

Spring 2007

SHEARWATER AVIATION MUSEUM FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER



The Last Hurrah

-Slt Bob Russell

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Submissions: Text submissions can be either paper, email or electronically produced - Word Perfect (preferred) or Word. We will format the text for you. No need to centre headings, indent paras etc.

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P1PC4 C.H. Nelson
Circa 1965

...and we were NAVAL AIR.

Deadlines for receiving submissions are:

Spring	10 March
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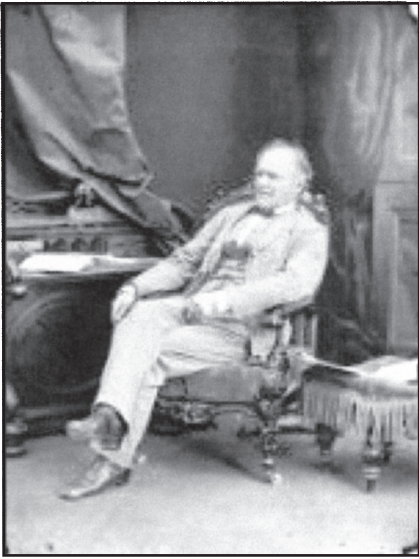
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A wise nation preserves its records, gathers up its muniments, decorates the tombs of its illustrious dead, repairs its great public structures, and fosters national pride and love of country by perpetual references to the sacrifices and glories of the past.

Joseph Howe , 31 August 1871

FOR NEW READERS (AND OLD)

THE FOUNDATION THAT PRESENTS THIS PUBLICATION TO YOU HAS LISTENED CAREFULLY TO THE WISDOM OF THE FATHER OF CONFEDERATION - QUOTED ABOVE, AND HAS ACTED UPON THAT EXHORTATION.

THE SHEARWATER AVIATION MUSEUM FOUNDATION WAS FORMED TO HELP PRESERVE ARTIFACTS AND MUNIMENTS OF CANADA'S SACRIFICES AND GLORIES FROM THE VERY BEGINNING OF AERIAL BATTLES OVER THE SEA.

THIS FOUNDATION'S VOLUNTEERS HAVE, ON THEIR OWN INITIATIVE AND LARGELY FROM THEIR OWN POCKETS, PATCHED TOGETHER A SURPLUS WARTIME GYMNASIUM AND PURPOSE-BUILT NEW HANGAR TO SHELTER AND PRESERVE AS ARTIFACTS AIRCRAFT THAT CANADIANS FOUGHT IN TO PRESERVE THE FREEDOMS THAT YOU NOW ENJOY. THEY HAVE LOVINGLY RESTORED ABANDONED WARPLANES THAT OUR GOVERNMENTS ABANDONED TO DECAY. THEY LISTENED TO JOE HOWE. THEY ACTED!

MANY OF THOSE VOLUNTEERS ARE VETERANS OF CANADA'S BATTLES - - ARE LIVING ARTIFACTS. YOU MAY MEET THEM AS GUIDES WHEN YOU VISIT. MUCH OF THIS PUBLICATION IS GIVEN OVER TO THEIR SHARING OF MEMORIES OF THEIR NAVAL AIR SERVICE THAT PRODUCED AN ESPRIT DE CORPS THAT ENDURES DECADES AFTER THEY HUNG UP THEIR UNIFORMS - - AN ESPRIT DE CORPS SO STRONG THAT IT DEFIES REASON - - PEERLESS!

SO, READ HERE AND VISIT THERE - - AND CONSIDER JOINING IN THIS NOBLE EFFORT BY SUBSCRIBING TO OUR FOUNDATION: A MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM IS SOMEWHERE WITHIN THESE PAGES.

**BILL FARRELL
EDITOR AND ANCIENT MARINER-AVIATOR**

Editor's Grunts Spring 07



The Winter 06 edition was, I sincerely intended, to be my swan song. At any rate here I am again grumbling about my fate and wondering what I can say that hasn't been said a

score of times before. So, let's see what my moribund muse now has to offer:

We, as retired warriors, are more important to our country's heritage and to its future than we give ourselves credit for. We, most of us, *have been there done that*. We have faced the enemy in a shooting war and in a cold war. We buried some comrades in both. We survivors, in ever-dwindling numbers, share, in this newsletter, memories of days halcyon and days of high adventure. We had an esprit de corps way back then -- and we have it in spades today even though our old uniforms moulder away in some old trunk or closet. Why has our morale and sense of duty not faded away but rather grown as we grow old? We are, in my not-so-humble opinion, peerless in what the pongos would call regimental pride. Truly remarkable even though our "regiment" was destroyed by a stroke of a visionless politician's pen decades ago.

Back now to **sense of duty**. I know that some will say that a newsletter should steer clear of any hint of politics but I say balls! When old warriors see politicians starving to destruction the military institutions that they laid their lives on the line to preserve, **their sense of duty demands that they speak up loud and clear** -- speak to the pols directly and to the media. Some of us have been doing this ever since we learned that our governments, both Liberal and Conservative put Shearwater up for sale to real estate developers -- thus destroying for all time the hope of a rebirth of naval aviation and of the building of a Joint Air Force, Army, Navy, Expeditionary Force based on our Atlantic Coast. So join in the chorus. Every voice in a chorus counts. Time runneth out for us all. Procrastinate not. BTW Our distribution includes Members of Parliament. I may get fired for this but, hey, what have I got to lose except the monkey on my back? *Cheers. Bill Farrell*

From the Curator's Desk

By Christine Hines, SAM Curator

We made it through another winter, and thankfully, had a cold snap. You may ask why we'd wish for such a

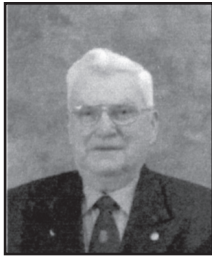
thing, but I guarantee we needed hard ground to complete our winter chores. SAM exhibit spaces are sporting a new look! We moved the aircraft in the collection around between hangars in late January, and we are pleased to report a much improved footprint and generally better look to SAM's exhibit spaces. The end result is that we've divided up the collection by type, housing utility/training aircraft in building 13, and moved the ship-born aircraft into the new hangar, along with a somewhat more dedicated, consolidated maintenance space in the back of the new hangar, which currently houses the Firefly, HUP and NAVY T-33. We have received positive feedback; I hope you'll visit us soon to take a look and tell us what you think! Congratulations to SAM Engineer John Webber who managed the move, and to all of our volunteer maintainers who banded together from their respective projects to help us out.

We also made a great deal of progress on our restoration projects over the winter. The Firefly Team has celebrated several milestones since I last reported: the engine was mounted just before Christmas: perhaps the roar of the Griffon will be heard by September...the electrical wiring has just been completed, and we have tested the starter and navigation lights. We hope to have the propeller mounted in April. The HUP project has seen the team clean the interior and begin rust inhibition, and team leader Ron Kay has just about completed painting the blades. The Avenger Team is now the T-Bird team, turning their attention to replacing the vertical stabilizer and has just begun to put a fresh coat of paint on our "NAVY" Silver Star.

Our new staff members, Mike McFadden and Patti Collacutt have each settled into their respective roles, Administration/Volunteer Coordinator and Gift Shop Manager, and are doing great work. We're glad to have each of them on the team.

Planned for the summer months is a look at the career of HMCS BONAVENTURE; as I am sure you're all aware, 2007 commemorates the 50th anniversary of Bonnie's commissioning, so we thought a trip down memory lane was in order. If you have a unique or significant item you believe should be included in our exhibit, by all means give me a call: we can arrange a loan for the duration of the exhibit.

As we enter our 2007 visit season, I'd just like to leave you with this: SAM team members have worked hard to ensure an exceptional presentation for our visitors. If you have questions about our presentation or would like to help us improve our collections and exhibits, please don't hesitate to contact me [(902) 720-1767] I would love to speak with you about your ideas!



President's Report.

Old Man Winter really hit us with a blast but we noticed the crows breaking ground - so Spring can't be far behind. A fresh beginning for 2007.

This issue of the Newsletter is basically dedicated to the 50th Anniversary of the Commissioning of HMCS Bonaventure, Jan 17, 1957. I am proud to say that I was part of that Commissioning.

A couple of stories come to mind: The day we departed Shearwater for Belfast was a very cold one, 15th January 1957. We were loaded on a North Star that just came from hauling cargo on the DEW line. Once on board, and had gained some altitude, we discovered frost was visible at the bottom of the door. Some of us stuffed our greatcoats around the door to try and keep out the cold.

It was supposed to be a direct flight to Belfast but things changed and we had to put down in Gander, Nfld due to mechanical problems. We stayed there for some time, were airborne again and thought we were on our way to Belfast for sure. However we had to land in Iceland due to some more problems - stayed for some time then were airborne again. We finally arrived, in the early morning of the 16th at Nutts Corner airfield and were bussed to Belfast and finally reached our new home - The Bonnie. I'll always remember our first meal on board - cold beans!

From that day until the Bonnie left for her big refit in Quebec in April 1966 - I spent three - two year tours on her. Some good times - some not so good but looking back I served with a lot of great people and became life long friends with many. We were a great Naval Air Team.

This year at our home in Kingston, NS on the 15th January 2007 - exactly 50 years from the day we left Shearwater, as I sat in my easy chair looking out the window on a stormy January day, I called to my wife Minnie who was in the kitchen and asked her if she remembered what happened fifty years ago today. She said, "Should I?" and I said, "Maybe" and told her why. She said, "That is not a day I want to remember. It was the day you left home for six months leaving me with three babies, Chris 3 years, Jeff 17 months and Anne 5 months old. But with the help of great friends and neighbours we made out OK." By the end of June, Bonnie arrived in Halifax Harbour and life has gone on.

When I am at the Museum, I only have to look at the diorama of the Bonnie to bring back good memories of the past. Speaking of the past, our great museum would

not be here today if it were not for the foresight of former Naval Air members. These members and all Naval Air members have contributed greatly towards the very existence of our Museum. Today members of the Foundation, which are mostly former Naval Air members contribute the majority of funds to build, buy artifacts, and restore artifacts. I hope they will continue to renew their memberships and donate funds until the last member is standing. We would like to see an influx of members from other services. This is a Maritime Air Museum - so join and support it. We are waiting for family members to join - some already have. My five children have been members for a number of years. They will carry on our heritage!

We continue to restore the Firefly, HUP3 and a T-Bird. Many thanks to the volunteers who are doing a fine job on the restorations.

The next fund raiser will be a Dinner/Auction to be held in the WO/Sgt's Mess on 16 Jun 07. Please show your support and attend.

I want to thank the Foundation Board of Directors for their support and insight to keep the Museum functioning. Keep up the good work and have a happy and safe Spring and Summer.

Eugene 'Buck' Rogers

	
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Whither Canadian Naval Aviation

Ernest Cable
Shearwater Aviation Museum Historian

During the Second World War the successes of British and American Carrier Battle Groups brought the Canadian government to realize that naval air forces were essential to the successful conduct of war at sea. The British Admiralty had previously made several overtures to Canada to establish a naval air arm, but the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) was already having difficulty coping with its rapid growth and increasingly demanding convoy escort duties in the North Atlantic. In 1942, the Admiralty devised a scheme to encourage aviation in the RCN by offering Canadian officers instruction as pilots or observers with the Royal Navy but remain members of the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve (RCNVR). Lieutenant Hampton Gray, the only member of the RCN to be awarded the Victoria Cross during the Second World War joined the RCNVR as a pilot under this scheme. By early 1943, the RCN was ready to establish a naval air arm and discussions began with the Admiralty to introduce naval aviation into the RCN. The Admiralty volunteered to provide Canada two aircraft carriers and four air squadrons. The Royal Canadian Navy's air arm became a reality on 19 December 1945 when the Canadian Cabinet approved in principle the formation of a "Naval Air Component" for the RCN.

This was not the RCN's first venture into naval aviation. In 1918, near the end of the First World War, the RCN formed the Royal Canadian Naval Air Service (RCNAS), which was to be a shore-based organization equipped with flying boats and airships to patrol for German submarines operating south of Nova Scotia. Fatalistically, the war ended before the embryonic naval air service could be fully recruited and trained and the RCNAS was disbanded. In 1943, after more than a 20 year hiatus from aviation, the RCN was in a position to seriously entertain an Admiralty proposal to establish a naval air arm. The proposal gained momentum when, because of a manning shortage, the Royal Navy asked the RCN to provide the ships' companies for the aircraft carriers, *HMS Nabob* and *HMS Puncher*, with the Fleet Air Arm providing the air squadrons. The experience gained with *Nabob* and *Puncher* was instrumental to the RCN successfully forming its own air arm with the commissioning of its first aircraft carrier, *HMCS Warrior*, on 24 January 1946 and the transfer of 803, 825, 826 and 883 squadrons from the Fleet Air Arm to the RCN. The primary functions of the RCN's first Seafire and Firefly aircraft were carrier-borne fighter and torpedo bomber- reconnaissance operations.

HMCS Warrior was not winterized and proved unsuitable for frigid North Atlantic operations. She was paid off in March 1948 and five of her officers and 238 of her men became the main draft for her replacement, *HMCS Magnificent*. In the ambitious plans made before the end of the war *HMCS Magnificent* was to have been Canada's second aircraft carrier, but because of the manpower ceiling imposed on the RCN the navy could man only one carrier at a time. *HMCS Magnificent*, commissioned on 7 April 1948, served the RCN nobly; her Sea Furies provided fleet air defence and ground support to the army and her Avengers established the RCN as force to be reckoned with in airborne anti-submarine warfare (ASW). "*Maggie*" as she was affectionately known participated in several U.N. operations; she also saw the

introduction of helicopters into Canadian naval aviation several years before she was paid off in June 1957. Her replacement, *HMCS Bonaventure*, was commissioned on 17 January 1957 and incorporated the latest innovations in aircraft carrier technology including an angled flight deck, a mirror landing aid and a steam catapult. The "*Bonnie*" had the distinction of embarking the Banshee, the RCN's first and only jet fighter, and her Tracker ASW aircraft won pride and prestige for Canada during many NATO exercises.

In the post war development of the RCN the officers and men were recruited to specialist Branches; the Executive Branch basically ran the operations which were supported by the Engineering, Supply, Constructor, Electrical and Ordnance technical branches as well as others such as the Medical and Instructor Branches. However, the Air Branch was unique among the RCN's branches as it had both users and maintainers to fly and support naval aircraft and their equipment. At the same time it drew upon the Executive Branch for its aircrew officers and upon the Supply, Electrical and Medical Branches for aviation sub-specializations; and from the Engineering Branch for its Air Engineering officers. Most of the officers serving as aircrew or as technical specialists in Naval Aviation Branch became dually qualified in the ship. This cross-training of air and surface expertise was instrumental in the RCN's remarkable success in integrating its air power in naval operations; with Canadian naval airmen frequently surpassing the benchmarks established by allied navies. In terms of operational capability, if not size, the RCN naval air arm won high respect among its NATO contemporaries. This was a source of great distinction and pride in the golden years of Canadian naval aviation.

Canada's Naval Air Arm contributed to NATO's strategic deterrence and played an important role in preventing the Cold War from erupting into Armageddon. Because the air arm's achievements occurred at sea, out of sight of most Canadians, their accomplishments received little press or publicity. Because the Cold War never deteriorated into open hostilities no Canadian naval airmen were lost in action against the enemy, no Canadian naval air units participated in campaigns that merited "Battle Honours", there were no combat heroes and no medals for valour awarded. Consequently, there was little to draw the Canadian public's attention to its naval aviation heritage.

