

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

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THE COVER The message of the cover photo is that an aircraft carrier has, in the past, met Canada's defence needs for both peacekeeping and war. Shown on the flight deck of the (now scrapped) aircraft carrier Bonaventure, are Canadian Army Helicopters. The occasion of the photo was a test of the compatibility of army helicopters with a naval aircraft carrier. The test proved total compatibility and the ability of the Canadian Armed Forces to switch almost seamlessly from naval anti-submarine operations to support of land war or peace duties. That was then.

INSIDE COVER: "Vickers Vedette at RCAF Station Dartmouth, 1925", by Geoff Bennett 2004. This piece was commissioned by former 12 Wing Commander and Chair of the SAM Board of Trustees, BGen David E. Martin, and presented to SAM at BGen Martin's Change of Command Ceremony.

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:

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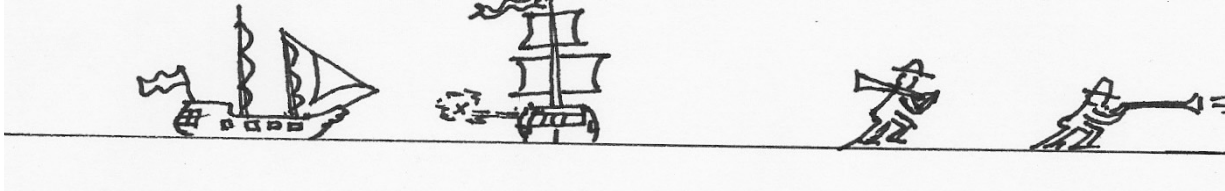
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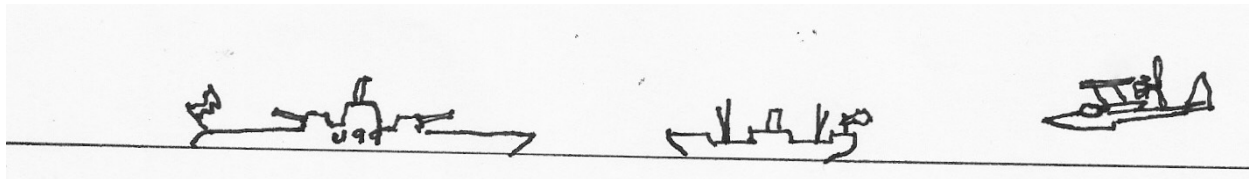
Some photo's courtesy of DND - thank you.

Reader Orientation Page

New Reader of this newsletter? It's more than just your average publication meant to keep individuals with a common interest or experience in touch with one and other. Read on (unless you have no scrap of interest in your own country's noble heritage).



Once upon a time, not all that long ago, men waged their battles on land and on the high seas. Then, about a hundred years ago, man mastered the navigation of this planet's atmosphere: men began to fight in the air and in the depths of the oceans too. For Canada, war in the air began near Halifax at what we now call Shearwater with flying boat operations against U-Boats then cruising off the coast. This was in 1918.



The Great War over, the warplanes went on to serve in the development of Canada's general aviation – fire fighting, aerial mapping and other *swords-into-ploughshares* service.

Then came the war after "*The War To End All Wars*" and to the Halifax Harbour seadrome of 1918 was added a land aerodrome: From these 'dromes our RCAF fought the Battle of the Atlantic in the Second World War for five long years.

That war done, The RCN acquired the Base, named it **Shearwater** and operated a succession of aircraft carriers and their squadrons from there in prosecution of the long *Cold War*.

That's cold, clinical history but here in these pages are glimpses of the human side of the development of an esprit de corps in what came to be known as *Naval Aviation*:

The Canadian Navy, starting virtually from scratch, acquired, through an unrelenting pursuit of professional excellence, a level of sea warfare expertise that astonished the commanders of the mighty navies of our NATO allies. The Little Navy that could! The carrier's crew, the aircrews and the groundcrews did Canada proud. It was a "can do" outfit. No challenge was too great. It must have been the shared hazards and physical hardships inherent in facing up to the stormy North Atlantic that generated a camaraderie and esprit de corps that lives on in the men who served in naval aviation. There are old survivors of those days scattered around the globe who contribute their memories to this newsletter – some even from palliative-care beds in foreign lands. Some went on to distinguished post-navy careers across this land and abroad – but they left their hearts in Shearwater.

From the Curator's Desk

by Christine Hines

The summer season has been as busy one from the start: despite poor weather in July we have seen a steady number of visitors through the Atrium doors. Our first season with the Atrium in full operation has seen a vast improvement in Customer Service, and the new Gift Shop has been doing a banner business. The Wall of Honour is a wonderful focal point, and admired by all. Now that we have completed the construction of the Atrium, we have begun to focus once again on our exhibit program. In need of a facelift, the Time Capsule exhibit is currently being renovated, and work on installing new exhibits in the vacated gift shop areas has begun. I have also included a new contribution to this Newsletter entitled "Artifacts Wanted" to broaden our reach to search for artifacts that may assist us in developing exhibits at SAM; on our wish list continues to be items of a technical nature ("tools of the trades"), artifacts representing 102 Marine Squadron, RCAF, as well as WRCNS uniforms. If you think you may have a lead, please share it with us: we'd love to hear from you!

This season has also seen a number of SAM Board of Trustees members leave 12 Wing for a variety of postings; I would like to extend our sincere thanks to BGen David Martin, outgoing Wing Commander and Chairman of the Board of Trustees, as well as SAM Director LCol David Mason and Board Member LCol Don Henry for their leadership, commitment and constant support of SAM activities. We wish them every success in their new taskings, and welcome Col Alan Blair, LCol Mary Turkington and LCol Fig Newton to our Board of Trustees. I look forward to our work together.

Another departure. I regret to advise you of is that Mrs. Alma Coffen, our Volunteer Coordinator, will be retiring from her position at the end of July, 2004. After several years keeping track of our volunteers' activities and scheduling Guides and Gift Shop Cashiers, Alma has decided to turn in her telephone. I am happy to report that Alma has agreed to stay on as a member of our Volunteer Corps; it wouldn't be complete without her. On behalf of all at SAM, I would like to extend a heartfelt Thank You to Alma, and congratulations on a job well done! Alma has turned the telephone over to Michael McFadden, who will be joining our staff in August. Recently retired from the CF, Mike brings with him a

wealth of military experience and has already proven to be a valuable and able volunteer himself. Welcome to the SAM Team, Mike!

All the best for a wonderful and safe summer.



Editor's Grunts

"Grunts" will be brief for I have nothing to say that hasn't been said already in previous issues. We have tried to select content that satisfies the nostalgic yearnings of old Shearwaterites for tales (some true) and memories of "the good old days". With a view to attracting new readers, and thereby new members, we have included articles likely to appeal to the Canadian public at large: see the gripping article "Saviour of Ceylon". Squadron Leader Birchall emerges as a brave Canadian warrior of whose courage and dedication to duty all Canadians can be truly proud. And wait for Part 2 of this article (Winter Issue) in which he displays exemplary (in the fine sense of that word) leadership in Japanese POW camps -- echoes of "Bridge on the River Kwai". And, yes, Birchall is one of us -- flew Stranraers from RCAF Dartmouth on the day the 1939-45 War began. **Bill Farrell, Ed.**

We need your help....

At the last CNAG reunion held at Shearwater in 2002, we



collected \$600 to dedicate a plaque in memory of the three dogs we had as mascots at Shearwater. We had hoped to put their pictures on display in the Museum. A search of the archives proved futile as we were unable to find a picture of Teddy. He was a mongrel Terrier - mostly chocolate brown with ears pointed upward. He rode around the Base on the back of an Air Force Corporals motor bike. Eventually he found his way to the Tower and bunked down with the Crash Crew until he decided the grub was better at the Galley.

The plaque looks bare without the third picture. We would greatly appreciate a picture of Teddy if anyone has one. (Late 40's early 50's. Thanks Please reply to the Museum Foundation. **Tom Tonks**

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Volunteer of the Quarter: Barb Ryan



Barb Ryan has been another of our staunch supporters of SAM for many years. Every second Friday sees Barb trek from Mahone Bay to complete a lengthy shift in the Gift Shop, and has assisted many, many times with the Art Show and Sale, the Dinner Auction as well as helping out as the need arises at almost every SAM event we hold. Barb, from all of us at SAM we say Bravo Zulu and thanks for keeping us full of cake!

SAM Receives Student Assistance Subsidies

As a result of the generous support of Human Resources Development Canada Student Career Placement Program, and the Young Canada Works in Heritage Institutions Program from the Canadian Council of Archives, SAM can boast of three students hired to assist us in moving SAM forward this summer. I'd like to introduce to you Crystal Harvey, Marc Émond and Jason Johnston.

Crystal Harvey is a recent graduate of Prince Andrew High School, and can be found working in the Archive alongside Christine Dunphy. Crystal has been working at cataloguing our video collection, cataloguing and covering books, as well as culling and reorganizing our large collection of technical manuals and CFTOs. Crystal plans on attending St. Mary's University in September to study Commerce.

A returning student from last season, Museum Assistant Marc Émond came to us after several summers at Citadel Hill as a re-enactor. Marc has been focusing his efforts at cataloguing a variety of artifacts, assisting in exhibit updates, as well as

providing French language services for us, giving tours to our Francophone visitors and translating exhibit text and signage. Marc will enter his final year at Université Sainte Anne in the fall, where he will complete his B.A. in History.

Jason Johnston is also a History student studying at Dalhousie University. Jason is a long-time volunteer at SAM, who has been running our Youth Outreach Program this summer. Jason traveled out to area schools in June to make interactive presentations based on the theory of flight and Shearwater's role in the Maritime Military Aviation story. Once the school year ended, Jason ran summer camps at SAM, as well as to conduct tours for summer day camps.

We have been very fortunate to secure the talents of these three well-rounded and bright students. SAM would like to thank the HRDC and the Canadian Council of Archives for their support of our student projects. Many thanks to Crystal, Marc and Jason for a job well done!



Marc

Crystal

Jason

ARTIFACTS WANTED

Air Trades tools and equipment or photos depicting these items in use.

**Please contact Christine Hines, SAM Curator at (902) 460-1083 or awmuseum@ns.sympatico.ca
Note: Receipts for charitable donations are available.**



Firefly Restoration Report

The work has been stalled (temporarily) by Bud Ayer's illness. I can't say much more on this except that we are exploring ways to resume asap and get PP462 ready to be Certified Serviceable. The aim has not changed. We do plan to move the aircraft down to the museum building complex to make it more accessible to volunteer workers (access to C Hangar is severely restricted by Base Security regulations. *Bill Farrell, Project Dogsboddy*

'Son of a Gun'

It was only around 1870 or so that women ceased to be carried in a Man-O'-War. It was Queen Victoria who ordered the practice to be discontinued in the RN.

In the old days when no leave was given, the ship was invaded by crowds of women on her arrival in harbour and any man was free to choose as his fancy dictated. Officers were very jealous of the reputation of their ships, and not infrequently, those women thought by the Officer of the Watch not to attain the standard of beauty considered essential, were ignominiously returned to the shore.

The boatmen at the naval ports were careful of the selection of the cargo they wished to import, as it was customary for the women to stipulate that unless they were accepted, they would not pay for their passage.

Scenes of profligacy and debauchery used to take place on the gun-decks of the Man-O'-War.

The gangways however, had to be kept free, and it was in the spaces between the guns that these scenes used to occur. Hence, to call a man 'a son of a gun' was equivalent to casting doubt on the legitimacy of his parentage.

(Taken from the Maginews - 1951)

From the Secretary

Usually I say a lot about nothing - you may think that of this article as well, but that's the way it is.

You may have noticed that sometimes we have a lengthy 'In the Delta' list. Time doesn't stick around too long guys and in the not too far off future there won't be many around to sing the praises of your era, Naval Air. For those wonderful people who have joined and supported the Foundation and Museum we ask you to consider getting your families involved as members as well. There has to be someone out there to carry on the museum established to remember you and your history in Naval Air. Many others read the newsletter and probably agree with what I just spoke about but unlike you, they are willing to sit back and let someone else do the job for them.



The Avenger is starting to get some interest. No, they haven't started to repair the one we have - it's too far gone - we can't let people work on it because of something in the paint. Whatever. There has been some talk of trying to obtain another one. Sketchy right now, but I will advise when I have more info. The Curator advised that because of a financial and personnel problem, work on the one here on the Base, if another Avenger can't be had,

will not take place for any time in the foreseeable future. She advised \$20,000 - at a guess - would bring it up to static display status; however, they would have to have someone assess the job. \$20,000 - to me that's next to nothing compared to funds we've raised for the Museum - if we can get a new building and Atrium - how hard can it be to raise approx \$20,000? We have received email agreeing that a fund for Avenger restoration be started. Maybe the time to set up this fund is now, just in case we have to buy one. Anyone with info on a cheap Avenger? I have been guaranteed that the funds will be used strictly for 'Avenger Restoration' as are the funds for the 'Firefly Project' and 'HUP Project'. Your comments would be greatly appreciated - I'd donate, wouldn't you? All tax deductible. This Avenger on Base (or Wing) is the one that was brought back from the murky depths of the Halifax Harbour. Quite a feat.

