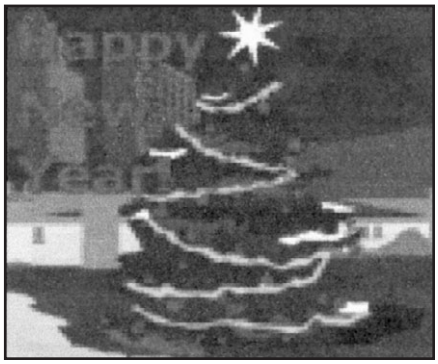
A wise nation preserves its records, gathers up its muniments, decorates the tombs of its illustrious dead, repairs its great public structures, and fosters national pride and love of country by perpetual references to the sacrifices and glories of the past.

Joseph Howe, 31 August 1871

THIS ISSUE...



Submissions: Text submissions can be either paper, email or electronically produced, Word or Word Perfect. We will format the text for you.

Graphics are best submitted as an original photo (not a fax). If submitted electronically, they should be 300 dpi and a .tif file. A .jpg file at 300 dpi is acceptable if no compression is used. We will attempt to use any pictures, whatever the format.

NOTE WELL: **When sending mail of any kind, newsletter articles, letters, membership renewals, donations etc, please ensure the envelope is addressed correctly to the: Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation or SAM Foundation.**

Deadlines for receiving newsletter submissions are:
Spring 10 March
Summer 20 June
Winter 15 October

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Any opinions expressed are deemed to be those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Shearwater Aircraft Museum Foundation, its members, and/or the ShearwaterAviation Museum.

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From the Curator's Desk
by Christine Hines

It is with great pleasure that I can report a successful summer season, with a modest increase in visitors of about 8% over last year at this time. Our first tourist season with the Atrium in place was successful from an operational standpoint, as well as a hit with our visitors; again many thanks to SAMF fundraising efforts to provide this much-needed addition to our services.

The upcoming winter months will allow us to focus on exhibit work; indeed, now our building efforts have ceased for the immediate future, we have to focus on refinishing some old exhibits and plan for the installation of new exhibits. Over the winter we hope to move the Firefly project down into our new hangar, where it will become an exhibit in itself, generating some new funds, new volunteers, and new focus. Before we are able to launch new restoration projects for the Avenger and the HUP-3, we need to complete the Firefly. As the SAMF membership can appreciate better than most, these kinds of projects require human and financial resources that are a struggle to provide and maintain. Moving the Firefly project into full view of the public will serve as an "interactive" exhibit of sorts, which will be of great value and interest to our patrons and supporters, as they see the result of their contributions.

In closing, I would like to mention that 2004 has seen a great deal of activity at SAM. Besides the functions, parades, school visits and regular Museum activities, our volunteers have been outstanding in their time commitment to us and provided over 11,500 hours to SAM in 2004. If you work that out at an average of $10.00 per hour, that figure could buy us at least three more full-time staff members! We owe our volunteers a great debt of gratitude, and hope that you will be able to join us on Friday, 10 December 2004, at 2 p.m. to celebrate SAM Volunteers and the year that was 2004. From all of us at SAM, we wish you a prosperous Holiday Season and every happiness in the New Year. See you in 2005!

ARTIFACTS WANTED!

Artifacts or memorabilia for: 102 Marine Squadron, RCAF

Please contact Christine Hines at: (902) 460-1083 or awmuseum@ns.sympatico.ca

NOTE: Receipts for Income Tax purposes are available.

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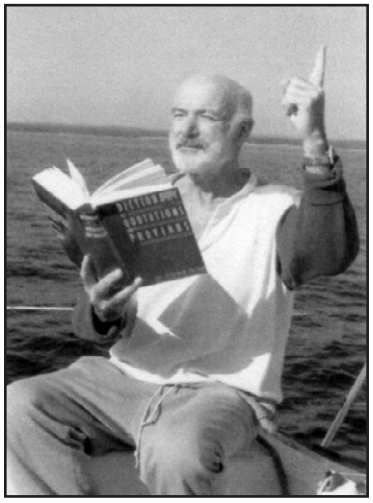


Me when I started working with Kay.)

Editor's Grunts
We soldier (sailor?) on with precious little guidance from you readers. This leads us to suspect that you are all dead – but then, if you were really dead, you wouldn't be renewing your memberships and sending in special donations. There's gotta be another explanation for your silence and the only one we can come up with is that you are satisfied with the tripe we send you – yea, more than satisfied. We, Kay and I, have come to believe that you are so impressed by the magnificence of our publication that you must be asking yourselves "How can you improve upon perfection?" and, accordingly, you refrain from offering suggestions. I'm not kidding: our egos have swelled to cosmic dimensions.

So we will sailor on with messdeck anecdotes, old photographs and the like but we will, more and more, have articles designed to appeal to a broader audience. If this Foundation of ours is to survive the passing of us old farts it must recruit new members. Until our servants on Parliament Hill come to their senses and fund the rebuilding of naval and maritime aviation we will have no pool of serving and retired warriors to recruit from: therefore the urgent need to reach out to all Canadians with an interest in things military and things historical. If you don't like the word **urgent** go read the Delta List.

So stand by for more tales of heroic acts in air and sea battles in addition to messdeck yarns of "*the good old days*".

I take this opportunity to welcome to our pages CNAG's Across the Flight Deck. Welcome aboard "Naggers". And to those of you who are not already Foundation members " Maybe you'd like to sign on for the voyage?"

(See Media Employment Opportunity elsewhere in this issue)

Me, 5 years after working with Kay. ***Ed***

****

SAGACITY OF AN ANCIENT AIR ENGINEER

Bill: Herewith enclosed I hope you find some useful grist for the mill. Thought of you on a recent visit to Gibraltar; you too have now become a rock-like feature of our newsletter, complete with ape grunts. ***Mike***

Flight Deck Suspense

Long past sunset we wait, uncertain, clinging to hope against hope. None of us here know of the state of the mission or if the flight plan has been changed, as rain squalls shimmer along the deck and we huddle against the icy wind. I strain my ears listening for an engine drone, stamp my chilled feet, wrap my arms tight, hands on shoulders, clamp my fists, wishing I could speed the agonizingly slow tick, tick of time. Or has it even stopped? Am I now dreaming? Or slipping out of my sane mind.

There is more to heritage than money.

The notion of passing on ideas and experience of value as well as property and cash, is an ancient one. Jacob, in the Bible, talked to his sons about their lives after his death. Also, most people, when writing a will, are already in that mood of futuristic thought.

I call my second will and testament, my Advisory Will.

My Journal, I began sixty years ago, contains the names of many of my mentors. The word 'mentor' from the advisor to Telemachus in Homer's Odyssey, alludes to one of my aims: To encourage my inheritors to stop and to think seriously about the many mentors in their lives.

Because each of us has some school teacher, faculty advisor, senior officer or other person who has played a part in shaping our professional lives or perhaps in helping us to discover a latent talent; or to influence us in forming a long-standing view.

It is my conviction that each of us should write a second will. It could include a brief overview of our naval air experience, and why it was an important part of our formative years. And, it may be a worthy addition to our Foundation archives.

Naval Aviation

The two states of being: One on the deck and the other in the air can only be pictured as distinct from each other as day and night. The Groundsman dons his working rig and grasps a tool. The airman steps into his flight suit and clamps on his helmet and goggles. The mission of each is linked by the power of combustion and the aerodynamic forces of propeller thrust and wing lift. In the medium of air about the sea, the pilot adventures and is lost to us on the deck as he is for a time imprisoned in a zone of danger. Just as we, waiting on the flight deck are suspended in the uncertainty of sea-state and weather forces. In the symbolic realm of aviation, the two states in which we each exist become one in action, like rider and horse.

To the Flight Deck By Canoe

As I was better with my hands than my head in studies, and built a sailing canoe inspired by Uffa Fox at age fourteen, my father suggest a career in aviation.

Later I realized how prescient he was. Aviation had become a major part of the twentieth century story. Canada's railway population was about to take to the air, aircraft on floats and skis were opening up our north land. Thus did my father set my feet on the path to airborne things.

After graduating from central Tec's aircraft course and an apprenticeship with the Toronto Flying club on de Havilland Pus Moth and Gipsy Moth, at no pay, I was hired by Hamilton Aero Club's EFTS at Mount Hope at $20 a week; real money in 1940.

But after a year of rebuilding bent wing tips and five-cylinder engine tune-ups, I saw a photo of an aircraft carrier with the latest Rolls Royce engined fighter on the flight deck, perhaps a Fairy Fulmar; so right away I applied to join the Royal Navy's Fleet Air Arm, as an escape from boring biplane work. However, the RN Liaison Office replied: "We don't recruit in Canada, but come and see us aboard HMS Seaborne." So, after a one-way TCA flight to Halifax I report to Seaborne, a yacht moored in the Dockyard and was put on the pay list as an AB by the only person aboard, a Writer, and was told to pick up my kit and get measured for uniforms and to report to the AEO at HMS Saker, the RN Air Section, Dartmouth, for trade tests and examination; which qualified me to be either an airframe rigger or an engine fitter. As the greater challenge, I chose Air Fitter Engines, at

4 and six pence a day. That was only about a dollar a day. Of course I didn't join for the money, who did? But for the satisfaction of working on an aircraft that might zap the enemy.

Surprise! When in uniform a few days later, I was promptly put to work on a large old biplane; what a letdown that was.

But, my workmate, RAF Corporal Jack Holt, smartly told me our plane, a Swordfish, was not to be sneered at. Just a year ago he'd serviced and helped to arm with torpedoes Swordfish aboard the Illustrious, when the Italian fleet at anchor at Taranto had been attacked. "For sure you must have heard about the Bismark in May this year" said Jack. "The German battleship that sank the Hood", I think I retorted. "Yes, but the British battle fleet didn't manage to sink the Bismark until Swordfish torp had hit her rudder and she became a sitting duck, steaming in circles" Jack was quick to point out.

Going into the mess hall for super a week or so later, I heard the radio blasting out the news: "Attack on Pearl Harbour." Jack shouted: "That's it, the Jap shit has hit the fan." Later I heard Air Fitter Marsden, who'd been in the Ark Royal, say, "We are all in this now, it'll be a naval air war."

Thinking back over many years about my first days in the Fleet Air Arm, I realized that although each person's naval air story is unique unto himself alone, in one respect, it could never have taken place the way it did without the close intermeshing of the work of so many ground technicians and the expertise of the many airmen. My next chapter: To Air Engineer by Flying Horse ***Mike Patterson***

(***Editor's Note**: There used* to be a saying attributed to the newly-graduated Engineer "Last year I didn't know how to spell Engineer and today I are one". **Mike Patterson** of our Naval Aviation diaspora in Spain proves that Engineers can become sage and eloquent philosophers. Readers, go thou and do likewise: Articles like this add a touch of class to this rag of Kay's.)

****

IN THE DELTA

Anderson, John "Hoss"
Beauchamp, R
Boyd, Thomas
Brewster, Hugh G.
Brown, Harry John
Collyer, Bob
Doherty, John
Farrington, Lawrence
Gray, G. D. N.
Hardy, William Hewson
Harley, Audrey
Jackson, Pat
Lyons, Heather
McNab, Barb
McRobb, J. F.
Morris, Walter
Paul, Joseph M.
Smethurst, Bill
Weaver, Wilf
Whittaker, Walter

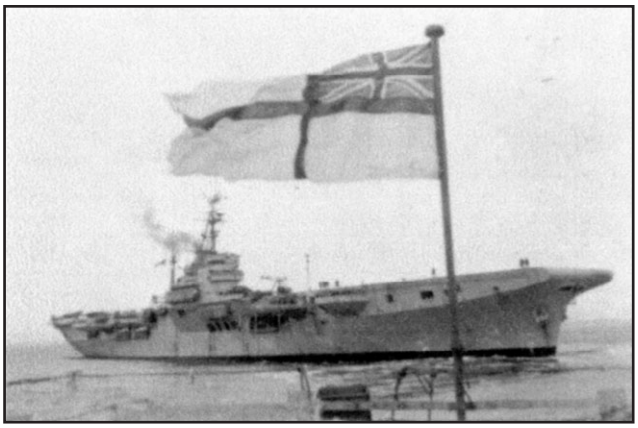
Planes From Carrier Warrior Thunder Over City As Crowds Welcome Navy Squadron To Home Base

Twelve Fireflies of the aircraft carrier Warrior thundered into the air in face of an approaching gale force and wheeled back over their carrier as she, the cruiser Uganda and destroyer Crescent steamed into Esquimalt Harbor Sunday afternoon, having completed the most ambitious operation in the Canadian Navy's peacetime history.

First sight of the Warrior gained by the escort vessels which went out to meet the carrier off Cape Flattery was greyed over with snow which flurried over the rough seas. The party transferring to the carrier from the frigate Charlottetown, under the command of Lt.-Cmdr. J.E.W. Wolfenden, R.C.N.R., were unable to take the frigate's boat and had to wait for a larger one to be put over the side from the carrier. Among the party was Allen Jenkins, reporter of the Victoria Times.

As the vessel neared Victoria, the winds increased and bursts of hail and snow swept across the flight deck of the carrier. When 12 of 825th Squadron's 15 planes roared down the flight deck, the wind force across the flight deck was estimated at 35 knots. However, the pilots, before taking off, had said it was just the sort of a wind in which to take off.

All along the shore line, on Marine Drive and from Beacon Hill Park, crowds of Victorians watched the spectacle as the carrier turned her bow into the wind for the take off, and one after another the fighter-reconnaissance planes took to the air. All 12 were airborne within two minutes.



As the Warrior warped into her berth at H.M.C. Dockyard's main jetty, the ship's band, lined up with part of the ship's company on the carrier's flight deck, and a second band ashore played as hundreds of waiting relatives of personnel aboard stood eagerly by.

FIRST COMBINED OPERATION

The operation which the three warships had completed was the first one in which an all-Canadian force had developed co-operation between big ships, and between aircraft and surface vessels. Hitherto, a small-ship navy and one lacking its own air arm, the R.C.N. had been compelled to depend upon the Royal Navy for such operational experience as the recent cruise provided.

Although Warrior has been in commission for a year and the cruiser even longer, they had not previously worked together. From the point of view of the personnel, the cruise provided large numbers of R.C.N. new entries with their first practical training at sea and offered the highly skilled older hands with their first opportunity to fully put to work what they had been learning in theory for so long. Members of the R.C.N. (Reserve) were also aboard, returning to their inland divisions with a wealth of first hand experience.

Capt. F.L. Houghton, C.B.E., R.C.N., Warrior's commander, who spent his boyhood in Victoria when his father, a doctor, was in practice here from 1910 to 1922, said: "The chief value of those 8,000 miles from Halifax to Esquimalt was the fact that we were off on our own and were able to find the teamwork that can't be fully developed with the distractions of a home port close at hand."

REMAINS IN SERVICE

The Warrior, Capt. Houghton said, will be placed in drydock for a period for scraping and painting. He discredited rumours the Warrior was to be temporarily decommissioned. The carrier held a permanent commission and would definitely remain in service, he said.

He was pleased with his command. "She's a hell of a good ship ... perfect in every respect," he said. He had no complaints whatever with regard to crew or ship.

Capt. Houghton, who is senior officer afloat, said he had no idea how long Warrior would be stationed on this coast, but he knew she was here for the winter at least as one of the reasons for sending her here was that she had not been winterized. "Although," he added wryly, "when we met that snowstorm, I was doubtful if we had come to the right place."

Squadron 803 did not come out with the Warrior as its planes were not allowed to fly off carriers owing to a technical modification required, he said. These planes are now being modified and are expected to fly out here later.

AIR STRENGTH NECESSARY

Speaking of the value of carriers, Capt. Houghton said all modern fleets must have their own air strength. One of the main lessons of the last war, he continued, was that a navy would not operate unless it had its own air strength with it.

Carrier work was specialized and although Canada had two aircraft carriers and some people might think them expensive things to maintain, the captain said, he believed the navy had to become air minded and had to have practical experience in carrier work.

He expects the R.C.N. to adopt the system of requiring all officers to obtain an "A" certificate which will give them a knowledge of air mechanics and other pertinent knowledge, although they would receive no actual operational training. Such a requirement would be much the same as those requiring officers to have torpedo and gunnery training, although their particular duties might not cover that phase of naval work.

SCHEDULE MAINTAINED

Capt. Houghton, looking back on the completed cruise, paid particular tribute to the maintenance staffs who, working six weeks away from a base, allowed no hitch to develop in the program for either ships or aircraft. The schedule was maintained meticulously. Even the weather co-operated in respect to the flying program. In the course of an entire month, only half a day's operations were cancelled and within that time Squadron 825 completed 190 deck landings, more than a third of its total deck landings since the carrier was commissioned. This was accomplished without injury to personnel and with a minimum of damage to aircraft.