After integration of Canada's three armed services in February 1968 the heritage and traditions of Canada's proud naval air arm were in danger of becoming nothing more than proud memories. This concern became more acute with the paying off of *HMCS Bonaventure* on 3 July 1970. "*Bonnie*" no longer came along side the jetties at Halifax or Shearwater to remind Canadians of their nation's proud naval aviation heritage. Her retirement without a replacement sounded the death knell for carrier aviation in the RCN.

Despite the demise of carrier aviation, the banner for Canadian naval air has been ably carried by ship borne aviation; that segment of naval air that operates aircraft from ships other than aircraft carriers. Although it lacked the prestige and naval presence of carrier aviation, Canadian ship borne aviation has had a greater impact on naval aviation globally and in the Canadian context has outlasted carrier aviation. Because of the advances pioneered by the RCN in ship borne aviation, Canada's Naval Aviation heritage is far from being forgotten. When larger navies proclaimed the technical challenges of operating large helicopters from small warships to be insurmountable, the RCN with the aid of

Canadian industry forged ahead and proved the concept of operating Sea King helicopters from St. Laurent class destroyers. The success of the entire concept was attributable to the Canadian designed and built Helicopter Haul Down and Rapid Securing Device, better known as the "Beartrap". The "Beartrap" was adopted by navies around the world and is considered to be Canada's greatest contribution to naval aviation; the Canadian legacy of leadership in ship borne aviation continues to be manifested today in navies around the world.

So, with the future of Canada's naval aviation heritage and history? The Canadian Naval Air Group was formed in 1970 to keep the history and traditions of Canadian naval aviation alive. But, as these naval air retirees gradually take up position "in the Delta", there will be few to remind Canadians that the RCN once had a proud naval air arm. It is, therefore, incumbent upon those who were a part of the RCN's air arm and those who study Canada's Naval Aviation to help preserve its unique heritage that evolved throughout its 23 year history. A major step forward occurred in 1978 when a few enterprising officers at Shearwater realized that Canada's naval aviation heritage had to be preserved and created the Shearwater Aviation Museum. Today, the Shearwater museum, considered to be one of the best military museums in the country, immortalizes Canadian Naval Aviation and its unique place in Canada's aviation history. It is important that future generations of Canadians can be proud of naval aviation's importance to command of seas and the immense prestige and high regard that Canadian Naval Aviation was held among our allies.

With the integration of Canada's Army, Navy and Air Force in February 1968 the heritages of the former three services were inherited by the Canadian Armed Forces (CF). In 1975, all of the CF's air assets, regardless of their former service affiliation, were consolidated under a single Air Command. Although it's main focus was the generation of air forces and a national air doctrine it has a mandate to preserve Canada's military aviation heritage. It is important to remember that Air Command was an ab initio formation when it was inaugurated with no heritage or history of its own and had to absorb the former service aviation traditions and customs into its heritage; today, 39 years after integration, the customs and traditions of the former RCAF and the air components of the former army and navy are well represented in Air Command's heritage. Although the merits of consolidating all of Canada's air resources into a central Air Command has long been debated, one of the legitimate concerns was that the heritage and histories of the smaller army and naval air components would be overwhelmed by the customs and traditions of the much larger Royal Canadian Air Force.

Air Command has put forth a credible effort to preserve the traditions and core capabilities of the former three air components. After integration, all military bases were given a Canadian Forces Base (CFB) moniker where, for example, *HMCS Stadacona* became CFB Halifax. However, Air Command preserved the naval air Shearwater tradition by calling the air base, CFB Shearwater. Under an Air Command reorganization in 1993, the air base still retained its naval roots when it was renamed "12 Wing Shearwater", historically linking the former RCAF 12 Group of Eastern Air Command with its Shearwater naval heritage. Similarly, in deference to its naval heritage 880 Squadron is still retained on Air Command books as a zero manned squadron, a unique exception to the strict adherence to the former RCAF 400 series squadron numbers.

In the same vein, all former RCN aircraft, from Seafire to Tracker, are listed on Air Command's website as being part of its aircraft heritage. Similarly, a Tracker painted in early RCN colours is among the static display aircraft lining the roadway entrance to 1 Canadian Air Division (1 CAD) headquarters in Winnipeg.

No. 1 CAD has a small office dedicated to the preservation of Canada's military aviation heritage and history. To foster its military aviation heritage and history 1 CAD convenes annual historical conferences where historians from across the country are invited to present papers on various aspects of Canadian military aviation. Numerous papers on naval aviation have been presented by well known naval historian Michael Whitby, naval air historian Leo Pettipas and this author. Consequently, naval aviation is well represented in Air Command's historical files along with the many other Canadian military aviation histories.

The leadership, colour and spirit of Canadian Naval Aviation gave rise to a comradeship and self assurance that was reflected in an immense pride of having earned a place and been a part of "Naval Air". Through no fault of their own, naval air retirees have no roots or descendants in today's military and there is no one to perpetuate their proud traditions or indomitable spirit; but successor organizations and numerous books have recognized their boundless spirit and selfless dedication to naval aviation that has earned them a chapter in Canada's aviation history. The Canadian Naval Air Group and the Shearwater Aviation Museum are among several institutions committed to preserving their proud heritage and history so that future generations will know that Canada once had a proud naval air arm. Although dominated by RCAF customs and traditions, Air Command recognizes the significance of Naval Aviation to its history and has demonstrably committed to preserving Canada's naval aviation heritage.





From the Secretary.....

Hi everyone. It's time to think 'Museum' again. The Museum artifacts and buildings are here because volunteers, almost exclusively Naval Air, made it happen and it's these folks that keep things happening. (DND,

through the Wing budget (your taxes) provides some operation support, but expansion, as in the new hangar, Atrium, etc comes almost exclusively with volunteers sweat and charity of our members.)

Your contributions are more important to the Foundation than ever. Take a look at our continuing lengthy 'In the Delta' lists. In 10 years there will be very few you can count on to continue to maintain this museum and your heritage. Let's try again to get our families involved. If they aren't interested themselves, for their father/mother and his/her military heritage, they should be. That goes for my family too!

Naval Air, as you knew it, will NEVER happen again! It's up to you to see it is NEVER forgotten.

The bottom line here is to ensure the Museum, if nothing else at Shearwater, keeps going even when we don't. We have to encourage others to join now to support it. Your contributions are buying a Museum that enshrines your memories for your children to savour throughout their lives - long after you have joined the Delta list: Gone, but remembered (just like the Bonnie). However, while we have you here with us (I'm selfish - I don't want to part with any of you) we'll savour it together now.

In addition to the above, we are still looking for articles from you for the newsletter. Now that we have 'Hairy Tales', thanks to Jim Stegen's idea, let's hear yours. I'm sure all the flight's weren't perfect - perhaps you techs out there may have some 'Hairy Tale' stories just sitting dormant waiting for a time and place to tell them - well we're here for you too.

A reminder from CNAG - don't forget the reunion. Who knows, we may never meet again. Besides, you have to see the Museum. It's looking good - very good. In the next issue, I'll do my best to have some photos taken of some of your heritage. Keep in touch.

Kay (Happy Birthday Aries)

"Hold the Mashed Potatoes"

by Si "Slinky" Green

Ex: OM; NA; OBS; NAV (Didn't make the AESOP classification)

The following tale is submitted in response to Kay's plea for stories relating to service aboard Bonnie.

It involves two P1 Observers Mates (or perhaps we were called NA's) during the ship's visit to Bermuda in the spring of 1962. As was the usual practice, the carrier anchored in Grassy Bay and liberty men were ferried ashore to Hamilton in a duty boat known as the "Chauncey M. Depew".

The two scoundrels implicated were Knobby (Bill) Clark, and Si (Slinky) Green. Before going ashore all liberty men were directed to read a notice written on a blackboard and maintained by the Master-at-Arms, but brought up to date by the duty crusher. The notice that particular day stated words to the effect that all leave expired at 2359, either on board the ship or aboard the "Chauncey", whose last departure (we thought) from Hamilton was midnight. We found out later that the last trip was around 2100. Knobby and I made it ashore safely and started our run the way sailors usually conduct themselves in foreign ports, that is we visited museums, churches, other tourist attractions etc. We even made it to the Swizzle Inn, the town of St George's and Kindley Airforce Base at the eastern tip of the island. At Kindley we visited the Senior NCO's mess to top up before heading back to Hamilton and securing a ride to Bonnie. Time was whizzing away unnoticed by our two intrepid matelots. Suddenly, it was brought to our attention that the bar was about to close. The time was around 2300. "No problem" we both said, expecting a taxi could get us to the jetty in time. From the base to downtown Hamilton would normally take between 45 minutes and one hour.

In the first instance, we couldn't find a cab. We did finally manage to get one but had to walk about ½ mile to the main gate. Secondly, we quickly discovered that all motor vehicles in Bermuda were restricted to a max of 20 MPH. Anyone charged with exceeding the limit was fined a hefty amount and lost his license for a lengthy period. It seemed we wouldn't be able to make the deadline - even offering the driver a substantial bribe didn't help. Nevertheless, we arrived in Hamilton a short time after midnight and screeched up to the jetty. Lo and behold there was "Chauncey" alongside and neatly tucked in for the night. No crew that we could see and no water taxis available. Knobby and I decided the logical thing to do would be to bunk down in the midship passenger space and get some shut eye. We managed to find a head and a sink where we could perform our ablutions the following day.

Wakey-wakey next morning we put ourselves together as best we could and waited for the crew to get things moving, expecting to get going around the beginning of the forenoon watch. Again, no sign of any living soul who looked like he might be a crew member. As we sat pondering our fate, Knobby asked me if I could detect the odor of breakfast cooking. Sure enough something akin to a Canadian breakfast smell was wafting our way. But from whence? Bermuda was not known to have a plethora of restaurants open at 06-0700, so that didn't seem a likely prospect for us to get a meal. Through our eagle eyes we spotted a Royal Navy "A" Class long range patrol submarine, which I believe was Auriga, just a jetty or two from where we were. "There's

our brecky” said Knobby, trudging off in the direction of the boat. Our route took us through an area that contained a good deal of mud, likely caused by a rain shower or two from the night before. Note: It was usual for subs to tie up in St. Georges, and later, at the naval base at Ireland Island. Why she was in Hamilton we didn't bother to determine.

We duly arrived and asked a sleepy Corporal of the Gangway permission to come aboard. Somewhat surprised, he directed us to the after hatch access and told us to report to the XO. He wasn't very interested in a couple of non-commissioned Canadian aviators looking for a free breakfast, so he told the two of us to see the Master-at-Arms who in turn authorized the duty cook to ensure we were looked after. I must get back to trudging through the mud and clambering down the ladder into the sub. We both had a fair amount of mud clinging to our footwear and as we descended the mud became dislodged and fell into a pot of mashed potatoes carried by a messman, or messdeck dodger. He happened to pass beneath us at precisely the time for a big chunk of dirt to fall squarely in the middle of the spuds. He nonchalantly picked up a serving spoon, mixed the mud in with the potatoes and carried on to his destination.

The cook told us the menu consisted of hard boiled eggs, bangers, fried bread, toast, tea of course, mashed potatoes, as well as some other items. We said we would like a little bit of each, but to “HOLD THE MASHED POTATOES”. Neither Knobby nor I had the heart to tell the submariners that there might be additives in their food. We thanked all concerned (the crew was extremely hospitable to us) and returned to the “Chauncey”, which by this time was showing faint signs of life. One of the crew said their first trip was not scheduled until 1100. As the duty boat approached the gangway we noticed umpteen goofers seemingly interested in the progress of the boat. As we made our way to the brow the spectators started cheering and clapping. For a moment, both Knobby and I wondered why we should warrant such a spectacular reception. We thought that perhaps our promotion to C2 had arrived. Our elation was shattered moments later as we crossed the brow, and the duty RPO informed us we were in the rattle for being adrift, and that we were scheduled for Captain's Defaulters within a couple of days. That, I have always presumed, was the reason for our extraordinary welcome back on board (I was promoted to C2 three years later and Knobby received his several months after mine).

Neither of us had bothered to concoct a story to impress the Captain as we felt that events were in our favour. We would relate our understanding of duty boat schedules, when shore leave expired as well as the message on the brow chalkboard. Defaulters proceeded as follows: The Divisional Officer was called in ahead of our appointment with the Captain. Knobby said I suppose he is droning on about how wonderful we were and hopefully recommending to the Captain we be awarded minimum punishment. We were then called before the skipper, Knobby first. From outside I could faintly hear

the MAA booming outlefttrightleftthaltocaps rapidly followed by the charge being read. A moment or two later I was summoned. Same thing ; offcaps etc. and a list of charges. The navy loved to include as many sections of the National Defense Act as the disciplinary staff could squeeze into a charge sheet, just in case the victim was smart enough to avoid conviction on one, there was always plenty of room to charge him on another. The Captain ordered me to explain my version of why I returned to the ship 12 hours adrift. I hardly had time to get too far into my excuse when I came to the piece regarding the chalkboard. The Captain turned to the MAA asking him if it was correct that the notice had actually stated the details for the Chauncey schedule as well as limits placed on shore leave. The Chief said he couldn't be sure. The Captain said he wanted to see the chalkboard. The Master-at-Arms said yesterday's messages had been erased. The Captain said “Case Dismissed”. The MAA bellowed “Casedismissedoncapsaboutturnquickmarh. The skipper, by the way, was Captain Frewer.

In the flats and gangway outside the defaulters' area we were accosted by some members of our squadron (VS880) and a few ships company interested to know the outcome of the trial. We grinned and told them the verdict. Their jaws fell in disbelief as most of them had expected some sort punitive justice to be handed down. We didn't feel smug or lucky. Knobby and I felt we were treated with impartiality, and under the circumstances, the Captain did the right thing by dismissing the case. Neither one of us got into trouble again.

Perhaps not as exciting as flying a Tracker through a “greenie”, night deck landings during cruddy weather or even experiencing a cat shot, but a brief illustration of how our life was in the good old days. Although there were bad times, it is always the good ones that come to mind. This was one of them. I have never been too partial to mashed potatoes since that trip to Bermuda.

I'll close my narrative by stating Knobby was a good shipmate and a first class squadron member. We were buddies. From time to time I fondly recall some of the capers we went through together. Sadly, he passed away last summer. I, for one, often raise a glass in his memory.

FIRSTS AND FOREMOST

THE STORY OF BILL MARTYN - PART ONE

Among the Canadian-born naval pilots flying with the British Fleet Air Arm (F.A.A.) during WW II, Hampton Gray received the highest award; the Victoria Cross. William Atkinson, referred to as the gentleman aviator, was the top naval air ace. William Martyn became the foremost honored decorated naval pilot receiving the Distinguished Service Cross (D.S.C.) and Bar as well as three (3) Mention in Dispatches (M.i.D's) while establishing a significant number of firsts in the F.A.A..

Bill 'Digger' 'Moose' Martyn was born in Winnipeg in 1915. During his early childhood, his family moved to Calgary. Bill underwent pilot training in the mid-1930's with the Royal Air Force (RAF) in England. With the transfer of responsibility for carrier-borne aircraft from the RAF to the Royal Navy (RN), Bill was in the first group to be re-commissioned, this time as an Acting Sub-Lieutenant (A), RN, with seniority dated December 10, 1937. In 1938 and 1939 he gained tremendous naval air experience ashore and afloat.



**HMS GLORIOUS WITH HER 488' FLIGHTDECK,
ENTERING MALTA**

On December 17, 1939 Bill reports to Royal Naval Air Station (RNAS) Eastleigh, Southampton, also known as HMS Raven. His task is to fly security patrols over the North Sea. On a flight just before Christmas he passes over the ships carrying the first contingent of Canadian army soldiers headed for Scotland. By late January 1940, his squadron, #801 is at RNAS Donibristle, Inverkeithing, Fife, Scotland and a few days later in the F.A.A. Section of RAF Station Evanton, Ross-Shire, Scotland, on Cromarthy Firth, near Inverness, flying Skuas.