We appreciate your compliments re the newsletter - thanks in part to Jamie Archibald our cover designer and of course His Holiness, St William the Editor.

By the way, if anyone has the new mailing address for M. Wasteneys would you please let me know.

Take care and enjoy what's left of the summer. (Less than 5 months and you know what will be here. Ha) *Kay*

PS write to us at:
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A FEW REMINISCENCES FAMILIAR TO SOME

From Ron Bezant

I joined the RCN on 31 Jul 53 after having to beg my parents to sign a of swabbing decks and emptying ashtrays and gash buckets at HMCS Star, where the old-timers delighted in scaring us witless with fibs of squares needles in our left testimonials upon arrival at HMCS Cornwallis, then it was onto a bus on a Saturday night and over to the CNR station in Hamilton. Years later my dad bumped into Dale Klassen who told him that he still remembered my playing the piano as accompaniment for a sing song.

There was a stopover of an hour or two in Toronto where everyone headed to a tavern for a beer. I followed along and choked on mine. The huge old urinals in Toronto's Union Station were only replaced but a few years ago. Gives one a strange feeling to find the surroundings untouched and just as smelly after decades.

I was impressed by the linen table cloths, silverware and victuals served by bonafide waiters on the way to St. John. Not so by the aroma from the coal-fired steam engine when the locomotive negotiated a curve, away up ahead.

There were Wrens in uniform aboard the Princess Helene. Their black stockings and institutional footwear were god-awful. One new entry fell sound asleep sitting up and no one could awaken him. For all I know he might have been reduced to scrap in a Japanese shipyard years later.

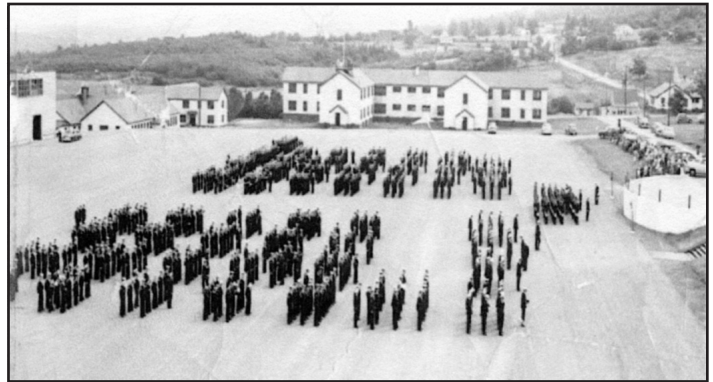
Anyone remember spilling out of a Digby-Atlantic Railway car to be greeted and told to line up by one Francois Lepage, a dumpy P2 in singlet and khaki web belt and gaiters? A 25-cent haircut whether you'd had one two days before or not? Coffee with canned Carnation milk. (I quit a job at Loblaw's to join the RCN and Carnation milk went for 11 cans per \$1.00 on special back then.) Wakey-wakey at 0545. My God! What have I gotten myself into? "Ironjaw" McInnes, the P2 GI who was supposedly broken from CPO for doubling some guy to death. Another P2 GI named "Pusser" John Campbell with his deep vibrato voice that I'm still not convinced wasn't a contra-falsetto.

The wife of our divisional chief, a CPO named "Dolly" Doyle, was a decent artist who produced several paintings of RCN ships that hung in one or more messes. She also painted cheesecake pictures on ditty bags that her husband flogged to new entries for two bucks a copy.

My regret that my cubicle was on the second deck when I had to climb out a window onto a shaky "horse" made from two by fours to wash the glass on the outside. Or maybe it was me who was shaky.

Home made calendars on the insides of our blue, wooden locker doors, so we could check off each painful day for 18 weeks. The entrepreneurs who stocked up on

chocolate bars, stored them in their lockers and sold them to other guys in their divisions at a 100 per cent mark-up.



Falling in for divisions on the edges of the parade square and standing behind a fellow named J. Billington-Whiteley -- a UK immigrant and one of an extinct breed in this country unless they travel to South Africa and apply from there -- and being thankful that I only had six letters in my surname to embroider with floss in my kit. (Partway through my stint at Cornwallis I observed that his had been shortened to B-Whiteley.)

Kootenay Division was a week behind us. Somehow we screwed up. When our Saturday morning passing out parade finally came, Commander Joe Paul announced from the dais that "Rainbow and Kootenay Division will march past: Kootenay Division leading."

I was looking forward to the luxurious train journey home on 30 days' special leave. A comfortable berth, linen table cloths, and the rest of the paraphernalia that went with the outbound journey 18 weeks before. Stepping up to the wicket with my hand out for a free first class ticket, I had to bite my tongue when the guy on the other side demanded 19 dollars, or was it 12 dollars? Whatever, it was a tidy sum, so to speak, out of my \$87 per month, minus pension and income tax deductions. Ye gads! They even assigned a value to the "free" room and board and taxed me on that. Did the recruiter tell anyone up front? Thirty bucks a pay, net, thank you very much.

My first leave at home, standing in the kitchen, talking with my parents and unconsciously wrapping the electrical cord on the iron into some kind of bundle that came with the knot making lessons at Cornwallis. My dad laughed like hell. Said I'd been such a sloppy bugger before I left home. Ring any bells?

(We are aware there are many service members who are not members of SAMF - one of which is Mr. Bezant. Hopefully he will consider supporting the Museum Foundation. With his extensive knowledge of just about every-thing, as noted in navairgen email messages, perhaps he could suggest a way for us to reach the other non members for their support. Kay)

LIFE AT SEA IN THE GULF

by Cpl Terry Wynn

Since the events of 9/11, Sea King aircrews and maintenance technicians have been continuously employed aboard Canadian ships in the North Arabian Sea and the Arabian Gulf. HMCS TORONTO's Sea King Helicopter Air Detachment is currently deployed on one such operation. The employment of the Sea King in this environment brings about special challenges to the aircrews and technicians, most of which are related to the temperatures experienced by both groups. Even though flying operations tend to follow a set pattern, the daily schedule aboard a ship as a member of an Air Detachment cannot be described as routine. It is the maintenance issues that can arise at the end of each flying day that can create long hours for technicians.

The heat combined with humidity in both the Arabian Gulf, and the North Arabian Sea make life on the flight deck and in the hangar very uncomfortable. A regular temperature in the hangar can be more than 34 Celsius, and with the humidity it is generally at or above 50 Celsius. On the flight deck the direct rays of the sun make it even more unbearable. At home these conditions would generally result in base stand-downs, or a reduction in the work that is done outside, neither of which is practical here. These temperatures are so hot that it literally causes us to sweat through the coveralls that we work in. That includes the t-shirts and shorts that are also worn underneath the coveralls. These severe sweats leave the coveralls and undergarments cold and wet while inside the air-conditioned ship up until the next time we are required to be outside. These severe sweats come several times a day, and, due to the water conscious operations of our ships, showers are limited. To best prevent technicians and aircrew from being exposed to the maximum effects of the heat and the sun, flying operations are preferred to begin before dawn and end in the late morning so that the hottest parts of the day can be spent inside the ship. When the flying is over, the maintenance begins on whatever unserviceabilities have occurred. This can keep technicians busy until the late afternoon and well beyond. Unfortunately the work must be done in the hangar, which has no air-conditioning, so the heat is a part of daily life for technicians. Night flying programs can also be flown to avoid the afternoon heat.

The avionics systems in the Sea King are able to operate in conditions up to 54 degrees, not including humidity, so they remain relatively unaffected by the heat. The severe temperatures cause some of our anti-corrosive compounds and greases to melt off of the components that they are applied to. There have been occasions when the helicopter was required to fly to a land base for operational reasons. On a few of these occasions, the heat inside the electronics compartment was great enough to cause some of the glue and sealant used on connectors and insulation to drip. An additional burden while in the Arabian Gulf and the North Arabian Sea are the sandstorms that can come around and leave

the helicopter covered in a talcum powder like residue of sand. This sand cannot be washed away by the regular daily wash that we perform, so we have been using a power sprayer to get it off of the aircraft skin. This same sand also gets into the grease and the anti-corrosive compounds that we use. This requires some special attention because sand very obviously causes friction when trapped in the grease, which can lead to premature wear of parts if left unattended.

The types of deployments that we are currently involved with, in both the Arabian Gulf and the North Arabian Sea, are very different from the exercises, and traditional NATO type deployments that we were once accustomed to. Even though the helicopter and aircrews are not employed in the manner that they were initially developed and trained for, technicians can still rely on the same skills and training. Since the helicopter is not used for the traditional sub-hunting role, there are fewer snags related to the avionics systems that are required for that particular role. Avionics technicians are still kept busy with the many radar, communication, indicator, stabilization, and plotting system snags that occur. The great number of hours flown and wide range of employment for the Sea King still bring about much of the same wear and tear maintenance for the aviation technicians who fix the airframe, engine, hydraulic, and flight control systems.

Technicians are also placed on a cleaning rotation that involves the cleaning of our shop spaces, living quarters, and washroom area. These areas are cleaned every night at around 1800. All of the ships departments contribute personnel as part of a rotation in dry garbage stores. Each Air Detachment technician does dry garbage once every nine days, starting at 0800, and generally takes two hours. The rotation in dry garbage involves the separation of the ship's garbage into plastics, metals, and paper. The paper and metal cans are shredded and then disposed of. These rotations are done unless technicians are at flying stations. When night programs are flown, flying ops can start any time after nightfall, and, if two missions are flown, flying ops can end around dawn. At that time maintenance would be carried out if necessary, and someone would be required to fill the dry garbage position. Each technician is also given at least one, but sometimes as many as three or four secondary duties. These duties are all related to aircraft maintenance. The intensity of the duties can vary. The tasks can be things such as being a member of the torpedo load crew, being the technical publications librarian, being the harassment coordinator, being the general safety representative, or being the tool control coordinator.

The daily routine generally consists of two flying missions. Flights are generally two and a half hours in duration, with a half hour in between for a hot-fuel and an aircrew change. At the end of each flying day the aircraft is washed outside on the flight deck. The washing process takes about thirty minutes. Technicians are generally up one hour prior to the first flying stations so that the self-defense suite can be functioned and

aircraft can be removed. The aircraft is then brought out on deck so that the starting process can begin and the helicopter can be launched on schedule, thirty minutes after flying stations is piped. The Sea King then departs on its mission and returns later for the hot-fuel and crew change.

The heat also challenges the aircrews. "The greatest challenge faced by the aircrew is the heat when starting or shutting down the helicopter. During the thirty-minute start and shut down sequences, the temperature in the helicopter can reach the low forties. Combined with the humidity, the exhaust flow from the helicopter's two engines makes starting and shutting down the helicopter fatiguing. Once air borne the helicopter is cooler as there is airflow from open windows, but it is still impossible to escape the heat at any altitude. To stay alert the crews drink plenty of fluids and limit sortie times in a day. After a flight, uniforms are completely soaked with sweat and the important task of re-hydration begins. If the crews don't drink enough water, health problems such as headaches and fatigue set in. The pilots also face more heat exposure when they are in the landing signal compartment. This compartment is on the flight deck and has windows all around to observe the helicopter during landings and launches. The windows create a greenhouse effect and temperatures climb as high as 47 Celsius, in spite of an air condition ducting hose from the ship. Landing Signal Officers (LSOs) can spend long periods in the LSO compartment during flight deck evolutions, which adds to the heat stress pilots encounter during the day. During Op Altair, temperatures in the LSO compartment were measured and recorded in the hopes of improving the air conditioning system. As for the helicopter, the aircrews aren't keeping their fingers crossed for an air conditioner, not until the replacement for the Sea King comes anyway." Capt David Drahovzal, Air Navigator.

During our off time we have the opportunity to sleep, exercise, use the email/internet, watch movies, read, or play board games. Members can also bring correspondence courses to further their education. The ship is equipped with a small weight room, which is very limited in size and selection, but adequate enough to do pretty much any exercise with the use of dumb bells or a guided bar bell machine. Several stair master machines, elliptical machines, and tread mills are also placed in different areas of the ship, and a sign up sheet is on all of them so that members can pick convenient times. There is a ships movie room that has about two hundred movies to choose from, and members can watch these on individual computers or DVD players that they have brought, as well as in several group movie areas. Reading is a little harder to do because personal quiet space is very hard to find, so it is generally done on the flight deck or on our own beds. Board games are generally played in the junior ranks eating area that has many tables and ample space to play during non-eating hours. One night a week there is an all ranks dart tournament.

The Air Det is a unique department on ship for many reasons, one of which is the fact that we are always "on watch". Most of the rest of the ship's company are on fixed watch schedules. We handle all of the work as it comes to us. We fly every day, and all of the days are the same. The only day that seems different is Thursday. Thursday is steak night.

Cpl Terry Wynn is an Avionics Technician with 423 Maritime Helicopter Squadron deployed with the Air Helicopter Detachment on HMCS TORONTO. He is currently conducted his second long deployment to the Arabian Gulf.

HMCS TORONTO is currently on a six-month deployment, OPERATION ALTAIR, in the Arabian Gulf Region as part of the USS GEORGE WASHINGTON CARRIER STRIKE GROUP.



Boarding Party watch over searched vessel crew and papers verified. *Credit: Mcpl C. Kelly, Formation Imaging Service*



WRESTLING WITH THE PAST

By Rolly West

Many positive words have been said these past ten years of our Museum, but very little of the main building itself. "Oh if those walls could only speak, what stories they could tell". There are many memories held by those who utilized this historic facility and here are a few.