CRASH LANDING

The single crash landing of the cruise was expertly handled and, although the plane was forced to come down on the limited space of the flight deck without benefit of undercarriage or flaps, it finished up in repairable condition.

Sub-Lt. (O) D.B. Gill, Hamilton, Ont., who was observer aboard the plane, said he and Lieut. (P) Charles Bourque, Toronto, the pilot, discovered within five minutes of taking off, that there was a hydraulic leak and the undercarriage would not come down. The plane flew around for nearly an hour, keeping radio contact with the ship and receiving instructions, before finally coming in for a landing.

Looking back on the incident, Lieut. Gill said he had not been worried too much when they were coming in for the emergency landing, but confessed he had been "pretty weak about the knees" when he finally clambered out of the plane.

Lt.-Cmdr. O.W. Tattersall, D.S.C., R.N., commanding the air squadron, said flying on the operation

had been most successful. He was highly pleased with all personnel.

The cruise was in three phases. Leaving Halifax Nov. 5, Warrior was escorted to the Panama Canal, via Jamaica, by the newly commissioned, Canadian-built Tribal class destroyer Nootka.

EXERCISES AT SEA

At Balboa, on the Pacific side of the canal, the destroyer Crescent, out of Esquimalt, took over from Nootka. In Acapulco, Mexico, Warrior made a rendezvous with the widely-traveled Uganda. From here on, the most valuable period of the cruise occurred, the three ships and the aircraft joining in a series of exercises which included air strikes, torpedo attacks and general manoeuvres. For Uganda and Crescent, intensively engaged in more orthodox forms of seamanship training during most of the year, the opportunity to work out with a carrier was an exciting and welcome change.

Engineer Cmdr. T. Fife of Warrior put into words what the cruise had meant to his department. "No school, of itself, can produce a marine engineer; it is what a man learns by smelling and hearing and seeing an engine-room under 24-hour-a-day operation. This trip has provided that opportunity under temperatures ranging from snowstorms to tropical heat. In the great majority of the posts we have doubled up, with the future manning of the new carrier Magnificent in mind. There have been 40 extra men in my department, including a few reservists, and they have had fine all-round experience they could never otherwise have obtained."

For Lieut. J. Isard, R.C.N.(R)., Oakville, Ont., it was the training he had long been awaiting. For all that he had behind him a very full war experience on such ships as St. Croix, Saskatchewan, Prince Rupert, Kokanee and Seacliffe, it remained for his temporary appointment to Warrior to bring him in intimate touch with the radar work he had always coveted.

From his action station in the aircraft direction room, he learned the intricacies of tracking raiding planes coming in at 25,000 feet and followed, by eye and ear, the course of interceptors sent out to forestall them ... all in the semi-darkness of the nerve centre in Warrior's island. No man could be keener about the peacetime reserve.

Now, with his first service aboard a large warship completed and having had his first sight of the tropics, Lieut. Isard is returning to his eastern Canada home to resume civilian life.

The same keenness for the reserve was found in a quartette from the Windsor division, who have spent their time in varied surroundings. William Baker has served as an engine room artificer, Jack Wood as a telegraphist, and E.B. Brown and W. St. Aubin in the sick bay.

BROTHERS ABOARD

Equally keen for the permanent navy were two Victoria brothers, Ldg. Smn. Howard Woodburn, flight deck director, and AB. Dallas Woodburn, flight deck handler, of 434 Heather Street. To them Canada's naval air power is fascinating.

Full calibre shoots and a wealth of speeding targets produced in gun crews a confidence they had previously lacked. So it was with the men in every section of each ship. There were no failures in the passing out examinations of new entries.

While visits to foreign ports were not stressed, those that occurred had their importance in the matter of general training. If the behaviour of the Canadian seamen ashore was any criterion of their efficiency at sea, their rating was unusually high. In every port touched, local police and military authorities went out of their way to comment on the exemplary conduct of crews on leave. The performance of the special contingent of 100, which was flown to Mexico City by the Mexican government to march in the presidential inauguration parade, was a highlight of the cruise. As goodwill ambassadors of Canada, the sailors did an outstanding job.

As read from the Victoria Times, 16 December 1946.

LIFE GETS TEDIOUS, DON'T IT!

Commander Pat Jackson, crashed into the North Atlantic during the hunt for Bismarck and survived nine days in an open boat; later he directed air operations during the Korean War.

At midnight on May 24 1941 Jackson was flying a Swordfish torpedo bomber of 845 Naval Air Squadron, led by Lieutenant-Commander Eugene Esmonde, from the aircraft carrier Victorious when he spotted the battleship Bismarck. As Jackson flew down through the cloud for a low-level attack, his observer Lieutenant "Dapper" Berrill tapped him on the shoulder to wish him Happy Birthday. Bismarck's greeting was a heavy barrage of flak which shook his flimsy aircraft, filled the cockpit with the stench of burning explosives and drenched him with walls of water thrown up by the battleship's main armament. Amid the confusion and violent manoeuvring, Jackson thought he saw a torpedo hit Bismarck's starboard side, but, he confessed later, he "was not brave enough to wait and see". After landing on Victorious's pitching deck in the dark amid a heavy storm, he snatched a few hours' rest, then took off again to search northwards for the battleship, which intelligence wrongly suggested was heading towards Norway.

Meanwhile, Victorious was ordered south to cover any attempt by Bismarck to reach Brest. After a sortie of five hours, Jackson found himself lost and out of fuel; he had just said three Hail Marys when Berrill pointed to an empty ship's lifeboat lying partly-sunk below them. Landing on the water about 20 yards away from it, the two men bailed out the lifeboat with their flying boots until there was enough freeboard to climb inside to shelter from the freezing wind. The lifeboat, from the Dutch tanker Elusa, was well-equipped, and, after bringing up their breakfasts, Jackson and Berrill revived themselves with tots of vintage brandy. Jackson then rigged a mast and sail, hacking the blade off an oar with a rusty axe to make a gaff; once the lifeboat had heeled over and took steerage way, they headed east for Iceland, running before gale force winds.

Four sleepless nights later, Jackson hallucinated that the British consul on the Moon was calling him to a hot bath, and Berrill had to restrain him from jumping overboard. Thereafter he and Berrill took turns massaging each other's feet while one of them steered; their rations, hard biscuits damaged by sea water, gave them terrible toothache. On the eighth day, the sighting of seabirds and wreckage gave them hope, but on the ninth the weather worsened so that the sails started to split. Then, from the crest of a wave, Jackson saw a fishing vessel. As he fired off his last Very flare, a siren indicated that he had been seen, and burly seamen from the Icelandic Lagerfoss jumped aboard to prise Berrill's frozen hands off the tiller. They landed in Reykjavik, returned home, and 10 days later Jackson rejoined his squadron. In London, his mother knew that he was missing but had not worried: after attending a requiem Mass for him and one of his brothers, she had visited a medium who reassured her that "Patrick's doing what he likes best, sailing".

Patrick Bernard Jackson was born on May 25 1917 in London, where his father was the engineer in charge of the electricity generating station which has since become the Tate Modern; his Irish mother was a sister of James Callahan, the Royal Academician. One of Patrick's brothers was to become head of BBC drama; another survived four years as a Japanese PoW; and a third was killed in a "friendly fire" incident in 1941. Patrick was educated at Haberdashers' Aske's, Hampstead, and worked briefly for Smith's Electric Clocks and then Imperial Chemical Industries while rising from rifleman to 2nd lieutenant in the Artists' Rifles.

In 1938 he obtained a short service commission in the Fleet Air Arm. Jackson learned to fly in Tiger Moths, and flew from the carriers Argus, Ark Royal and Furious before joining Victorious. He was already assessed as an above-average pilot, and he himself said that he "never found deck-landings much of a problem as I drive my car faster than I land a Swordfish". In 1942 Jackson, with more than 150 deck-landings in his logbook, was appointed an instructor. The following year he graduated from the Empire Central Flying School and was sent to the US Naval Air Station at Grosse Isle, Michigan. HMS SEARCHER

HMS SEARCHER

On returning to Britain, Jackson became Lieutenant Commander (Flying) in the escort carrier Searcher. He was responsible for operations on May 4 1945 when aircraft from 853 squadron sank U-711, the last U-boat to be sunk by the Fleet Air Arm during the war. Jackson next flew for Hawker Aircraft, where the chief test pilot considered him a great asset. He was recalled to the Navy to help develop fighter tactics in 1948, sent to the School of Naval Air Warfare and became commander of 13th Carrier Air Group in Triumph in 1949-50. Triumph was already in the Sea of Japan when the Korean War broke out, and Jackson planned all the early air operations, culminating in the Inchon landings. Mechanical problems restricted Triumph's speed and she could barely create the necessary wind over the deck. She was an unhappy ship with a peacetime complement of obsolescent aircraft and some inexperienced aircrew; but Jackson led by example, flying several sorties in his own Seafire, which was marked with black and white stripes to let the Americans know he was friendly.

Once, while on a rooftop sweep over an industrial zone, Jackson was hit by a Korean machine-gunner on a factory chimney. As his engine temperature gauge rose alarmingly, he calmly fired back, collapsing the chimney in a cloud of dust, and returned to Triumph minutes before his engine seized up. Jackson did well to increase the sortie rate and the serviceability of his command. After an appointment as Lieutenant Commander (Flying) in Illustrious, Jackson was sent back in the mid-1950s to America, where he served on the staffs of various USN admirals and was responsible for the training, organization, welfare, discipline and payment of 600 British officers under training. He deputized in the Gulf of Mexico for the naval attachéé in Washington, especially during ship visits. When he retired, Jackson had flown 1,780 hours in nearly 50 types, and made 316 deck-landings. Jackson made a second career for seven years as a recruiter, thrilling prep and public schoolboys with talks about his flying. Apart from a mention in dispatches in 1945, he was never decorated. Friends thought him a handsome, dashing figure with a wicked sense of humour, a most attentive lunch companion, and a good raconteur with a ready twinkle in his eye. Senior officers found him a consummate pilot, a sound administrator and charismatic leader, but were sometimes uncomfortable with what one called his cheerful cynicism; others cited his forceful personality, and one described him as "a staff officer who thinks - and lets you know he does".
In retirement Jackson supported the Ataxia Foundation and took up oil painting and watercolours, read books on military history and was always ready to debate current affairs vigorously. He left a record of his experiences on tape at the Imperial War Museum and contributed to several books and newspaper articles, especially about his survival at sea.
Pat Jackson, passed away October 2, 2004.

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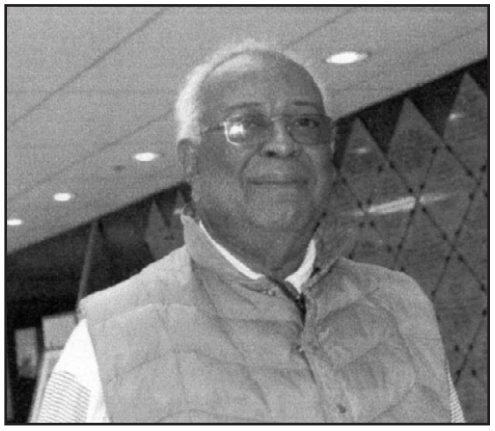

OUR VOLUNTEER OF THE QUARTER - MR. DON LOGAN

Mr. Don Logan has been our volunteer electrician since July of 2004. He does not have a military background, but when he visited us with his daughter he was so impressed by SAM's aircraft and aviation displays he decided to volunteer. He says that he has been an electrician "all his life" but, with the exception of model aircraft, has never worked on aircraft before. Getting to work on our firefly is what he is really eager to do. Originally from Jamaica, Mr. Logan moved to Toronto in 1977 and was drawn to Nova Scotia by family last year.

Bravo Zulu Mr. Logan! We are looking forward to seeing your work on the Firefly.

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THREE SERVICES AND NO BASIC TRAINING

By Tom Tonks

I was thirteen when war broke out in 1939. I can remember thinking it would be all over before I would be old enough to join up.

In 1943 three of us went to London, ON to join the RCAF. I passed the tests for Pilot training. However, since the age requirement was 18 yrs and I was 17 and 3 mos; I was signed on given one days pay and sent home on leave without pay for nine months. On my 18th birthday, I reported to the manning depot in Toronto. After being kitted up, I was sent on a route march of Toronto's Front St and Young St. with my brand new boots. I managed a blister on the bottom of my foot which broke and became infected. I ended up in hospital for 10 days during which time the Air Force decided to discharge 4300 Aircrew to be conscripted into the Army. Since conscription age was 18 and 6 mos, I was sent home for 3 mos (to grow up).

I reported to Wolsley Barracks in London with my conscription papers. The Army Captain (Captain Foster) looked at the discharge pin I was wearing and decided I didn't need Basic Training. I told him I had an application in to join the RCNAS; he gave me the option of going for Basic Training or volunteering to be a Guinea Pig. As such, I was sent to NRE in Ottawa where they were testing new ointments and salve to counteract the effects of Mustard Gas. I received sixteen burns on my arms, which caused blisters; fortunately the ointments worked.

When I reported back to London, my transfer was in and so I headed down to HMCS PREVOST to sign on. I was then sent to HMCS STAR in Hamilton. I reported into 'STAR' with two discharge buttons on. The RPO on seeing my discharge buttons, decided I didn't need any more Basic Training and since there was a class of sixty odd who had just completed Basic Training and were being sent to RCAF Station Aylmer Ontario for Trade selection, I was to join them. I had been in the Navy five days and I ended up back on an RCAF Station.

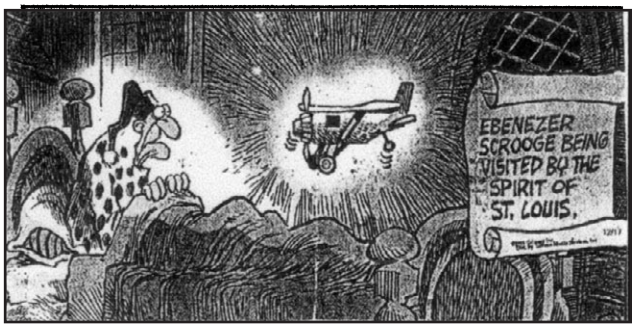
Our Divisional Officer was a Lieutenant RCNVR. He decided to find out how much we had learned about naval Terms and so he gave us a multiple choice questionnaire. He was quite upset with my answers and threatened to send me back to the Army until I explained that I had only been in the Navy five days. Three of my answers to the questions follow:

Q. What is Up Spirits?
A. Weekly Church Parade.

Q. What is 'Splice the Mainbrace'?
A. Splice the mainbrace securing the ship to the jetty.

Q. What is the Jimmy?
A. A crowbar for opening windows.

I finally received Basic Training in Cornwallis while on Leadership Course in the '60s.



Retired and seeking gainless employment?

We have become aware of an attractive (sort of) employment opportunity that will presently (presently means soon, not right now). become open in the paramedia field. The hours are flex hours, meaning that the work can be done from home by anyone with a computer and internet service provider.. The successful candidate will have had first-hand experience in the maritime military aviation environment, be able to visit the publisher's office (located near a former naval air station in Eastern Canada) at least weekly and have communications and inter-personal skills sufficient to deal with obstreperous co-workers. Applications should be directed to the secretary of this publication. They will be treated in absolute confidentiality. Any application enquiring about remuneration scales will be trashed without acknowledgment. ***(Our Editor is sick and demented. K)***

BONNIE/MAGGIE REUNION
Halifax, NS 1,2,3 July 2005

The Last Bonnie/Maggie Reunion

For Info contact:
Peter/Ann Kent
902-455-2533

Dave Bradshaw
902-876-7450

web info: www.fleetclubatlantic.ca

(*Note:* A special thank you to Peter and Ann Kent and Dave Bradshaw for all you've done to ensure this great time.) I'm told the only reason this is called the Last Bonnie/Maggie Reunion is because they have no one willing to take over running it. Surely someone out there would be willing to Chair the event. Kay)

RUM, SODOMY AND THE LIFEJACKET

It's almost 200 years since Lord Nelson's famous naval victory over the French and Spanish in the Battle of Trafalgar. To kick-start the anniversary celebrations, an actor dressed as Nelson posed for pictures on the River Thames at Greenwich. But before he was allowed to board an RNLI Lifeboat, safety officials made him wear a lifejacket over his 19th century admiral's uniform.