On February 26, 1940, Canada's first air squadron under command of Squadron Leader de Van Fleet arrived in England and Bill had an opportunity to meet some of the pilots and talk about flying in the Calgary region.

The period from April 1, 1940 to October 31, 1940, supposedly on second-line service, turned out to be the most active and exhilarating of the war for Bill. He flew from the following shore bases: RNAS Hatston Kirkwall, Orkneys, RAF Station Deltong, Kent, Maidstone, RNAS Donibristle, Inverkeithing, Fife and back to RNAS Hatston, not missing a single day of flying.

The declaration of war in September 1939 finds Bill as a keen and confident naval pilot aboard HMS Glorious, Mediterranean Fleet, on #802 Squadron (G-6 Squadron).

Two weeks later Bill is promoted to Lieutenant, continuing his active first-line service anticipating danger every time his wheels leave the deck. But as he comments in one of dozens of letters sent home, "I have not bloodied myself, mainly due to the lack of opportunity." He is flying Gladiator aircraft that are very maneuverable, have high speed, and a very effective rate of climb. Bill sails past HMS Glorious while aboard a British India Line ship on December 1, 1939 headed back to England for second-line service.



**BILL'S ATTACK ON OIL TANK INSTALLATIONS AT
DOLVIK**

Bill conducted a total of 29 daylight raids over enemy territory, aside from fighter work over the Fleet in the North Sea. Of the 29 sorties, 10 were over France and Belgium, and 18 over Norway with 1 over Tromso, in the Arctic Circle with enemy interceptions, mostly by Messerschmitt Bf-109's occurring in all instances, except during the last three raids on Norway when Germans were concentrating on sending aircraft to France to support their May offensive. The most common targets for allied aircraft were shipping and oil tank installations such as the one at Dolvik, Norway.

To date, November 9, 1940 Bill was first in the number of daylight operational raids of all FAA pilots and was so recognized by the First Sea Lord, who nicknamed Bill, 'Digger.' This was quite an achievement considering the midnight sun of the Arctic summer meant that the aircraft were flying practically twenty-four hours a day. It should be noted that the attack on Tromso in the Arctic Circle on October 16 was from HMS Furious, which accommodated #801 squadron throughout the last three months of 1940.

During 1940, Bill was also assigned to escort the British Infantry Force safely to England from Dunkirk, and to lead a flight of Skuas on a large gun emplacement at Calais, receiving a personal visit of thanks from Rear-Admiral Richard Bell- Davies, VC, who was in charge of naval air stations at the time.

These exploits led to Bill receiving his first M.i.D. on August 9, 1940, a second M.i.D. on October 4, 1940 and a Distinguished Service Cross on November 22, 1940, " for continued devotion to duty in operations against enemy forces in Norway." Bill had one confirmed destroyed, and two shared destroyed enemy aircraft.



On December 30, 1940, celebrated his 26th Yeovilton, Somerset where he had recently been appointed flying instructor. He then became the first-ever F.A.A. naval pilot to be given the opportunity to attend the RAF Central Flying School, Upavon, Malborough, Wilts for an advanced course in air instruction, graduating on April 11, 1941. He served as an instructor at Yeovilton till September 1941 taking time on May 20th to meet King George VI to receive the D.S.C. and to do the flying for the first W.W. II Royal Naval Air recruiting film "A SHIP WITH WINGS".

September 16, 1941 found Bill on a short detachment assignment at RAF Station Sumburgh, Shetland Islands as the lone naval pilot flying Hurricanes and within a few weeks gained the nickname 'Moose' due to his imposing rugged frame of slightly over 200 pounds. After three weeks of RAF ribbing, Bill finally was appointed to a naval air squadron and headed for first-line service again as senior pilot on #880, the very same squadron number which, ten years later, would be assigned to the Royal Canadian Naval Air Service.

LIEUTENANT (A) WILLIAM MARTYN, RN, 1941

(To be continued next newsletter.)



ACROSS THE FLIGHT DECK

In Honour of
RCNVR Lt. (P) Hampton Gray VC DSC



Chuck Rolfe beside Bronze Bust of RCNVR Lt (P) Robert Hampton Gray. VC DSC who is one of 14 of *THE VALIANTS*.

National War Memorial in Background.

Dear Mrs. Phyllis Gautschi,

On behalf of Canadian Naval Air Group, it is my distinct pleasure to acknowledge that after many years of deliberation, the powers to be have finally given your brother, Hampton Gray, and his fellow Valiants, true recognition of their heroic deeds. As I'm sure you are aware, these infamous individuals have each been honoured with life size bronze statues and/or busts, which are now prominently displayed in our Nations Capital along side the Canadian National War Memorial.

The Valiants dedication, overseen by the Governor General, was held on Sunday, the 5th of November, 2006, a damp and dismal day to say the least! The large rain soaked audience, including several members from Hampton Gray, VC, Chapter, listened intently while Her Excellency paid tribute to our heroic comrades from the past. Without-a-doubt, we were all warmed in the knowledge that the deeds of Hampton, his fellow Valiants, and future like minded individuals, have not, and will not, go unnoticed by their fellow Canadians.

In closing Phyllis, let us assure you that the entire membership of Canadian Naval Air Group, are proud to have played a small part in seeing this project through to fruition. In particular, given the fact there were so many deserving individuals/hero's to choose from, not to mention the inevitable politics that come into play in a monumental venture of this nature. May we all be comforted in the knowledge that the memory of Hampton, who gave his all, will now live on in all those who take the time and privilege to read his epitaph.

Yours in Naval Air,

Paul Baiden
CNAG National Chairman

THE CLOSING OF A CHAPTER.

CNAG Tracker Chapter held its last meeting on 10 December 2006 at the Toronto Aerospace Museum, its home for the last several years. The meeting was the annual Xmas party, so all the 28 attendees were upbeat; however, there was also a little sadness when three of the most stalwart members cancelled out at the last moment. Just that

morning, John Eden called to say that his wife, Lillian, was on her way to the ER in Trenton; so he could not drive to Peterborough to pick up Una Walton, recently widowed wife of our Secretary, Rod Walton, to bring her to Toronto. This incident showed the problems faced by Tracker or any organization whose members are seniors; the problem was even clearer when we saw that two members who did attend were using walkers, one was confined to a wheelchair, and two others had lost their spouses recently.

Nevertheless, the event went well, with June Fleming and the Mary Bailey organizing the potluck food and drink, including Fred Rol's famous rum balls. We had no business to discuss, since the chapter had already wound down all its operations, sending SAM Foundation a donation of the residual operating funds. Ted Cruddas, the last President of the Chapter, did say a few words, reminding chapter members to transfer their memberships to other chapters, or to 'at large' status, so that they would continue to get 'Across the Flight Deck' along with the SAM Foundation Newsletters. Ed Janusas also spoke about the possibility of a 2007 summer BBQ in Toronto, and other informal get-togethers.

The decision to close of the chapter had not come suddenly. Over the past few years, membership had dropped by about one third due to cancellations, transfers to other chapters, or deaths. Attendance also had dwindled: Very few members lived in Toronto, and most other members found that driving up to 300 km round trip on southern Ontario's busy highways was challenging. During the last few meetings, members considered several options, including a move to the Hamilton area, where several members lived. However, it became readily apparent that the main concern was deterioration of health among members and spouses both. This meant that only a very few members were able and willing to take on the responsibilities of being chapter officers. Because now only one or two members felt capable of assuming those responsibilities, we realized that the time had come to close down.

In a letter earlier to all members, the President had noted that there was no blame involved in closing the chapter. He noted that loss of good health is a natural result of aging, not something that we can control. In our naval service, duty was always emphasized and we understand it well. When our health deteriorates, it is our duty to look after ourselves; when family or friends become ill or infirm, we look after them as well. Such is our duty.

The closing of a Chapter is not the end of a chapter. Tracker Chapter will live on in the shared memories of its members: memories of the good times we had, of friendships both old and new. We will meet often at reunions and less formal affairs, and our symbols will last for scores of years within the Shearwater Aviation Museum, the repository of our collective memories. No goodbyes: just farewell, and good sailing. Yours Aye, *Ted Cruddas*
Yours aye, Ted Cruddas

CNAG PARTY - TORONTO AEROSPACE MUSEUM - 10 DEC 06



L - R Speirs, West, Fleming, Hotham, Buck Taylor, Bob Campbell, Ted Cruddas, Kettie West, Ray Kneebone, Fred Rol, J. Mazmanian

(Can't identify back of heads or woman in red.)



John Hotham, Ted Cruddas, John Mazmanian



Peter Speirs, George West, Paul Fleming

MINIATURE HISTORY OF THE "TOT"

Prior to the 24th of March 1743, The Royal Navy issued beer, wine and spirits in place of tea, coffee and cocoa and even water on all ships. On the 16th of January 1745, beer and spirits were issued on alternative days. In 1831 all issues except rum were ceased.

1824 saw the issue reduced from half a pint to two and a half ounces as a "TOT" of neat rum. In 1850 the issue was reduced to once a day at NOON. The formation of the Royal Canadian Navy in 1910 carried over many of the Royal Navy traditions and the daily issue of a "TOT" being one that was continued until the 30th of March 1972. Canada was the last Commonwealth Navy to cease this tradition.

"UP SPIRITS"

"UP SPIRITS" was the age old call for men of the Royal Navy and, after 1910, in ships of the Royal Canadian Navy to muster for their daily issue of rum. Played on the Bosn's call, this to men of the Navy was the most welcomed and merriest of the three dozen odd orders that could be relayed via the Bosn's pipe. The call itself is older than the Navy with it's origins going back to at least the days of the ancient Phoenicians around 1200 B.C. The use of the Bosn's call to issue orders and commands is the reason for the age old taboo against whistling aboard war vessels - just in case the whistling was confused with the Bosn's call itself.

In the days of sail, only one member of a ship's crew was permitted to whistle... the ship's cook. It was mandatory for the cook to whistle. While he was preparing plum duff - the Navy's traditional raisin pudding. The cook's whistling conveyed to his shipmates that he was not stuffing himself with the raisin ration that the ship's purser - the "Gut Robber", as he was designated - had issued for the plum duff. Another tradition has it that whistling aboard invites just plain bad luck.

But back to "Up Spirits" and rum. The last time this particular call was heard at 6 bells in the forenoon watch of the ships of the R.N. was July 31, 1970, and March 31, 1972 in Canadian ships... bringing to an end a tradition over 300 years old in British ships and 62 years old in Canadian ships.

The decision was not exactly accepted gracefully on the lower deck and in the Chiefs and P.O.'s Messes - and this day of infamy became known as "Black Tot Day". But the decision to do away with the daily tot was not made lightly by their lordships in Whitehall and came about only after several years of deliberation - with one of the more serious possibilities under consideration being that of mutiny - such being the hallowed place that the daily rum issue enjoyed in the hearts of Navy sailors. Regardless, in 1972, Canada's Navy Authorities decided that a hefty tot of rum at midday was not the best of medicine for men entrusted to handle the floating electronic complexes that Naval ships had become. In the R.N. the announcement in this regard was made by Admiral Sir Andrew Le Fanu... a diminutive, red-headed officer who henceforth became known derisively to the lower deck as "Dry Ginger".

Canadian Naval Air Group Reunion 2007

October 5th, 6th & 7th

Marriott Halifax Waterfront Hotel
Halifax, NS



Booking Information:

1-800-943-6760 (Mention CNAG Reunion)

Marriott Online Bookings:

<http://marriott.com/property/propertypage/yhzmc?groupcode=cnacnaa&app=resvlink>

For further information see: <http://cnag.ncf.ca/REUNION-2007.html>

Or contact:

Bill Whitefield (902) 462-0845 gulliandbill@accesscable.net

Kay Collacutt Toll Free 1-888-497-7779 (902)461-0062 samf@ns.sympatico.ca

Eugene "Buck" Rogers (902) 765-3292

HAIRY TALE

FREE STREAM RECOVERY 4008

Pilot - Slt Norm Lovitt

We took off from B/V at 2157Q switched to control frequency and was vectored 330 and then 310 to my first dip position. The controller confirmed that I was in my sector and told me to mark dip. I turned into the briefed wind of 210 and engaged coupler. At the end of the transition we discovered the wind was 300 at 20kts. I told the sonarman to lower the dome to 100ft while still on a heading of 210. Realizing, by the difference in the airspeed indicators, that the wind was more from starboard I used the rudders to turn the aircraft to 300. The aircraft settled down into a stable cable angle hover. After a minute or so the aircraft started a slow turn to port and I applied opposite rudder to no avail until I had applied full right rudder. By this time the aircraft was being buffeted around quite violently. I started to drag the ball and was unable to establish any stable attitude. I initiated a free stream. As I pulled collective to initiate the climb the violence increased to very severe. The aircraft by now was in an uncontrolled port spiral and being buffeted around severely. My crosscheck became the artificial horizon and the altimeter. I had to fight to maintain control of the aircraft. The aircraft continued to climb - I had pulled in 80-85% torque to initiate the free-stream and didn't pull anymore collective because I was afraid we had or would lose our tail rotor. Also we didn't need any more as I was climbing by my radar altimeter. I punched out the ASE and had the co-pilot re-engage it immediately as it had no effect. I told the co-pilot to guillotine the ball during this time as I was continuously fighting for control and was afraid the ball would hit the aircraft. At 1000ft I was still in turbulence but noticed it had decreased slightly - I realized I had no airspeed. I then nosed the aircraft over and gained 60kts forward speed we were at 1400ft.

We recovered onboard B/V without further problems.

NOTE: Years after the event my good friend Fred D'Amico who was the detachment Flight Safety Officer at the time, gave me both mine and my co-pilot Jim Clarke's hand written statements taken after the occurrence. Fred had also kept the results of his investigation in the form of a copy of his supplementary report which he had given to Warren Winchester the Detachment Commander.

The incident actually occurred on the 7 Feb 1969. The other members of my crew were CMDO Phil Mackay and L/S Ron Frank. If my memory serves me correctly, I think it was Stu McGowan flying the other aircraft on the launch that is mentioned in the supplementary report.

Today when I reflect back on this experience I remember

how it seemed to take forever to get out of it and how mind numbing the cacophony of noise was rendering both the ICS and radios ineffective. In those days it was SOP to have both pilot's sliding windows open slightly to better find the wind in a hover. So at the top of the climb not only were Jim and I wet but Jim had, intentionally or otherwise inflated his may west.

My log book entry is 0.8 nighttime and 0.8 actual IFR with remarks 'Tacex, hit by water spout, severe turbulence, guillotined ball, lucky'.

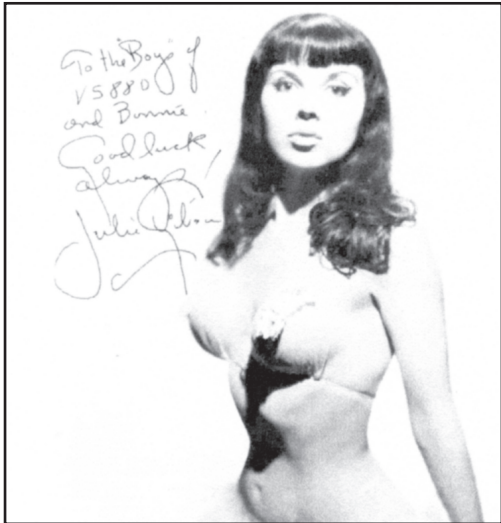
HAIRY TALES *OK the rest of you guys, time to 'fess up about your close calls - you're now beyond the reach of the Air Safety Sahibs and DOT - write to Kay. Ed*



GOING ASHORE



WAITING FOR FLYING STATIONS

IF YOU KNEW JULIE.....**Miss Gibson is the namesake of what?**

(Poor deformed creature. K)

BONNIE & MAPLESPRING '70

by Rolly West

When people think of the demise of the Bonnie, it is common amongst many to remember only that last Tracker being launched in Bedford Basin, hence the end of Naval Aviation with a carrier in the RCN. This is not the case, however, as Bonaventure had one more major operational cruise whereby RCN aircraft and Naval Air technicians would again play a very important role with the Fleet at sea. This took place in the Carribean during the period January through March, 1970, when the carrier was pressed into service in a role of supporting the Fleet with aircraft, spares and air technicians at sea.