Built for the RCAF, Station Dartmouth in 1941, Building 13 became the gymnasium and recreation centre, and soon became the focal point for social activity on the Base. Of course, all types of indoor sports took place in the building, along with numerous formal and informal social functions. This site was always under the control of a Physical Training Officer and staff of PTIs. Three most notable Officers during the Navy years were Jack Arnott, Jack Dean and Don Loney. Besides the sports, which included senior basketball, badminton, and the Flyers football dressing rooms, there were other activities, such as the woodworking hobby shop, a barbershop, Base band room, tailors, a dry cleaners and meeting rooms. There was a large dry canteen which was exceptionally popular, where always a hearty breakfast, hamburger, or coffee could be had, and was a great place to meet after the movies.

The twice-weekly movies were a highlight for both military and dependents. First-class movies were shown under the control of that flamboyant projectionist, Sammy Semeczsem. Many theme dances, parties and smokers were held in the gym, plus pay parades, Remembrance Day services, blood donor clinics, lectures and live entertainment. The Shearwater Players Drama club put on some marvelous plays and musicals, starring the likes of Denny Shaw, Kips Reeves, Beverly Findlay, the Cookes, Brittens, Poole-Warrens, and many other base and dependent personnel.

On July, 16, 1949, a new form of entertainment came to Shearwater-wrestling matches. That opening night featured a grappling star from Stadacona, one Wacker Payne, who fought Shearwater's football hero of that era Johnny Sawatsky. However, it was not until 1953-54, that "WWW" style wrestling came to the gym along with premier boxing cards. These shows were exceptionally popular, so much so that the Base Fire Chief had fits monitoring the overflow crowds in the building. The fans came to see the following "International Stars" do their thing in the ring; Italy's Antonio Mattia, Russian Melenchuck, Ireland's Danny Boy McCowell, the Flying Turk Knatchbell, Alaska Bill Smethurst, Rolly Deschene, and Wildcat West

The boxers for these events put on fantastic shows and were well-received by the fans. Popular Shearwater boxers were Danny Kane, Rollie Thibeault, Sam Johnson, Ivor Axford, and Hank Nash.

When the current gymnasium facility came into being, Building 13 soon became the site of the Base CANEX store. Then in 1994 it became the new and present location of our Aviation Museum-what a perfect site. There is much history and many tales that can be told about this site. It is only fitting that our past is being

maintained there today, and that functions continue to be held in this dear old building.

Note: Many thanks to Chuck Nelson for suggesting the title for this article



Wrestling Action - 1954

'Russian' Bill Melenchuck drop kicks Shearwater's Rolly Deschene. Referee Bill Smethurst looks on.

That Day in History

June 1953, the 30th CAG (VF871, eight Sea Furies and VS 881, eight Avengers) participated in the massive Coronation Flypast following the Fleet Review this date at Spithead, UK. HMC Ships forming the Canadian Coronation Squadron for the occasion were Magnificent, Quebec, Ontario, Sioux, Swansea and La Hullose.

Ernie Flight remembers it a little differently - "That day also stands out in my memory, but for a different reason. Danny Chin and I were picked up and thrown in cells by the Royal Marines in Portsmouth. Apparently they had orders to pick up any sailors with Canada Badges as they were supposed to be back on board their ship for that occasion. Needless to say that it took four hours to convince them to get in touch with the main gate in Lee On Solent to prove that we were ashore legally. By that time, our "dates" had long disappeared."

**Editorial Policy Change
Obituary List**

Some readers have been, understandably, distressed to read their own names in our obit list. In one recent such case a still-living member had the same last name (bar one extra consonant) as a genuinely-deceased veteran and for whatever reason, the still-living member's first name was used. There was hell to pay for this - but not from the member whose name we used in error.

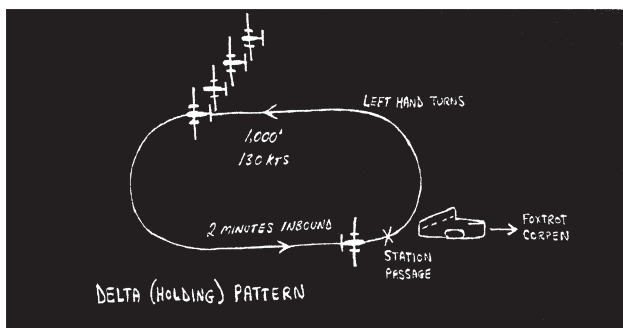
We now are meticulous in getting written confirmation that every name appearing in our list has had its entitlement to be there confirmed in writing by someone of unquestioned credibility. Still, no system is perfect and, undoubtedly, we will some day err again.

In the past we have resurrected the not-deceased by a notice in the following issue - you guessed it, we forgot to resurrect Weldon Paton. Our apologies, Mr. Paton.

This is embarrassing to us and we have, for our own comfort, engaged a Sicilian "consultant" to deal with such errors in future. Ed

Readers may have noticed that we had re-titled the obituary list from In the Delta to Farewell For A While: This because the former title may have been somewhat meaningless to readers not familiar with carrier circuit jargon.

From Kay: I imagine there are very few of our readers who don't know the term 'In the Delta'.



(From 'The Bonnie' Book)

Our obituary list will continue to be printed under the "In the Delta" title. (His Holiness, St William the Editor, agreed to this.) Our 'Delta' is where our deceased friends wait to go to Heaven (no self-respecting Naval Air member would be going down to you know where - well... perhaps a couple)...



IN THE DELTA

- Armson - Wiltshire, Joan**
- Baker, Don**
- Beeson, Harry**
- Bowen, Peter**
- Clark, Jim**
- Francis, Ted**
- Goode, Betty**
- Kidd, Bud**
- Loney, Don**
- Nunnerley, Rick**
- Rock, Arnold "Bud"**
- Sloan, Wally**
- Wolf, Ron**

2004 CNAG REUNION

The 2004 CNAG Reunion will be known as 'The Quinte County Gathering', to be held from 17-19 September 2004 in Trenton, ON on the Bay of Quinte.

For info, contact:
John Eden email: liljon@reach.net Telephone::
1-613-394-0316

OR

Bob Findlay email: findrob@sympatico.ca
Telephone: 1-613-392-8459





WOT? NOT INSURABLE?

20 April 1955:
VS 881 Avenger
serno 69303

(NAVY*334), piloted by Lt(P) Robert "Bob" Murray RCN, suffered engine failure while involved in weapons practice over the Air-to-Ground Range, and force-landed on the mud flats at low tide in Chezzetcook Inlet. Lt Murray emerged from the accident unscathed, but the wheels-up landing precipitated a sequence of events that are noteworthy. Damage to the a/c was minimal and her salvage considered worth looking into. This endeavour would necessitate deployment of a motor boat, one of which was slung underneath a HUP for delivery to the crash site from Shearwater. Once airborne, the boat began to sway dangerously, and to avoid a serious accident the pilot wisely elected to cut the vessel loose over an unoccupied area. It transpired that an unoccupied car was illegally parked down below, and the boat landed directly on top of it. The car's owner reportedly had difficulty coming to terms with his insurance agent.

The Shearwater Senior AEO, meanwhile, was airlifted by helicopter to the Avenger crash site to assess the salvage prospects. The helo departed, leaving the AEO to his own devices but with the plan to return and take him back to the station. This did not happen as soon as might have been hoped, and with the tide becoming a factor, the stranded AEO climbed ever higher up the a/c fuselage to escape the rising flood. Fortuitously, a local fisherman not only rescued the officer, but struck a deal with him to keep an eye of the a/c to ensure there was no pilfering of it. In due course, a recovery crew was dispatched to the scene and hauled the TBM off the flats. By virtue of her being inundated by seawater, she was a write-off. Six months later, the fisherman submitted an invoice of several hundred dollars (including interest for late payment?) to the authorities at CANAS for "protection services rendered" to the downed aircraft. The agreement had not been terminated following retrieval of NAVY*334 and apparently was lost sight of by all except the enterprising fisherman.

A fuller rendition of this account appears in Stu Soward's "Hands to Flying Stations", Vol. Two, pp. 14-16.

From: Robert Murray

The crew of HUP-3 247 - LCdr Rodney "Rod" V. Bays and CPO William Bill" Shorten.

Here is the story taken from the "The Piasecki HUP in the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN). You should have a copy in your library : On 21 April, HUP-3 247, flown by LCdr Rodney "Rod" V. BAYS with crewman CPO William "Bill" SHORTEN was attempting to transport a 14' aluminum boat to the tidal flats at Chezzetcook Bay, NS, the scene of the crash of AVENGER AS-3

69303(334) on 20 April. The boat was suspended from the external sling with a steadying hand line held by CPO SHORTEN. Just after take-off, while transiting to forward flight, the boat started to take charge gradually swinging more and more violently from side to side and, for safety of flight, the boat had to be jettisoned. By this time the HUP was just past the Officer's Mess heading southwest at an altitude of about 200 feet. The trajectory of the boat carried it into the Naval Stores Building parking lot where it landed on top of a car owned PO Peter Britton, illegally parked by a "No Parking" sign, crushing the car. PO Britton's call to his Insurance Agent that a boat had hit his car was said to have been hilarious. He was advised to go home, sleep it off, and call back next morning



HMCS Bonaventure departed the UK

19 JUNE 1957: The new Canadian carrier *HMCS Bonaventure* departed the UK this date on her maiden voyage to Canada. Ship's "company" included a number of Irish-bred dogs and a large assortment of other pets. In the early morning of departure, a late-arriving addition to the menagerie appeared on the jetty in the form of a Clydesdale horse that had been purchased by a pair of Leading Seamen for 17 pounds. Their ambitious plans to transport the steed to Halifax and race it at Sackville Downs came to naught when the OOW heard the suspicious noise of the ship's crane being activated at 0300 (S. Soward, *Hands to Flying Stations*, Vol. 2, p. 79).

HMCS BONAVENTURE PAID OFF

3 JULY 1970:

HMCS Bonaventure, Canada's last conventional aircraft carrier, was paid off this date. The Paying Off ceremony was a symbolic and moving occasion as VAdm O'Brien read the lesson, the bugler played the Last Post and the Ensign was lowered. The Stadacona band then marched onto the forward lift, which then lowered and they went down out of sight playing the final hymn. Overhead, a solitary Tracker flew with tail hook down and wings wagging in the internationally-recognized sign of distress.

WEST COAST WAR GAMES

By Capt. Colin Bylsma,
Air Navigator at 443 MH SQN who took part in Encounter Exercise



BR - L to R - Sgt Poper, Cpl MacDonald, Cpl Bell, MCpl McKay, MCpl Obreiter, MWO Adams, MCpl Gibson,
Cpl Thompson, Cpl Stull, Cpl Collis
FR - L to R - Capt Duval, Capt Peek, WO Hollington, Capt Antrobus, Capt Strachan, Lt Brosnan, Capt Bylsma

The United States may be regarded as the world's only remaining superpower, but this June HMCS *Calgary* and her lone *Sea King* handily defeated an American naval force off the coast of Vancouver Island. Of course, the naval engagement was only a simulation, but it reinforced the notion that the Canadian Forces have struggled yet succeeded in doing more with less. In an era of personnel downsizing and budget reductions, men and women of Canada's Navy and Air Force are still striving to do their best and are achieving the desired aims through innovation and determination.

As is common practice when a West Coast frigate sails, a *Sea King* and a 19-member Air Detachment (Air Det) from 443 Maritime Helicopter Squadron (MH) Squadron is embarked. While this was certainly not the first sea going experience for both the

maintenance and aircrews, it was however an anxious time for two members in particular. For both Capt. Colin Peek, a junior *Sea King* co-pilot and I, Capt. Colin Bylsma, Exercise Tactical Coordinator (TACCO). It would be our first close encounter with our continental allies in a battle simulation on the high seas.

Slipping out of Esquimalt Harbour, the crews readied themselves, anticipating the first of many "Encounter" Exercises in less than 24 hours. As a junior co-pilot, Capt. Peek would be charting new territory. This would be his first tactical flying experience in close proximity to a known "enemy". In this case, the opponent was an American surface fleet comprised of two state-of-the-art Arleigh Burke class destroyers, an Oliver Hazard Perry (OHP) class frigate, and a supply ship. There were also two American *Sea Hawk* helicopters accompanying

the fleet. As the TACCO the trip would prove to be my first attempt to plan, coordinate, and direct a surface warfare mission outside of the Sea King simulators that are based in Shearwater, N.S.

Before launching on the first sortie of the day, I entered the ship's operations room to receive a situation briefing from the Operations Room officer. Thanks to a CP-140 Aurora maritime patrol aircraft, I was informed that the opposing force was steaming straight south from Alaska towards Victoria.

The plan was that our ship would attempt to blend into the surrounding merchant traffic and the helicopter's mission would be to precisely locate the enemy's position while both covertly launching from and returning to the *Calgary*.

Our first mission was not successful, however, the second mission, flown by Capt. Peek, ended in victory. Choosing a direction of flight that disguised their true intentions, the Sea King crew was able to launch an unexpected and undetected attack on one of the American ships. The Sea King was fitted with a simulated air-to-surface missile, and the *Calgary* was then able to launch her own attack and thus succeeded in hindering our ally's advance.