How would Nelson have fared if he'd been subject to modern health and safety regulations.

(You are now on the deck of the recently renamed British Flagship, HMS Apeasement.)

Order the signal. Hardy. *Aye, aye, sir.*

Hold on, that's not what I dictated to the signal officer. What's the meaning of this? *Sorry, sir?*

England expects every person to do his duty, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, religious persuasion or disability. What gobbledegook is this?

Admiralty policy, I'm afraid, sir. We're an equal opportunities employer now. We had the devil's own job getting "England" past the censors, lest it be considered racist.

Gadzooks, Hardy. Hand me my pipe and tobacco *Sorry, sir. All naval vessels have been designated smoke-free working environments.*

In that case, break open the rum ration. Let us splice the mainbrace to steel the men before battle. *The rum ration has been abolished, Admiral. It's part of the Government's policy on binge drinking.*

Good heavens. Hardy. I suppose we'd better get on with it. Full speed ahead.

I think you'll find that there's a 4 mph speed limit in this stretch of water.

Dammit, man, we are on the eve of the greatest sea fight in history. We must advance with all dispatch. Report from the crow's nest, please. *That won't be possible, sir.*

What? *Health and Safety have closed the crow's nest, sir. No harness. And they say that rope ladder doesn't meet regulations. They won't let anyone up there until a proper scaffolding can be erected.*

Then get me the ship's carpenter without delay, Hardy. *He's busy knocking up a wheelchair access to the fo'c'sle Admiral.*

Wheelchair access? I've never heard anything so absurd. *Health and safety again, sir. We have to provide a barrier-free environment for the differently abled.*

Differently abled? I've only one arm and one eye and I refuse even to hear mention of the word. I didn't rise to the rank of admiral by playing the disability card. *Actually, sir, you did. The Royal Navy is under-represented in the areas of visual impairment and limb deficiency.*

Whatever next? Give me a full sail. The salt spray beckons. *A couple of problems there, too, sir. Health and safety won't let the crew up the rigging without crash helmets. And they don't want anyone breathing in too much salt – haven't you seen the adverts?*

I've never heard such infamy. Break out the cannon and tell the men to stand by to engage the enemy. *The men are a bit worried about shooting at anyone, Admiral.*

What? This is mutiny. *It's not that, sir. It's just that they're afraid of being charged with murder if they actually kill anyone. There's a couple of legal aid lawyers on board, watching everyone like hawks.*

Then how are we to sink the Frenchies and the Spanish? *Actually, sir, we're not.*

We're not? *No, sir. The Frenchies and Spanish are our European partners now. According to the Common Fisheries Policy, we shouldn't even be in this stretch of water. We could get hit with a claim for compensation.*

But you must hate a Frenchman as you hate the devil. *I wouldn't let the ship's diversity co-ordinator hear you saying that sir. You'll be up on a disciplinary.*

You must consider every man an enemy who speaks ill of your King. *Not any more, sir. We must be inclusive in this multicultural age. Now put on your Kevlar vest, it's the rules.*

Don't tell me – health and safety. Whatever happened to rum sodomy and the lash? *As I explained, sir, rum is off the menu. And there's a ban on corporal punishment.*

What about sodomy? *I believe it's to be encouraged sir.*

In that case – kiss me Hardy.

****

READER'S COMMENTS AND SELECTED NAVAIRGENS

Greetings:
Stu Soward's report in your Spring issue, of that fateful day in March 1949 when LCdr Monk flew a Sea fury through a Harvard formation, brought back many memories.

I had only just completed the OFTS myself at the time, and my Certificate to that effect was signed by him just three days before, on March 25.

The tragic event was unfortunately not an isolated incident in those days when there were many "prangs", including other fatal ones. I myself was in a Seafire formation just a few months before, on December 7 to be exact, when on changing formation, Lt (E)(P) "Rocky" Campbell collided with Lt (?) Stewart, our instructor and leader, and a wonderful person, if ever there was one. Lt Stewart's plane was cut in two, sending him crashing to his death in the harbour just off Georges island.

Luckily and skillfully "Rocky", whose plane's wooden propeller had been completely sheared off, was able to do a dead stick straight in approach and landing on Runway 11. However, the poor fellow, and a prince of a guy he was too, never flew again.

As for me, I remember only too well the sickly and horrified feeling I had, witnessing it all as number three of the same formation. I remember also the loneliness I felt coming back to land, having earlier taken off with them in formation.

I went on from there to have a wonderful tour with 883 Squadron on Sea Furies, thanks to those wonderful people and other OFTS instructors (Lt's Hutton, Bice, Falls and Welsh) who had so willingly and enthusiastically shared their skills with us.
Sincerely, ***Jacques P. Cote***

Geoff Bennett *writes:*

In the Summer 2004 issue, under Readers Response, Philip Eisnor appealed for someone to tell him how he can find anyone to tell him about the flying characteristics of the Sea Fury. I have found a fairly informative article on the Sea Fury by Captain Eric "Winkle" Brown, the famous retired RN test pilot and author. The article appears in the February 1980 edition of Air International, Vol 18 No. 2, which I have in my collection of aviation literature.

I will gladly make a photocopy of the ten-page article, but I would imagine that copyright laws might inhibit you from reproducing all or part of it.
Per Ardua.

Jack Arnott writes:

Hey Kay, Enjoying reading your superb Summer issue. Surprised to see Rolly West on page 9 attribute sportsjocking to myself. He meant "Jim" Arnott. Hell I am only 73 don't rush it. In 1954 SubLts Arnott, Craven, Chandler, Hewer and More were learning how to bounce Fireflys off the carrier HMS Illustrious.

I think when I was in initial training as a midshipman (air) at HMCS Cornwallis in 1952, there were three Arnotts there. Jim was senior , LCDR P & RT on JOLTC course, Lt(E) T A Arnott on Lieutenant's qualifying course, and myself on JOBTC course # 2. The engineer retired as a Commodore(E).

ROLLY'S ERROR
In the last edition of the Newsletter, my article "Wrestling With the Past", I made a slight boo-boo. I mistakenly named Jim Arnott, the late Base P&RT Officer by calling him Jack, who as many of you know was one of our illustrious Naval Air pilots. Sorry about that Jack. Rolly West

WE STAND CORRECTED!

Ernie Cable writes:

Just a quick note to say how much I like the content and format of the Summer Newsletter; a good selection of articles from various older and more recent eras and most of the letters to the editor provide meaningful commentary on the history of Shearwater.

I do have one constructive comment. I think the addition of the drawing of Shearwater aircraft on the back of the front cover is an excellent idea, however, it must be accurate and technically correct or we will lose our credibility as an authorative aviation museum. In our Summer edition, the Avenger on the back of the front cover has the identification letters "A (roundel) BB". The identification letter sequence should read "AB (roundel) B". The first two letters "AB" were the

identification letters for 826 Sqn while the stand alone "B" represented the individual aircraft on 826 Sqn. Notwithstanding the difficulty in producing colours with good fidelity in drawings, the upper surface of the Avenger's fuselage should be a dark sea gray and not the light blue representative of some of the early USN paint schemes.

As a precedent, all of the paintings in our art gallery depict Dartmouth/Shearwater aircraft not only with authentic paint schemes, but also with aircraft serial numbers and identification letters that match actual aircraft that served at Dartmouth/Shearwater.

For future editions, as the museum's historian, I would be willing to vet any aircraft drawings for technical fidelity.

Keep up the good work! Cheers

VMT Ernie, I have sentenced Kay to one day's stoppage of grog for this (myself too); and, yes, we will accept your kind offer to vet such articles in future issues. *Bill Farrell Editor*

From Kay: Leo Pettipas had already offered and I had accepted his offer. So hopefully I won't have too many more 'errors' with Leo and Ernie vetting any aircraft photos or drawings I use. Believe it or not, I did use a photo from a book in the archives. Yep, it came right from the Archives. Someone told me that this was how they were received in Shearwater from the US. Is that true? What do I know. As a matter of fact when that photo was chosen, an Air Engineer Officer was in the office and said that that particular photo, shown with several others, was the **closest to** the ones worked on by the techs. I just thought it looked like an Avenger.

From Bill Farrell: Tua Culpa, Kay. (Not being good at Latin, Bill tell's me that roughly translated into English would be: **T**hy **U**nderstanding of **A**ircraft (acronym of Tua) **C**onfounds **U**s **L**ousy **P**ilot **A**irmen (acronym for Culpa). *Hmm...*

By the way, the Editor and I are very happy with mail from you. Just keep writing to us no matter what comments you have! Kay

Sheila Davis wrote:

Thank you for the recent confirmation that my tile for my brother is in the 'works'. I would be very grateful if someone could send me a picture of the tile when it is mounted and I could share that with my siblings. It is now 50 years later and our great memories of him are still vivid.

Jim was 21 yrs. old when, on 6 Nov. 1954, he was killed testing a Mustang with the Reserve Squadron in Calgary. He had topped his class at Centralia when he graduated in the RCAF and my father was invited there to pin his wings on. I have all his memorabilia.

I was on duty in the Tower at the time and so many of the Shearwater personnel were so wonderful getting me organized and on a plane to Calgary. After his funeral I marched to the Cenotaph with HMCS TECUMSEH in the November 11 Memorial parade and then returned to duty in the Tower. It was a difficult time.

For humor - all I got, when I got my 'wings' before him, was a nod from DOT but that got Jim's interest I guess.

I couldn't resist forwarding the picture the pilot of Harbor Air took of me with my WebCam when I flew over to Vancouver last Christmas. With the exception of the communication gear it was not an operational seat but it took me back to my flying days to sit there

We all have a lot of memories to deliberate over during this week don't we. *Best Wishes.*

Report says: ***Mystery Mechanic behind chopper crash....***

HALIFAX -- A badly-tuned engine is the likely cause of last year's Sea King helicopter crash, but records showing who was responsible have mysteriously disappeared. That's the conclusion of a report released Monday by the Directorate of Flight Safety, the air force agency that investigates aircraft accidents. The report says mechanics incorrectly adjusted one of the Sea King's two engines, but it's not known who.The crash happened in February of last year. The aging helicopter lifted off the deck of HMCS Iroquois shortly after it set out for the Persian Gulf to take

part in the U.S.-led war on terrorism. Just after takeoff, the chopper crashed back onto the deck of the destroyer and rolled on its side. Two of the Sea King's four crew members were slightly injured. *Written by CBC News Online staff*

Better get Detective Inspector McNab on the case.

***Ted Gibbon** writes:*

The memory of many orbits of McNab's Island brought to mind several incidents involving my association with the enigmatic "Tex" McNab which are probably little known but should not be lost from our Naval Aviation history. Tex was once aptly introduced by the duty Ops Officer in Bonaventure following the mission debrief for the LSO's comments on the night recovery with these appropriate words. "Now for a few thousand words from Tex McNab"

In the early 60's Tex was the XO of VU-32 and took the responsibility seriously, Indeed Tex was serious about all his responsibilities. The following are the "Chronicles of Detective Inspector McNab".

Episode #1 **The Case of the Clipped Cables**

One morning a pre-flight inspection of the Trackers by the Squadron Techs revealed that the wires to the trim button on the pilot's yoke of one aircraft had apparently been snipped. The XO was immediately informed and with unusual alacrity Detective Inspector McNab declared that sabotage was afoot and suspended flying. Dumbo, (remember Dumbo?) underwent an exhaustive inspection, was declared serviceable and a guard was placed on the SAR bird. The Inspector then called the RCMP major crime unit in Sackville for investigative assistance but was informed that they had some really important things to do and their arrival would be delayed so our intrepid investigator embarked upon some preliminary work. The Divisional Officers for the Fitters, Riggers and Electricians were told to muster their troops. When all were accounted for they were escorted to their tool boxes and under the watchful eyes of the Divisional PO's were relieved of all pliers and cutting devices that could have severed the wires in the belief that every edge would leave a distinctive mark akin to ballistics, the culprit would be identified and the crime solved. We thought Tex may have been spending too much time in front of his TV .The plan unfortunately was flawed. Not only did the perpetrator not identify himself upon realizing that the game would soon be up but as each Divisional Officer deposited a cardboard box full of devices capable of the deed in the XO's office it was realized that no method of determining individual ownership had been incorporated in the strategy. As most of our men would agree Divisional Officers were seldom selected for their mental dexterity. The RCMP Sergeant, who arrived a few hours later, was somewhat nonplussed at this initiative and much to the dismay of Detective Inspector McNab declared the effort worthless, if not a major impediment to any worthwhile investigation and suggested the tools be returned. The Divisional Officers were again summoned, the troops were again mustered and an argument over what belonged to whom ensued that raged for days. To my knowledge the crime remains unsolved.

Episode #2 **Whereabouts of the Wayward Whaler**

Investigative work can be exhausting so our intrepid Detective Inspector (XO) declared that a little R&R was in order and entered a Squadron whaler in the annual fleet regatta sailing competition. (An entry in the whaler pulling event was flatly rejected during heated debate at a morning brief).Volunteers to crew the vessel under Tex's command were recruited in the usual naval manner and on a Saturday a half dozen pressed pilots set off from the Shearwater boat shed to defend Coward Cove's honour in a two day race against the best the Fishheads could muster. The first leg started adjacent to the NSYS breakwater and required the competitors to sail out to Sambro Light Vessel, round this marker and finish in Ketch Harbour. The Sunday race was the reverse of this route. All of us had been exposed to this environmentally friendly method of marine travel but most secretly revered the inventor of the outboard motor however, we set sail with high spirits well provisioned by the Warrior Block galley and Mr. Oland's brew master. With a fine demonstration of " time on target" expertise we crossed the start line with a substantial lead on the rest of the field. Following a tactical error reconfirming that when sailing the shortest distance between two points is not a straight line combined with a few bungled attempts at trying to obey the Captain's orders to change tacks, (there was understandable confusion here because we had all been castigated more than once for demonstrating a significant lack of tact in more formal circumstances) we were, within the hour, dead last .As the day waned we finally were exiting Halifax harbour when there occurred what sailors might construe as a mutiny. Tex

continued to aim for SLV, the crew decided a right turn, VFR Direct for Ketch Harbour, was more appropriate. A discussion ensued but when the Captain retired to the quarterdeck to ponder the issue and consign a kidney filtered measure of Oland's finest to the deep he was relieved of the helm and the mutinous vessel established on the course for Ketch Harbour. This was obviously the correct decision as it immediately placed us back in the lead and we crossed the finish line in the same position we started. -- First !

With this tactical coup in hand we forewent the banyan and camp out planned by the Fishheads for that evening and returned to Shearwater in a strategically pre-located vehicle much preferring a night in our own beds and in dire need of re-provisioning for day 2. (Is it any wonder our seagoing comrades referred to us as the "I go now Navy" ?) Naval Aviators are great at planning but somewhat irresponsible when it comes to conserving consumables. About 11 PM our intrepid leader phoned to say how distraught he was with the afternoons junta and with little ceremony passed command for the return voyage to me. This complicated matters somewhat as Tex was to drive us to Ketch Harbour. The transportation glitch was eventually overcome despite the rejection of a proposal for an airlift by our HU - 21 pals as being too provocative to our fellow competitors who had endured a night out on Nova Scotia sand. (each grain weighs about four pounds) and we all, minus the jerk who got us into this in the first place, were there to manoeuvre our vessel into position for the start of Day 2. As you would expect our innate sense of precise timing and the averaging of the variety of times available from our aircrew chronometers saw us once again lead the flotilla across the start line. History repeated itself and our inept sailing techniques soon saw us drop astern. A hastily assembled heads of department meeting agreed that the bar at the Shearwater Wardroom opened at noon and the only way to get there on time was to again abandon the dog leg around SLV and proceed direct. With a brisk 20K south wind we made excellent time and were abeam McNab's Island before the others had gained their first turning point. In a continuation of our nautical inexpertise we inadvertently crossed the finish line while attempting to come about and return to Shearwater. With our improving ability we were able to sail that damn whaler right into the boat shed where we abandoned it, sails in a heap and mast still stepped, arriving at the Wardroom just as the Steward opened the bar. All of us learned an important lesson from this experience - Timing IS everything ! About two hours later the phone rang and the caller inquired if any members of the VU-32 whaler crew were there. With some trepidation I took the call to be informed that we had, much to their chagrin and surprise won both legs of the race and could we provide a representative to come over and accept the trophy from the Admiral. I was not up to perpetuating the fraud, having had some experience at how vindictive a frustrated Fishhead could be if the truth was ever revealed so I explained our inspired tactics whereupon the caller hung up. The next morning Tex spent considerable time explaining to a very upset Bosun why his command was returned in such an unseamanlike manner. The rest of us went flying !