HMCS Protecteur was originally scheduled to sail as the Fleet AOR, however mechanical problems were discovered and she was prevented from sailing. The Bonnie was hurriedly made ready for sea, and set sail with five DDHs. On board the carrier was one Sea King, one HO4S, with spares and personnel from Shearwater's Base Technical Branch.

As the Aircraft Engineering Officer in charge of the detachment, I took with me a crew of 28 personnel of all trades, with key supervisors C2 Nobby McNabb, P1 Tom Graham and P2 Tom White. As the cruise progressed, all personnel within the detachment "displayed their metal" in support of the helicopter operations. A prime example was the occasion when all five Sea Kings from the DDHs were on board the carrier unserviceable and required repairs by the detachment

technicians. All snags were repaired, tests completed, and aircraft launched back to their respective ships (and maintenance crews, by the way), in time to meet their scheduled operational flights. The carrier and the air technical detachment (especially the HO4S), were in constant demand by the Fleet both at sea and whilst in port (San Juan, Port-of-Spain, Roosevelt Roads and Kingston Jamaica).

Once again the carrier, Bonaventure, along with her air technical detachment, provided the Fleet support that was always given over the years. Maplespring '70 was Bonnie's last operational cruise with aircraft on board. She did make one more trip across the Atlantic to Narvik, Norway in support of the Army. However, the air detachment will always remember, that last sun-filled cruise to Southern waters aboard the carrier.

Upon return from the Carribean, outside the Halifax approaches, the last two remaining aircraft were launched from Bonnie's flight deck. First to go was the spare Sea King. The last to be launched was the HO4S under the command of Capt. Dave Walker (RCAF & HU-21 Squadron).

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Bonaventure from a Boy's Perspective

At one point in my life my father came home from work and asked me if I'd like to go to sea on the Bonaventure. I was eleven at the time, big for my age, but definitely under the twelve years of age stipulated for participants in this father and son cruise to St. John where the Bonaventure was to enter dry-dock for a refit. "Go to sea on the Bonaventure! Really?!! When do we go!" I spluttered.



(James Keith "Shamus" Dawson)

I recall most vividly getting up very early in the morning to cross the Angus L. MacDonald bridge to Halifax and board my dad's ship (all kids see it that way – it wasn't until I had a friend whose dad was the Captain of the Restigouche that I figured out that Bonaventure wasn't LCdr. Shamus Dawson's ship – my friend's dad had a steward who brought him Cokes. My dad had to go the mess to get his Cokes with the other men in the white hats). But I digress. Upon arrival at the side of the ship, where on a normal departure my mother, brothers, sisters and I would say our goodbyes, I felt the importance of being the one leaving family group. I felt quite grown up and, gazing up the steep gangway incline to the gray wall of the aircraft carrier I, for a moment, wished I had a uniform, so that I wasn't so conspicuous in my now childish civilian clothes.

The interior of the ship was a fascinating warren of passageways and ladders leading to steel walled rooms painted in the most unimaginative colours I had ever seen in my life (and this from a child who grew up in base housing). The smell was the next thing I experienced – and can still recall in certain situations, usually near machinery and oil. Dad led me through doorways with really high steps, up and down ladders that were very steep, past rooms with machinery or equipment crammed into them and, eventually, to the coolest fort I had ever seen – his quarters. His was a much smaller room than mine at home, but it was similar in that it had bunk-beds like the ones I shared with my brother. We stowed our gear (rather than put our clothes away) as I might have done, had I been asked to, ashore. The adventure had hardly begun and yet I was learning to

speaking as a Navy man and to put away childish things.

The process of getting a ship as large as Bonaventure underway seemed a magnificent ballet of tugs and lines, shuddering underfoot, then subtle movement, and virtual silence, but for the hum of traffic on the bridge deck far above my head. The ship seemed to glide of her own accord into the harbour – there was no loud roaring of an engine as there had been when I accompanied the fishermen into Northumberland Strait during my summers on Prince Edward Island. I stood amazed as George's Island moved slowly past my seemingly solid place on the earth, closer than I had ever been to that landmark. I grew in stature as the city of Halifax grew smaller and less distinct in the ocean haze and, as the first swell of the Atlantic Ocean initiated my knees to the work required to keep me upright, and my butt off the deck, I breathed my first breath of independence from the land.

At some point in my reverential awe of being at sea on a big ship, Dad asked me if I'd like to have lunch, and the spell of being in the open ocean was momentarily broken. The wardroom seemed to be out of place on the ship. It had linen and china, silverware and stewards, and didn't smell like paint or oil. It was quiet, but for the excited buzz of about 15 boys like myself all eager to be fed. That lunch was an eye opener for me in that my table manners were exposed to the scrutiny of the steward who, noticing my fork and knife arranged next to one another, removed my plate before I had finished eating my meal. I broached the decorum of the table by requesting, in a somewhat offended tone, that he bring my meal back. He patiently explained my faux-pas and I have been grateful from that day on for his lesson in gentlemanly conduct.

The most exciting place, for me, during that cruise was the flight deck. I had visited the engine-room and the steering position below deck, and even the bridge where I got to sit in the Little-F's big red chair, because my father occupied that position at the time. The flight deck had danger on all sides. I feared that the wind would lift me off my feet at any moment and hurl me over the side to the seething gray water some 60 feet below. At the time there were replacement propellers for the ship carried on the deck. Their size and gleaming brass was fascinating to me, except when I imagined them cutting me to shreds if I should fall overboard.

I remember approaching the round-down at the bow of the ship to see what it was like 'way up there. I have experienced vertigo, or something like it, only twice in my life: once here at the bow of Bonaventure and once standing on the crest of the Stawamish Chief (the Chieftain), a huge rock outcrop on the road from Vancouver to Whistler, where there is a near vertical drop of three thousand feet between where I was standing and the first landing spot near the base of the cliff. My first experience on Bonnie provided enough

warning for the second to keep me firmly seated until the uncomfortable sensation of flying left me.

It was on that flight deck that a group of us boys witnessed the incredible sight of a seaman firing a machine gun into the empty ocean. The arc of brass casings that fell at our feet was a temptation to which we'd been warned not to yield. "They're very hot" our machine gunner warned "wait for a bit, and then you can have some to share".

What more could a boy have asked of life than this? Here I was, close to my father, far from home, in the company of men with great machines to control. I enjoyed every minute of the trip from the "Wakey, wakey, wakey" call early in the morning, followed by the seven minute Navy shower, to the gentle roll of the ship as I lay in my bunk at night. That trip will forever remain one of the highlights of my life. I often summon the peace of the covered quarterdeck at the stern of the ship when times and events threaten to overwhelm me, when life becomes cluttered with demands and expectations, or when I just want to recall time spent in the company of gentlemen like my father.

They're both gone now, the man who was my father, and the ship we shared for a short time, but the memory lingers as if it were that parting on the dock in St. John the morning after Bonaventure arrived at that destination - and her eventual destiny.

Patrick Dawson, Ottawa, ON



IN THE DELTA

BAIRD, BOB

BAYLEY, TERRY

BRADLEY, FRED

BRENNAN, E.

BYERS, JERRY

COELL, RON

COLLIN, HARRY

CONWAY, PERCY

DESROCHES, GABE

FEARON, WILLIAM (HAL)

HAZLITT, RONALD

HUNTER, DON

KILBRIDE, GERRY

LEWIS, ARNIE

MARSH, VIC

MATCHETT, BOB

MILLS, JIM

MORGAN, JIM

MUIR, BILL

MUNRO, BILL

NOWLAN, BOB

OGAICK, DES

POTTER, GLENN

PRESTON, VICTOR

RUBIN, DON

SHEE, JOHN A.

WATSON, JIM

**SHEARWATER AVIATION MUSEUM FOUNDATION
CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT**

Pull Out Section

I am pleased to report that we had a very successful Tournament this year despite less than perfect weather. As many of you know, the Nova Scotia International Air Show (NSIAS) took on the running of the Tournament a number of years ago under an undertaking to guarantee the Foundation a minimum of \$10,000.00 from the proceeds. This agreement worked well until the Airshow was forced to move to Halifax International Airport when the promised \$10K failed to materialize. Therefore through mutual agreement and with some support from NSIAS, SAMF this past year re-acquired management of the Tournament and with the assistance of many volunteers, Chuck Coffen and myself did the organizing. We received the last \$1,500.00 outstanding from one of our participating aerospace companies in January and with that we have exceeded our goal of \$10,000.00 profit for SAMF. I would like to acknowledge the supporting sponsors and participating companies listed below. I would also like to recognize the support provided by the Executive Director of NSIAS, Colin Stephenson and his staff and of course the many volunteers from SAM and SAMF as well as the many hours Roger Patey put in cajoling supporters and sponsors. ***Eric Edgar, Co-Chair***

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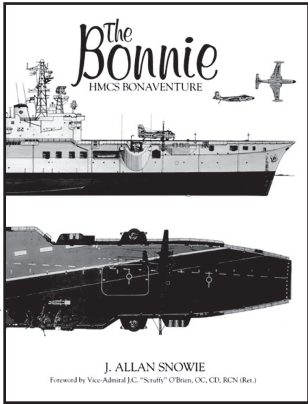
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Pull out section

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III

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 DISCONTINUED

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.

From:	Engraving Request:
Name: _____	_____
Address: _____	_____
City: _____	_____
Prov: _____ Postal Code: _____	_____
Telephone: _____	
Email: _____	

Option Choice: Option "A" (Discontinued) Option "B" Option "C" Option "D"

Method of Payment: Cheque (made payable to SAM Foundation) Money Order Cash

Visa/Mastercard Card#: _____ Exp Date: _____

For further information, please call the SAM Secretary: Toll Free: 1-888-497-7779 or (902) 461-0062
Fax: (902) 461-1610 Email: samf@ns.sympatico.ca Please check engraving details for accuracy before sending. We cannot be responsible for misspelled words on your order form.



\$150



\$300



\$600

Half and Full Wall Tiles may be purchased through monthly installments.
Half Tiles - \$100 day of purchase - \$100 per month for following two months
Full Tiles - \$200 day of purchase - \$100 per month for following four months

IV

PLANNED GIVING

(The following is a simple Codicil which can be added to your present Will.)

CODICIL

Codicil to the Last Will and Testament of _____

which Last Will and Testament is dated this _____ Day of _____ 20____

I hereby add to that said Will as follows:

I give, devise and bequeath to the Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation the sum of \$ _____ to be paid out of my general estate.

Signed and dated this _____ Day of _____ 20____

In the City of _____ Province of _____ Postal Code _____

Witness: _____ Witness: _____

Signature of Testator

Address: _____ Address: _____

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

Gord Troughton writes: (In part) There is another nickname or two around. The guys at #5 Hgr and Z2 hung one on me as a Scout Leader at Shearwater. Trout the Stout Scout.

From **Ed Haglund**: After sitting down and reviewing my winter 06 Newsletter, I have to say that I appreciated your list of nicknames. I remembered Spider, but the Spider I knew was Spider Ried. Torchy Smith I worked with and had the (should I say) joys of a few shore leaves with. He really was a big teaching brother!

From **Jack Walter**:

Just thought I would add a footnote to Cal Withers' article 'A Tragic Accident' in the Winter 2006 edition of the Newsletter. It was the propellor of our aircraft - [Geoff Craven, Ron Greenbury and myself] - that struck LS Tonks (sic). As Geoff and I recall we had come to a complete stop with the chocks in place when the accident happened. The three of us were directed to deplane, clear the flight deck and go straight to the debriefing. Unfortunately neither Geoff or I made any notation in our logbooks so neither of us can remember the exact date or time. No doubt it is in the records somewhere. It was a traumatic experience as one might expect.

From **Gordon Gray**: Hi Kay - It is always a pleasure to visit the Museum along with old friends of the museum or to show new folks the treasures that lie within. They are indeed many.

Your masterful or mistressful guidance of the many workings of SAMF are very well appreciated by us mere folks from afar. The Newsletter is always interesting and sometimes provocative but always in good taste. Keep up the grand effort. (You charmer you. K)

F. Stuart Taggart writes: Further to our telecon regarding 'Nicknames' upon going through the listings I saw the nickname Magdrop Kennedy. I am wondering if this was the nickname given to Lt(N) Air J.K. Kennedy who was a Divisional Officer at HMCS Venture from at least 1958 - 1960. All the Cadets at Venture referred to him as 'Shaky Jake' because when he walked, his body shook and contorted in many different directions all at the same time. When Cadets enquired about the reason for his peculiar body movements, we were advised that 'Jake' had flown Banshees and had 'pranged' so many aircraft during those days that he had broken almost every bone in his body at least once.

Whether these crack-ups had occurred when he flew off the 'Maggie' or whether they occurred flying from NAS's, we were never told - 'Magdrop' Kennedy and 'Shaky Jake' may be one and the same. For the sake of the

history of Naval Aviation, it would be appreciated if veracity and more colour could be added to Naval Air History. (No! Magdrop was a Rigger. Bill Gillespie.)

From **Philip Eisnor**. I will not be re-newing my membership this year because of several reasons. On several occasions I wrote about Sea Furies, one letter was asking what the plane was like to fly and the second letter was about the many wrecks of Sea Furies near or some miles from Shearwater, these wrecks appeared to be in reasonable condition according many photo's in the book about Sea Fury aircraft.

Noone seems to care if someone is interested in telling how the plane flew and handled nor is anyone interested in recovering a Sea Fury for the museum if those Sea Furies are still in the "woods". Both letters were published in the News Letter Magazine and I have reason to believe not a soul out there be they Navy or civilian are interested in the most beautiful airplane ever built. What a damn shame and these people should be very ashamed of themselves especially all those pilots who flew them and also the Mechanics and Tech's that worked on them.

One thing I have noted when surfing the net that there are several Sea Furies for sale, one still has it's original RCN paint and markings.....interesting..... but what the price is for one.....I don't know. One thing is for certain - I can't afford one plus I'm too old to have one but I do remember working on them at Fairey's back in the early 1950's.

Well Kay for an "Old Fart" I have sounded off enough, perhaps you can wake up those Sea Fury types.....who knows?? Anyhow I have relented, please re-new my membership.

John Eden writes: First off, I want to again compliment you on another terrific newsletter this summer. As usual, it includes a varied cross section of items that should twig the fancy of all of the readers. Of particular interest to me was the article "Shearwaters Galloping Ghost" by Rolly West. It sure brought back some great memories, as I was one of the stadium announcers for many years at the Wanderers Grounds for the "Flyers" football games.

I clearly recall the day when the Flyers won the 1957 Canadian Intermediate Championship title when I got so excited when Walker scored a touchdown that I Tumbled out of the booth, only to be "flung" back in by the rather noisy and excited crowd who were now sporting coffee & rum jackets. Spook was always one of my favourite players for as a rather slightly built man, he achieved successes that many much larger men would be hard pressed to duplicate.