With the trip's first exciting Encounter Ex behind us, the second day began with an equally intense, but much less confrontational encounter. In accordance with long-standing naval tradition, junior officers from the U.S. fleet boarded the *Calgary* while a ten-member Canadian contingent left for the various American vessels. Capt. Peek visited the U.S.S. *Ford* while I spent eight hours aboard the command ship, the U.S.S. *Howard*.


A novice of general naval affairs, I was struck by the similarities between both the equipment and the operations aboard American and Canadian warships. I was informed by many of the ship's officers that the *Howard* was a test platform for several technologically advanced pieces of equipment. These included a new gun system, a ship-wide internal wireless network, and display screens granting grand scale situational awareness to all sections of the operations team. With all these technical innovations, it seemed a surprising that the *Calgary* and its lone Sea King had won the first encounter so convincingly. The next day's events, however, would challenge that result.

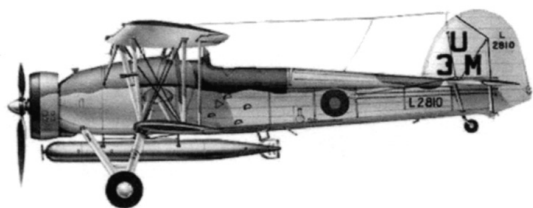
The final war games exercise pitted the *Calgary*, her Sea King, and an Arleigh Burke, against the command staff Arleigh Burke, the OHP, and her Sea Hawk. The sides appeared even, however, while the American junior Officers were onboard the *Calgary* they unknowingly revealed an important piece of information. They informed the Sea King TACCO, Capt. Rob Truscott that they had previously had difficulties properly identifying our helicopter on their radar systems. Their information was detailed enough that we believed we could use it to our advantage and sufficiently disguise, rather than hide, our presence in the air.

Launching from the deck of the *Calgary* we quickly headed toward the most likely position of the two American ships. It was our task to search, identify, and target the enemy vessels in order for our units to fire their surface-to-surface missiles. Almost immediately after spotting two suspicious contacts on radar, we visually sighted the enemy Sea Hawk heading in the opposite direction as us. She was heading toward the *Calgary*. Little thought was given to intercepting the aircraft as we only carried the C-6 light machine gun, a purely defensive weapon, most effective against slow moving surface targets. The *Calgary* would have to fend for herself and we had to hope that the Sea Hawk crew did not spot us and report our presence, or our intercept course. Closing to within visual range of our gyro-stabilized binoculars, we positively identified an Arleigh Burke and an OHP. We then began to send regular targeting reports and the *Calgary* quickly simulated launching her missiles over the horizon at the enemy contacts.

The enemy was destroyed and, upon returning to *Calgary* we learned so too was the Sea Hawk as it closed to within the stand-off range, at which point our ship utilized its own defensive weapons. Although simulated, victory was ours!

Later that evening, the high-ranking officers from each ship convened aboard the *Calgary* for a special dinner. Capt. Paul Antrobus, Air Officer of *Calgary's* Helicopter Air Detachment, attended the dinner and reported that no boasts, or excuses were made by any of the participants. While the Air Det did not brag, even in private, we were obviously very happy with the result. Even though we were flying in a platform that is over 40 years old and working with sensors and equipment long since developed, we achieved the desired ends. Through determination and innovation, we were able to do more with less and defeat an historic ally who possessed a decidedly technological and numerical advantage.

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Swordfish MK I 818 Sqn HMS Furious 1940

Our Downunder Diaspora Speaks
(Windy Geale)

I was one of those Canadians who joined the Royal Navy in 1943 to fly, and stayed on in the RN until 1950. I intended to become a pilot but fell foul of a medical and was then recommended to become an observer. But there was a six-month wait for an "O" course so I opted for a Telegraphist Air Gunners course and became a TAG flying in that great aircraft, the Fairey Swordfish. You are probably aware that the old Stringbag was the most successful airborne submarine killer of the war, sinking more shipping and submarines than any other type of aircraft. At the end of the war, the RN decided to continue on with two-seat aircraft, i.e., the Firefly, and some TAGs would be selected to do an observers course. After a stint in the Med in 827 Squadron, flying in a Firefly as an observer, I actually got to do the observers course and became a rating observer – an Aircrewman II. From there I went to a Mosquito squadron before coming back to Canada where I started flying in Avengers.

I soon found that the Avengers were not a bad aircraft but not as reliable as the Barracuda. The trouble with the Barra was that it did tend to look like a flying scrap heap and therefore got bad PR. Also, Avengers tended to have a few problems of their own like carb troubles, which in my case resulted in a hectic forced landing on a frozen lake – another of my hairy flights. The Avengers were a good buy (inexpensive) on the RCN's part and there were a lot available from which to choose. It was definitely an improvement on the Firefly; and the Gannet, which Gannet people swear by, was too far in the future.

When I first saw the Tracker, it was a brand new aircraft and seemingly modern, and I remember a remark that it could do the work of two Avengers. My response to that is, yes and no: no, it was not a stealth aircraft as was the combination of the ASW scrapper and AEW guppy team. Using the AEW as the controller and the scrapper going electronically silent, one could put the scrapper right on top of a snort before the scrapper went active. I know; I flew in the AEW Avenger as an Air Controller and did it. With the Tracker, once the submarine became aware that radar emissions were heading his way, he pulled the plug and was gone.

Even so, over the years the Tracker did do good work

and was a good ASW aircraft. Of course I will admit that I have always disagreed with the two-pilot concept with usually the junior pilot, who only wanted to fly the thing but had to handle the tactical situation of which he knew little. Later, when I came to the RAN, I flew as TACCO as the RAN only flew a single pilot in Trackers and talking to experienced USN pilots on exchange in the RAN they all agreed wholeheartedly that a second pilot was a waste. All in all, I had over ten years in Trackers and as a TACCO with better equipment in the S2E and later the S2G they were a good aircraft. Incidentally the RAN lost only one Tracker in fourteen years in a flying accident and the crew were recovered safely to the ship, HMAS Melbourne. By the way, HMAS Melbourne was my seventh carrier and I embarked as Senior Observer of 816 Squadron equipped with S2Es. I also commanded 851 Squadron equipped with S2Gs and S2Es, as well as the ECMHS 748 aircraft.

CONGRATULATIONS DANNY!

We offer congratulations to one of your Foundation Board members on his recent honour from St Mary's University. Dan Brownlow received an Honourary Doctorate Degree in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the community.

All we can add to this is a resounding Well Done, Danny! And you, yourself, do honour to St Mary's University by accepting the honour they offered.
Editor

*You know when you're getting marvelously mature when....
You give up all your bad habits and still don't feel good.*

**SAMF Fund-raising
Dinner/Auction**

We wish to extend our heartfelt thanks to the following friends of the Shearwater Aviation Museum foundation. Their generosity has ensured the success of our 5th Annual FR Dinner/Auction. As they continue to support our efforts, it is only fitting that you members and readers, should patronize them.

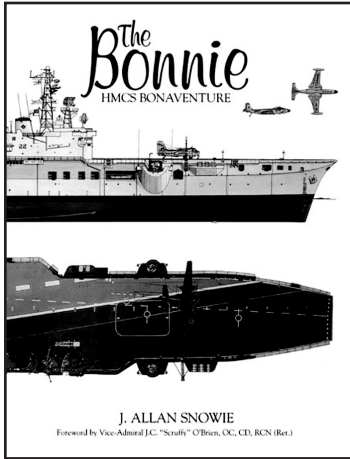
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Thanks also to the following volunteers: Bill Mont (Auctioneer par excellence & donor), Christine Hines, Kay Collacutt, Christine Dunphy, Mary Ellen McWhirter, Julie Gallant, Barb Ryan, Rob Lapine and Michelle Anthony.

Of course, the event could not have happened without the enthusiastic support and participation of the attendees. Thanks to all of the above for enabling us to raise in excess of \$6,000 for the Museum Building Fund. *Eric Edgar, Chair
Dinner/Auction Committee*



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All members are listed in our Donor Recognition Book in the Museum. When your contributions total \$1000 or more, your name will be mounted on our Donor Recognition Board also in the Museum. To check your total contributions, please call our Secretary.



Photos of Bonnie and Maggie are in colour and Warrior in black and white. The photos are mounted and ready to hang.

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LEO PETTIPA'S NAVAL AVIATION BOOKS

Books are available from the Shearwater Aviation Museum Gift shop or by contacting the Foundation. The following is a list of the books and price of each. In addition, GST (7%) and \$2 S & H are required.

Aircraft of the RCN \$14.95
Can. Naval Aviation 1945-1968 (2nd Edition) \$17.95
The Fairey Firefly in the RCN \$15.95

The Grumman Avenger in the RCN \$17.95
The Hawker Sea Fury in the RCN \$15.95
The Supermarine Seafire in the RCN \$15.95

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WALL OF HONOUR - GUIDELINES FOR DESIGNING YOUR "WALL OF HONOUR" TILE

The tile in the "Wall of Honour" is made from high quality marble, which is 12 inches square. The tile can be scored to form four 6-inch squares, diagonally across to form two triangular halves or used as is, whichever suits your wishes. All letters will be in the upper case configuration (capitols) and the tile will be mounted in a diamond orientation as opposed to a square orientation, with the line of your message running diagonally across the tile. You have four options to choose from:

Option "A" One quarter tile 6" by 6" square with up to 6 rows of 1/2" letters for a maximum of 40 letters and spaces with the remaining rows decreasing as the border/edge of the tile dictates.

Option "B" One half tile 12" by 12" by 17" and triangular in shape (isosceles), with up to 5 rows of 3/4" letters for a maximum of 60 letters and spaces. The longest row can accommodate up to 20 letters and spaces. The remaining 4 rows will decrease as the border/edge of the tile dictates. It should be noted that the upper half of a tile will start with a short row and the lower half with a long row.

Option "C" The full tile with up to 6 rows of 1" letters for a maximum of 55 letters and spaces. The two center rows can accommodate up to 16 letters and spaces. The remaining rows will decrease as the edge of the tile dictates.

Option "D" The full tile with up to 10 rows of 3/4" letters for a maximum of 120 letters and spaces. The two center rows can accommodate 20 letters and spaces each. The remaining rows above and below center will decrease as the edge of the tile dictates.

The colour of the tile will be "Belmont Rose". The only exception to this will be a black dedication tile. If submissions require any alteration, the subscriber will be contacted by phone or email (if you forward your own email address) by the coordinator for further discussion.

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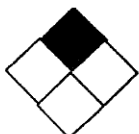
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Option B



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\$600

READERS RESPONSE

Larry Vipond writes:

Dear Kay,

I read with great interest Leo Pattipas' contribution to the spring 2004 SAMF Newsletter. What a great article! It brought back many memories. Here follows the way I saw things during my 12 years in the Air Branch.

It was 59 years ago, almost to the day, when I arrived at HMCS Star in Hamilton, ON, determined to join the navy and see the world. After about 5 minutes with the recruiting officer, I experienced my first disappointment.

He sent me home with instructions to return only when I had a letter from my parents granting me permission to join the navy. You see I was only 17 years of age at the time.

Shortly after that first encounter with the new post war 1945 R.C.N., I returned to Star with a hand written letter from my parents, granting me permission to join the navy. I was sworn in a day later with the title of "Boy Seaman". I refuse to call it a rank since that was as far down the totem pole as one could go.

For the next few weeks I cut the lawn at Star, did a little painting, helped out in the galley and generally tried to stay out of trouble. Boot Camp? There wasn't any. At some point during that period I was informed I was now a member of the Air Branch and would be sent to the RCAF base at Alymer, ON for a basic mechanics course, compliments of the RCAF.

Late in October 1945, the R.C.N.'s first class of approximately 20 aircraft mechanics arrived at Alymer for a six week course. At the end of the course all 20 of us appeared before a Selection Board that decided the trade we would be assigned. I think we all got the trade we requested. In my case I was to become an aircraft engine mechanic.

Since the RCN. lacked capacity to train ground crew personnel, in January 1946 I was shipped off to the U.K. for that all important engine mechanics course, compliments of the Royal Navy. Equipped with a head full of knowledge about a Spitfire's engine, I arrived back in Canada near the end of July at what was to become HMCS Shearwater.

To prevent this from becoming even more boring, I will skip ahead a couple of years when as a member of the 19th Carrier Air Group's 803 squadron, I arrived at the RN Naval Air Station in Northern Ireland, and was assigned to a new Sea Fury. I must add this occurred following a short course at the Bristol Aircraft Co. factory in Bristol, England, where that strange sleeve valve engine that powered the mighty Sea Fury was built.

My 12 year naval career ended in 1957 after numerous other duties, aircraft and ships, including several tours of duty on the Maggie, HMCS Labrador, HMCS Buckingham, UN Peacekeeping in the Suez, Avenger aircraft, helicopters and many days as the Duty RPO at

Shearwater. Hey, someone had to do it!