Bob Bissell writes:

Hi Kay: Sorry that I was not able to see you guys in the museum. I Had a good trip, I did visit Shearwater, the new admin building looks out of place on the base and I was disappointed to see the big XXX on the best runway in the Maritimes. I also visited the Halifax squadron of the CFSA now more commonly known as the Shearwater Yacht Club. and was surprised to discover that I was still known there, of course by some of the more senior members.

Met up with a couple of my former crew members, Ken Brown, who joined me on a UK to Gibraltar trip. And Jim Mills who was a lot of help on one trans Atlantic trip. The object of the trip was the annual visit to dear old Mum, now 102, and to make my number with the grandchildren of which there are now 7.

On the day of my departure, the best as far as weather was concerned, a 747 crashed on take off. It was a pity the tower staff did not notice that this crew unfamiliar with the airfield did not proceed to the button before they were cleared for take off. But it was early in the morning and dark. Also while I was their the navy had the first submarine casualty that they had had in years. Seems that emergency and damage control training is lacking.

Anyway seems the navy is doing as well as it can within their financial restraints. At least they are finally to get a new helicopter, although not the one the ship was designed for. Its now well into autumn here in Britain, so I am off to Trinidad next week. No doubt Marsh Dempster will join for a cruise in the sun.

Sorry I didn't recognize Marsh Demptster with you in the photo. Kay

The Museum Magazine is WONDERFUL!! and so are all the articles in it...Thanks !!! ***Howie Chapman***

Still reading and enjoying the Newsletter. What a splendid effort, how do you guys do it. Best wishes to all. ***Earl Vandahl***

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JOIN THE "CLUB"

From Rolly West

Many of you who read our Newsletter are not SAMF members. However, the Editor and staff continually mail out copies to all those who are known to be interested in the Museum, people who served at Shearwater/RCAF Dartmouth.

SAMF membership is a support function which provides funds for the buildings, and to help with display projects in the Museum. In addition to members providing financial help, three editions of this Newsletter are mailed to all for their reading pleasure each year. So, I don't think that it is too much to ask those non-paying readers to help the cause by filling out a membership form , which is enclosed in every edition of the Newsletter and mailing it to Kay, along with your payment. It's the right thing to do.

Note from Kay: Why not have your family take out a membership to keep dear old dad's or grampy's memories of your history at Shearwater alive. It's only $30 a year (less than 8 cents a day). You're worth much more than that.

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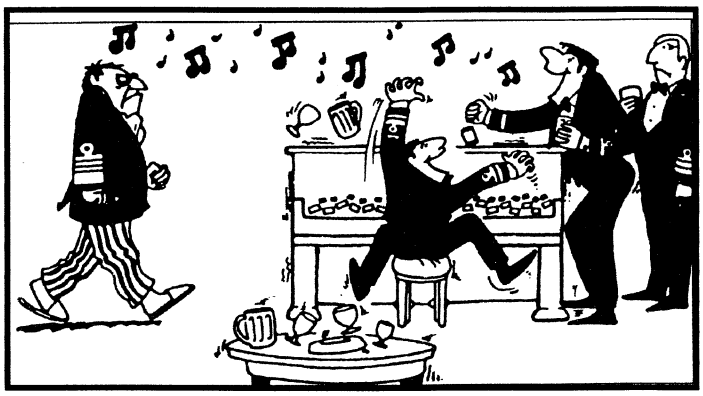

WILL YOU GO SPLASH TODAY
(Sung to "Ta-Ra-Ra-Boom-Tee-Aye)

If you fly an S2F
Sometime soon you will be deaf
For the engines you're between
Drowned outby the goddamn scream

Chorus: Will you go splash today
Will you go splash today
One went in yesterday
The Gas is bad these days

If you fly an HSS2
Don't go up unless it's blue
For if it feels one drop of rain
You'll have a wreckage, not a plane

If you fly the Cod
Ranging far across the sea
Just because you have the gas
Don't bitch to us about your ass

If you fly the Pedro spot
Watch out for the cold cat shot
VS pilots in the drink
Hit them fast before they sink

Best Wishes
for a
Merry Christmas

U-190 TV Documentary

From Ron Bezant

I think that the U-190 may have been discovered when divers were searching the Swissair crash site. That much has just come back to me.

U-190 At Sea

From Col Ernie Cable
Shearwater Aviation Museum Historian

I believe the TV documentary was about the locating of U-215 approximately 200 km south of Shelburne NS. On 3 July 1942, U-215 was on a secret mission to lay mines in Boston harbour. U-215 torpedoed the USS Alexander Macomb (7191 tons) which was loaded with tanks and guns bound for Europe. A British trawler, HMS Le Tigre, counter attacked and sank U-215 with depth charges, 48 dead with all hands lost.

Mike Fletcher, the chief diver on the wreck for the TV production company, reported that they used archival information and consulted local fishermen to narrow the area to be searched on the Georges Banks with side-scan sonar. U-215 was found fully intact in about 90 meters of
water. Fletcher feels confident that the wreck is U-215 because it was a very specific type [mine layer] of U-boat, only six ever built. Fletcher reported, "In fact, you can look inside and see the live mines still there".

U-190 surrendered 8 May 1940 and was intercepted by Canadian corvettes 500 miles off Cape Race Nfld. on 11 May. Under Canadian escort U-190 sailed into Bull's Bay Nfld on 14 May. As a prize of war U-190's periscope was installed in the Crow's Nest Officers' Club in St. John's, where today you can scan the St John's cityscape through U-190's periscope.

U-190 was sunk by rockets fired from a Firefly, other ships and aircraft were to take part but by the time they were to play their role U-190 was doomed. U-190 was sunk in the exact location where she had sunk HMCS Esquimalt at 4428 N 6310 W just off the entrance to Halifax harbour, near the Sambro light ship. This is a long way from where U-215 was located. (HMCS Esquimalt was the last Canadian warship sunk during WW II.)

I recall speculation that parts of what may have been a U-boat were found in the debris field of Swissair 111. But to my knowledge nothing was verified as the Swissair recovery took priority and there were no U-boat parts dredged up with the aircraft debris.

As a closing thought; despite the post war emotions, wouldn't it have been far better had naval leaders had the foresight to preserve U-190 for a museum rather than ceremoniously sending her to Davy Jone's locker.

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'Flashback to Yesteryear'.

From Leo Pettipas

2 **October 1946**: At a Naval Board Meeting held on this date, an earlier recommendation by Naval Staff -- that the RCN acquire 50 Grumman Hellcat fighters from the USN at a cost of $3500 each -- not be considered. The original recommendation was made as a result of delays in production of the Hawker Sea Fury, the intended replacement of the Seafire XV. However, the Admiralty had since advised that the RCN would receive priority allocation of Sea Furies (no doubt prompted by the disclosure to the Admiralty that the RCN was also looking at a USN fighter replacement), in light of which there was no longer a requirement for Hellcats.

HMCS WARRIOR: HERSELF, HER SQUADRONS AND HER AIRCRAFT

from Leo Pettipas

In the Beginning

It was during the Second World War that the foundations of a Canadian Naval Air Branch were established. In the fall of 1943, a joint RCN-RCAF planning committee proposed the Navy's acquisition of two light fleet aircraft carriers, and in April of 1944, it was confirmed that Warrior and Magnificent, both still under construction, would be obtained on loan from the British for use in the Pacific theatre. The Admiralty then undertook to re-activate disbanded RN air squadrons and man them with Canadian aviators. These were drawn from among personnel already serving in Royal Navy squadrons and from a pool of available RCAF pilots, 550 of whom transferred to the RNVR (A) in 1945. In June of that year, 803 (Fighter) Squadron was recommissioned within the Royal Navy, it having been earlier disbanded in 1943. In its revived form, the squadron comprised 25 Canadian-manned Supermarine Seafire LIIIs that began their work-ups at RNAS Arbroath, Scotland.

Another unit, 825 (TBR) Squadron armed with radar-equipped Fairey Barracuda IIs, was re-formed at RNAS Rattray, also in Scotland, on 1 August 1945. A second TBR squadron, 826, was re-activated with 12 Barracuda IIs at yet another Scottish aerodrome, RNAS East Haven, one day after V-J Day. By mid-August of 1945, then, three of the four planned "Canadianized" operational RN squadrons destined to form the backbone of RCN aviation were in existence. The fourth, 883 (Fighter) Squadron, was recommissioned with Seafire IIIs at Arbroath on 18 September. Following their formation, the squadrons underwent relocations to various naval air training stations in the UK preparatory to embarkation aboard Warrior. Between August 1945 and January 1946, all four squadrons re-equipped: 803 and 883 received Seafire XVs in place of their Mark IIIs, and both 825 and 826 converted to Fairey Firefly FR Is.

Underway

A day of paramount importance came on 24 January 1946 with the commissioning of the Colossus-class carrier HMCS Warrior and 803 and 825 squadrons into the RCN. On 14 March at Belfast, Captain F.L. Houghton, CBE, RCN signed the acceptance papers for Warrior, making her the first capital ship to be provided to a Dominion navy. Laid down in December of 1942 and launched in May of '44, Warrior at the time of her commissioning was not the largest carrier in the world, but she was certainly among the newest. She boasted a displacement of 13,350 tons, a maximum speed of 25 knots, a range of 12,000 nautical miles and a flight deck that measured 680x80 feet. She was armed with 24 2-pound and 17 40mm guns, had a complement of 1300 personnel, and was capable of carrying 48 aircraft.

The Canadians didn't actually purchase Warrior; rather, she was provided on loan (from the British standpoint, the individual Commonwealth navies were part of the larger joint Royal Navy, so the Admiralty simply perceived Warrior as a transfer within the larger entity). Be that as it may, Canada now had its own aircraft carrier and two active air squadrons. Unfortunately, 883 Squadron had to be disbanded on 23 February due to acute shortages in maintenance personnel. Number 826 Squadron followed suit five days later for the same reason. However, these two squadrons remained Canadian on paper, and barely a year would pass before they were re-activated. In the meantime, 803 and 825 squadrons continued their shoreside operational training before proceeding on to deck-landing practice aboard Warrior in March. Finally, on the 23rd of that month, the ship departed the UK for Canada with her squadrons embarked. The aircraft flew off to their shore base at RCAF Station Dartmouth on the last day of March as the ship approached her home port of Halifax for the very first time.

The idea of commissioning an aircraft carrier into the RCN in 1946 was not without its detractors. Chief among them was Prime Minister Mackenzie King himself, who from the outset saw no value or purpose in possessing such a thing with the war now over. However, new tensions were developing on the world stage: even now it was clear that the Soviets and the Americans were on a collision course. With Canada squarely in the middle geographically, there was a threat to the country's arctic region, not only by invading Russians, but by the Americans who would seek to operate there in their own defence. By January 1947, even Mackenzie King had come to recognize the value of an aircraft carrier to the interests of Canadian

sovereignty.

Warrior at Work

During her first summer in Canadian waters, refresher carrier landings, carrier qualifications and deck landing training were the order of the day. One of Warrior's earlier commitments was a "show-the-flag" trip up the St Lawrence in August to the cities of Montreal and Quebec. En route she ran aground on a mud bank from which she was freed by tugs with the help of a rising tide.
Warrior's major drawback lay with the fact that she was originally intended for service in more temperate climes and hence had not been outfitted to operate in the cold North Atlantic. Accordingly, during the first (and only) winter of active service with the RCN she was dispatched to the West Coast where weather conditions were more to her liking. In the process, she established a tradition that would endure for as long as the Navy operated carriers: training cruises to the Caribbean during the winter months to take advantage of the good flying weather. Departing Halifax on 5 November 1946, she proceeded to HMC Dockyard Esquimalt via the Panama Canal and reached her destination on 16 December.

Warrior's air element during this cruise comprised 17 Fireflies of 825 Squadron, and a varied training program was carried out en route, including air navigation exercises, dive-bombing with live and practice bombs, gunnery, high-altitude formation flying, air strikes and interception. Anti-aircraft firing by Warrior was conducted using kite targets towed by an accompanying destroyer.
Warrior's stay on the West Coast included a brief refit at Esquimalt and a week-long courtesy call at Vancouver, while the air squadron conducted its flying from RCAF Station Pat Bay. Tragedy struck when one of the aircraft, piloted by the squadron Commanding Officer, crashed into the sea and disappeared without a trace of either of its crew. The ship departed Esquimalt in February 1947 for the return voyage to Halifax, where she finally arrived on 27 March.

By now, naval aviation had been part of the Canadian military establishment for a full year, and changes were in the offing. During the war, the British Fleet Air Arm had organized its squadrons into "carrier air groups"

(CAGs) which, in the early post-war scheme of things, comprised one squadron of Seafires and one of Fireflies. Since Canada's naval air arm was patterned after that of the Royal Navy, the time was at hand to begin organizing its squadrons into CAGs. In April of 1947, 803 and 825 squadrons were combined into the 19th Carrier Air Group before departing on the spring training cruise to the Caribbean. This deployment, by the way, was notable in that the first night deck landings were conducted since the formation of the Air Branch back in December of 1945. On 15 May, 826 and 883 squadrons were re-activated at Dartmouth to form the 18th CAG with hand-me-down aircraft from the 19th CAG. This two-CAG organizational structure was still in place at the time of Warrior's decommissioning in March of the following year.

On 2 August 1947, Warrior slipped her moorings and set out on another voyage, this one a trooping trip to Europe. Embarked were a contingent of Sea Cadets off for a visit to Britain as guests of the Navy League; a group of Boy Scouts en route to an international jamboree in France; and the personnel of the 19th CAG, who were headed for the UK for training and re-equipping with the new Sea Fury and Firefly IV aircraft. Meanwhile, the recently re-formed 883 and 826 squadrons were carrying out flying training from their shore base at Dartmouth. In mid-November they commenced deck-landing and navigational exercises from the carrier off Halifax. On the 21st of the month this work was completed; the aircraft flew off to the air station, and Warrior's flying commitments with the RCN drew to a close.

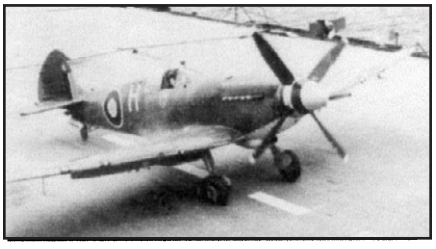
Finis
By the end of 1947, Warrior's future had been decided by the Powers That Be. The early post-war cutbacks in military spending that typified all of the Allied nations had taken their toll. The commissioning of HMCS Magnificent was on the near horizon, and it was obvious that the Navy could not afford to operate two carriers at the same time -- something had to go. It had been proposed that Warrior be paid off in October of 1947 and placed in reserve in Esquimalt until such time as she could be manned for active service. But on 14 January 1948, Cabinet decided to return Warrior outright to the British and to operate a single

carrier, instead of two as originally planned. On 23 March, Warrior paid off at Spithead, England, and 15 days later was replaced with the commissioning of HMCS Magnificent.

Aircraft

On 27 March 1946, Cabinet approved the purchase of four squadrons of naval aircraft, including reserve machines, stores and equipment, for an amount not to exceed $10,000,000. These assets comprised 18 fighter and 12 strike aircraft, plus 18 reserve aircraft along with an outfit of ship's air stores and air ammunition comprising four months' supply. However, aircraft and stores for 803 and 825 squadrons fell under the terms of agreement on the settlement of war claims between Canada and the UK, and so no actual money was paid for them. Although the Navy had been operating Seafire XVs and Firefly FR Is since August and November 1945, respectively, the aircraft were not actually taken on charge by the Canadian government until June of 1946. Even then, they were officially on the RCAF register, a situation that would remain in effect for another year.

The Seafire XV comprised the first of three generations of single-seat, carrier-borne fighter aircraft to serve with the RCN. The type was officially added to the Canadian inventory on 1 June 1946 and was the Navy's sole operational ship-borne fighter interceptor when Warrior completed her tenure with the RCN in late 1947. It had been envisaged that the ship would normally carry a complement of 18 Seafires. As it turned out, the type saw rather limited service in Warrior; in August 1946 the Seafires were withdrawn from carrier duty owing to a supercharger clutch defect in the Rolls-Royce Griffon engine that precluded shipborne operation and took the better part of a year to correct.