From **Lorne McDonald**: The best of the Festive Season to you and all the hard working people at the Shearwater Museum. I get a lot of pleasure reading the Newsletter and know how much work it takes to keep it going and interesting for all members. Bravo Zulu to all of you at the Museum that work so hard at such a worthy cause. May 2007 be a great year for all of you.
Cheers, Lorne McDonald

From **Glen Urquhart**: Hope to visit the Museum during the Venture Reunion in 2009! Keep up the good work.
(Note: *We hope to see you too.*)

Peter Lawson writes: Kay - three days after the publication of 'A Gentleman Aviator', I received the following note by snail mail from Commander J.K. Kennedy, VF871 Ret'd: "I refueled a T-Bird on a cross country flight at Rivers in 1955 and invited Bill Atkinson up for a ride. He hadn't yet checked out in jets. You wouldn't know it! We headed over to Lake Manitoba at angles 20, looking for mischief. We spied a RCAF T-Bird, one of the trainers from Gimli. A dog-fight ensued. I asked 'Willie' if he would like to take it. Willie grabbed the controls in the back seat and all hell broke loose. Willie spiraled around the prey. I remember instinctively ducking as a tailpipe filled the windscreen. Willie swooshed INCHES under the other craft, and my vision coned in as Willie pulled 3 - 4 - 5 g's. Would I survive this flight? Eventually, I landed in a cold sweat. Ten years earlier Willie had hacked down five to become an ace - and he still had it!"

I feel that the above is a superb postscript to Bill Atkinson's biography. *Peter.*

Rod Hutcheson writes: Enjoyed your Winter 06 Newsletter and suspect that the article on nicknames will see you buried in an avalanche of mail pointing out the more glaring omissions. Most of the older (ancient?) Readers should easily be able to identify the likes of Boomer, Knothead, Pappy, Smoky and Animal amongst their old squadron mates. Nor should they have any problem sorting out Yendor Snoyl. Some of my favourites in the non-flying category would be Fat Jack, Kiki, Creeper and Feezer.

P.S. For the benefit of those whose memory may no longer be up to it, these are the last names that belong to the foregoing nicknames: Cocks, Knox, MacLeod, Bice, Schroeder, Lyons, Knowlton, Howard, Steel, Emerson. Finally, I suppose I must admit to having one of my own although few if any of those out there will be aware of it----"Beaver" and I am not going to explain it.

From **Ross L. Riddell**: The winter edition of the Foundation Newsletter arrived a bit waterlogged, but I

was able to open it and get your email address, and read most of the articles - which I enjoy. Page 23 has a list of nicknames, and Bill Cody wrote that he was "Soady". I too, was nicknamed "Sody", without the 'a' when I first arrived at HMCS Cornwallis. The gunroom had its own bar, and knowing I would have a lot of work scholastically, stuck solely to 7-up, lest I fall by the wayside. It probably took only a day or two for the moniker to stick!

Ed Janusas writes: Kay - thanks for your continued interest, support and guidance in all aspects of Shearwater, SAMF and all things Naval Air. As a matter of interest, those uniforms that I continue to wear at Reunions, Legion Parades etc and still fit me are those originally issued to me.

Jack Moss writes: **Credit Overdue** - Bill, I don't expect that you will remember me, but I was one of the OD "Strikers" assigned to squadrons whilst awaiting course at NAMS in 1949.

I was assigned to 825 Firefly squadron and you were an observer on that squadron. LCDR Stoakes was the XO as I recall. We detached to Quonset Point where I worked in the ops office typing the daily flying programme. Hank Utting was my DO during that period. As you know, Hank perished in a B-25 prang. I have a photo of Bill Blatchley doing FCLPs at Quonset, and we later detached to USS Saipan, the carrier converted from a grain carrying lake vessel. Quite an experience. I am fairly sure you were on that squadron. If not, I served in some other squadron with you.

However, I digress. The reason I am writing is to give you some long overdue credit, from guys like me, for your contributions to the museum and the Foundation Newsletter. I keep in touch with a lot of the techs from my time and they echo my thoughts. Many thanks from all of us. All the best, *Jack.*

From Canadian Aviation Museum - Carleton Place, Ontario: This note is to solicit the help of those who were part of Naval Air.

The first part of the research project, now complete, was to identify the aircrew posted to the Squadrons and to trace their deployment to various detachments (HELAIRDETs). This was accomplished using the personnel lists attached to annual historical reports submitted to NDHQ. We are now attempting to trace the assignment of individual aircraft to squadrons and deployment with HELAIRDETs since its taken-on-strength (TOS) date.

From **LCdr Gordo Bonnel USN(ret)**: **RAFS** is an organization dedicated to keeping the spirit of Grumman Iron Works' S2 (in all its versions) and the men who flew it, alive and well. Basically we're a fraternity of Stooft drivers who want to remember those great days and gather occasionally to honor "the beast" and to tell wild war stories.

Originally RAFS was founded to counter the contention that S3 Viking pilots were "god's gift" and "hot stuff," when we all know that... **Real Aviators Flew Stoofts!!** In a more serious vein, I'm attempting to keep all us old Stooft pilots connected, by providing individual address/contact information, and by holding small to large scale gatherings called **RAFS RENDEZVOUS**.



I currently have a roster of over **1800** and I am trying to search out some of our loyal Canadian Forces S2 drivers to include them. I remember well the years in the early 60's when we cross decked on the Bonaventure and tipped a few at Shearwater when in port or on a cross country.

I now have approx 110 RCS CS2 drivers with several of them helping to get the word out.

The only membership requirement is that at some time in your life you sat behind that yoke and flew a Stooft; from 5 minutes to 5 decades, whether it be in the training command, VS squadron, or any other outfit. Operational and/or carrier flying is **NOT** a prerequisite.

THERE ARE NO RULES, CHARTER, DUES, FEES or any other obligation involved!!

Please contact me at: <mailto:gab146@sbcglobal.net>

From **Bob Bissell**: Forgive short letter but just remembered this years subscription. Enjoyed your last newsletter - except for that sad day in San Juan Puerto Rico which your photo shows of the White Ensign being lowered for the last time on board HMCS BONAVENTURE. It was the beginning of the end. Little did we know.

Fortunately, **'Meander 11'** flies the Blue Ensign and the burgee of the Royal Naval Sailing Association.

Life on the Lower Deck: A History of the Men and Women who Served in the Royal Canadian Navy and Canadian Naval Forces, 1910-2010

B.A. ("Sandy")Gow, a History professor in Edmonton, is ex-RCN and RCNR and has started work on his last book, *Life on the Lower Deck...*, the story of the men and women who served in Canada's Navy during the first 100 years. It is *your story*.

Sandy served in *Shearwater, Bonaventure, Nootka, Porte St. Jean, and Nonsuch* (Edmonton) as an Air Rigger and later an Ad Writer. He is an active member of the Legion (Kingsway Branch, #175 Edmonton), the Canadian Naval Air Group (founding chapter, Edmonton), the Royal Canadian Naval Association (Edmonton), and the Canadian Tribal Destroyer Association (Western).

The aim of this book is to tell the stories of those who served from the time the Navy was formed in 1910 until its 100th anniversary. To achieve this aim he needs your help. If you wish to be part of the book Sandy can be reached at:

Prof. Sandy Gow,
Department of History,
Concordia University College,
7128 Ada Boulevard,
Edmonton T5B 4E4.

Tel: (780) 479-9315 (work) (780) 474-6819 (home) FAX (780) 474-1933
at work. E-mail: sgow@telusplanet.net OR sandy.gow@concordia.ab.ca



Happiness is spending a quiet evening with pleasant companions.

THE INDOMITABLE SPIRIT OF NAVAL AVIATION 1945 - 1970

In the post-war redevelopment of the RCN, officers and men were organized, trained and promoted within one of a number of specialist Branches. These constituted divisions of the Navy into functional groups which were essentially either "users" or "maintainers" in nature. The largest of the "users" was the traditional Executive Branch, descended from the days of sail. This supplied personnel to operate and command ships and most shore establishments. The rest were largely "maintainer" branches for technical, training and logistic support of the Navy's operations. These included the Supply, Engineering, Constructor, Electrical and Ordnance Technical branches and others like the Medical, Chaplain and Instructor branches.

Unique among all, however was the Air Branch. It had both users and maintainers to fly and support naval aircraft and their equipment. At the same time, it drew upon the Executive Branch for its aircrew officers and upon the Supply, Electrical and Medical Branches for aviators sub-specialists, both officers and men, and from the long established Engineering Branch for its Air Engineer Officers. Most of the officers serving as flyers or as technical officers in Naval Aviation thus became dually qualified on the ship and air sides of the Navy. This greatly enhanced their long term career employability and usefulness as well as versatility, a highly valuable and often indispensable trait especially in ships of limited crew capacity operating beyond the reach of specialist resources ashore. It also assured the kind of cross-trained surface and air expertise essential to effective use of air power as an integral element of ships and naval operations. Most importantly it provided an outstanding range and depth of technical and operational experience at the sharp end of aviation at sea and in planning and support of organizations ashore. In terms of quality, if not size, aviation in the RCN stood tall among its counterparts in NATO. This was a source of great distinction and pride among those who served in the golden years of Canadian Naval Aviation.

High professional standards were but one of the principal reasons for the deep rooted pride and sense of community which developed in Naval Aviation over the years. This has survived the abolition of the RCN as a distinct service, and the destruction of Naval Aviation itself after 1970. Of all the former Branches, it is the only one which has created and sustained a strong and active fraternal organization. Formed in 1970, the Canadian Naval Air Group has chapters that link centres across Canada. Yet it has been estimated that even at its peak, little more than 2,300 or 10% of the Navy's strength was engaged in aviation duties at any one time.

Other circumstances also gave powerful support to this enduring comradeship. Originally, the RCN was to have

had a light fleet carrier and naval air station in the Pacific as well as the Atlantic Command. In those days, men recruited east of Manitoba were assigned to the Halifax Port Division, and westerners to the Esquimalt Port Division. Except as officers, they could expect to spend most, if not all, of their careers in the Atlantic or Pacific Commands. However the initial plan for a carrier and a full naval air station on the West Coast was scrapped because of funding and manpower limitations. Men who joined from the Western provinces were therefore largely destined to serve out their careers on the East Coast, for the most part in squadrons or units at RCN Air Station in Dartmouth or at sea from time to time in the carrier or helicopter equipped destroyers and supply ships based in Halifax. The result was that young naval airmen from across Canada and those who had preceded them, grew up, married, raised families and made life-long friendships together at HMCS "Shearwater", the Naval Air Station. This kind of close and stable association did not exist outside Naval Aviation in the purely "fish head" or ship side of the Navy. Here officers and men spent perhaps two years in a ship or shore establishment in a constant flux of partial reassignments of their crews within the Fleet. In addition, revolutionary advances in naval aircraft, equipment and weapons compared to those in ships, gave a strong sense of dynamism to the relatively exciting nature and demanding challenges of flying and maintaining aircraft at sea. And finally, Naval Aviation attracted the younger, less traditional officers who looked more to the future than the past. Many were mavericks and genuine characters who inspired the best in the men under their charge. They gave a leadership, colour and spirit to Naval Aviation that was absolutely without parallel in the staid old RCN heavily imbued with the great traditions of its origins in the Royal Navy. Not surprisingly, the "air side" was to develop a comradeship and self-assurance unique in the history of the Navy to the present day.

Together the complementary histories of "Hands to Flying Stations" and "Certified Serviceable: Swordfish to sea King" are a fascinating account of the few visionaries and the many young men who created and developed a highly professional, all volunteer Air Arm from scratch in 1945, achieving in its golden years, a Naval Aviation second to none in calibre and spirit during the long Cold War. Tragically for Canada and its Navy, they and their vital expertise are gone, victims of failed leadership and the miserable politics of rampant self-interest and empire building unleashed by the excesses of Unification. But for a dedicated few, Naval Aviation's proud record would have been lost to history as well. Those who read these accounts and others by Leo Pettipas, Al Snowie, Carl Mills, Stu Soward, Peter Charlton, Robbie Hughes and John MacFarlane and marvel at the photos of ships, flying machines and young men from a vibrant era of 25 to 50 years ago, will readily understand the boundless pride of having earned a place and been a part of the "air side".

Most had no choice when against all logic and common sense, Maritime Command was maneuvered into giving up its entire aviation to a resurgent de facto Air Force, successor to the RCAF. Stripped of their careers in the Navy, abandoned sailors either accepted the forced transfer or got out. Most who survive today are now 60 to 70 years of age. With the abolition of the Air Branch, they have no roots or descendants in today's Navy. To a once familiar fleet, they are strangers, one time members of a forgotten branch abolished before the current generations of young sailors were even born. Yet, no other part of the post-war Navy has inspired such loyalty and pride. Nor in retirement, have any been as dedicated to the preservation of its history and heritage. The historical works of the Canadian Naval Air Group, the creation and development of the Shearwater Aviation Museum, and the outpouring of books and personal recollections bear dramatic witness to their determination that the spirit of Canadian Naval Aviation shall never die.

Ralph Fisher NOAC "Starshell" 1995

THE INDOMITABLE SPIRIT OF NAVAL AVIATION

REFLECTIONS

Eleven years have passed since "The Indomitable Spirit of Naval Aviation" was published on the 50th anniversary marking formal re-establishment of the Navy's air branch in 1945. Since its writing, many more of our pioneers have died. Most survivors are now well into their seventies and eighties. They and the venerable old "Sea Kings" are the fast diminishing remnants of its once 15 regular and reserve squadrons for whom HMCS "Shearwater" was both family and home. Fifty years ago, "Magnificent" was paid off and replaced by "Bonaventure". Because of politicians and others who failed in their duty, the latter was to have a tragically short but vital service. Like "Magnificent", it was the spearhead of our naval forces in defence of the North West Atlantic sector of the NATO shield during the long Cold War. Their matchless versatility, readiness and capacity with three large hangars and huge flight decks were demonstrated time and again in calls for sealift of Air Force planes and Army contingents to and from Northern Europe, the Mediterranean and Caribbean.

Under the near legendary Vice Admiral J.C. "Scruffy" O'Brien, the Maritime Commander, backed by Paul Hellyer as Defence Minister, control of all shore based as well as sea going aviation had finally been consolidated. However, it was a successor that completed their unification by a rather novel reverse approach. He simply surrendered the entire Air Branch to the new Air Command. With the last carrier scrapped, the three services abolished and fragmented, and ignoring wiser counsel, Rear Admiral D.S. "Fester"

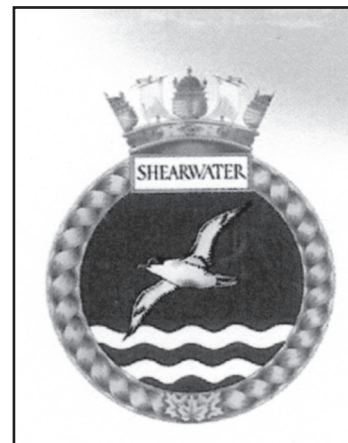
Boyle had little understanding or concern for the major role of aviation in naval or land warfare. The result was disastrous for integral air elements of both maritime and ground forces, hopelessly out gunned and out maneuvered by Air Command leadership. To this day, the miserable politics and manipulation that destroyed the air elements of the Navy and Army make angry reading in the clinical accounts by Stu Soward's epilogue of "Hands To Flying Stations".

Despite this, Canadians can be grateful that two events were to assure survival of one core capability. The first was that the practical case for helicopters as powerful and integral elements of our destroyers, supply and repair ships had been convincingly proven by prior development and trials. The second was the employment of former Navy aircrew and technicians skilled in the operation and maintenance of the "Sea King" pending their ultimate replacement by well trained and experienced air force personnel. By any measure, the latter have done an outstanding job, the only ones in Light Blue to meet the highly demanding task of flying and maintaining aging complex machines and systems under operational conditions in small ships on the high seas.

We owe them an immense debt of gratitude. They may not stand watches, share in ship routines and will leave on disembarkations of the air detachment for periods at home in Shearwater and Comox. But they too have rendered a vital service. In a very real sense, where naval leaderships have failed, they have preserved and nurtured a core capability and priceless expertise.