I've now had some 54 years to think back on those days. From a "lower deck hand's" point of view, there were problems, and many of them were potentially serious problems. I'm referring to training and equipment. A couple of examples: At one time I was in-charge of "A" hangar on the Maggie where we often refueled aircraft below deck. I can think of few more potentially explosive situations than a carrier's hangar deck being filled with gasoline fumes. At the start of refueling we rolled out the hoses and the cans of foam making stuff....just in case. Unbelievably, not one of us had any training on how to fight such a fire, including how to use the fire fighting equipment.

While on the Labrador in the Gulf Of St. Lawrence, the Bell helicopter developed an engine problem. I determined one of the cylinders had gone bad and was instructed by Shearwater to replace the cylinder with a spare that was onboard. I replaced the cylinder as instructed and all was well. Unfortunately, neither I or the other crewman had any training on the engine that powered the helicopter.

I was on an Avenger squadron for 2 years with absolutely no training being provided.. Dozens of other maintenance personnel were similarly handicapped. But somehow we managed to keep them flying, much to the credit of the builders that built such tough and dependable aircraft.

The equipment we were given to do our job was much of the time inadequate at best, and frequently totally lacking. However, we made do with what we had and still managed to get the job done. After all, we had some of the worlds best pilots that depended on us and we weren't about to let them down.

Fortunately, the RCN's air branch was never tested in time of war, I can only speculate how that would have gone had the shooting started.

Canada's military personnel are as good as any in the world. They deserve the best training and equipment the country can afford. I suspect little may have changed since 1945. Ottawa, are you listening?

From Hugh Davies & Ross Gascho

Newsletter Editor:

While looking through the latest newsletter it was really good to see the picture of the Fairey Firefly showcased on the back of the front cover.

Later on during the week I was in conversation with S/M Ross Gascho who also remarked how nice it was to see a colour photograph of one of the type of aircraft that we worked on many years ago.

We both wondered if it would be possible to showcase in a similar manner, all of the various types of A/C flown by the RCN during the hey days of the Warrior, Maggie, and the Bonnie. We know that to show them one at a time

would take many months, but if possible, could they be shown in the sequence that we used them. That way some of us could possibly see all of the ones that we were lucky enough to have worked on.

Glad to see that the name is not being changed at this time.

Harry Frost writes:

Bill Farrell's editorial in the spring 2004 newsletter has prompted me to write a piece on my father's exploits as naval aviator in WW1.

Russell Frost joined the RNAS late in the war. He qualified pilot and was posted to a squadron based on the south coast of England when the naval strategy was to bottle up the German fleet. One of his squadron mates was the then Duke of York, later King George VI.

He was tasked with ferrying and aircraft from the north of England. He experienced engine failure and crash landed in an English family garden. Unfortunately, he hit the top of a large tree on his approach. He fell from the aircraft through the limbs of the tree and was unconscious when he hit the ground. He remained comatose for 2 days and was nursed by the only members of the house at home, the daughter and mother.

When he recovered consciousness he discovered he had chipped almost every tooth in his mouth while falling through branches. He spat bits of teeth out for days. He found the daughter of the house most attractive and an endearing nurse. After recovering for several days in the excellent care of these ladies he returned to his squadron. Miraculously he had no broken bones, just bruises and a mouth full of chipped teeth.

When the armistice was declared he had not seen enemy action. It was at the end of WWI that the RNAS and the Royal Flying Corps (RFC) were merged to form the RAF. My father donned light blue.

He received a cable from his mother that his father was gravely ill in New York. My grandfather had travelled to New York on business and contracted the flu which was ravaging Europe and had permeated New York with the return of American service men. Unfortunately grandfather died within days, there being no drugs such as penicillin to treat the epidemic.

My father applied, on compassionate grounds, to jump the queue to return by liner to New York. He was refused. He was desperate to return and went 'awol'. He purchased a ticket on the next liner and returned to late for his father's funeral. In 1919 he went to university. He became a business man, married, had two boys (my brother and I) and moved to England in 1932. While there he visited the daughter of the family who had nursed him (with my mother). She was a spinster still in the house where he crashed.

My family returned to Canada before the outbreak of

WWII. In September 1939 my father went to Ottawa to apply to join the RCAF. When his file from WWI was examined it was marked 'Deserter'. With some difficulty he was engaged although judged too old to fly operationally.

As an administrator he was tasked with starting the Air Cadet Corps in Canada. He went to the UK to learn how the Brits ran their programme. He finished the war as a wing commander.

Before entering Royal Roads in 1944 I spent one year in the Air Cadets. Bob Laidler was in my high school unit before he joined the RCAF. Cheers from the UK.

From Mickey Owens

Agnes and I just returned from a seniors bus tour of California. On our way through a small town, Half Moon Bay, there was an air show on and the highway traffic was stop and go. Parked with the other aircraft was the Sea Fury, RCN 105, in the old Navy colours and with a bright red nose cone. Of course I brought this to the attention of our fellow travelers and they, being all Canadians were quite impressed.

One of our guys on board approached me and asked how I knew so much about the RCN. It turned out that he was ex-RCN, his name is Jim Goodwin and he was a reserve pilot who became a UNTD and went on to be an MD and served as such in the RCN. He later opened a practice in Gravenhurst Ont. where he now resides. Small world!

From: Philip Eisnor

In reading the many books written by Mr. Leo Pettipas especially the one on the Hawker Sea Fury I have noted many photo's throughout his books and the many photo's of Furies that had crash landed in wooded areas near Shearwater or thereabouts. A number of them appear to have minimal damage while others have substantial damage, were these aircraft removed from the crash site or where they destroyed on site by RCN personnel.

I was an employee of Fairey Aviation way back when the Sea Fury was in operation with the Navy and this aircraft was the most beautiful naval aircraft ever designed and as a pleasure to work on, so I thought since I was an airframe tech. and later to become a civilian pilot flying out of Lake William in Waverley. One of the Sea Furies I did much work on was TG-127.

I have several questions on this subject as I think it would be great idea if the Museum had a Sea Fury on display in it's collection. I do know there are only two Furies left in Canada, one in Ottawa and the other in Calgary. I also know that the McEwan's in Dieppe, N.B. had some twenty of them on their airfield many years ago. Some years ago it was said that McEwan had sold several to American interests and one was in the old Moncton Flying Club hanger when it caught fire some years ago which totaled all the planes inside.

With the substantial number of Furies that were pranged, were any of these recovered and put back in service

again ? If there are still the remains of Furies in the woods would it be possible for them to be reasonable removed and restored ? Has the Shearwater Museum done any research on the possible recovery of a Sea Fury since this aircraft was used at Shearwater ?

It is a darn shame the Museum doesn't have one example of the finest aircraft designed and I would love to see one and place my hands on one again.

One final question.....can someone tell me what the Fury was like to fly as I can't find anyone who will give me any info on her flying characteristics?????? I sincerely hope I can get some answers to my questions from someone there at the Museum.

Dave Williams writes:

The Herb? on page 32, third row is Herb Parsons. Herb flew with me for quite a while in the 50's as OM along with Harry Brown. One day on the flight deck of Maggie I was sitting in the cockpit with my brains in neutral waiting for the "start engines broadcast" when Herb climbed up onto the wing and dumped all the control locks in my lap which I had somehow missed on my pre flight inspection. The look on his face was somewhere between disgust, annoyance and terror. I think I mumbled something to the effect that I was sure I would have noticed my oversight sometime between startup and launch. I must have talked fast because he climbed in the back seat and of we went. This incident hints quite a bit about our relationship. A he continued to fly with me and B he felt the need to monitor my pre flights in the first place. Herb was a top crew member but I lost touch with him in later years but I believe he had a great career and is retired somewhere in the Annapolis Valley.

Question for Banshee pilots

From: Patrick Dawson

As a youngster growing up on Firefly Terrace I recall finding a Banshee fuselage out in the woods behind our house (OK it was 40 years or so ago (probably 1963 or 64) and it might not have been close to home but it was definitely in the woods behind the houses on Firefly). How would something like that get there? It didn't seem to be a scrap yard as there were trees all around it as far as I recall.

Patrick Dawson M.A.
Service Group Administrator
School of Advanced Technology
Algonquin College (Woodroffe Campus)
<dawsonp@algonquincollege.com>

From H. A. Williams:

Picture - pg 32 Spring Issue: In the middle row next to Ray Doucette is Bill ? who I believe was actually Jack Bottaro (who I think was killed in an accident later that year). In the TR row Herb? Is Herb Parsons. These two fellows were in VS881 during 1957 and 1958 when I

was and we were on the Bonnie together.

From Carl Wright:

Picture: pg 32 The second unknown on TR is Doug Euloth for sure and Herby Parsons I believe.

F. Stuart Taggart writes:

My sincerest congratulations to you upon the inclusion of Naval Aviation Aircraft on the inside front cover of your newsletter. If is your intention to continue this series, please do not add commercial advertising in this space as the inclusion of these pictures will make great collectors items and also suitable for framing.

In addition, the photograph on the inside back cover is unidentified, but as a non Naval Air Person, I am assuming that it is an aerial photograph of CFB Shearwater, but if it was an identified photograph, I would not have to make any assumptions.

I thoroughly enjoy your publication as it usually contains references to many who served with me at HMCS Venture from Sep 58 through Aug 1960 - pg 17 - Jack McGee's biography, pg IV - where 323 names are listed as being on the "Wall of Honour" of whom I personally know 9.

I also thought that in this issue, mention would have been made of the "50th Anniversary" of the Venture Plan and its quincennial reunion to be held at NOTC Venture from 7 - 12 Sep 04.

(Note: My apologies that you had to make an assumption re the photo on the inside back cover. I made the assumption, and didn't mind doing so, that most of our readers would know it was Shearwater. What do I know... I'll try to remember to 'name that photo' from here on in. BTW We did not have the info re the reunion or we would/could have printed it. Kay)

From: "Wags" Wagland, Flight Deck Engineering Officer, Magnificent Aug 52 - Nov 59

Say "Hi" to Bill Farrell for me - it's been a long, long, time.

From Doug 'Gibby' Gibson

Dear Bill (Gillespie): Am renewing my membership for next two years.

How are you Bill? I see the ranks are getting thinner every year. I sure enjoyed the newsletter - great cover and inner rear cover. Can't get over how much building has gone on east of the lake.

This Sat 19Junn, Hampton Gray VC Chapter (CNAG) is holding its annual BBQ at the Ottawa-Hull Naval Assoc. Am looking forward to that. Will be anticipating my seeing you and CNAGers in Trenton this Sep. Best wishes to you all at the Museum. Ready Aye Ready.

Ivor Hamilton writes:

Was in Monte Video, Uruguay, recently and, for those who were also there in Bonaventure in 1966, I can say it is still a marvelous city. The "Cubilete" club is no longer in existence but some of the older citizens recall it with affection as one of the finest establishments of its type.

From Frank Smith:

I enjoy reading the various stories, experiences etc, in the SAMF Newsletter that take us back to the "old days". Thought that this could be of some interest' my association with the Swordfish or as we called her 'Stringbag'.

It began in 1935 after having left school at 14 years of age. This age was normal in the 30's in the UK - within days I started to work at the Fairey Aviation aircraft plant, Hayes, Middlesex. I started on the final assy line where each Swordfish began as a bunch of dural tubes. These were riveted together to form the fuselage, placed on tressles and moved along the line as necessary. My job was to help the men, get fresh rivets from the salt bath every few hours and do whatever else I was told to do. One day I began to install the flotation bags and secure them with cord and varnish. Later I was put on Snags picked up on final inspection. Bill Fairey, the owner, a huge man used to come occasionally to check on things and chat to this men. After engine installation, wings installed (we called them wings in those days) ground run etc, the aircraft was wings folded and towed to Fairey's own field (part of Heath Rownow) for test flight and delivery to the FAA. Early part of the war the wing shop was damaged by two German bombs.

About five years later in 1941 I joined that FAS and after training as an Engine fitter AM(E) at RAF Locking, was drafter to HMS Condor, Arbroath - my first Sqdn 749 a Swordfish Sqdn. I forget what the UE was, 12 or 18 a/c but we Fitters and Riggers were few in number and kept very busy.

Our Sqdn chief was a Flt/Sgt and we did DI's and night flying DI's as we flew to 1-2a.m. Upon recovery to our field dispersal we would cover engines, screw picket each wing but strangely not refuel until the next day. Our "field" office was an old a/c packing crate and the whole area had total black out making night operations difficult. The only lights I recall were the live runway Glim Lamps. Within months, I did my first eng. Change and as the Rigger had done a major repair on the stbd main plane requiring a symmetry check we were both required to go on the test flight. This flight was fun to us, in an open cockpit, on a beautiful day over the Scottish countryside. After checking my engine, the pilot said "hang on men", climbed to about 12 thousand ft (no oxy for us in the back), we dived down and up and over into a loop and up again to a stalled turn falling off back to port. I'm in the rear cockpit really hanging on but I think enjoying the ride: must have been a bit scared though.

After a year or so on the squadron, drafted foreign to RNAS Piarco Trinidad where I relieved Les Sparrow. We met again later at Shearwater. Still working on Bristol Pegasus engines we had 4 Walrus and 12 brand new Grumman Goose a/c.

Joining the RCN in 1951, I was drafted back to Arbroath on an A. T. Course 1955-57 had a nostalgic moment when our "home classroom" was in our old sqdn offices and the adjacent hangar was now filled with much later a/c.

But, I will never forget the Swordfish.