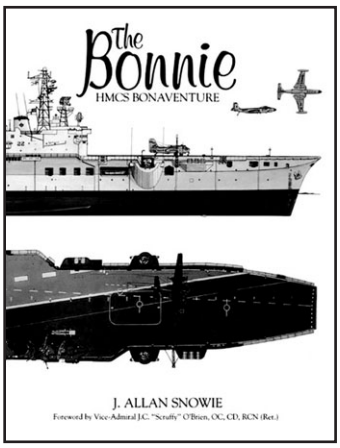


When the RCN embarked on its fighter program, the philosophy and doctrine were firmly rooted in the recent wartime experience. Two basic functions characterized carrier-borne aircraft of the day – defence and offence. The paramount role of the naval fighter of the mid-1940s was the protection of friendly shipping, and two threats were the subject of its attention. Shadowers were long-range reconnaissance aircraft whose purpose it was to locate and inform upon the whereabouts of enemy task forces and convoys. If the defending fighters could destroy such spotters before they could report the position of the task force/convoy, the latter's chances of survival were considerably enhanced. Enemy bombers were dealt with via combat air patrol (CAP), whereby a number of fighters orbited the friendly forces and were vectored onto incoming bogeys by the Fighter Direction Officer aboard the home carrier. To deal with unfriendly aircraft, the Seafire XV was armed with two 20mm cannon and four .303-calibre machine guns, and was capable of 383 mph at 13,500 ft, a rate of climb of 2860 ft/minute, and a range of 640 miles with an auxiliary fuel tank.

With the limited number of aircraft of all types that could be accommodated on an aircraft carrier, it was appropriate that each type be adaptable to a variety of roles, if possible. To this end, the RCN's Seafires could also carry a pair of 250-lb bombs for ground attack as fighter-bombers.

All of the 35 Seafires served with 803 and/or 883 squadrons at one time or other. Although they were Mk XVs, they were not all identical. For example, the arrester hooks were of two kinds: the earlier V-frame type fitted to the underside of the aft fuselage forward of the tail wheel, and the "stinger" type that was mounted beneath the rudder. When the Canadians first received their Seafires, and for as long as they flew them from Warrior, the aircraft were equipped with VHF wireless transmitter/receiver communication radios. The Seafire XV also had provision for ZBX homing equipment as well as IFF (Identification, Friend or Foe)-- a push-button transmitter that caused the aircraft's blip to brighten on the ground radar controller's screen for the purposes of identification.

The two-seat Fairey Firefly FR Mk I of Second World War fame was heir to the British naval doctrine, economic realities and technological status quo of the inter-war years. Limited-range R/T communications capability and lack of appropriate navigational (homing) devices discouraged the operation of single-seat fighters far from British carriers. The solution to the problem was made good by the presence of a second crew member -- a navigator ("observer") equipped with appropriate instruments and a



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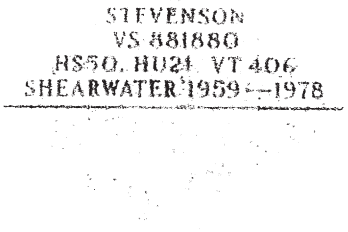

$300

Option C or D

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wireless telegraphy set. These facilities allowed him to maintain contact with the carrier and with other strike aircraft with which he was operating. In addition, the scarcity of aircraft prompted naval planners to develop versatile, multi-purpose machines whose roles could be varied as needed. Where over-the-sea reconnaissance was called for, the additional crew member provided an extra set of eyes.

The two-seat configuration exacted a penalty in terms of speed and manoeuvrability. The Mk I Firefly, with its modest maximum speed of 316 mph at 14,000 ft and slow rate of climb (5.75 minutes to 10,000 ft), was entirely inadequate in dealing with much faster and more agile single-seat fighters. On the other hand, its armament of four 20mm cannon plus eight rocket projectiles or two 1000-lb bombs suited it to the strike role against land targets and ships, including submarines, and it was in this capacity that the RCN pilots were trained to employ it.

As an aircraft "type", the Firefly officially came on strength with the Canadian military on 1 June 1946 and was struck off charge almost eight years later on 1 March 1954. Twenty-nine examples of the fighter-reconnaissance (FR) Mark I, the only variant flown from Warrior, were acquired between June 1946 and April 1947. As fighter-reconnaissance aircraft, they were equipped with a bomb-shaped ARI 5607 air-to-surface homing radar pod slung below the engine cowling, a radar scope in each of the pilot's and observer's cockpits, and an F 24 aerial camera aft of the observer's seat. To keep in touch and to find their way around, the Fireflies carried HF and VHF communication radios, a ZBX homer or radio range, a radio altimeter, and IFF.

The Firefly-equipped 825 Squadron was aboard Warrior when she made her one and only cruise to the West Coast; and the first-ever night deck-landing exercises to be conducted by the RCN were carried out with 825 Squadron's Firefly Is in the spring of 1947. Other Firefly firsts of a more somber nature included the first ditching off Warrior and the first fatal accident out of Dartmouth, when an 826 Squadron Firefly crashed into the sea near Musquodoboit Harbour, Nova Scotia, carrying the two crew members to their deaths.

When 826 Squadron was re-activated as part of the newly-formed 18th Carrier Air Group (18 CAG) in May of 1947, the unit's aircraft were Firefly FR Is acquired from 825 Squadron whose personnel deployed to Great Britain that summer for training on the new Firefly FR 4s. Until 12 July 1947, naval aircraft were under the administrative control of the RCAF. On that date, the RCN acquired its own register, and the Fireflies, along with the Seafires, were transferred to the Navy's list.

In 1947, RCN air and surface units celebrated Trafalgar Day (21 October) with "Exercise Scuppered" during which the surrendered ex-German U-boat U-190 was sunk with aerial rockets by 826 Squadron's Fireflies off the Nova Scotia coast.

Unlike the Seafire, the Firefly FR I did not cease its carrier career with the departure of Warrior. No. 826 Squadron went on to fly its Fireflies from HMCS Magnificent until they were replaced by Avengers in 1950.

****

From 'The Crowsnest'
Vol 13 No.4 Feb '61

'Copter Rescues Duck Hunters

Two duck hunters marooned by ice on small, Baltee island in the Musquodoboit region of Nova Scotia, were airlifted by the Navy to safety in Tangier Village about two miles away.

James Clattenburg, 37, and Parker Cooper, 21, were taken off at 12:25pm January 27 by a Sikorsky helicopter of HU 21, Shearwater. Lt Cdr W. E. James, new commanding Officer of the Squadron, was the pilot, Sub Lt John Leyman was co-pilot and Ldg Sea. Ronald Miller, crewman.

The two were duck-hunting on Baltee, in Tangier harbour, when ice formed to block their boat journey home to Tangier village. They had two days' provisions when they set out Tues Jan 24. When they were a day and a half overdue at home, a request to find and recover them was made by the RCMP to RCAF Search and Rescue in Halifax, who relayed the request to Shearwater.

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FLYING STATIONS
by P.O. Percival

This is the pipe practically everyone aboard likes to hear, except – The FLIGHT DECK DIVISION. When we are at Flying Stations, this is the Division that works, and works hard.

To all the other Divisions it means – "Oh! How can I get away from the eagle eye of my Petty Officer, I sure would like to see this next one land on", so eventually when the P.O. of the top has turned his back –SWISH! – and off you go to have a look at 'this' one land on. Because it is a little bit exciting, you stay up and see the next and the next land on. Then, - on top of that , you probably wait for three or four to fly off.

Exciting business this Flying Stations but it is also serious business. There is quite a routine laid on for bringing an aircraft in to land on.

If an aircraft is out of sight of the ship, we must know where it is. Well, we do. All this is done in the Aircraft Direction Room and in the Operations Room. The former directs the fighters – the latter controls and plots reconnaissance aircraft. The A.D.R. carries on a dead reckoning course of the aircraft, and also the radar keeps an up-to-date report of where it is. The Fighter Direction Officers keep in constant touch with the aircraft by R/T and direct the aircraft to pancake, which means 'land on'. The aircraft then puts his hook down and flies close to the ship as he joins the circuit and then waits his turn to land on. The Batsman takes over to get him aboard safely – all of which is far from being as easy as it sounds.

So, my scullers who have slipped away to see the 'next one' land on – remember there is someone working while you "Goof".

Do your bit while the other fellow is doing his. "Goof" only if you have nothing to do.

From Seafly: The Happy Warrior's Monthly Magazine, Volume 2 No. 2, August '46

QBFJ
"Your Station – Q.B.F.J. Warrior Broadcasting System"
by Terry Sawyer

This call you hear over your S.R.E. speaker at 'wakey-wakey'or Pipe Down originates way down in the heart of H.M.C.S. WARRIOR, in the broadcasting section of the Special Services Office. Down there, is a beehive of activity; changing records, answering the phones for request numbers and checking scripts, sound effects, and dozens of small items of which the listener knows nothing. The announcers, operators and general duty men at the mike doing these chores are Geo. Hoskins, Ken Gray, Ken Coughlin and Terry Sawyer. Some of the station's feature programmes at present are the "Swingology Show", "Request Hour", "Slumber Time", and, "Morning Melodies" which comes on as the last notes of 'wakey-wakey' fade away. An experimental quiz show was put on one night and was met with great success, the winning team was awarded four hundred free fags while the losers walked away with one hundred. Quiz shows will definitely play a big part in Warrior's future broadcasting facilities.

The station's history dates back to the Harland & Wolff yards in Belfast, N.I., where, with little equipment, few records and no co-operation, feeble attempts were made to broadcast radio shows. Before the ship's return to Canada, about the only programs heard were the unfamiliar voices and shows on the B.B.C., which were brought in by one, old broken-down mike and a very weak Admiralty Pattern Receiver (which has not yet been replaced).

After our return, there was a two-month lull during the leave periods when the receiver was tuned into C.H.N.S., and music was mostly supplied by Wilfe Carter and the immortal Hank. In early June our own station was started. The canteen granted us money for records – prizes for our own shows – new equipment was bought and the S.R.E. was moved down to the Special Services Office for Broadcasting. With this support a radio station was born. Like all stations, a call was needed, so the ship's international identity letters QBFJ were adopted. Since our first broadcast came across the S.R.E. speakers, the station has grown in all ways, the lad in Sick Bay listens for the number he requested, a fellow writing home pauses, as a song brings back memories of the last leave – and the guy that crawled into his mick early, drowsily hears his favourite melody.

There are lots of live shows put on in which the ship's company take part, e.g., The Gash Bucket Trio from H.1 Mess, the ship's band, a talk by Lieut. McClymont (who plays the chapel organ on "Slumber Time") and a

presentation to the Captain on his birthday.

We still need lots of records to fill our shelves, so anyone who has any spare records, old or new, how about sending them in? Be sure to keep listening for the call that lets you know you are tuned to the Warrior Broadcasting System – "Your Station - Q.B.F.J."

From Seafly: The Happy Warrior's Monthly Magazine, Volume 2 No. 2, August '46.

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PROBLEMS WITH ROCKETS

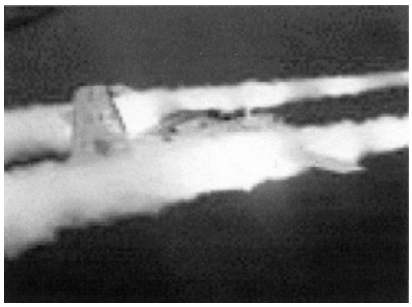
John Searle

Our armament training in the Banshees at the Shilo range involved the use of 3" rockets fitted with semi-armour-piercing (SAP) heads. During one particular exercise, the Army had built a mock village of wood and canvas. The idea was that the ground observers would direct us onto targets using the grid system. We were attacking

this thing west-to-east, just north of the normal weapons range on which all attacks were made south-to-north. During the morning session I managed to start a fire with the SAP rockets, and the pongos were sent out in large numbers to put it out. Since we could no longer use that area during the afternoon because of the firefighting, we were sent out to use 20mm cannon on the normal range. I was a little horrified when my guns wouldn't quit when they were supposed to, and had to hold the nose down until either I could reach the master switch or else the gun ran out of ammo. Nothing like starting a brush fire and then strafing the firefighters!

Ted Gibbon

On the West Coast with VU 33, we fired into the Nanoose range warning area. There was no control but the range was so calibrated that the operators could report the impact area in relation to the fixed target. If you know Nanoose, it's virtually in the centre of downtown Vancouver Island. Frequently on pushover you could line up on a light aircraft transiting from Qualicum to Vancouver or Nanaimo to the Sunshine Coast. Notams are apparently not required reading on the Wet Coast. On one occasion I had a brand new pilot excited to be on his first firing mission. He watched from the right seat as I fired my pod, and then we exchanged seats for his turn. I flew the aircraft in the pattern and onto the firing line, making the appropriate switches. When he looked organized, I said, "You have control." He responded by launching his first-ever rocket in straight and level flight by using the wrong button to talk. The rocket disappeared into the haze in the general direction of Parksville. We returned to Comox where I made the required report to Ops, called the RCMP in Parksville to see if they had any bad news for me, and paid a courtesy call on the Base Commander (at his request). I then called AETE in Cold Lake and asked one of their million-dollar engineers how far the head would go if fired in level flight. Four days later they got back to me, presumably having had problems putting out the fire in their slide rules. The answer was, "less than a mile before it would fall out of the sky". Since we were more than a mile offshore that day and no mariners had been reported missing, all breathed a sigh of relief and the Base Commander began acknowledging my presence about a month later. From then on we flew to the south coast of the Island, dropped a smoke marker in the water, and fired into the ocean. After that decision, every pilot in the squadron easily qualified.



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Christmas & Turkey

As the season of joy and giving looms closer and closer let us all, each and everyone of us, (forgive me Charles Dickens) give thought to gifting (I know that isn't really a verb) our Foundation with a contribution toward the purchase of a Christmas Turkey. We're not talking the feathered gobbler kind here, but rather the loud aluminum skinned type from the Grumman Turkey Ranch.

The Grumman Avenger played a significant part in our lives here at Shearwater and nobody thought to preserve one when we were all mad keen to get the Trackers. Shame on somebody (including everyone of us)! We did dredge one up from the bottom of pestilential Bedford Basin and it, ravaged by corrosion, is the only example we have of the aircraft that saw us through so much of the Cold War. To restore it to static display condition ain't going to be easy and it ain't going to be cheap. If we have no option, then that is the route we'll have to take; but there is an option if we act quickly.

The option: Many of our RCN Avengers went on to careers as fire bombers. Those second careers are now over and some have come up for sale in New Brunswick. Asking price about $C100,000. They'll soon be snapped up. At a SAMF Board Meeting in November an Avenger Fund was launched with the aim of raising enough to buy one before they are all gone. So, as you make up your Christmas list, think about preserving one of your old TBMs -- there'll be a tax receipt and your name inscribed forevermore on dedication board in front of the aircraft. And tell any well-heeled corporation exec's you may have a nodding acquaintance with that their company name on the best aircraft in the best-looking military aircraft museum in Atlantic Canada is damned good PR.

Ed.

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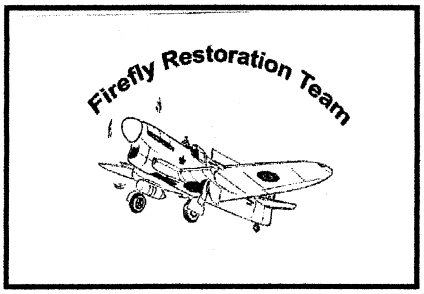

FIREFLY RESTORATION

We've been drifting in the doldrums for a few weeks: ill health (what an oxymoron!) has taken its toll on the restoration team. However, that having been said, we met again, just before this newsletter goes to press, to pick up tools and have at it encore. I have transient feelings of guilt about asking people to rise from their sickbeds and put the project ahead of personal health – but I don't lose any sleep over it. As our secretary says "Geez, what a nice guy!".

The Museum has agreed to cause the aircraft and associated tools and material to be brought down the hill from C Hangar into the new museum hangar-extension – this to make it more accessible to volunteer workers (the Base has security measures designed to protect our forty year old Sea Kings -- deemed prime terrorist targets -- that make access to C Hangar onerous). The timeliness of this move will be an indicator of the value the Base places on the museum.

The rebuilt propellor is ready for shipment from Munich and we hope to have it back presently. We have enough money set aside for it but there are more expenses coming up. The message is "Why not put the Firefly on your Christmas gift list?" Donations to SAMF. Note the F. In fact, all donations sent in by members should be clearly marked for SAMF and if for a particular purpose such as the Firefly or the Avenger, so indicated on your cheque. Tax receipts will be issued

Bill Farrell, Project Dogsbody

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Swordfish Revisited

Ernie Cable, SAM Historian

I enjoyed Windy Geale's recollections in "Our Downunder Diaspora Speaks" on page 14 of the summer newsletter telling of his experiences as a TAG on Swordfish and later as an Observer on Fireflies, Avengers and Trackers. However, his statement that, "... the old Stringbag [Fairey Swordfish] was the most successful airborne submarine killer of the war, sinking more shipping and submarines than any other type of aircraft" didn't jibe with my studies on the Battle of the Atlantic. Further research revealed that Windy is half right; the amazing Swordfish did sink over 350,000 tons of shipping with both bombs and torpedoes; more than any other aircraft type. However, despite its strong performance in the anti-submarine role, the Swordfi sh ranks only seventh among aircraft types in the number of submarines sunk.