It will be a powerful legacy and base for the coming renaissance of naval aviation in diversity and scale as amphibious carriers like those of the American "San Antonio" or Australian "Canberra" classes enter service in the development of our Expeditionary Command forces in the decades ahead.

Commander (Rtd) Ralph Fisher





BV Story

by Ted Gibbon

Night before arriving in Portsmouth. I was the Air Officer of the Day and part of the responsibility was to hold an emergency drill for the air department as part of evening rounds. I always tried to vary the scenario to generate an interesting challenge for the emergency party so this night I called HQ 1, identified myself and told them to pipe: "for exercise, fire in the Commodore's car, 'C' hangar. Air emergency party take action". On completion of the pipe I left the wardroom to assess the response and being less than a minute away thought I would be there in plenty of time to observe the actions being planned. Unfortunately the response was swifter than I expected and I arrived on scene to find four squadron apes with enormous grins on their face holding empty fire extinguishers and looking into the Commodore's sedan filled with foam. And I mean filled. Everybody knew that on arrival the Commodore had several official calls to make and that was why we carried the staff car. Now I had a serious problem. When the whole of the emergency party had gathered and complimented the first responders on their actions they took several minutes to enjoy my discomfort as I contemplated yet another visit to Portsmouth beginning with my leave jammed when they began to laugh and turned to as a group to clean up the mess. I've no doubt the upholstery was still a little damp when the Commodore began his duties and I

sweated his return, but nothing further was said and I got ashore that evening.

Damn they were bastards but creative ones and an absolute joy to be associated with..

Cheers,

BONNIE TO THE RESCUE

by Bill Nash

On September 17, 1962 Bonaventure sailed from Halifax destination Rotterdam. I embarked with her as a new crew commander and a junior LSO. On the 23rd of September late in the day Bonaventure was advised that a Super Constellation had ditched in the north Atlantic.

Because of increasing sea conditions, flying had ceased for the day and most pilots were enjoying drinks in the wardroom when the announcement was made that the aircraft was down and pilots who had not been drinking should repair to the briefing room. As I had only had one drink I reported as ordered, (without of course advising of my drink) and was advised that we should launch at approximately 0400 for the crash site. I advised commander air that I had as yet not finished my night quals and pappy advised we would be recovered in day light and not to concern myself. Good show! I and 3 other crews briefed and were launched from Bonny.

Hours later, when we returned from a fruitless search the senior crew commander determined that as I had little experience I should be first on approach. As I remember the sea state by this time was very high and I was waved off twice because of a pitching deck. I was recovered on my 3rd approach and it turned out I was the first to be recovered. I

believe the last to be recovered was on his 8th or 9th pass.

I made a brief note in my log book which states the following: Super Constellation crash! The SAR flight on the 24th of September was a little more than my log entry indicates. Four crews were launched at 4:00 AM, pitch dark, high sea state. The flight was long and the sea state worsened. On return we had a wild deck.

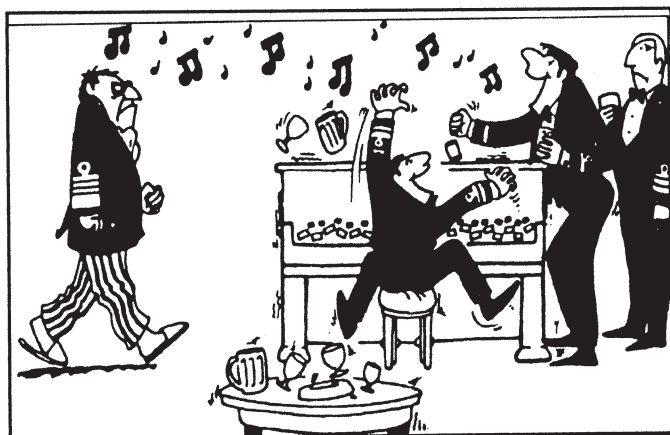
This adventure was one of a number of high lights I remember from my days in VS-880. I was fortunate to be aboard for the cruise to Ungava Bay and later as a crew commander to fly during the Cuban crisis. My last voyage as a tracker pilot was to Cypress when we took the army for their 50 year peace keeping mission.

Unfortunately I failed to note the names of the other 3 crew commanders on that SAR flight of 62. I believe one may have been Glen Brown and perhaps Don Wallace may have been another. If your records indicate who those other crew commanders were I would appreciate you advising me of their names so I can enter them in my log for my grandchildren's perusal.

Do you know if the RCN ever had two or more carriers in Commission at any time?

How about this one -

On 5 Mar 58, Edward 'Ted' Francis became the first Tracker Pilot to perform.....?



I HAVE OFTEN FLOWN OFF THIS SHIP BEFORE

(Tune: I Have Often Walked Down This Street Before)

I have often flown off this ship before;
 But the meatball never looked quite like that before.
 All at once am I, several Nordo's high,
 Looking down on the ship where we live.

*And oh, the Towering Feeling,
 Just to know these wires are there.
 The Over-Controlling, Powering Feeling,
 That any second Pappy may be on the air.*

Goofers Stop and Stare as I Bolter By
 And the Wave-off Lights illuminate that Blackassed
 Sky.
 I will never Die, Just so long as I
 Keep that Cotton-Picking Orange Meatball High!

MY BONNIE (in part)

For Kay:

(Clearing throat)

*My Bonnie is over the ocean,
 My Bonnie is over the sea,
 My Bonnie arrived safely today..*

From Rick Thomson

(Note: Mr. Thomson lives in Germany and was advising us of the arrival of his Bonnie Book. Just wish I could have heard him sing. Ha)

The below shown leather Jacket will be auctioned off at the SAMF Dinner/Auction to be held 16 Jun 07 at the WO/Sgt's Mess - Shearwater.

Size: **Large** (unfortunately if it doesn't fit it cannot be exchanged for another size)

Colour: **Bonaventure Blue** (Slate Midnight Blue)

Value: **\$300**

Bidding on the jacket will begin immediately - you may forward your bids to the SAMF Secretary who will keep them 'silent' until the evening of the Auction.

Place bids by phone toll free 1-888-497-7779 or locally 461-0062. As well you may email your bid to samf@ns.sympatico.ca

If you wish to purchase a jacket, please contact:

HSRS
 81 Ilsley Avenue Unit 7
 Dartmouth, NS B3B 1L5

1-800-565-8677

902-468-5638



Pertaining to the mis-adventures of Sub Lt Fergus Flybottom

If I remember correctly, the Bonnie had returned to Jetty 4 under the bridge after completion of Exercise Racer Run in Jun of '68. Most officers - except for the single guys who were living aboard while in Hfx, were living ashore. Some Subs were lucky to have a cabin in the wardroom at Shearwater where they could zzz out after a hard day of work on the flight lines. That, indeed was the case with ol' Fergy Flybottom as he thought it was convenient to have two homes in the vicinity.

Things were busy at VS 880 that summer. The CO had arranged for a Squadron photograph, in whites, the next morning. The plan was to form up the Sqn in front of D Hangar where a Tracker with wings spread would be the focal point. Large risers would be placed on each side of the A/C for the men and chairs would be set up in front of the risers for the Junior Officers. Senior Officers would be sitting in the middle, directly in front of the Tracker. Meanwhile this evening, there was a gathering of Tracker hackers in the wardroom and the going-on were pleasantly anticipated by one and all.

Well the party was great and the night was late so Fergus put plan B into effect, which was; stay at the wardroom and get up early to go back to Bonnie to get his white uniform for the morning photo. As one might suspect, Fergus slept in so he had to hurry to get downtown to the ship to get said uniform. Luckily, he remembered it was ready to in a "suit bag" hanging in his 2 Sierra single cabin right below the flight deck. Man, you had to be a sound sleeper to live up there, with all that chaotic activity going on above you. But I digress, on with his story.

On arrival at Bonnie, Fergus beatles up to his cabin, grabs the suit bag (with white shoes in the bottom) and heads back to Shearwater as fast as he can manage. Back at the wardroom, he still has 11 minutes to change and get over to D hangar. Without further adieu, he changes into his whites and suddenly realizes that his white socks are not in his shoes. He knew that if he could stand for the photo he would be alright - but he couldn't - one chair was for him....Damn....what now.... only 6 min to get over there... no time to borrow....no ones around anyway...flour from the galley...no that's stupid. Finally his anxious eye came to rest upon an unobtrusive little bottle of white liquid shoe polish (with dauber attached) at the back of the desk. Quick now, get daubing and paint some socks on your ankles, says he to himself, which he did, and wouldn't you know it, the shoe polish dried as he ambled over to D hangar with 2 min to spare.

Nobody suspected and nobody detected the Sub's substitution till later when he was ordered to report to the XO's office across the hangar..... luckily, he wasn't

required to give his "reasons in whiting"!



MS. BONAVENTURE

"What about the Bonaventure you say? Oh, how I remember laying on her deck..dragging the chains across her back. Listening to her catapult... building up steam. Sleeping beneath her cover. Hearing her sounds....day-after-day and throughout the night.. What of the pilots who flew their rounds- again and again? On and-off her deck. Soaring high and throughout the night. What about the great smoke and speed and gaining for the launching and recovery - One-after-the-other...trembling and shaking to meet her goal?

What about the waves that came smashing over her bow and washing down across her deck from stem to stern? What about the sparkling southern sea and the phosphorous that glowed in her wake? What about the horizon..the constant line, ever present..nothingness from side-to-side? What about the lonesome sparrow that landed on her deck in the eye of a hurricane?

What about the constant bobbing and stepping ...up and up and up and then down...what about the scuppers and the sounds of the sea and the smells of a vessel in ever motion? First, the rolling and then the spray and then the crashing down and upon the waves....Oh, how I yearn for the sounds of the Bonaventure...Those were the days..Little did I know today how much they would mean to me...many, many years have gone by and I still feel her in my blood and bones. **John Gorman**

'We made a name for ourselves in the operation of that Ship'

by Robert Gordon, Staff Reporter, Chronicle Herald (in part)

On the Belfast, Ireland waterfront in 1957, HMCS Bonaventure was Commissioned in the Royal Canadian Navy, giving the Navy a fixed wing aircraft capability that would come to a controversial and untimely end in 1970.

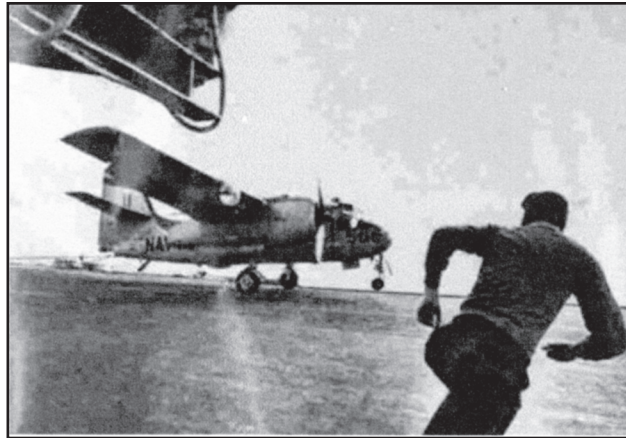
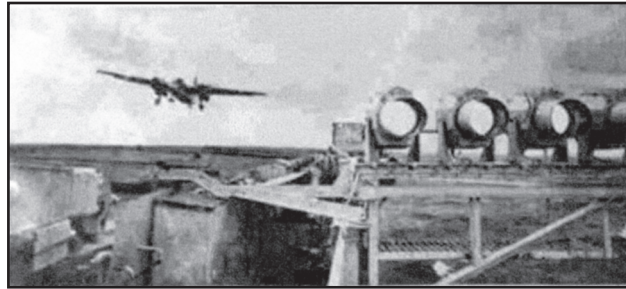
The Bonnie, as she was affectionately called by her sailors, replaced HMCS Magnificent which was on loan to Canada from the Royal Navy, making her the first and only Canadian-owned aircraft carrier.

"It was a happy time. Morale was good during the Commissioning Ceremony in the hangar," said Bob Dube, one of the original "deck apes" on Bonaventure who was flown over from Canada to put her through trials and sail her back to her new home port of Halifax.

Until her wings were clipped in 1970, Banshee fighter jets, Tracker anti-submarine aircraft and helicopter made thousand of landings on the 700 foot long flight deck with the large 22 painted on the stern. "We made a name for ourselves in the operation of that Ship.... She and the crew got continual praise from other navies." said Vice Admiral Harry Porter (Ret) Master of Bonaventure in 1965-66. But the living conditions for the 1350 Officers and Men who worked aboard Bonaventure "were spartan to say the least," said Admiral Porter.

During long southern cruises her metal flight deck would heat the uninsulated quarters below to a sweltering temperature. The sailors were jammed into messes tighter than a tin of sardines and the clang of aircraft landing on the deck rattled throughout the ship 24 hours a day. "In my mess, there were 80 men sleeping in bunks arranged in four tiers," said Mr. Dube.

The Bonnie met an untimely death in 1970 just after a controversial \$13-Million refit. Government funding cutbacks forced the Navy to scrap something and it seemed better to get rid of Bonaventure than half a dozen destroyers. "There was 13 years of life left in her when she was scrapped. Scrapping the Bonaventure was, well pretty well, the death knell for fixed wing aviation in the Navy," said Admiral Porter.





2 MESS KAVANAUGH, DOWNIE, GUTHRIE

MAGIC MOMENT spent with Hal Fearon....when he was Commander Air at Shearwater.

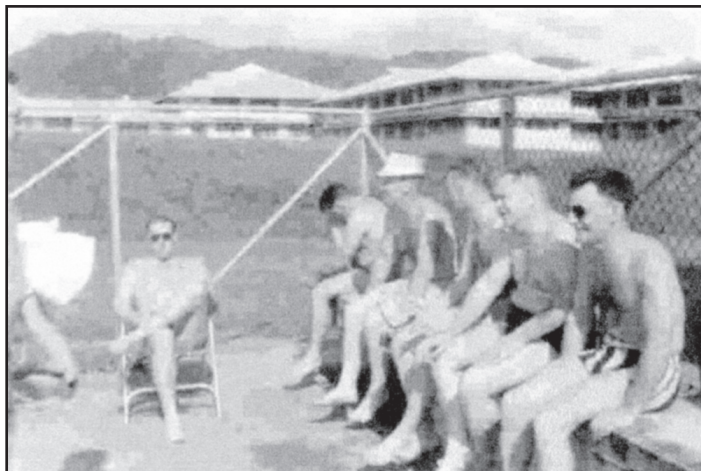
By Al Whalley

We launched from Shearwater on a special mission from 880 in one of our Trackers....on a flight to Saskatoon early one foggy morning with a scheduled stop in Ottawa to pick up the Admiral ! When Cdr Fearon called for taxi clearance from our hangar ...the controller advised strongly"zero visibility" etc etc!! Hal called back just as strongly "understood..this is Commander Air!".. and we started to taxi slowly to the runway for departure. [I had the feeling that the controller was at a loss for words at that moment]

Moving on to the runwaythat was barely visible...Hal says to Cdr Walton who was right seat.."you call the airspeed..I'll lift off at 110!!" All we could see were the white runway center line strips as they passed by under the noseand at 110.... we went straight up...and moments later popped out into a bright sunny day on top of a solid overcast and were on our way to destination. On time ..on schedule!
Those ..WERE ..the good 'ole days!

SO YOU THINK YOU KNOW EVERYTHING?

A goldfish has a memory span of three seconds. (Some days that's about what my memory span is)



I've heard of segregation, but.....



Just sightseeing...



29 MESS

I see Charlie Gay and John MacLeod - names for others?

Royal Canadian Navy "MARCOM" and their Ensigns

by Terry Goddard

I am sure that all Naval officers and men know the history and meaning of the White Ensign. But then there are those who read SAMF Newsletter who are not Naval, so a little background.