From Roger A. King:

In the last issue - Spring 2004 - of the newsletter, there was a photo by Bruce Campbell of a Hawker Sea Hawk which he took at Shearwater in 1953.

I am enclosing herewith my photo of the same Sea hawk being hoisted on to HMCS MAGNIFICENT just before we (Sqdn 881) left for the Coronation. *Best Regards.*



Lest We Forget...

From J. Edward Troy, Bishop Emeritus of Saint John

Enclosed is a cheque in support of the SAMF. My brother Lt (P) Barry Troy, killed on February 25, 1958 is perhaps a tiny footnote in the history of Canadian Naval Aviation, but his loss is a painful memory to this day, for the surviving members of our family. RIP. In seeking to preserve the happier memories of Naval Aviation in Canada, the foundation also ensures that Barry and others like him are not forgotten.

Bob Collyer writes:

Dear Bill (Gillespie)

Thanks for your letter bringing me up to date a little on the Foundation. I can understand your difficulty in raising enough funds to keep things going. Am

enclosing a cheque which I hope will help a little.

It seems a long time since I came ashore to HMS Seabourne in Jan 43. Lucky I suppose to get a draft like that.

Hope you are keeping well. All the best.

From Ray Creery

Much enjoyed the Spring Edition of the Newsletter. I'm glad the name will stay the same. I agree with what Gordon Soutter wrote. With all best wishes, Ray

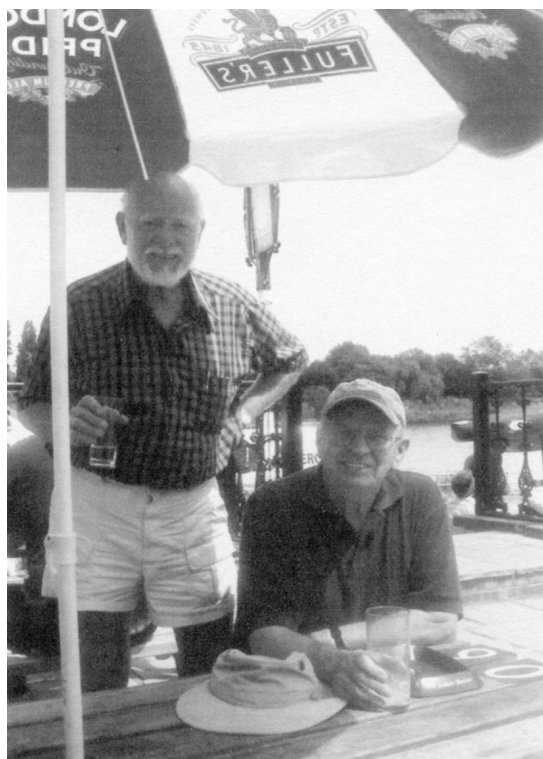
Seth Grossmith writes:

Art on pg 12 re the Hawker Sea Hawk. Could this be the same aircraft noted on pg 6 of Spring 2002 nsltr - the dates seem to be significant. Cheers.

Bob Bissell writes:

Hi Kay: Here is a pic of ancient mariners/aviators on leave in London. Just to prove we are still alive. Sorry that I am missing Tall Ships 2004, but can't be everywhere.

Enjoyed the Newsletter - I was home to receive it this time.



Peter Berry writes:

To the Editor: I am referring to the mid-air tragedy report written by Leo Pettipas with an excerpt from

"Hands to Flying Stations" by Stu Soward

This was one of the worst accidents suffered by our naval aviators. At the time, I was flying in an AVRO ANSON MK I with Mike Wasteney who needed someone to wind up the undercarriage. We were very close by and witness the scene in the harbour but not the incident itself. One of the Harvard pilots killed was Marshall Stewart, who was married to Barbara Howe, one of C. D. Howe's three daughters, neighbours of ours in Rockcliffe (Ottawa) who I had known since early childhood. The Stewart's lived on the main road from Dartmouth to Shearwater and often played host to many of us.

Somehow, Marshall's name was omitted from the report. When his widow Barbara died a couple of years ago, I wrote a sympathy letter to her next of kin and received a very appreciative reply from his son "Bob".

I may have been jinxed. In two particularly nasty accidents which took place above Halifax Harbour, I was flying nearby both times in an Anson, this second time when that brilliant pilot named Fisher from the 806 display squadron on tour, somehow lost it in the heavy overcast and dove his beautiful Hornet at very high speed straight into the harbour.

As old age creeps inexorably on, I tend to dwell upon the names of old aviators who managed to get on the wrong list far too soon. Marshall Stewart is one who is sorely missed as is dear old "Dogface" Monks who must have felt horrible.

SAM Newsletter is a sensational publication which continues to give so many of us many happy hours. There never has been an outfit like ours, and it deserves far more recognition than it has received. Many of my acquaintances in and around Toronto are unaware that Canada had aircraft carriers. It is a shame but no fault of the many contributors to SAMF.

God Bless Bill (Wild Bill) Farrell and his associates. We date from 825 Squadron of the 19th Carrier Air Group in Happy Warrior.

From Pop Fotheringham:

Dear Chuck: Many thanks for making the arrangements for our visit to the museum. I was greatly impressed and congratulate all concerned for the fine work that has been done and is continuing. Much credit is due for the perseverance against what must have seemed impossible odds. The results bear witness to tremendous zeal which has been shown by so many willing helpers.

It was a special treat to see the Firefly. It seems hard to believe that this is an aircraft in which I flew a number of hours during Warrior's trip to the West Coast almost 60 years ago. While there is still work to be done, it is obvious that the atmosphere of enthusiasm so evident will bring the desired result.

Leo Pettipas' 'History and the Historic' in the Spring 04 newsletter is an excellent piece of work. Reproduced in pamphlet form it would make an outstanding item for distribution to future museum visitors. It will not be long before there will be little knowledge or understanding of this important segment of Canadian Naval History. Just a suggestion.

Our visit to Shearwater will remain the highlight of our trip to the Maritimes. It is unlikely I will have an opportunity for a future visit. Again our thanks for your assistance.

Ronald Houstoun writes:

Dear Bill (Gillespie): Firstly, let me thank you for your time and interest regarding my membership status. You are probably aware of my more recent views regarding the exposure and presentation of our past mutual interests in museum exhibits. My letter, printed in the spring 2003 issue of the Newsletter is still reflective of those viewpoints.

I was not so much interested in making rapid physical changes to the museum itself, but to precipitate changes in the thrust and direction of their programs. Unfortunately, I see no intent to seriously consider such activity. Personnel such as myself living at a distance from the site are in no position to adequately create a museum exhibit, anymore than those presently been shown were expected to dig up their materiel.

I am forever appreciative and grateful to those that are responsible for the living memories of the past that are presently on exhibit. However, until such time as these memories include the technical and engineering achievements of people such as yourself, I find myself unable to provide my previous support.

From Bill Gillespie, Membership Chair to Mr. Houstoun

Thank you very much for your letter of 2 Jul 04. A copy has been forwarded to the Manager and Curator of the Museum for their information.

We too, share in some of your frustration in the way in which the Museum is moving, but also understand, the slow progress the Museum is taking in achieving many of its original objectives. In many ways, we, the technical side, have no one to blame, but ourselves. No documentation was ever recorded on the technical side that jumps out and hits you, like the history of a Squadron, which has been documented in various Squadron Line Books/Logs. Even these are very sketchy in naming personnel other than incoming and outgoing Commanding Officers. Any history of the Technical Branch, as we knew it, is hidden away in individual memories. Rolly West, who volunteers in the archives, is trying to identify various photos, and can tell you how difficult the job is, especially when trying to match faces, let alone tell what event the picture represented.

With each passing year, the mandate of the Museum appears to change. Originally, the Museum was to portray the history of Shearwater. Now it is leaning towards Maritime Aircraft history. We will continue to fight to ensure there is a strong representation of the Naval Air Branch and try to have them put more of the history of those who made it happen, put on display

Thanks once again for your interest and constructive thoughts and we hope you took notice of the picture on the cover of the Spring 2004 edition of the Newsletter. We do listen and take action when we can.

Well", snarled the tough old Navy Chief to the bewildered Seaman. "I suppose after you get discharged from the Navy, you'll just be waiting for me to die so you can come and p--- on my grave." "Not me, Chief!" the Seaman replied, "Once I get out of the Navy, I'm never going to stand in line again!"

SADDEST OF DAYS! 30 Mar 72

"Up Spirits" was piped for the last time in the Canadian Navy, followed by the last issue of rum.

LOST WORK OF ART

Those of us who had the pleasure of knowing that fabulous pilot Dickie Bird, once upon a time C.O. of our first Seafury squadron, may recall him boasting of his possession of a classic painting dating from the early 1900s. The subject of the painting is probably an English general and the painting itself commemorates that general's most successful military exploit during the Boer War. While the only SAMF connection, a tenuous one at that, is that it confirms that naval pilots had taste and a degree of erudition that went beyond just wine, women and song. Dickie left our living train years ago and the whereabouts of his treasured work of art is unknown. Any reader with a clue as to where this painting may now be lying is requested to contact the editor or the secretary. The painting was titled Lord Roberts Relieving Ladysmith on Horseback. *Ed.*

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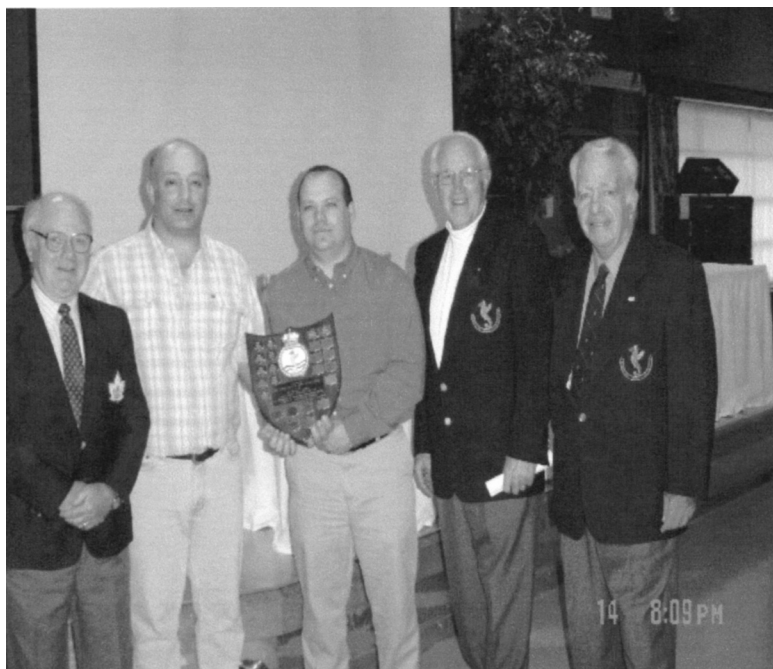
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**Aircraft Technicians
Deserving Student Award**



This picture was taken at Awards Night for students of the Akerley Campus Of the Nova Scotia Community College. This year, two courses were run for Aircraft Technicians. The recipient for Class #1 was A. J. Peters and for Class #2, Neil Pickerskill. Each recipient was presented with a \$300 cheque from the Atlantic Chapter of CNAG.

From left to right: Rolly West, Committee Member, Neil Pickerskill, Class #2, A. J. Peters, Class #1, Bill Gillespie, Committee Chairperson, and Steve MacDonald, Chapter President, who did the presentations.

BRAVO ZULU (BZ)

A BZ to all who responded to our letter re membership and brought their's up to date - and also BZ to those new members. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

The 'Wicked Witch of the East' (Kay) is still open for business and will gladly accept any further renewals (it just takes the payment of this years membership to bring yo up to date) or new memberships.

With the cutbacks taking place at the Base/Wing, more and more of our resources are being used just to maintain the Museum. Consequently, there are no funds available for new projects unless of course they come from you - the membership. This coupled with our ageing volunteer staff, is having a dramatic effect on displaying the numerous items still in storage. Your new or renewed membership will give us the chance to try and move forward.
Bill Gillespie, Membership Chair

**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: I'm told the only reason ths is called the Last Bonnie/Maggie Reunion is because there is no one willing to take over running the event. Surely someone out there might be willing - rather than scrapping this great event. Kay)



16 Mar 69. S/Lt Daryl Harden, RCN, piloting VS880 Tracker 1572 during a night landing in rough seas, flew up the axial deck of HMCS Bonaventure and struck an a/c on the forward deck park. He reported difficulty gaining altitude following his bolter and trouble controlling the a/c below a speed of 120 knots. He was waved off in the following landing attempt and while overflying the ship, it was noticed that he was missing about 4 ft of his starboard wing. With fuel escaping from a ruptured tank in the damaged mainplane and lack of control at the normal approach speed, Harden elected to ditch. He and his crew were subsequently picked up uninjured by the plane-guard destroyer.

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."

The Royal Canadian Air Force's (RCAF) Second World War history is replete with remarkable accounts of individuals and operations in Europe, North Africa and the Battle of the Atlantic. However, much less is recorded about the RCAF's efforts in the "Forgotten War" in the Middle East where the actions of one RCAF officer changed the direction of the war in the Indian Ocean. Squadron Leader (S/L) Leonard J. Birchall's sighting of the Japanese Imperial Fleet, while on his first patrol in a RCAF 413 Squadron Catalina, is credited by British Prime Minister, Sir Winston Churchill, with saving the strategic island of Ceylon (now Sri Lanka). Birchall and his crew were shot down and spent the remainder of the war as prisoners of war (POW). As the senior allied officer in a series of Japanese POW camps, S/L Birchall's selfless leadership under inhumane conditions personified the RCAF's motto, "Per Ardua Ad Astra" (Through Adversity to the Stars).