The Swordfish provided yeoman service in the anti-shipping role in the Norwegian and Mediterranean Seas, English Channel and Indian Ocean; this is an especially remarkable feat considering its obsolescence. The Swordfish first achieved international fame in November 1940 when 20 Swordfish crippled the Italian Navy in the daring night attack on Taranto harbour. The attack sank several capital warships and heavily damaged other major warships and port facilities. The attack eliminated the possibility of the Italian fleet reinforcing German naval strength in the Mediterranean; thereby, allowing the allies to win the extremely hard fought battle for Malta and eventually launch **Operation Torch** (North Africa invasion) and **Operation Husky** (Sicily invasion).

In May 1941, the Swordfish enhanced its reputation for its role in sinking the German battleship, *Bismarck*. The first Swordfish attack, lead by Lieutenant Commander Esmonde, was launched from *Victorious*. However, none of the torpedoes from the nine aircraft made a telling blow. The second attack, consisting of 20 Swordfish, was launched from *Ark Royal*. One of the Swordfish torpedoes severely damaged *Bismarck's* rudder, seriously limiting her maneuverability and allowing the pursuing British Task Group to finally sink *Bismarck* with naval gunfire.

From 1940 through 1942, Swordfish operating from shore bases in Malta and North Africa as well as aircraft carriers (*Eagle, Ark Royal, Illustrious*) continually attacked convoys sailing from Italy to North Africa. The decimation of these convoys denied General Rommel's German Afrika Korps of much needed fuel and ammunition, which facilitated General Montgomery's British 8th Army's tumultuous victory at El Alamein that led to the rout of the German and Italian armies from North Africa.

The Swordfish's obsolescence led to its final demise in the anti-shipping role. In February 1942 the German battle-cruisers *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* and the cruiser *Prinz Eugen* slipped out of the French port of Brest and forced passage of the English Channel to join the Norwegian campaign. Six Swordfish from the hastily reformed 825 Squadron (Fleet Air Arm), with no time to work up to operational readiness following the sinking of the *Ark Royal*, were the first to attack the German ships in the English Channel. Because of their vulnerability and slow speed, the Swordfish stood little chance for success. All six Swordfish reached the outer screen of destroyers around the capital ships and the first three dropped their torpedoes; the other three had only a mile to go to the dropping point when last seen. None of the torpedoes hit their mark and all six aircraft were shot down with only five of the 18 crew members surviving. For his coolness, determination and leadership under fire, Lieutenant Commander E. Esmonde, the leader of the attack, was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross. Throughout the remainder of the war the Swordfish was relegated to the anti-submarine role where it would not have to fight through overwhelming anti-aircraft defences to attack the elusive U-boats.

In the anti-submarine role the Swordfish was also successful, but not nearly as successful as its more modern counterparts. The Swordfish's first victory against a submarine occurred in April 1940 when it bombed and sank U-64 in Norway's Ofot Fiord. This marked the first U-boat sunk by an aircraft in the Second World War.

From 1940 to 1942 U-boats inflicted atrocious losses on Allied convoys in the mid-Atlantic beyond the range of land-based aircraft. The protracted delay in the construction of escort carriers to protect the convoys led to the Royal Navy's decision, in 1942, to convert 19 tankers and grain ships into Merchant Aircraft Carriers (MAC-ships). The MAC-ships unlike almost all other merchantmen could easily be adapted to load and unload their cargoes despite a flight deck running the full breadth and length of the ship. Grain was handled through trunkways as though it were a liquid. The flight decks were truly minuscule, with a uniform width of just 62 feet. The grain ship flight decks were somewhat shorter, varying from 413 to 424 feet, than those of the tankers at 460 feet. The Swordfish with their low air speeds were the only aircraft to operate
from the MAC-ships. The grainers had a hangar below decks aft, complete with elevator, with room for four Swordfish with wings folded. The tankers, alone among aircraft carriers, had no hangar, so their Swordfish were stowed on the flight deck. Since the first pilot airborne always had an aircraft astern of him, the available take-off run was reduced, thereby limiting tankers to operating only three Swordfish at most. The lack of a hangar meant that the aircraft

were always exposed to the weather and made maintenance work difficult and unpleasant if not impossible. (*HMS Seabom*, the Royal Navy Air Section at RCAF Station Dartmouth serviced the MAC-ship Swordfish while their parent ships loaded their cargos in Halifax harbour.)

MAC-ships with their embarked Swordfish sailed in 217 convoys and made 323 Atlantic crossings. The MAC-ship Swordfish made 12 attacks against U-boats, though none was sunk. However, the dramatic reduction in convoy losses can be attributed, in part, to the Swordfish's airborne presence deterring many U-boats from pressing home their attacks.

The MAC-ships were originally intended to be an interim measure until the more complex construction escort aircraft carriers could be built. Fortuitously, the 19 MAC-ships proved to be successful because British shipyards were only able to convert three merchant ships to escort carriers and construct only five British-designed escort carriers. The hulls on which more escort carriers could have been built were required for fast merchant ships. Fortunately, the severe short fall in escort carrier construction was made-up by American-built escort carriers, which were loaned to the Royal Navy under the British-American lend-lease program.

By 1943, the first of 36 American-built escort carriers started to make their presence in the Royal Navy. (The RCN provided the ships' companies for two of the American built carriers, *HMS Nabob* and *HMS Puncher*.) Many of these carriers embarked Swordfish as their primary anti-submarine aircraft along with a complement of Grumman F4F Wildcats (Martlets in British parlance). The Martlets and the Swordfish were an effective anti-submarine strike team. When encountered on the surface the U-boats tended to stay and fight rather than dive. The Martlets strafed the U-boats to suppress anti-aircraft fire while the Swordfish attacked with depth charges, bombs or rocket projectiles. (In May 1943, a Swordfish attacked U-752 with rocket projectiles; marking the first time that a rocket projectile had been fired operationally by any allied aircraft. The rockets were particularly effective as they penetrated the pressure hull both on entering and departing on the opposite side.)

The Swordfish enjoyed their greatest wartime anti-submarine success while operating from escort carriers by sinking 22.5 U-boats, 10 of the sinkings were shared with other ships or aircraft. The Swordfish is also credited with sinking three Vichy French submarines and one Italian submarine. The Martlets, operating from both British and American escort carriers, shared in the sinking of 21 U-boats with other aircraft (Swordfish and Avengers).

Success cannot be measured by the number of U-boats sunk alone; the other important measure is the number of ships that sailed but were NOT sunk because of the inestimable number of U-boats that were deterred from their attacks by the presence of aircraft. After a disastrous 1942 when new merchant ship construction could barely keep pace with the loss of 40 ships per month the tide in the U-boat war started to change. In 1943, long-range land-based aircraft and escort carriers were introduced in significant numbers and provided trans-Atlantic escort for 428 convoys consisting of 13,788 ships; of these 124 ships were sunk by U-boats. In 1944, as tactics and coordination improved there were 476 convoys with 16,702 ships, of which only 17 ships were sunk. Many more ships were actually sunk, of course, but most of them were sailing independently or separated from convoys.

Although the Swordfish was remarkably successful in the campaign against the U-boat, it ranks well down the list of number of U-boats sunk by aircraft type as illustrated in the following table:

Aircraft Type	U-boats Sunk
B-24 Liberator	72 (15)*
Catalina/Canso	37 (8)
Avenger**	35 (24)
Wellington	29 (9)
Sunderland	27 (7)
Hudson	25 (5)

Aircraft Type	U-boats Sunk
Swordfish	22.5 (10)
Wildcat/Martlet	21 (21)
B-17 Fortress	11
Halifax	9
Mosquito	8 (3)
Ventura	6

*Number of total U-boats sunk shared with other ships or aircraft.
**Royal Navy Avengers sank two U-boats; U.S Navy Avengers sank 33 U-boats.

The Swordfish did not sink more submarines than any other aircraft. However, had Windy said that the Swordfish sank more submarines than any other Royal Navy aircraft he would have been right.

ACROSS THE FLIGHT DECK

CNAG Annual Directors Meeting

Saturday 18 September 2004

1. Chairman John Eden had indicated last January that he was stepping down due to health reasons however with no one stepping forward to take the office John, who is feeling much better, agreed to stay on until a suitable replacement is found.

2. News from CNAG will in the future be published in the SAMF Newsletter under the banner 'Across the Flight Deck' commencing with the winter 2004 edition.

3. Nomination of Cmdre Fraser Fraser-Harris to Canadian Aviation Hall of Fame was submitted to the Selection committee in June, however it is not expect that the names of members elected to the Hall in 2004 will be announced until the end of the year.

4. Nomination of Bruce Walker to the Canadian Forces Sports Hall of Fame was not successful this year however his name remains before the Nomination Committee and will automatically be considered again in both 2005 and 2006.

5. CNAG Membership data conversion to disc for SAM library has received approval and sufficient funding to engage a computer programmer to expedite the project.

Fellow CNAGers;

It is with a great deal of pleasure that I am able to inform you that the nomination of Cmdre. A.B.F. Fraser-Harris has been accepted and he will be inducted (postumously) into the Canadain Aviation Hall of Fame at a ceremony to be held in Edmonton AB on Saturday 4 June 2005. It is hoped to have Mrs. Jean Fraser-Hariis or her son in attendance to accept this outstanding honour.

This is truly a feather in the cap of the Canadian Naval Air Group and we thank each and every one of our members for their solid support during this very demanding process. The place of Canadian Naval Aviation is once again solidly emblazened in the military history of our country. A hearty BZ to all,
John

CNAG Member of the Year Award

WILF WEAVER 2004

The CNAG Member of the Year award symbolizes the spirit and tradition of Canadian Naval Aviation. The trophy is awarded annually to the member judged to have made significant contributions to CNAG or the preservation and promotion of naval air history.

This year's recipient of the 'Tul Safety Equipment/Fred Lucas Award' is Wilf Weaver of Firefly Chapter in Calgary. Wilf has been a member of CNAG since its inception in 1970 and was the mainstay of the chapter over the intervening years. He has been on the Executive of the chapter and served in every position for 35 years; has alternated as President/Vice President with another member over the past 16 years. Wilf was Chairman and chief organizer of the three reunions hosted by Calgary chapter (1971, 1983 & 1988) a daunting task when one realizes that their membership hovers around 8 or 9 stalwarts.

Wilf has attended every reunion held by CNAG since 1971 and participated as a representative of his chapter at almost every Board of Directors meeting. His wise counsel and valuable input on a wide range of CNAG interests has been outstanding over the years.

Through his efforts, the two Alberta Chapters have developed a wide range of social and fund-raising activities in compliance with the original aims and objectives of CNAG. This includes his involvement with the Alberta Naval Museum where he was a Director for many years and until recently did volunteer work there restoring aircraft displays.

John Eden
Sea King Chapter

CNAG 35th ANNUAL REUNION

"A QUINTE COUNTRY GATHERING"
TRENTON SEA KING CHAPTER

17 – 19 September 2004

The welcome began as one approached The Knights of Columbus hall on 57 Stella Crescent in Trenton. There, on a large marquee, were the words "Welcome CNAG 35th Reunion". That was a good sign. Also, there were several cars in the parking lot, another promising omen. On entering the hall we were greeted by Gerry Melnyk, Dorothy Casement, Gerri Findlay and Lillian Eden, all eagerly waiting to process registrations. One couldn't help but notice that there were also some bowls of refreshing mints to welcome the weary travelers. Nice touch, obviously the results of detailed planning. The ladies processed our registration quickly and we meandered into the grand Hall.

Although the letters on the outside of the building indicated that it was the K of C Hall, the interior represented a typical Naval Air environment. A vendor's table with an exceptional selection of goods, ranging from bathrobes to lapel pins, was located just inside the entrance to the hall. Ships' crests and names from Puncher to Bonaventure were embroidered on various articles. Several also bore the image of "The Sailor", a matelot with his kit bag. It was an impressive selection.

The CNAG crest was suspended in a prominent location at one end of the room. The walls were adorned with a CNAG banner, White Ensign and huge replicas of squadron crests. There was also a vast array of photographs from several private collections. These showed ships, aircraft and people representing the era of Canadian Naval Aviation. Some photos of personnel were complete with names. Others had some names and blanks that would, hopefully, be completed during the course of the reunion. It was entertaining to listen to various arguments as to who was who, what the squadron number was and where and when the photo was taken. What is that old saying? "Memory is the second thing to go." Nevertheless, it was an appropriate setting for the events of the weekend.

The hall filled rapidly and soon became crowded. The din of conversation combined with lots of laughter soon swelled to a dim roar. The "Quinte Country Gathering" was well underway. Among the large number of regular reunion attendees, there were several new faces together with those who hadn't attended a reunion in years.

Roy Chatters had been at Shearwater when it was still officially known as RCAF Station. Bob Campbell was of the same vintage. Vic Brand had been to a reunion at Rockcliffe in Ottawa years ago and didn't think he would know anyone. He was delighted to see Delphis Roy and some others with whom he had served in the mid fifties. Jim Ferguson, a former surgeon at Shearwater and aboard Bonnie, took some time from his practice in Virginia to attend the gathering. Many had not seen Tex McNabb and Marsh Dempster in several years. Bill Walker and Mike Miljus, former 52 Flyers football players were there, and Hank Nash appeared out of the blue. Undoubtedly, there were a few more among the 217 who eventually sat down to enjoy some excellent clam chowder, meat trays, buns, dessert and tea or coffee and reminisce throughout the evening. Some were still having a great trip down memory lane during breakfast in the hotel on Saturday morning. Bill Eastwood was recalling the homespun variety shows that were held in the old Shearwater gymnasium, now SAM, back in the late forties. Bill and Doug Lauder played banjos, Bobby Carl played drums and Dennis Shaw was the MC. Local talent from the Dartmouth area also participated. It

wasn't Sing Along Jubilee or The Grand Ole Opry, but it certainly was fun.

The Saturday morning Up Spirits, complete with attending authorities in vintage uniform, was well attended by a predominantly male crowd. It was noted that the custom of offering "sippers" has gained popularity. Those who had proclaimed temperance, signed the pledge, seen the light, taken medication or been threatened with divorce, were offering their tot to old wingers. It was a true gesture of bonding and cementing friendships. "Greater love hath no man than to give up his tot for a shipmate." Following the rum issue, Betty and Ed Janusas entertained with some folk songs from down home.

The RCAF Museum appeared to be the main attraction for the men on Saturday afternoon. The major project at the moment is the restoration of a Halifax bomber that was retrieved from a lake in Norway. The restoration is progressing quite well through the efforts of the local volunteers. Meanwhile, the ladies had an opportunity to visit local shops. Dorothy Gibson picked up some of her visiting friends and toured Prince Edward County, stopping at shops in Wellington and Bloomfield.

Scheduled events continued as 195 gathered for a cocktail hour with a corsage presented to each lady as they entered. The naval atmosphere was now even more prominent with a miniature white ensign as a centrepiece for each dining table. Two bottles of white wine, provided by the Tracker Chapter in Toronto, were placed as sentinels on each side of an ensign. Bob Findlay, President of the Sea King Chapter, presided over the proceedings as the MC. The opening formalities comprised the playing of the National Anthem, the offering of grace, the Royal Toast and the Naval Toast of the Day. Bob then extended a warm welcome to all on behalf of the Sea King Chapter and invited us to partake of the buffet, which was extensive and plentiful.

As coffee was being served, Bob introduced local guests who had been invited to join him at the chapter banquet table. He then called upon John Eden who gave a brief summary of decisions arising from the executive meeting that morning, and also advised that he would remain as National President for the coming year. John then announced that Wilf Weaver was the recipient of the Member of the Year award. Rusty Newell accepted the award on behalf of Wilf. In his closing remarks, Bob Findlay expressed his thanks to the chapter members, their ladies and all of those involved in planning, organizing and contributing to the reunion. The applause from those assembled echoed his sentiments. The last item on the programme was the draw for the raffle and door prizes. Millie MacLean won a framed coloured photograph of the Shearwater Sentinel aircraft. Barb Lenihan was the recipient of two prizes, an afghan and a carved wooden clock, and Shirley Brambley took home a carved wooden wall shelf. Bob then surprised everyone by revealing that the persons sitting at each secretly marked placemat could claim the white ensign on their table. He also mentioned that a volunteer duty driver would be available at the end of the evening. He then introduced 'The 8 Wing Trenton Concert Band", a popular local band with an abundance of talent.