The White Ensign representing allegiance to the Crown consists of the Red Cross of St. George on a white field with the Union flag in the upper canton. The make up of the Union flag may be of interest. It is England's Cross of St. George overlaying Scotland's Cross of St. Andrew which overlays Ireland's Cross of St. Patrick.

In the early 1800's the White Ensign in conjunction with the Red and Blue Ensign were flown to indicate the rank of an Admiral. All ships in the Admiral squadron would fly his White, Red or Blue Ensign.

In the early 1800's the Admiralty considered the three Ensign practice had many drawbacks. One of which was the use of the Red Ensign by British Merchant ships. In the result it was decided in 1864 that all ships in the Royal Navy would fly the White Ensign. The Blue Ensign was to be flown by ships in the Royal Navy Reserve and the Red Ensign to be flown by British Merchant ships. Subsequently, it was agreed that Dominion warships would use the Blue Ensign with the country's Coat of Arms.

On January 12, 1910, the Canadian government introduced the Naval Service Bill, the official title of the navy to be The Naval Service of Canada. The bill received Royal Assent on May 10, 1910

On August 10, 1910, HMS Rainbow was the first ship commissioned into the Naval Service of Canada. On October 1910 HMS Niobe joined Rainbow

In January 1911, the Canadian government asked the Admiralty for permission to fly the White Ensign and to change its title from Naval Service of Canada to Royal Canadian Navy. It was not until March 1911 that permission was given for Canadian warships to fly the White Ensign at the stern and the distinctive Blue Ensign at the Jack. Not until August 1911 did King George, by Royal proclamation give approval to change the designation to Royal Canadian Navy. The tardiness may well indicate that the Admiralty had some reservations in recommending approval.

On December 16, 1911 the Privy Council set forth regulations that all ships and vessels of the Royal Canadian Navy shall fly at the stern the White Ensign as the symbol of the authority of the Crown and at the Jack staff the distinctive flag of the Dominion of Canada; such distinctive flag being the Blue Ensign with the Arms of the Dominion inset in the fly. The White Pendant will be

flown at the masthead.

In early 1914 British Columbia purchased two surplus Royal Navy submarines. On August 7, 1914, they were bought by the Canadian government and commissioned into service. It is interesting to note that in 1917 the submarines CC1 and CC2, together with their tender HMCS Shearwater after patrolling the Pacific became the first warships to transit the Panama Canal flying the White Ensign.

In September 1945, authority was given by the Canadian government to fly the Red Ensign with the shield of the coat of arms in the fly on all government buildings within and outside Canada; this provision to apply until such time as action is taken by the Parliament for the formal adoption of a National flag.

This order in Council specifically stated that nothing therein should be deemed to alter the regulations for the White Ensign and the Blue Ensign with the shield of the coat of arms of Canada on Canadian naval vessels or with respect to the flying of the Red Ensign on Canadian merchant ships. Shortly thereafter a submission to the Canadian Naval Board to deface the White Ensign with the Canadian Coat of Arms was unanimously rejected outright with appropriate harrumphs

In 1949 Admiral Rollo Mainguy was appointed to head a commission of enquiry into incidents in the RCN. Among the commissions conclusions three would seemingly have future ramifications on uniforms, customs/traditions, flags and ensigns.

1. The absence of a distinguishing Canadian identity in the Navy
2. A deterioration in the traditional relationship between officers and petty officers (an RN tradition, the greatest single factor is the man)
3. An uncaring officer corps harbouring aristocratic attitudes inappropriate to Canadian democratic sensitivities.

As is well known there has been and continues to be a struggle between what was the RCN and the RCAF for political power and fund allocation, a struggle, which the RCAF insidiously and constantly is winning. As noted by Stu Soward this particularly applied to Naval Air, the transfer of RCAF station Dartmouth and Aircraft Carriers (both now won).

As a sign of things to come, in 1951 the RCAF questioned Naval supremacy in Maritime Warfare and wanted co-existence with the RCN; even more alarming was CNS Admiral Rollo Mainguy's rebuttal of Commodore Lay's recommendations that more emphasis should be placed on the growth of Naval Aviation and that the Naval Board should plan for the

adoption of all Maritime air operations, Mercy! Admiral Mainguy stated it was the task of the RCN to convince as many as possible of the importance and place of Maritime Air and to encourage the RCAF to build up an efficient Maritime Air, a similar submission by Commodore Storrs was also rejected.

Despite many setbacks like these, the RCN seemed to be keeping an even keel, albeit losing political power. Nonetheless, whilst not singing "hearts of oak" the naval sentiment to retain naval traditions, inherited from the Royal Navy and those evolving from the RCN's World War 1 and World War 2 experiences and triumphs seemed to be in vogue.

However, with the desire to be identified as "Canadian" the use of the Canadian Blue Ensign at the Jack was not considered satisfactory, as the Jack is not flown when underway. Canadian ships could not be distinguished from those of the Royal Navy. To rectify this, in 1961 a policy of wearing the Canadian Red Ensign from the masthead (in addition to the Canadian Blue Ensign at the Jack staff when appropriate and the White Ensign at the stern Ensign staff was established.

On February 15, 1965, the Canadian government established the Red Maple Leaf flag as the flag of Canada which replaced the White, Blue and Red Ensigns. I was unable to find out where and when the new flag was flown on Canadian warships. However, the Union flag also remained an official flag in Canada representing Canada's membership in the Commonwealth of Nations and Canada's allegiance to the Crown.

As a personal comment, replacement of the White Ensign representing the authority of the Crown seems out of order. Is the Queen no longer The Commander In Chief of the Canadian Armed Forces? Replacement of the Canadian Blue Ensign designating Canadian Ship is logical as it is redundant. What flags Canadian Merchant ships fly, now that the Red Ensign is not used. I don't know and can't find out.

Also in 1965 we had Mr. Hellyer and his disastrous concepts for the Armed Forces. Despite early denials that total unification was planned, he implemented it and on February 1, 1968 The Royal Canadian Navy was merged with the Royal Canadian Air Force and the Canadian Army to form the Canadian Armed Forces with their green uniforms. Mr Hellyer certainly bears the major responsibility for the chaos then and now. However, notwithstanding that there were those like Admiral Landymore and Admiral Stirling, would it be reasonable to assume that like the rejection of Commodores Lay and Stores submissions, that Hellyer required some complaisant Senior Naval Officers to develop and implement his grand strategies. Holy Cow! I find it difficult to understand how any Senior Naval Officer would agree to change the designation Royal

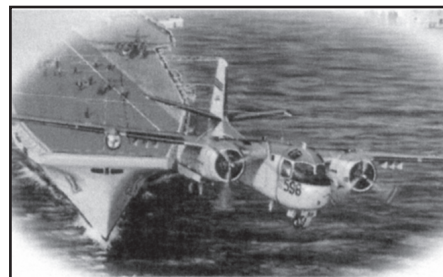
Canadian Navy to whew! Canadian Forces Maritime Command. Although unofficially referred to as Navy, an edict was issued that it was not correct to use the designation "Royal Canadian Navy".

However, is the directive out of order since the Royal designation of the Canadian Navy was executed by a Royal proclamation which has never been revoked, the Canadian government and the Canadian Forces will be required to use the designation "Royal Canadian Navy" if the expression Canadian Navy is used in any official capacity.

As for the current MARCOM use of flags and Ensigns in Canadian Warships, I was unable to determine a definitive description. Local Naval Establishment, Armed Forces College, Naval information Ottawa, Library Ottawa, History Ottawa were vague to no knowledge. It would seem that a MARCOM Ensign was developed for Canadian Warships; a White Ensign without the Cross of St. George with the Canadian Maple Leaf flag in the canton and a fouled anchor beneath a Crown in the fly. I understand that the MARCOM Ensign is flown at the Jack and Canadian Maple Leaf flag at the masthead and or the Ensign Staff at the stern. Perhaps a serving MARCOM officer (Naval) could clarify this.

Unification also had a strange effect on uniforms. The callous churlishness revealed in Mr. Hellyer's auto-critic dictum changing uniforms to green needs no comment by me. It condemns itself. It would appear that it has now self destructed as dark and light blue uniforms have returned.

In so far as removal of the "Executive Curl" to preclude any notion that the wearer was Naval seems in line with the demise of the Navy as an identity i.e. in becoming MARCOM. One is not to say "Royal Canadian Navy" yet we still have a Royal Canadian Air Force. The removal of the Executive Curl also prevents one knowing whether the wearer is a fireman, custom officer, policeman, and transit inspector, et al, all of whom wear gold stripes without the Executive Curl. Could it be that other Navies Of the World are laughing up their sleeves?



LCdr (Ret'd) Bob Murray, former CO HU21, has been building a collection of copies of aircrew log books at the CavM through his long association with Naval Air. Because of the limited number held, however, a large gap remains in the Sea King story at sea. What is really needed are more logbooks for research purposes.

A second project that Bob is researching involves the aircraft assigned to *Bonaventure*, both fixed and rotary wing, and the dates of deployment. In a recent conversation, he mentioned 'OPERATION NIMROD CAPER' which was the carrier's last major exercise during the early spring of 1970. Six Sea Kings were deployed in the exercise off Jamaica involving the Royal 22ng Regt (Van Doos). Possible some former Association members were part of that exercise.

The current collection is in excess of 400 log books and is comprised of aircrew members who served in any arm of the forces. The CAVM does not have the originals" these are loaned to the museum, photocopied, and returned to their owners. The copies are retained at the museum. The process that Bob has developed is for the original to be received, photocopied and returned to the owner by courier, usually within six weeks.

It is hoped that Ventures who flew with the RCN/CF will give serious consideration to taking part in the important log book project and lend their log books to the Museum. Log books can be sent to the following address:

Attn: Bob Murray

Canada Aviation Museum
11 Aviation Parkway
Ottawa, ON K1K 4R3

Orville Parker writes: Subject: Firefly
I served on HMS Puncher a/c 1944 to 1946 and returning from Scapa Flow to Halifax 1946 when we brought back on board a Firefly aircraft for Shearwater. I see no mention of this in your write up. HMS Nabob and Puncher manned by Canadians and with a British air crew. HMS Puncher was commanded by Captain Bidwell from Halifax and who ended up as Rear Admiral. A book was published about HMS Puncher. From MR Orville Parker, 1171 Ambleside Dr Apt 1110, Ottawa, ON K2B

Rolfe Monteith writes: I must express my admiration for the SAMF Newsletter - all concerned are to be congratulated on this splendid periodical.

We look forward to hearing that Shearwater is to be reborn. Kind regards to one and all.
Yours Aye Rolfe

Eric Edgar writes: How about Jasper Wright, Blacky Menard, Apple Henderson, Baggys Baker, Jake the Snake Leonard, Hugh "Two Gun" Roberts, Harry "Nails" Jardine, Pony Moore, Pin Cushion, Nobby Clark (about 3 of them), Stainless Steele, Suds Sutherland. That's just a few that I can think of, I am sure others can come up with many more. I wonder if Carl remembers Soapy Hudson, very appropriate and what about "Doc" Rowat "Scruffy" Wier "Bunky" Strickland. And, how about "Pop" Fotheringham ...dear 'ol "Hammerhead" Donaldson and Wifflediff and Fluffduff!!

Dave Tate writes: One of the funny tricks Scotty Guthrie pulled on Bonnie.

Anyone serving on Bonnie when Downie and Scotty drove Big Art McPhee bonkers by starting a rumor that someone had smuggled a horse aboard? They perpetuated this rumor by depositing evidence of a horse in various areas of the ship.

Add to the above this one from **Al Whalley**: Another "feature" story of dear 'ol "Scotty" ..that others may know more details of..was when he was in tears aboard a Bonnie detachment ...due to having lost a family member. A Tracker launched with Scotty aboard to fly him home. About an hour or so into the flight it was recalled...when the word got out to the COthat it was his dog who had departed!

Anyone who has a dog though... knows that they ARE considered as part of the family! I don't recall that anything further developed from the incident - do you?

Vern Cunningham writes: As my friend Shamus Dawson used to say, "I've done my sums" and I've set aside in my budget the same \$100 that I've always been sending you - now that means \$40 for membership and another \$60 for you to apply wherever it will do some good.

I continue to marvel at the wonderful job you do, not only for the Foundation, but especially on the Newsletter, which keeps getting better and better!!!

I hope you feel very proud of what you are accomplishing - I know we Old Farts who are still around from the original Air Branch days are grateful for what you are doing!

Cheers to you and Bill - take care.

Our Bonnie lies under an ocean of sailors' myths.

Jonathan Manthorpe - Southam Newspapers
Sunday 12 Feb 97

HONG KONG - Farewell HMCS Bonaventure.

Canada's first and last aircraft carrier, "The Bonnie", was perhaps the most loved ship in our Navy's history. And, when she was scrapped in 1970 those who had served on her constructed an intricate myth about how it survived the breaker's yard and continued to sail the seas.

But the myth of the Bonnie's survival died on Jan 31 in Bombay, half a world away from her home port of Halifax. Two weeks ago, the Indian Navy decommissioned one of its two aircraft carriers, the *Vikrant*. And as any Canadian sailor knows, the *Vikrant* was really the *Bonaventure*.

"I've had dozens of people come up to me over the years and say, did I know the *Vikrant* was really the *Bonaventure*", Colonel John Bremner, military attache at the Canadian High Commission in Delhi, said Tuesday. "So far as I can, I've checked into the story and there's no truth in it. But I guess people just didn't want to believe the Bonnie had really gone."

The *Bonaventure* was not only much loved, it was also at the centre of a Defence Department scandal. It was taken out of service in 1966 for a major half-life refit that cost \$11 million Cdn according to the Government and up to \$17 million, more than double the original estimate.

Then the Government announced the *Bonaventure* would be scrapped.

It was sold for \$851,700 to the Vancouver company N. W. Kennedy Ltd., which on Oct. 28, 1970 took possession and had her towed out of Halifax by the tug *Fuji Maru*.

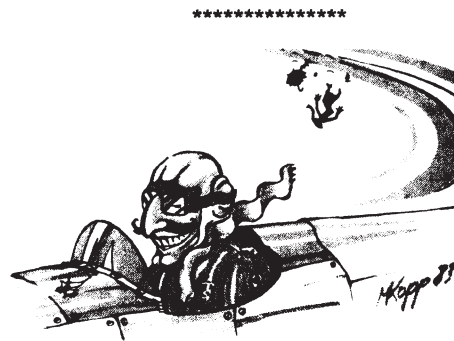
As the Bonnie was towed around the Cape of Good Hope and into the Indian Ocean, the myth of her survival was born. The story that began to circulate in the bars of Halifax was that the ship the *Fuji Maru* finally pulled into Taiwan's Kaohsiung Harbor on March 15, 1971 was not the *Bonaventure* at all. It was, the story said, the Indian aircraft carrier the *Vikrant*, of the same British-built Majestic class and outwardly of similar appearance. A switch was done at sea with the superbly refitted *Bonaventure* joining the Indian Navy and the much less presentable *Vikrant* going for scrap.

Few over the years have been able to explain what made the Bonnie special. The one common sentiment is that she was a happy ship.

The tale of its survival after 1971 was never more than wishful thinking. The ship that the *Fuji Maru* towed out of Halifax was not the *Bonaventure* of renown. It had been stripped of all expensive re-fit work right down to the hull. Nearly \$5 million worth of equipment was taken out and even its huge bronze propellers were blown off.

But in the *Vikrant* it lived on in people's imagination. Now the *Vikrant* has gone and with it the last of the Bonnie. Well, not quite gone. "The *Vikrant's* only been decommissioned", said Colonel Bremner. "It's going to be scrapped. I have no doubt it will be scrapped."