After graduating from the Royal Military College, S/L Birchall completed his pilot training course in May 1938 and subsequently graduated from the Air Navigation and Seaplane School at Trenton ON in November 1938. His first posting was to No. 5 General Reconnaissance (GR) Squadron, equipped with Stranraer twin-engine, biplane flying boats, based at RCAF Station Dartmouth. On 10 September 1939, Birchall flew one of the RCAF's first missions of the Second World War, taking off from the water at Dartmouth's Eastern Passage in Stranraer No. 907 to patrol the approaches to Halifax's strategic harbour. After a hectic tour on No. 5 Squadron, Birchall was transferred to a newly formed flying boat squadron in Scotland in mid-1941.

No. 413 (GR) Squadron was formed in Scotland on 1 July 1941. This was the RCAF's eleventh squadron to be formed in Great Britain; it was the third squadron (after 404 and 407) and first flying boat unit to be assigned the Royal Air Force's (RAF) Coastal Command. Shortly thereafter S/L Birchall joined the squadron bringing with him his 5 Squadron background to bolster the coastal reconnaissance experience level of the newly formed squadron. 413 Squadron, based in Sullom Voe in the Shetland Islands, was supposedly an RCAF Squadron but due to lack of available Canadian personnel, the great majority of squadron members were from the RAF.

The squadron's Catalinas were a twin engine, high-wing, flying boat that operated from moorings on the water. The crew of nine had sleeping accommodations, a stove and refrigerator and was reasonably self-contained. The aircraft, built in the United States, retained their long-range tanks that were installed for the overseas ferry flight from Bermuda to England and hence could stay airborne for 32 hours. The normal patrol duration out of the Shetlands was 24 hours.

No. 413 Squadron operated in the anti-submarine and convoy escort role from Sullom Voe until February 1942 when the squadron received orders to hurriedly move to Ceylon. The fall of Hong Kong and Singapore had prepared the way for the Japanese advance into the Indian Ocean in their relentless conquest of Southeast Asia. To counter the Japanese threat Great Britain built up its Eastern Fleet and strengthened its base in Ceylon. The situation in the Indian Ocean was serious. Resources destined for Hong Kong and Singapore, which were captured by the Japanese, were diverted to Ceylon as the Allies scrambled to amass more forces in the Asian theatre to stem the Japanese advance. These included modern fighters, experienced pilots, anti-aircraft batteries, radar installations and the Catalinas of 413 Squadron. In Ceylon the squadron would perform the same maritime reconnaissance duties as in the Shetland Islands.

The British Eastern Fleet consisted of only two aircraft carriers, with obsolete Swordfish and Fulmar aircraft; five battleships, of which only one could be considered modern; one cruiser, five light cruisers and numerous destroyers. This fleet, which was cobbled together at the last minute, had little opportunity to train to become a cohesive force. Furthermore, there were no fighters to provide air cover, rendering their antiquated torpedo bombers all but useless. The lack of air cover also meant that the fleet could not draw enemy ships to within range of their battleships' guns without risking attack from enemy aircraft.

No nation in history had ever conquered as much territory as Japan in such a short time. The Japanese fleet's speed of advance was expedited by not having to lose time in ports to make repairs, as her warships had sustained only superficial damages from previous battles. Although Japan's interests lay in Eastern Asia she had to defeat the Americans in the Pacific before she could achieve her objective of capturing the natural resources of greater East Asia. Japan was confident that America could be eliminated as an effective force in the Western Pacific. She was equally certain that Germany would succeed in the Middle East and Russia, and her U-boat fleet would cut off Britain from American help. Thus Japan's military and naval forces continued to press forward on every front. Admiral Raeder, the German Naval Commander-in-Chief in a prepared report to Hitler dated 13 February 1942, wrote:

"Japan plans to protect this front in the Indian Ocean by capturing the key position of Ceylon, and she also plans to gain control of the sea in that area by means of superior naval forces. Once Japanese battleships, aircraft carriers and submarines, and the Japanese Air Force are based in Ceylon, Britain will be forced to resort to heavily escorted convoys if she desires to maintain communication with India and the Near East."

The Staff of the Japanese Combined Fleet prepared plans to strike westward into the Indian Ocean and seize Ceylon. They even prepared follow-on plans to take over Madagascar, which was still in Vichy French hands. The Germans did everything to persuade the Japanese to initiate these operations, which would give tremendous support to its war effort against the British. They even provided the Japanese with intelligence on suitable landing sites in Ceylon.

No. 413 Squadron moved from Sullom Voe to Pembroke Dock, Wales, to prepare for its deployment to the East. On 19 March, S/L Birchall was the captain of one of two squadron Catalinas to depart Pembroke Dock for Gibraltar on the first leg of the trip to Ceylon. The squadron's aircraft were armed with a single Lewis gun in the front turret and twin Lewis guns in each side blister, but had no self-sealing tanks or armour. Three long-range auxiliary fuel tanks were installed in the hull and the aircraft were to be loaded to their maximum all-up weight with supplies. Since the Catalinas were large and cruised at a leisurely 100 knots they were very vulnerable to air attack. So the crews elected to fly the first legs of their transit at night even though there were no flame suppressors on the exhaust stacks; making the Catalinas look like flying Christmas trees against the night sky. From Gibraltar Birchall flew down the Mediterranean to Cairo. He then carried on to Basra, Iraq, and to Karachi, India. On this last leg the autopilot in the second aircraft went unserviceable so Birchall carried on alone overnight to the RAF seaplane base at Koggala Lake, the final destination in Ceylon.

Koggala Lake is located just south of Galle on the west side of Ceylon. The lake is very small, surrounded by towering coconut palms and filled with coral reefs. Although a take-off and landing path had been cleared through the reefs it took practiced skill to come in over the trees and get the aircraft down on the water before running out of landing space. It was a standard requirement for crews to have a fair amount of twilight experience before attempting any night landings. Birchall and his crew arrived at mid-day and were allowed to rest until noon the next day. The situation was greatly confused, but all realized that battle was imminent and the Allied position was desperate. The Station Commanding Officer (CO) briefed Birchall on the serious deficiency in long-range patrol aircraft and the details of stationing 413 Squadron at Koggala. Because of radio silence there was no information on Allied ships' movements. Therefore, the CO asked Birchall if he could fly a patrol the next morning to a secret

Royal Navy (RN) base to deliver messages and to bring back information on the location of British ships and their future intentions. Since the flight was in daylight, Birchall eagerly accepted. An RAF Catalina was scheduled to patrol up into the Bay of Bengal and a Dutch aircraft was tasked to patrol over the Indian Ocean south of Ceylon. About midnight the CO briefed that the Dutch aircraft was now scheduled for the patrol to the RN base and asked Birchall to take the southern patrol. Birchall's crew was scheduled to leave early in the morning and return to Ceylon during the night but could cruise around until daylight when they could land. With their long-range tanks, 413 Squadron's Catalinas could easily complete this mission so Birchall accepted the revised tasking.



“A 413 Squadron on its beaching gear on shore of Koggala Lake for servicing.”

The Japanese had surpassed even their most optimistic targets and time scale. The Allied quandary was where the Japanese would attack next. There were three possible strategic options: to advance on Australia, India or Hawaii, each with its own strong advocates. While the arguments raged back and forth Japanese Admiral Yamamoto decided to put the British Eastern Fleet out of action and remove the Indian Ocean threat.

In accordance with Yamamoto's strategy, Vice-Admiral Nagumo with substantially the same force that he led against Pearl Harbour departed the Celebes Sea, in Indonesia, on 26 March. Steering southwards, Nagumo entered the Indian Ocean via the Ombai Straits between Flores and Timor. A smaller diversionary force known as the "Malaya Force" sailed from Mergui Burma, a few days later in order to enter the Indian Ocean at the same time as Nagumo's First Air-Fleet. The Malaya Force was to operate northeast of India while Nagumo tried to seek out and destroy the British Eastern Fleet near Ceylon.

Meanwhile, the Allies took all measures possible to reinforce Ceylon, limited only by the demand for men and equipment in all the other war theatres. General Layton was appointed Theatre Commander and he immediately put his new powers to work in an effort to fortify Ceylon; airdromes were built and aircraft were ferried in to them. Radar was practically non-existent so long range air reconnaissance was critical.

Commander-in-Chief of the Eastern Fleet, Admiral Sir James Somerville who had just arrived in Ceylon on 24 March, reviewed his fleet's assets. The only modern battleship was the Warspite, laid down early in the First World War but modernized with an armoured deck. The remainder of his naval force consisted of carriers Indomitable and Hermes, the light cruisers Dragon, Caledon, Emerald, Enterprise, Dorsetshire and Cornwall and six destroyers. A Dutch cruiser and destroyer completed the force. There was no time for any fleet training. Somerville immediately put to sea and made plans on the assumption that the enemy would approach from the southeast. Somerville based his fleet at Addu Atoll, the secret naval base located 600 miles (1000 kilometres) southwest of Ceylon, the island atoll to which Birchall had been originally scheduled to fly. At Addu Atoll the fleet was joined by four battleships: Resolution, Revenge, Ramillies and Royal Sovereign.

Intelligence led Somerville to believe Nagumo had sailed from Singapore and therefore, estimated his arrival in the area on 31 March. When the fleet did not materialize by 3 April, there was a strong feeling that the whole thing was a false alarm. The cruiser Dorsetshire was ordered back to Colombo to continue her refit together with her sister ship, Cornwall. The carrier Hermes was ordered back to Trincomalee with the destroyer Vampire. The remainder of the fleet returned to Addu Atoll for refuelling.

Nagumo had one vital task, to find and destroy what remained of British sea power in the East. Japanese intelligence reported a build up of aircraft and naval power but Nagumo had air and naval superiority. He had six aircraft carriers each with 54 bombers and 18 fighters; four battleships; two heavy cruisers; one light cruiser; 11 destroyers and seven submarines. This force was well trained, and had proven themselves at Pearl Harbour and other encounters. He expected to find the British ships at Trincomalee or Colombo or in Ceylonese waters and was confident that he could locate and destroy them. Somerville and the Admiralty were well aware of the Japanese superiority and the British could not afford the risk of seeking combat, as a defeat would allow Japan to invade Ceylon and India, thereby allowing the Axis powers to "close the ring" around the Asian, North African and European theatres of war.

In the early morning of 4 April, Birchall's crew took off from Koggala Lake in Catalina "A". They were tasked to conduct a crossover (ladder) patrol about 250 miles (415 kilometres) southeast of Ceylon. The tactic was to search an area during daylight far enough out from Ceylon that the enemy could not sail in during the night and launch an attack at dawn. The crew planned to be at about 2000 feet (700 meters) so that they could spot anything on the water including periscopes of submarines that could be scouting in advance of the fleet. Because of the lack



"413 Squadron technicians work on squadron Catalina in Ceylon."

of information on the whereabouts of the British fleet the crew was briefed to positively identify all ships and record their position, course and speed.

Birchall flew out to the assigned patrol area, arriving just as the sun was climbing over the horizon. From then on it was an uneventful monotonous day, flying the search pattern 150 miles (250 kilometres) east, 50 miles (85 kilometres) south, 150 miles west, 50 miles south, hour after hour. It was a cloudless bright day and visibility was unlimited. The only navigational aid was the sun and the navigator, Warrant Officer "Bart" G.C. Onyette, constantly plotted position lines based on his sextant observations. The sun produced only one position line but he needed two position lines to ascertain their geographic position with certainty. Onyette was not too concerned because on the way back to Ceylon after dark there would be plenty of stars from which to plot an accurate position.

The day wore on until Birchall's crew came to the end of their search pattern. During the final leg the navigator advised Birchall that the moon was just rising and that if they flew another leg he could get a good sun-moon cross fix to accurately plot their position and calculate an accurate course back to Koggala Lake. Since they had to remain airborne until daybreak, Birchall agreed to fly the additional leg. Onyette took his fix and found that the Catalina was much farther south than tasked. Birchall continued on and just at the most southerly point as he set course for home he saw some specks on the south horizon. Birchall altered course to investigate as per his orders to report the position of all vessels found in his search area. As they approached closer there were more specks that eventually started to take the shape of warships. With plenty of time and fuel remaining to return to Koggala the crew continued to close to positively identify ships. Since the navigator had just obtained a good fix the warships' position could be accurately reported along with their course and speed. Once the Catalina was close enough to identify the warships as Japanese, it was too late! The crew did a hurried count and at 1605 universal time the wireless operator, Sergeant F.C. Phillips, sent a first enemy-sighting message. It contained the total number of ships seen, a breakdown of the types of vessels, their position and speed. The standard procedure was to repeat the message three times before waiting for an acknowledgement of receipt.