Mickey's little hand was now pointing at nine on the watch, and his other hand was pointing at seven. The programme indicated that the band was available until 00:30. T hey opened with a stirring rendition of Heart of Oak. Their following selections of dance music were ideal. Glenn Miller arrangements were played almost as well as the originals, and all of the young tigers from yesterday took to the dance floor with the same enthusiasm of their earlier days. As always, the ladies looked great. Initially, it appeared that the dancers would outlast the band but, as midnight drew closer and closer, only those who had kept up with their 5BX progamme were still gliding through some slower tunes. Eventually, the band members outnumbered the dancers and a great evening came to a close.

The Sunday morning church service was well attended. The Order of Service included the Naval Prayer, a Prayer for Naval Air, a prayer for Peace and the reading of the names of those who had departed during the past year. Padre William Downham presented a fitting sermon concerning their everlasting peace, and the congregation heartily sang the traditional and well-known hymns to the accompaniment of piano played by Dorothy Flight from Winnipeg.

A farewell brunch was held on completion of the memorial service. Conversation was more subdued as people moved from table to table bidding farewell to old friends. An exchange between two ladies seemed to say it all. "I am so glad you came", said one. "It was wonderful to see you after all these years. Please keep in touch". "Me too", was the reply. "I have thought about you so often, and *Lillian Eden presenting cheque*wondered how you were and where the children are. Don't forget to come and visit us. Say hi to the family."

On behalf of all who attended, a sincere thanks to John & Bob and all the Sea King members, their wives and others who did so much to provide an enjoyable weekend. The Canadian Naval Air Group organization appears to be alive and well.

The 36th CNAG reunion will be hosted by the Banshee Chapter in Victoria on Thanksgiving weekend 2005. Keep in mind that there will be many there who will be "so glad that you came, and so happy to see you again". Until then, all the best, old friends. ***Jack Moss***

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2004 CNAG BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ken Brambley, Fred Rol , John Eden, Bernice Currie
George Hotham, John gourlie

Lillian Eden presenting cheque
to SAMF V/Pres Buck Rogers.

Maritime Military Aviation Meets Bush Flying: The Shearwater/Lac-à-la-Tortue Connection
by Christine Hines

I have found that as Museum Professionals, we are so often busy promoting our museum's mandate and busy with the day-to-day operations, that it happens we may overlook interesting related topics unless they land directly in our line of sight. In early May, I was contacted by Dorothy Jean Lupien and made aware of a project by a group from Bel Air Aviation, based at Lac-à-la Tortue, outside of Grand-Mère, Québec, to re-enact the flight of *La Vigilance*, notable Canadian bush pilot Stuart Graham's Curtiss HS2L, from Baker's Point to Lac-à-la-Tortue in 1919. This re-enactment was planned as an activity connected with Bel Air Aviation's annual *Festival d'aviation de Lac-à-la-Tortue*, a popular international event held each August.

The significance of this flight was that it marked the dawn of bush flying in Canada as a distinct aviation specialty, as well as having carried one of the earliest known airmail letters in Canada from then Lt. Governor MacCallum Grant of Nova Scotia, to Quebec Premier Hon. Sir Lomer Gouin. In addition, the connection to Baker's Point is of note to us at SAM, as it was one of Lt. Richard Byrd's HS2L flying boats from the USN Station Halifax at Baker's Point that would become *La Vigilance,* which flew with distinction until a crash in Northern Ontario ended its career.

The Quebec delegation of pilots and guests attended a reception held at SAM on 5 June 2004, to honour Stuart Graham's flight and career, as well as to unveil a Geoff Bennett painting of *La Vigilance*, a gift from Stuart's son Robert to the Shearwater Aviation Museum. The group heard SAM historian Ernie Cable comment on the HS2L's role at USN Station Halifax, followed by Bob Graham, who provided a snapshot of Stuart Graham from the family's perspective. Remarks by Dorothy Jean Lupien of the *Festival de l'aviation*, and Gilles Lapierre, president of the *Aviateurs et pilotes de brousse du Québec* rounded out the program. Concluding the day was Mr. Ken Wilson of Wilson Aircraft, a division of Cessna Caravan, who carried letters of friendship from Quebec Premier Jean Charest and Mayor of Shawinigan, Lise Landry, for Nova Scotia Premier Hamm and His Worship Mayor Peter Kelly of Halifax. Special thanks go to Ernie Cable, Stan Gardner and Peter Drage of the Silver Dart Chapter of the CAHS, as well as Normand Flageol and Dorothy Jean Lupien from the *Festival de l'aviation.*

SAM Curator Christine Hines and Mr. Robert Graham unveil Geoff Bennett's rendering of *La Vigilance*, bush pilot Stuart Graham's Curtiss HS2L, retired from service at USN Station Halifax at Baker's Point, ca. 1919. Graham flew this aircraft for its new owner, St. Maurice Forest Protective Association, later known as Laurentide Air Service.

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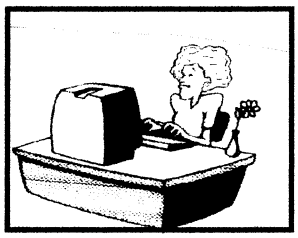
Shown above is Cpl Terry Wynn, author of "Life at Sea in the Gulf" printed in our last issue.

Note from Ed. Great article - thank, you Terry.



FROM THE SECRETARY:

Dear Friends: . Another year is ending soon. Where does the time go? It seems like yesterday that I came to work every day and saw all of you. Was I lucky or what. I loved my job then as I do now. Sometimes I see or hear from you and believe me, it still makes my day.

TBM Spray Avengers, N. B.

Finally, the light at the end of the tunnel has been seen for the Avenger, in that at our last Board Meeting it was agreed, unanimously, that we (the SAM Foundation) would go out with a full fledge campaign to get an Avenger down here to the Museum. If it doesn't happen soon, it isn't going to happen at all. The Avenger that is here on the Base is in pretty poor shape. I was devastated to hear that it was put back outside again along with other aircraft destined for the Museum because there is a 'Deicing' group at Shearwater and they need every inch of space they can get. In the old days, I'm sure there would be someone to say "hey, lay off these birds". It is hard to believe there isn't space anywhere here for even the Avenger that is in need of such repair. Cover the thing over perhaps? Who knows. We'll see.

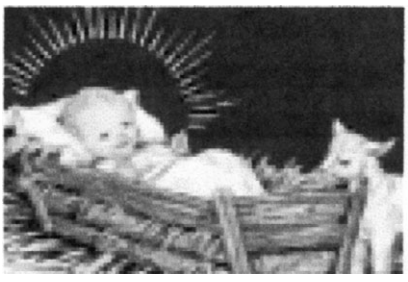
To either get this one fixed to static display (I personally think that would be neat as it does have a great story to tell) is going to cost big bucks. Once upon a time we were told that the Avenger was the Museum's next project. As I reported in the last newsletter, we were advised it would cost approx $20,000 or so. Mr. Jake MacLaughlin, upon seeing this was going to contact GE for assistance. Before sending off his letter, he ran it past the powers that be but was told the sum was now approximately $50,000 plus money to hire a Project Manager and that the Avenger was a low priority of the Museum. And so it goes, around and around and around. Mr MacLaughlin decided not to contact GE - why bother if there was not going to be any priority as far as the Museum was concerned. We're hoping he'll re-consider now that the SAMF Board has put it in writing to get an Avenger Project off and running. Donations have started to come in - it's amazing how things get started.

So, here we are! **You are responsible for having the building constructed for the 'Gate Guardians', and now we truly need you, one more time, to get the last Guardian in there.** It's either buy one before they are all sold (which I'm told may not be too far off) or fix this one. As soon as the funds are in hand, the priority of the project goes up - the Museum can't do it without funding or people support. It is estimated that to purchase another Avenger would cost approximately $100,000. We can do it! And if we can't get one then this poor old bird here will have to be repaired. Either way, an Avenger must be had.

Those of you who are in the local area, we are counting on you to physically be there to help out as well. All of you wonderful retired Naval Air people are being asked to dig deep, and quickly, for this one so we can get the Avenger into the Museum. It has to be soon and it's going to have to be the **dark blues** to get this thing underway. It's PRIDE that makes things work and who has more pride than those in Naval Air. We won't have any control on how the project goes if we're not around. Just look at our 'In the Delta' list. When you send your donation, please mark it for the Avenger project.

We're depending on you. Time to get off this old soap box.

Merry Christmas to you and yours. I wish everything good for you in 2005 and always. Take care. Kay



Squadron Leader L. J. Birchall
The Saviour of Ceylon

by Col (Ret'd) Ernest Cable, OMM, CD Associate Air Force Historian

"Squadron Leader Birchall peering from the cockpit of his Catalina flying boat."

Editor's note: in the last edition of the newsletter, the author related how S/L Birchall saved Ceylon from being invaded by reporting the approaching Japanese fleet. The warning enabled the British navy to avoid defeat at Ceylon and with the British fleet still a force in being, the Japanese were forced to withdraw without capturing Ceylon. Birchall's aircraft was shot down and he and his crew were taken prisoner aboard the Japanese aircraft carrier "Akagi".

En-route back to Japan, the Akagi stopped to refuel in Singapore, however, Birchall and crew couldn't understand why they weren't put ashore and sent to a POW camp. The Canadians finally disembarked on 22 April when the Akagi docked at Yokoska, Japan the big naval base near Yokohama. The three wounded went to a naval hospital. Birchall, Onyette and Kenny were marched down the streets to a railway station amidst insults from an enraged public. The train finally arrived at Ofuna from where they were marched through the countryside to their first POW camp.

Here, they found out why they were brought back to Japan rather than being imprisoned in Singapore. Ofuna was a special interrogation camp controlled by the navy and since prisoners were not reported to the Red Cross they could be killed at any time. Pairs of prisoners lived in two-meter square rooms, under bright lights with a glass window in the door for constant observation by guards. Birchall shared a cabin with a pharmacist mate captured at Kiska Island in the Aleutians. No talking was permitted and to say one word resulted in severe beatings. Each person had one blanket and a beanbag pillow. The amount of food was below starvation level and hence sickness was rampant. Exercise, once a day, consisted of walking around the exercise yard in single file for a precious few minutes. Prisoners were also given some instruction in the Japanese language, sufficient to ask the guards to go to the toilet, to get water when sick and other small requests.

The purpose of the camp was to keep a live dictionary of the enemy's' military trades. Each day an interrogation team came to the camp and questioned prisoners of whatever trade they were interested in. These sessions always started and ended with beatings. The only escape, other than death, was if the Japanese captured a more up-to-date serviceman of the same trade. For their Japanese studies the prisoners were given paper and pencils, which were also used to write clandestine notes to pass information. It was agreed that whoever got out of the camp would take a list of names of those still alive to give to the Red Cross. This camp had one of the worst reputations with the guards never thinking they would be held to account for their actions. Birchall later had the pleasure of testifying in the war crime

trials against the guards in this camp. His testimony resulted in the highest percentage of death sentences given to any of the camps.

Eventually, an American PBY flying boat (Catalina) crew arrived at Ofuna and Birchall's crew was released toward the end of 1942. They were taken to a brand new POW camp in Yokohama where they were the first prisoners. The new camp consisted of a single large room constructed underneath the stands in the former Imperial Oil baseball stadium. The room contained three tiers of wooden shelves, about 6 feet (2 m) wide. The officers had a small room with one 6-foot wide shelf for a bed. Straw was strewn on the shelves and the soldiers found paper to put under the straw for more warmth. Birchall and his crew had no belongings other than the clothes on their backs and had to rely on the generosity of others for comforts such as blankets. There were a couple of small stoves in the large barrack room but very seldom was there anything to burn. There was also a small shelf over the head of the sleeping shelf where the men kept their treasures, such as sewing needles, scissors and knives. Anything likely to be confiscated was hidden and each man had his own hiding place. Searches by the guards were carried out at least once a week.

A group of British POWs from Hong Kong arrived at the camp on the same day as Birchall. These prisoners turned out to be a rough bunch of troublemakers that the Japanese had sent from camps in the south to work on the mainland. With the rank of Squadron Leader, Birchall was the senior POW and hence camp leader responsible for the welfare of the POWs in his camp. The first thing Birchall encountered was mass hostility from the troops. Birchall learned that in the Hong Kong POW camps many of the officers had let the troops down by looking after themselves first. They had more food, cigarettes and access to contraband, which created severe hatred among the troops. The net result was that the troops distrusted these officers and held them in utter disrespect. The officers who had accompanied the Hong Kong POWs to Japan were the exception. They had tried to fight for their men not only against the Japanese but also against their own officers.

The first night Birchall convened a conference in the officers' room. After long debate Birchall convinced all the officers to agree on a single objective, to do the best they could for the entire camp. In the next few days the officers set up sections with senior N.C.O.s in charge. They had daily sick parades and tried to collect all the medicines and drugs in the camp. Here again they ran into severe hostility. The men hoarded their medicines or drugs like gold, as there were no medical supplies provided and the men had to rely on their own resources. The men knew that the medicine in their possession may not have been suitable for their particular ailment, but it could be bartered for the medicine that was needed. Medicine stood between the men and death, so to convince anyone to part with his precious supply was next to impossible.

Birchall and the officers soon realized that their only hope was to restore a vestige of mutual respect in the camp. Somehow they had to convince the troops that their greatest chance of survival was working together. The first improvement was the officers' supervision of the preparation, cooking and distribution of food. The buckets of rice were weighed in order to ensure fairness in its distribution. They ensured that the vegetables were evenly distributed in the soup. The officers' food buckets were dished out in full view of all the POWs. Anyone who thought one of the officers' portions was greater than his was free to change his bowl for the officer's. In the beginning some soldiers tried to beat the system by eating some of his own food and then changing his bowl for an officer's. When nothing was said or done the cheaters soon found that they had only earned the enmity of their friends. The affect of involving the troops in the food routine was immediate. Eventually, the officers had to watch their food as the troops tried to give more to any of the officers who were sick.

Trust in the officers further improved when Birchall introduced a camp policy to protect the troops. Leading by example, Birchall was the first officer to jump between a prisoner and the Japanese guard when a man got into trouble. This action gave time for the prisoner to get lost in amongst the other POWs and stunned the Japanese for a moment or two. Usually, the officer got away with a less harsh beating than the man would have received. After a few such incidents, the respect started to build once

again, not only for the officers but also the self-respect within the troops, which was essential for survival.

Under Birchall's leadership the POWs started down the long road to survival. The POWs had been a bunch of ruffians and had suffered for their misdeeds. The usual punishment was to take away rations which were at the starvation level at the best of times. With insufficient food their ability to resist disease was greatly reduced and the majority of the POWs became sick. Many had diseases caused by malnutrition such as scurvy, pellagra, boils and dysentery. Malnutrition affected the nerve endings with the result that their feet became hot and sore. It became so bad that the men would put their feet into buckets of cold water or just walk around on the cold cement in bare feet. Eventually, the skin cracked and gangrene would set in. A couple of POWs lost their feet before the officers were able to dissuade them from soaking and walking on the cold floor. Nerve-end deterioration also affected the eyes, which could result in blindness. Unfortunately, both the hot feet and blindness never could be cured. To this day, when Birchall tires his feet get hot.

Under Birchall's direction, the officers were able to incrementally improve the health of the camp. Unknown to the Japanese, the POW's held their own sick parades since one of the POWs was a doctor from the Hong Kong reserves. As the standard of health improved the men started to surrender drugs and medicines to the POW organization. It became obvious to the troops that only in dire circumstances would an officer be given any medicine and many times the officers refused medication just to prove the point. During this period one POW turned in three morphine pills, which were the only sedatives or painkillers in the camp. Birchall reached an agreement that only with the unanimous approval of the camp would one of the morphine pills ever be used. Strangely enough there were numerous surgeries including amputations when the doctor recommended the use one of the pills. A vote of the camp was taken and in every instance the man who was to be given the pill always cast the one negative vote. The surgeries would proceed without the pills and it took several men to hold the patients down and muffle the screams. When Birchall left that camp two years later the three morphine pills were still unused.