So sad to say our Bonnie does not lie over the ocean but what a return on investment - \$851,700 for \$17 Million. Ed



SIDEREAL WARMING?

There once was (last known position the Delta) a Sea Fury Pilot (803 Sqn) who had an ego of galactic dimensions – who used to speak of his **loops and rolls and flicks and bunts and tricks unknown to common pilots** and who was wont to burst into the hut with a loud **"Who's the hottest pilot in 803 and why am I?"** One wonders how hot his post-delta experience is? Not a bad guy though – used to buy a round (occasionally). Does anyone remember his name? **Ed.**

Three Old Guys at RA Park...

The first one says: "Windy, isn't it?"

The second one says: "No it's Thursday."

The third one says: "So am I. Who's for a beer?"

BONAVENTURE TROPHY



We think there is a 'Bonaventure' Trophy that is adrift somewhere. We had hoped to have the scoop on it and perhaps a photo for this issue but like a wily coyote, it has so far eluded our search net. Thanks

to a note from Bill McDermott with some info, we set off to find the prize and here is the skinny to date.

In the grand old days, Shearwater had a very active RSNSA (Royal Canadian Navy Sailing Association) that was later call the CFSA (Canadian Forces Sailing Association). There was a posh trophy that was raced for in an annual regatta. It was real solid silver and not just plated. The engravings prominently included the word: "Bonaventure". It was a smallish punch bowl trophy and not the traditional cup. Bill recalls it as being the best looking item "down the hill" and opines that perhaps it was donated by the Admiral when the Bonaventure was taken out of service. It is thought that the last time it was competed for in a regatta, it was won by the royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron and was thought to be on display in their show case. A check with the RNSYS reveals that it is not in their show case and neither is it on their inventory of booty.

Bill is going to do some more checking when he returns from his winter escape to a warmer clime in Mexico. Perhaps our readers can help us out with more info, the history and perhaps how we may track it down.

Lem Murphy

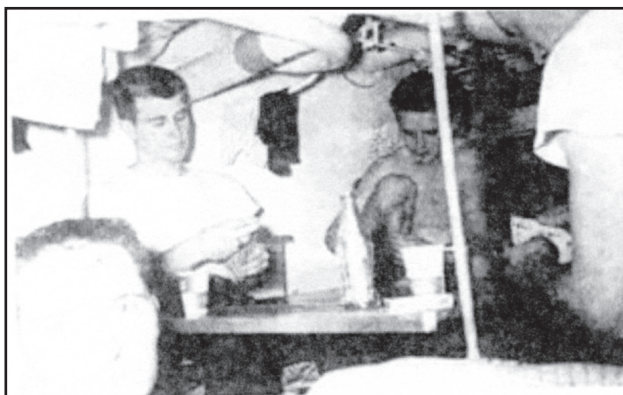


1951- Ed Janusas, Jim Corman, Dan Daley
On a tugboat (Italian Navy) on an excursion to the Isle of Capri.

HAVING FUN ABOARD SHIP!



Scraping paint



Wanna sit in?

TRACKER TALES

Allan Snowie

A short tale to describe the sturdiness of the Tracker:

This took place during a return trip north from Exercise Maple Spring in Caribbean waters. Our Squadron, VS-880, had been spoiled by good flying weather and smooth seas. Passing through the northern area of the Bermuda Triangle (where else?), a night flight of four aircraft was caught out by the fringe of a hurricane.

It wasn't bad weather; the skies were clear, there was a full moon, but the sea state was up. The flight of CS2F's was led by an experienced Lieutenant Commander with three new Sub Lieutenant's in tow. The lead a/c was recovered without difficulty, but No. 2 made a ropey arrival. Then No. 3 'lined up actual', which is to say he lined up his aircraft more to the ship than with the angled deck. The resulting approach was also high, and he missed the wires. Immediately there was a firing of warning rockets and a "Bolter-Bolter-Bolter" call from Flyco as the airplane shot out into the night. On the LSO platform our attention was diverted aft by No. 4 on approach -- an OK pass and recovery. Up forward, however, all was confusion and fire.

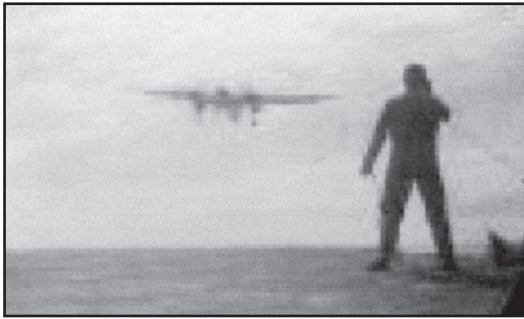
The cause of the excitement: No. 3 had collided with the folding wing of No. 2, dislodging and igniting two flares onto the deck. Quick-witted action by sailors in tossing the things overboard brought an end to the entertainment. A fire is not to be taken lightly aboard a carrier with large avgas storage tanks.

Communications with No. 3 were nil. His tail-light was visible just above the horizon and he was not climbing. Finally a voice. "We're having control problems."

The radar types gave a vector around the circuit and handed off to CCA (Carrier Controlled Approach) for a second attempt. CCA brought him down and over to the LSO (Landing Signals Officer, Batsman, or 'Paddles').

No. 3. "I can't get the speed back."

Paddles. "You're high and fast. Wave Off!"



As the Tracker commenced its missed approach it was silhouetted against the moon. At least 6 feet of the right hand wing, including all the aileron, was missing (One never has a camera ...). Setting up for the third approach the flight deck was cleared except for the Senior LSO and the crash crew. Again speed could not be bled below 120 knots for a proper 'in the groove, 90 knot' recovery.

A decision was made to rig the barrier and have the aircraft fly into it, like being caught in a giant spider's web. However, believing his fuel to be critical due to leakage from the ruptured wing, the crew commander elected to ditch while he still had power.

Now a night ditching in heavy seas is a matter of luck. You hope to land on the top or backside of the swell, because if you land under the swell you'll be swamped.

The airplane did impact a swell crest and the captain and two aircrew sailors scrambled into the salt water activated life raft with only their feet wet. The co-pilot, a cool type, swam out to the wing to inspect the damage first. There

were no injuries. The plane guard destroyer picked them up in five minutes ... and they were drunk in ten!

There was a fitting postscript: Safely back in *Bonaventure*, the co-pilot was on his way to shave the next morning when we surrounded him to hear the story. During the telling, amid much arm waving, he slashed himself on the hand with his razor!

And so to my very own story ...

I was on course with the USN in 1969 for LSO training: three months of watching and 'waving' S2Fs from Key West to Norfolk, and in USS *Yorktown*. During this time, *Bonaventure* set sail for Europe on a NATO exercise. Shortly thereafter a crew commander in Bonnie had to be replaced, and squadron records showed yours truly as being the next day/night qualified type available.

Talk about jet lag: Via airlines Washington-Montreal-Halifax. Pick up winter uniform and flying kit. Drop off summer khakis. Then, Tracker to Trenton, Yukon to London, a pick-up by COD Tracker and "bang, crash" back aboard Canada's capital ship. Immediately into the left-seat and onto the catapult for a quick refresher. Thirty-six hours from lazing in the sun on Virginia Beach to NATO work in the North Sea.

As a 'war' was in progress, there was no time for night re-qualification. On my third patrol, the mission launch was at 0200 with recovery slated for 0600 ... after daybreak. The fleet, however, began to fog in at 0400, well before first light.

There was a very concerned foursome in our Tracker. The other three had recently endured a crash on deck, and had crawled out of an aircraft that had been

hanging over the sponsons (my Senior Aircrewman, a chubby type, had feared this kind of prang as he felt he would not get out in time. In the event all he remembered was standing on deck watching the other three clamber out!).

We held at the TACAN fix with three other CS2Fs. Maintaining 500' vertical separation. Commencing approach at a given time 30 seconds apart. All very precise stuff.

So here we are on final. On time. Talked down by CCA 'til breakout from cloud. Over to the LSO. Great. Meatball centred. Line-up correct (on centre-line the right wingtip will clear the island by 13 feet). Speed holding 90 knots. "Looks good." from Paddles. Over the round-down, and I ease back on the control column.

WHAT AM I DOING? You NEVER round out a carrier approach. Rule No. 1 blown, and with it our recovery aboard. 'Bang' as the wheels hit, too late for a wire. Full power, gear up, and off into the black-assed night. No horizon. On instruments immediately, all the time cursing and swearing at myself. The co-pilot is a pair of large, very white eyes. It is quite quiet in the back.

Settle down, over to CCA control, but not before a comment from Flyco. "... Your MAD boom is extended." Rats ... the electric switch must be shot. I send the junior Aircrewman aft into the fuselage tunnel to manually wind it in.

CCA brings us around for another go. Check the fuel. Hmm. Lossiemouth is the nearest base, with an hour's transit. Enough fuel for another pass, and then it's Bonnie Scotland for me! But Oh, the injured pride – and no shillings for beer!

Back around on final. Everyone strapped in? No? Get him out of the hole and harnessed. The Senior Rating takes off his helmet and calls. Junior crawls forward, throws on his headset and asks. "Are we gonna make it this time, Boss?"

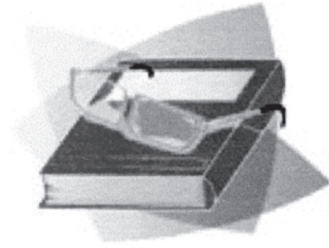
I reply. "You betcha. Hang on. We're going in."

And we do, not as great an approach, but the lovely decel of the hook catch is there. It's No. 6 wire and black water below the nose, but we're home.

Strange ... the Senior Crewman is very cool in debrief. I find out why later. He assisted Junior to strap in, and then put on his lid only to hear, "... We're going in."

During a commercial airline flight, a Navy Pilot was seated next to a young mother with a babe in arms. When the baby began crying during the descent for landing, the mother began nursing the infant as discreetly as possible. The Pilot pretended not to notice and, upon debarking, he gallantly offered his assistance to help with the various baby-related impedimenta.

When the young mother expressed her gratitude, the pilot responded, "Gosh, that's a good looking baby...and he sure was hungry!" Somewhat embarrassed, the mother explained that her pediatrician said nursing would help alleviate the pressure in the baby's ears. The Navy Pilot sadly shook his head, and in true Pilot fashion exclaimed: "Damn! And all these years I've been chewing gum."



News from the SAM Library & Archives

This has been a productive winter here in SAM's Library & Archives, full of new donations of books and archival material.

New books arrive all the time such as:

"Flyboys" by James Bradley

"Aces, Warriors & Wingmen" by Wayne Ralph

"The Cinderella Service: RAF Coastal Command 1939-1945"

by Andrew Hendrie

And, many more.

Over the past year, 127 pieces of film footage have been transferred from VHS cassettes and 16mm film reels to DVD. So come visit and check it out.

Finally, we would like to remind you of our photo collection containing everything from NAMS course photos to prints of aircraft photos taken during WW11. More of this collection is being scanned

Everyday. All items can be searched in SAMARC, our Library & Archives computerized catalogue. You can also email (awmuseum@ns.sympatico.ca) or telephone (902-720-2165) us with any specific research question you might have. *Cheers*
Christine Dunphy
SAM Librarian/Archivist

THE FINALE

Cdr D. Tate

As HMCS BONAVENTURE approached Halifax, early that morning, a final number of touch and go landings was carried out. Fourteen TRACKER aircraft, including TRACKER 1587 participated in a "daisy chain" type circuit carrying out touch and go landings for the best part of an hour. Included in this "exercise" was Admiral O'Brien riding as co-pilot with the Squadron CO. On completion of this session ten TRACKERS proceeded to Shearwater, two recovered on board and two remained in the circuit. In one aircraft was Cdr. Shel Rowell and Capt. "Pop" Fotheringham. (Pop was the first RCN pilot to land on board HMCS BONAVENTURE following initial commissioning). Admiral O'Brien and Cdr. David Tate were in the second aircraft. The plan was that the two aircraft would do a few more touch and go landings; after the Admiral and Tate "trapped" Fotheringham and Rowell would make the final arrested landing.

This took place as planned and the last landing by Fotheringham was duly recorded as #20,590. On completion of this final landing Bonnie proceeded towards Halifax harbour. As HMCS BONAVENTURE sailed up the harbour the four TRACKERS remaining on board would spread and then fold their port wings in a symbolic salute to Admiral O'Brien who had previously flown ashore and was awaiting the sail past at the reviewing stand ashore. The TRACKERS were then to be catapulted from the ship in the vicinity of Georges' Island and join up with 16 other orbiting TRACKERS for a fly past. However, due to a catapult unserviceability these plans had to be adjusted. There remained two alternatives to launching the four remaining TRACKERS from HMCS BONAVENTURE. They could be craned off and moved by barge or they could be flown off by using a "free deck" launch.

Captain Cutts recognizing the importance and significance of the occasion proposed they be launched in Bedford Basin, a novel idea. Accordingly, "cranking" up all the knots he could, while circling within the confines of Bedford Basin, Captain Cutts was able to obtain sufficient "wind across the deck" to launch one aircraft each time the ship settled, briefly, on a predetermined launch course. After the fourth circle around Bedford Basin the last free launch of an aircraft from an RCN carrier became history. It was a performance never before accomplished and never again to be attempted.

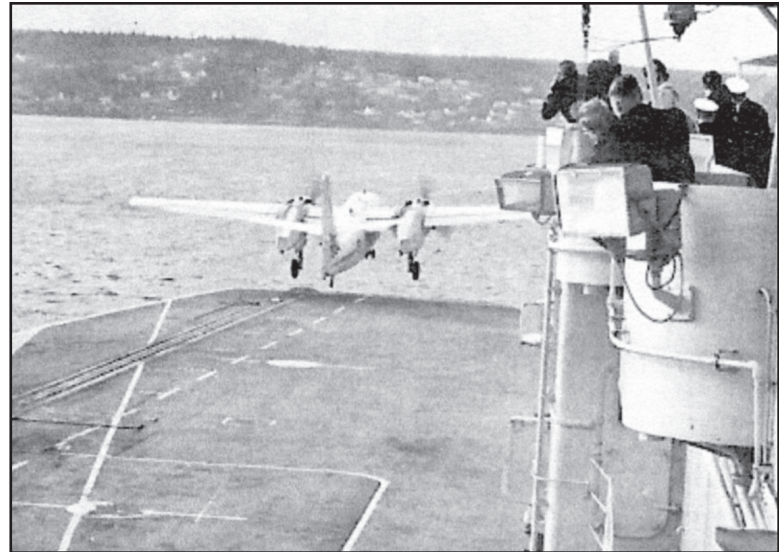
This was the "Grand Finale" for HMCS BONAVENTURE and RCN fixed-wing carrier operations which had been accomplished with pride, dedication and professionalism over 23 years. Such performance would never have been possible without the devoted and skilled efforts of all who sailed in this magnificent ship. However, a very special tribute must be made to all the men who kept the aircraft flying, the air maintenance trades, and those who

took care of them on the flight deck, the aircraft handlers.

As an epilogue and a tribute to carrier aviation the following words, written by an unknown aviator, can best sum up the feelings of all those who participated:

"It gave us moments of fear and loneliness, kinship and challenge, joy and sorrow, pride, tragedy and triumph.

It became part of us then and is part of us now. It will be with us til the end of our days---THE CARRIER EXPERIENCE."



The shallow waters of Bedford Basin loom under the bow, as the last Tracker claws its way airborne without the aid of the catapult.

As Cdr Rod Lyons in the last Tracker burst from the deck of HMCS BONAVENTURE, the ship was already 'helm-on' and carving hard around to avoid the Basin shoreline. When his VU 32 Sqn COD Aircraft became airborne, Lyons ended an era in Canadian Naval history. The carrier flying that had commenced with HMCS WARRIOR IN 1946 was over.