The lead warship, a Japanese cruiser, opened fire as Birchall turned away. Three flights of Japanese Zero fighters attacked Catalina "A" from above. The Catalina returned defensive fire from the nose and blister positions, but without effect. There was no cloud cover, nowhere to hide. Halfway through the third transmission of the sighting report, the wireless compartment was hit with an explosive 20-millimetre shell, severing all communications and seriously injuring Sergeant Phillips, the wireless operator. Birchall tried to evade to no avail; the fuel tanks in the wing were punctured and since they were not self-sealing, flaming gasoline poured down into the fuselage and into the hull where the long-range tanks were located. The crew extinguished the fire twice but then it broke out in earnest. Sergeant Calorossi, one of the air gunners was hit in the leg with a shell and his leg was blown off. The front gunner, Sergeant Henzell, took a burst dead on, shrapnel and bullets were flying all over the place. Another explosive burst shattered the instrument panel, wounding Birchall in the leg but he continued to throw the badly damaged Catalina into evasive manoeuvres. The fire in the long-range tanks was now out of control.

It took the combined efforts of Birchall and his second pilot, Pilot Officer P.N. Kenny to keep the aircraft flying. The crew's only chance for survival was ditching the Catalina; the aircraft was very difficult to control but the two pilots managed to force land the flaming Catalina on the water. The crew put Mae Wests on the two badly wounded crewmembers and threw them into the water. Sgt Calorossi, the air gunner without the leg went down with the aircraft. The rest of the crew put on their Mae Wests, leaped into the water and swam feverishly away from the burning gasoline on the water. Pulling the injured with them, they feared that the hydrostatic fuses would cause the depth charges to explode as they sank.

After the Catalina sank the Zeros strafed the crew in the water. The uninjured survivors dove under the water and watched the bullets change direction after hitting the surface. The two seriously wounded crewmembers, whose injuries prevented them from shedding their Mae Wests to seek cover under water, were killed. When the strafing ceased the survivors then had to worry about sharks as most of them were bleeding in varying degrees. Eventually the Japanese destroyer, Isokaze, picked up S/L Birchall, P/O Kenny, W/O Onyette, Sgt Phillips, Sgt Cook (flight mechanic), and Sgt. Catlin. Air gunners, Sgt Davidson and Sgt Henzell, were dead.

The six survivors were then placed on the foredeck. Three had relatively minor injuries. The remaining three had serious wounds, one suffered from shrapnel embedded in his left hip, the second had multiple fractures in his right leg from a machine gun burst and the third had his left arm shredded by machine gun rounds. A Japanese interpreter who had spent a lot of time in the United States appeared on the scene and asked for the senior officer. Birchall stood to identify himself and was immediately beaten. The Japanese were very interested in knowing if the crew had transmitted a sighting report. Birchall denied that the message was sent, which immediately prompted P/O Kenny to whisper to the wireless operator that he was now an air gunner so that he could feign ignorance about any communications. The question about the sighting report was asked several times between beatings but the crew stuck to their story. Just as they had convinced their interrogators, the Japanese intercepted a message from Colombo asking for a repeat of the sighting message. The six survivors were beaten and then jailed in a paint locker in the bow. Requests from Colombo for a repeat indicated to Birchall that the British had not received the message; this was sad news indeed for the crew.

Back in Ceylon the message was in fact received; although garbled, it was intelligible and relayed immediately to Admiral Somerville. A listening watch was kept all night for Catalina "A" and when it failed to arrive in the morning it was presumed to have been shot down. Birchall's warning indicated the enemy fleet to be 360 miles (600 km) to the south-southeast of Ceylon, which meant that Ceylon could be attacked early next morning. That night a second Catalina from 205 Squadron captained by F/L Graham was sent out to relocate the Japanese. Between midnight and 0100 hours Graham signalled that he had sighted a Japanese destroyer 200 miles (330 km) southeast of Ceylon. No further word was ever heard from Graham and the eight other members of his crew.

As a result of Birchall's warning, the Dorsetshire and Cornwall, which had returned to Colombo, were ordered to sail immediately. They departed at 2200 hours to rendezvous with Somerville who had left the Addu Atoll with the faster elements of his fleet at midnight to probe eastwards toward the Japanese. The Hermes flew off her Swordfish torpedo-bombers to reinforce the two squadrons of RAF Hurricanes and a few Fleet Air Arm Fulmars at Colombo. Also, 160 miles to the east, at China Bay near Trincomalee two squadrons of Hurricanes and Fulmars waited for the attack, which was expected the next day, Easter Sunday.

At dawn on April 5th, Nagumo steamed in to within 200 miles (330 km) of Ceylon and launched 125 aircraft under command of Mituso Fuchida who had led the raid on Pearl Harbour. The Japanese aircraft climbed on course for the southwest coast of Ceylon and then planned to fly well clear of the coast to Colombo. Despite being detected by radar and visually along the coast no warning was given, everyone thinking they were friendly. Even another Catalina out on early patrol sighted the aircraft but having been briefed to expect British carrier-borne aircraft in the area, did not report them. This Catalina did however, sight the Japanese fleet and radioed a report. Thus despite having been on the full alert since dawn, the Japanese aircraft arrived overhead unannounced at 0750 hours.

The fight was short and furious. Colombo was severely bombed and fuel installations destroyed. Thanks to the timely dispersal from the harbour, shipping losses were not as severe. The Hermes' six Swordfish, which arrived in the middle of the battle, were shot down. The RAF and the Ceylon air defences claimed to have destroyed 24 enemy aircraft, with seven probably destroyed and nine damaged. The Japanese in turn claimed to have shot down 19 of the 42 fighters launched, including 15 front line Hurricanes. Despite the British losses, however, the Japanese had not succeeded in their main objective – the destruction of the British Eastern Fleet.

Fuchida, who was leading the raid, intercepted a message from a Japanese reconnaissance plane, which indicated that the British were about to launch a surface attack on the Japanese Fleet. The message, which Fuchida had intercepted, was actually a sighting report, locating the Dorsetshire and the Cornwall attempting to rejoin Somerville's fleet sailing from Addu Atoll. The Japanese, holding a second wave of bombers in reserve in the event they located the British fleet, struck quickly at 1340 hours and eight minutes later the Dorsetshire was sunk. The Cornwall followed her to the bottom very shortly after. Of the 1,546 officers and men, 1,122 survivors were picked up after 27 hours in the water. Thus ended Easter Sunday 1942.

Allied intelligence believed that the invasion of Ceylon was imminent. The fall of Ceylon would greatly assist the Japanese army's drive through Burma to India and their eventual conquest of the Asian sub-continent. To repulse the invasion Somerville played a game of deception to avoid defeat by the Japanese yet pose a threat to the invasion. For the next three days the Japanese deliberately allowed themselves to be seen by reconnaissance aircraft to lure the smaller British fleet into battle. Somerville avoided this at all costs.

When Vice Admiral Nagumo did not find the Eastern Fleet at Colombo, he assumed that the British had either sailed after receiving Birchall's message or were perhaps at Trincomalee Harbour on the other side of Ceylon. In fact, Somerville kept his fleet at sea, believing that since the Japanese had made no further strikes on Colombo they may attack on his secret base at Addu Atoll. After a few days when no attack materialized Somerville approached Addu Atoll tentatively from the west in order to re-supply.

Nagumo stood well clear of Ceylon, but on 8 April a Catalina sighted the Japanese fleet 500 miles (830 km) southeast of Ceylon steaming at full speed for Trincomalee. This aircraft managed to evade the Japanese fighters and escape to Koggala Lake. Somerville now knew Nagumo's next target.

Once again Trincomalee Harbour was cleared. The most important ships were the aircraft carrier the Hermes and her escort the Australian destroyer Vampire. In order to give full support to the air defence of Trincomalee, all the aircraft from the carrier were left ashore. On 9 April, F/L Thomas of 413 Squadron, Flying Catalina "Y", took off from Koggala Lake and headed east to locate the enemy fleet. Soon after dawn, at 0700 hours, he sent a sighting report giving the position, course and speed of the Japanese fleet. The message broke off suddenly and contact was never regained. The aircraft was lost with all its crew but the warning had been given.

Twenty-five minutes later, approximately 100 Japanese aircraft appeared over Trincomalee Harbour. Radar and F/L Thomas' message alerted the defenders who were better prepared than for the last attack on Colombo. Despite the defenders' bravery the bombers severely damaged the airdrome and harbour and many workshops and buildings were destroyed. However, the Japanese success came at a cost as the RAF and anti-aircraft gunners claimed 15 enemy aircraft destroyed, with 17 probably destroyed and five damaged.

Meanwhile, Japanese reconnaissance aircraft located the British carrier, Hermes, which, was returning at full steam to Trincomalee. The Japanese bombers launched an attack immediately sinking Hermes and her destroyer escort Vampire in short order. As dusk fell, Nagumo and Ozawa retired towards the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Ceylon's trials were over and Nagumo's fleet retired from the Indian Ocean.

Admiral Somerville was not aware of the Japanese retreat so he maintained an air search for several days in a vain attempt to locate the enemy fleet. Until the Japanese fleet could be located he withdrew his Eastern Fleet to the west coast of Africa and did not return to Ceylon until September 1943.

Despite the number of ships and aircraft destroyed and damage to the harbour and airbase installations, Nagumo had failed his primary task to destroy the British Eastern Fleet. This battle marked the first time that the Allies had stopped the western expansion of the Japanese, raising much needed morale. Sir Winston Churchill claimed that this battle had important strategic results, which could not be foreseen at the time. He wrote:

"Admiral Nagumo's now celebrated carrier force which had ranged almost unmolested for four months with devastating success, had on this occasion suffered such losses in the air that three of his ships had to be withdrawn to Japan for refit and re-equipment. Thus when a month later Japan launched her attack against Port Moresby, in New Guinea, only two of the five carriers were able to take part. Their appearance at full strength then in the Coral Sea might well have changed the entire course of the war".

Birchall and his crew were unaware that their initial sighting of the Japanese fleet had set off a series of events that changed the course of the war in the Indian Ocean. On 7 April, they were transferred from the destroyer Isokaze to Admiral Nagumo's flagship, the aircraft carrier Akagi. Sergeants Cook, Phillips and Catlin were finally taken to the ship's hospital for treatment. The remaining three were kept in a hot, stale aircraft repair well under bright lights. They were fed a sailor's ration of rice, soup, fish, pickle and tea. Each night, Birchall, Onyette and Kenny were taken individually to the officers' cabins for questioning and beatings with heavy clubs and bamboo sticks. Fortunately, the trio had worked out their story while confined in the paint locker on the Isokaze.

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.

Editor's note: This concludes the first of two serials of the saviour of Ceylon. The last serial will be printed in the next edition of the newsletter and will tell of Birchall's exploits as a prisoner of war for which he was awarded the Order of the British Empire.

Punditorial Place:

We reserve a column for readers to share their thoughts on national defence, past, present and future and here is an editorial as a seed and a goad to others to get up off their rumps and speak up on matters of national importance and urgency.

You may be retired but you ain't off duty!

Wouldn't it be nice to say, when you have packed away your uniform and donned civies, "there, I have done my duty and *from these failing hands* I throw the torch. Sad truth is that we have thrown the torch to hands that are much more failing than our own. In a strictly non-partisan way I say that we have thrown the torch to elected servants who, through neglect, if not deliberate design, are destroying the professional expertise and excellence that our armed forces have bought, over generations, by blood and guts. These poor ignorant self-serving servants (not all -- there are some good guys in Ottawa) who have *never been there, never done that, never worn a uniform* haven't the foggiest idea of the importance of military morale and how much that quality depends upon the demonstrated respect and support of the nation. These political-career oriented populists just don't understand the damage they have done -- and continue to do -- to our ability to defend our Canadian sovereignty. They remain content to *go to war on Uncle Sam's Coat Tails*, or, alternatively, to say "*Let Uncle defend us on the American taxpayer budget*".

This is where we retirees must return to duty -- must take up the torch one more time. This destruction of our armed forces can be stopped if we speak up; if we **make democracy work**. And we can make it work by giving clear instructions to those well-paid, well-pensioned, elected servants of ours up on Parliament Hill. So, I beg you, write, email, telephone, meet your MP to encourage the good guys and threaten the bad guys. I've done this and it works. I am not alone -- there are many retirees across this land who are doing just that.

One such was the presentation in June of a comprehensive report and recommendations to the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition by a team of retired officers under the leadership of Major General Lewis MacKenzie, supported by a group of outstanding retired senior officers of all three services, including Vice Admiral Harry Porter and General Charles Belzile. It covers capability requirements for the establishment and outfitting of a rapid reaction brigade with restoration of full mobility and support by sea and air for overseas deployments to help suppress and contain regional conflicts, resolve civil chaos and serve humanitarian needs. A key element is retention of air, marine, logistic, storage and accommodation facilities at Shearwater as the Atlantic base for battle groups of the vanguard force. The presentation of project "Sea Horse" can be viewed in full on the web site of the Royal United Services Institution (Vancouver Island) at www.rusiviccda.org. A narrative outline was also published in the June issue of "On Track", the quarterly journal of the Conference of Defence Associations Institute along with a foot note on sea lift operations of HMCS "Magnificent" and "Bonaventure". It can also be accessed on the CDA web site at <http://cda-cdai.ca/pdf/ontrack9n2.pdf>

Again, this is strictly non - partisan -- whether you voted for the successful candidate or not, he or she is still your obedient servant.

Engage! *Bill Farrell*