The Stadium Camp was a central pool from which POW's were hired out to various companies to do manual work. Usually, the work details were given the night before, giving the officers time to assign the men in accordance to their health. Those too sick to work but still able to walk would go to jobs where their pals would cover for them. The big difficulty came when there were not sufficient men capable of walking to work. The sick were paraded before their guards and beaten in an effort to get them to go to work. This always ended in the officers intervening and receiving a good thrashing. The Japanese could never be convinced that if they wanted the men to work it was in their best interest to get the sick back to health as soon as possible. Instead, the sick were beaten, no medicines were provided and the rule of, "no work - no food" was enforced.

The Japanese had a penchant for keeping diaries so the POW's were issued with small writing books and pencils. To test the system the men made entries such as: Today it was cold. Today it was wet. Today I worked, etc. As suspected, at the end of the first week all diaries were confiscated and perused for information about any clandestine activities. They were returned the next day but the Japanese continued to collect them periodically for examination. The Japanese had unwittingly provided a source of materials for keeping a secret official diary and camp records. Each night Birchall meticulously recorded the events of the day started to keep secret records. Every man was listed along with his regiment, service number and next of kin along with a general dossier recording sicknesses and injuries. These records were used as evidence in the war crime trials, which followed after the war and for substantiating pensions for prisoners or their widows.

When each record book was finished it was boarded up in the walls. The book in current use was hidden with the secret medicine supply, which was kept in the false bottom of a box that the Japanese had directed to be built to hold the diaries, pencils, toilet paper and clothing that were issued. The men also found every nook and cranny in the building so that they were able to hide just about anything they wanted. They even found a small hideaway in the jail where they stored some hard rations and reading material. These provisions were used by the prisoners who were placed in solitary

confinement on starvation rations. The guards never did find the hideaway, which was used by everyone who went into solitary, including Birchall.

The work sites provided an excellent opportunity to steal the food intended to feed the factory workers. Stealing was easy but getting the contraband home was another problem. Despite searches by factory and camp guards there was a steady flow of goods into the camp. To ensure that smuggled materials were used in the best interest of the camp Birchall established an organization to record and distribute the various goods. The sick had peanut oil and scraped coconut added to their rice. A stolen consignment of condensed milk helped the sick tremendously. Contacts in the brick works and boat plant were used to trade soap and cooking oil for drugs. Soon the POW organization had to control the steady flow of goods going out of camp to be converted into medicines such as sulpha drugs, aspirin and ointments.

Through Birchall's efforts the improved health in the camp increased morale. By the time the cold weather arrived the POWs had even started to build up reserve energy and resistance to disease. Soon, a contingent of American POWs arrived from the Philippines. Similar to the morale problems experienced with the Hong Kong POWs, the American soldiers distrusted their officers. However, with Birchall's leadership and selflessness that had won the confidence the Hong Kong POWs, it was not long before the Americans, too, were turned around. Fortunately, Dr. Kauffman of the U.S.Army Medical Corps replaced the doctor from Hong Kong who had been sent to the POW hospital in Shinagawa. He proved to be an excellent replacement who worked day and night on behalf of the men.

The improved health in the camp was instrumental in the POWs surviving the first winter (1942-43) in Japan, which was quite severe. Sickness, colds and influenza abounded and some cases of tuberculosis were contracted. Once a POW became sick his resistance deteriorated, then all the malnutrition ailments such as pellagra, scurvy, boils and hot feet set in. When a soldier became too sick to work his rations were cut, further exacerbating the deterioration in his health. To counter the adverse affect on morale, Birchall instilled a resolve in the camp that all or none would survive. While about 35 percent of all POWs in Japan died that winter, Birchall lost only two men out of over 250. These two men were sent to the POW hospital at Shinagawa and never came back.

Shinagawa was a special hospital set up in Tokyo for POWs. Nearly all the medically qualified POWs were sent there to work, but under one of the most sadistic men Birchall had ever known. He was known to beat and torture the sick. He thought of himself as a doctor but he just butchered of the men. The conditions were filthy and food was scarcer than in the camps. The POW recovery rates were appalling. When Birchall discovered the deplorable conditions, he did everything possible to prevent the sick from being sent there. Only when he knew that death was imminent and inevitable did he allow the sick to be sent to the hospital. This was preferable to having a man die in the camp, as a death was exceptionally detrimental to morale. It took weeks to get over a death and even then the camp was never the same as selfishness and self-preservation crept in and soon the situation reverted back to every man for himself. The two POWs Birchall lost were beyond help and he was thankful to hear they had only lasted a matter of hours in Shinagawa; too quick to be further maltreated. Birchall had the pleasure of working on the prosecution team that dealt with this Japanese doctor and his guards at the war crimes trials. They all were given the death sentence.

The second winter (1943-44) was no better than the previous one and again the "chronically ill" started to show their symptoms. The doctor kept complete records and could predict to within a few days when an individual would break out with pellagra, or when another would contract dysentery. Some POWs cried for no reason and contemplated suicide. Birchall had to put POW guards on these patients day and night to keep them alive. He personally experienced this desperate condition, as he was one of sick that would gladly have died if his guards had let him.

Birchall learned why the Japanese were so intent on producing the maximum number of workers when he found out their army gave a unit a yearly allotment of money to buy or rent its quarters, rations,

clothing and equipment. When the money ran out the units were left to their own devices, therefore, looting and stealing were rampant in the Japanese army. Depending on their aggressiveness, some units were wealthy while others were poor. Birchall's camp guard unit was poor and relied in large measure on the money they received for providing labour to various work sites.

On one occasion when the camp could not provide enough men to work the Sergeant in charge of the guards ordered all the sick out of bed to stand on parade where he proceeded to beat the men on their boils. Birchall lost his temper and attacked the Sergeant. The fight was short and rough and after a few blows the Sergeant was knocked down. Everyone was stunned but the damage was done. The sick dispersed among the crowd of POWs as fast as they could while Birchall waited for the fury to follow. He was put into solitary until the camp commandant returned after which he was beaten again and hung up by the thumbs. After a few more days of solitary he was taken to Tokyo for court-martial. The trial ended with a long harangue and Birchall was sentenced to be shot. After the firing squad had loaded and aimed their rifles Birchall was told that he was dishonourable and only honourable people were shot. Birchall was then ordered to have his head cut off. After kneeling over and having the sword raised over his head, there was, again, a change of mind and Birchall was sent back into solitary for two weeks. It was then that Birchall appreciated the "cache" of hard tack and reading material that had been hidden in the solitary cell.

In early 1944 the main POW camps were broken up and Birchall with about 100 POWs were sent to a camp for the Asano Dockyards. With the loss of their illicit sources of contraband the "chronically ill" started their downward spiral and the camp couldn't meet its quota of workers. The first time this happened, all sick were put on parade and the deficit was made up from their ranks.

The next morning the camp was again short on workers and once again the sick were paraded. When orders were given to march out the sick Birchall ordered, "halt" and everyone sat down. The Japanese responded with beatings but Birchall explained that the men would not move until the sick went back to bed. After some time the guards gave in, the sick remained in camp and the troops moved out. About an hour later a group of guards from the Omori Camp arrived and escorted Birchall to Omori Camp, designated as a disciplinary camp for unruly POWs, in Tokyo.

Before departing for Omori Camp, Birchall and Dr. Kaufman arranged for all contraband, diaries, records and medicine to be left behind in Asano, as they knew they would be searched. Omori Camp was built on a small sand island in Tokyo Bay. The guards were particularly vicious and the Commandant enjoyed watching the punishment. After the introductory beating and being denied food for 48 hours they were released into the main camp. As a disciplinary measure Birchall had to work all day making haversacks, and then all night in the kitchens. He slept in five-minute naps whenever he could and was punished for any minor infraction by being forced at gunpoint to stand barefoot on the hot ovens holding two buckets of water. With the nerves in his feet being particularly sensitive because of being malnourished, the pain was excruciating. His punishment lasted for two weeks before he was removed from the haversack factory and allowed to sleep between cooking shifts. The stealing was just as rampant in this camp as anywhere but the contraband was not consolidated. Here, Birchall ran into his first and only encounter with POW "Barons" who controlled all the contraband and the coin of exchange was cigarettes. A POW's existence depended on giving up smoking and using the cigarettes to buy extra food and medicines. There was no POW organization to fairly distribute the contraband so dealing with the "Barons" was the only chance of survival. There were no POW organized medical parades, or issue of medicines; it was every man for himself. Consequently, there was increased sickness and men were being continually shipped off to the Shinagawa hospital, never to return.

As a result of the firebomb raids in Tokyo many of the industries where the prisoners worked were burned out. Consequently, groups of POWs were transferred to camps outside Tokyo. Since Birchall was one of the "undesirables", he was one of the first to be sent to a new POW camp at Suwa.

The POWs arrived at the camp at night; there was no food or water; it was raining and cold. The

wind blew straight through the barrack rooms, which had no light or heat. Birchall found that he was once more the Senior POW and was shown the kitchen, which was an open area lean-to with a roof and no sides. There was very little rice and no millet or beans; only some bean paste for soup. Birchall looked at the ramshackle kitchen and then wondered how he was going to face the sick, wet, cold, hungry troops in the dark, cold barracks.

Birchall returned to the barracks and before he could divulge the news about the sorry state of the kitchen a Canadian Sergeant introduced himself and asked if there was anything the Canadians could do. Birchall showed him the kitchen and the Canadians readily started work while Birchall fetched the necessary bits and pieces the men needed. The Canadians tore down a small building to get dry wood for the fire and before everyone went to bed they all had a bowl of rice with some soup and tea.

The following morning Birchall found that the great majority of the POWs had been in camps that had no proper leadership or camp organization; consequently, they had experienced high death rates. Birchall was again confronted with the old attitude of, "Every man for himself". Eventually, Birchall convinced several of the officers to provide effective leadership and to work on behalf of the men. The Canadian and British troops were the biggest asset who did what they could to generate some spirit in the camp.

Birchall found the Canadians, who had the least materials, to be the most resourceful. The British were not very adept at fixing things, but the Americans were good if given the materials. Since the Canadians could build or fix anything, they soon had their section of the barracks patched up and warm. They then helped the others to do the same. The Canadians next had the cookhouse going in very little time, while the Americans, once the Canadians stole some wire for them, re-wired the entire barracks to provide some light. There were no sanitation facilities whatsoever, however the British foreign field service came through and the camp soon had the typical "bogs" as they as were known in British parlance.

The camp was in a desperate state. While Birchall counted on the summer to build up the men's stamina for the winter, the health of the entire camp was deteriorating rapidly each day. Before long, three men had died and the number of sick increased each day. Once again the sick were paraded but these men were too far-gone to even stand up let alone trek to work. Birchall decided that drastic measures had to be taken.

Birchall and the officers selected a few reliable men who had stamina as well as the required morale. Birchall formed these men into four stealing teams; two teams to go out and steal and two teams to guard the false nailed section of fence through which they could exit and return to the camp. These clandestine preparations were conducted without the knowledge of the rest of the camp because collaborators were known to be in their midst. The first night out the two teams hit the jackpot by finding vegetable farms and the soups began to thicken. The teams revisited the gardens at least once per week.

When Birchall learned through the interpreter that the Emperor had announced the surrender of Japan on the radio he told the Commandant that that he was taking over the camp.

Now, Birchall's major problem was that many of the men wanted to leave the camp on their own. Birchall was afraid that individuals could run into fanatics or soldiers who were still very belligerent. Birchall explained that they had to build up their health and then exit en mass to be assured of surviving the final days. Birchall had the men make British, American and Dutch flags out of old sheets and crayons, which were hoisted on flagpoles. The flags would give the men a sense of security and unity when they exited the camp together.

Birchall's next problem was to get the POWs to Tokyo. They departed the camp quietly at night in stolen trucks and drove to the train station where they commandeered coaches on a train bound for

Tokyo. After arriving at the Tokyo station they could not find a single sign of the Allies. So Birchall had the troops commandeer trucks and drove to the electric train station where they took the train to Yokohama. Changing modes of transportation was not easy as Birchall had to ensure that the many who were very sick, blind or had lost feet or hands were helped onto the various transports. Finally, at Yokohama Birchall found the Americans who provided showers and new clothes and organized help from the Red Cross. Birchall had many of his records with him and turned them over to the Americans.

A lean Birchall arrives in Canada in 1945

En route to Canada, Birchall was detailed to remain in Manila where his record keeping caught up with him. He was detained for interrogation by the war crimes team who, even at that early stage, were setting the foundation for the prosecution of war criminals. It was at this meeting that Birchall first learned that the message warning of the Japanese fleet had been received in Colombo and resulted in the title of "Saviour of Ceylon". Birchall immediately sent telegrams to all the other crewmembers that were en route home about the good news.

When Birchall returned to Canada he was promoted to Wing Commander and awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for his perseverance in reporting the Japanese fleet while under attack and for his superb flying skills in ditching his flaming Catalina in the Indian Ocean. Even more impressively, Birchall was awarded the Order of the British Empire for his exceptional bravery and leadership. Under the most repressive, tyrannical conditions imaginable he established clandestine camp organizations to obtain food and medicines and insisted on fair treatment of the POWs, especially the sick. These acts of selfless courage came at the expense of great personal hardship and torture. But from the POWs perspective, Birchall's greatest contribution was his ability to instil a resolve to live that was absolutely essential for their survival in those inhumane conditions.

The last chapter of the "Saviour of Ceylon" saga didn't occur until Canada's centennial celebrations for in 1967. Prime Minister Lester Pearson gave a formal dinner and reception for each head of state who came to Canada and Birchall was invited to attend the dinner for the Ceylonese. At this dinner, Prime Minister Lester Pearson related one of his personal experiences dealing with the Ceylon battle.

It took place at a diner at the British Embassy in Washington, either just before or after the end of the war. Someone asked Sir Winston Churchill what he felt to be the most dangerous and most distressing moment in the war. Pearson thought he would refer to the events of June and July 1940, and the imminence of invasion; or to the time when Rommel was heading toward Alexandria and Cairo at full speed; or when Singapore fell. However, Churchill thought the most dangerous moment of the war was when he got the news that the Japanese fleet was heading for Ceylon and the naval base there. The capture of Ceylon, the consequent control of the Indian Ocean and the possibility of a German conquest of Egypt would have "closed the ring" and the future would have been black.

Churchill went on to say that disaster was averted by an airman, on reconnaissance, who spotted the Japanese fleet and, though shot down, was able to get a message through to Ceylon which allowed the defence forces there to get ready for the approaching assault; otherwise they would have been taken completely by surprise. Churchill believed that the unknown airman, who lay deep in the waters of the Indian Ocean, made one of the most important single contributions to victory. He got quite emotional about it.

Pearson was pleased to tell Churchill that the "unknown airman" was not lying deep in the Indian Ocean but was still an officer in the Royal Canadian Air Force stationed down the street from the British Embassy where he was active in our military mission.

Churchill was surprised and delighted to know that the end of the story was a happier one than envisioned.

Postscript:

After the war Birchall became a member of the 1947 War Crimes Trials prosecuting team in Japan. He was subsequently promoted to Group Captain and was appointed Assistant Air Attaché, Canadian Joint Staff, Washington D.C. where the U.S. government awarded him the Legion of Merit. As his career progressed he held many senior appointments in Ottawa, Paris France and North Bay ON. In 1963 he was promoted to Air Commodore and served as External Affairs Chief Administrator, NATO and Commandant of the Royal Military College. He also was Aide-de-Campe to their Excellencies, Governors General Vanier and Michner. Although, he retired in 1968, Air Commodore Birchall continued to serve the air force in many ex-officio capacities. He is the only serviceman with five clasps to his CD decoration representing more than 62 years of service. He was awarded the Order of Canada in 2000 and today (2003) serves as the Honourary Colonel for 413 Squadron, his former wartime squadron.

Post Postscript

Air Commodore Birchall died of cancer on 10 September 2004 only a few days after Part One of the Saviour of Ceylon article appeared in the last newsletter. Birchall was active in the Air Force until his passing. On July 5th 2004, Birchall was too ill to attend 413 Squadron's change of command ceremony at 14 Wing Greenwood NS as the squadron's Honorary Colonel. So the squadron decided to hold the parade in Kingston ON. For the ceremony the 89 year old Birchall was wheeled from his hospital bed to the nearby City Park in uniform wearing his impressive row of 18 medals including five clasps to his CD marking over 60 years of service. Birchall was delighted with the honour his squadron paid to him; we as Canadians are honoured to have had such a selfless devoted leader serve our nation so gallantly.

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Special thanks to Imperial Oil and SAMF for sponsoring our new flagpole yardarm. It certainly adds flair to SAM's facade! ***Christine Hines - SAM Curator***