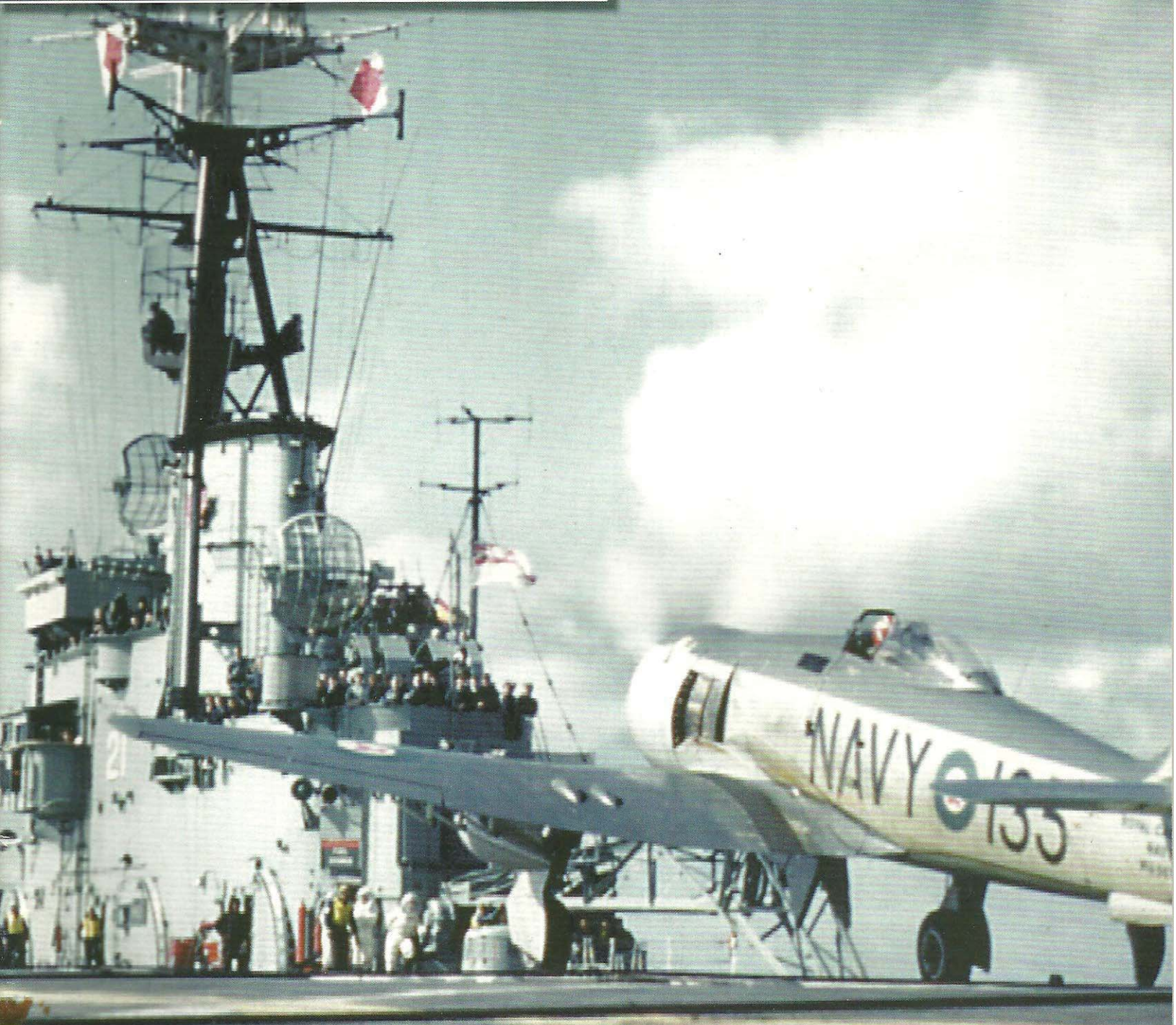


# WARRIOR

SUMMER 2009



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

*Joseph Howe , 31 August 1871*

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**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.

Graphics are best submitted electronically, they should be 300dpi and a .tif file. A jpg file at 300dpi is acceptable if no compression is used. We will attempt to use any pictures, whatever the format.

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

**Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation** or

**SAM Foundation**  
PO Box 5000 Stn Main  
Shearwater, NS B0J 3A0

**Deadlines for receiving submissions are:**

Spring	1 March
Summer	1 July
Winter	15 October

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**SEA FURY ON HMCS MAGNIFICENT**

The Royal Canadian Navy acquired 74 Hawker Sea Fury FB 11s in six batches between 1948 and 1953. Sea Furies served in 803, 883, VF 870, VF 871, VT 40 and VX 10 squadrons, and were variously flown from the Naval Air Facility at RCAF Station Dartmouth, HMCS Shearwater, the carrier HMCS Magnificent, and RCAF stations Scoudouc and Summerside. Sea Fury pilots in the operational squadrons trained in fleet and convoy protection and in close air support of the Army. Commencing in 1955, the type was replaced by the Navy's first and only jet fighter, the McDonnell F2H3-4 Banshee.

***Photos are provided by several sources: DND, SAM Archives, 12 Wing Imaging, SAMF website and those sent in with an individual's submission.***

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### From the Curator's Desk

by Christine Hines

It is amazing how time flies when you're having fun! This year, we've been unusually busy since we opened for the season in April, which is great news indeed. The Centennial of Flight activities, those locally and across Canada have been very well received so far, and the awareness of the event is spreading. Later this season we look forward more events, including welcoming Al Snowie and his replica Nieuport, flying across Canada as part of the Canadian Aeronautical Preservation Association's "Back to Baddeck" relay of military and vintage aircraft, due to arrive on 30 July. Al's flight all the way to YAW will also drum up excitement and awareness for the upcoming 2010 RCN Centennial. At time of writing, Al is en route, and we all hope Al will have a safe and historic flight across Canada, as well as a proper wing-ding here at SAM to celebrate his achievements and view his aircraft; definitely a rare opportunity for our visitors indeed.

Also notable were earlier events such as SAM's annual hobby show, a great success, thanks to the efforts of volunteer show coordinator Doug Murray and his team, as well as the "Flight" art show in partnership with Visual Arts Nova Scotia, with special thanks going to Anna Horsnell Wade and Jacqueline Steudler. Events such as these have been wonderful events to welcome new audiences not terribly familiar with Shearwater and its operations.

The T-33 and HUP are almost ready to be unveiled. They look spectacular, and many kudos to the team members for each project; their hard work is easy to appreciate when you see each of the aircraft. They are truly brilliant, in all senses of the word! In other restoration news, the Firefly tail strut has returned from Colorado where it was rebuilt. The team is

putting the gas tank back in, for the last time today, and we now hope to run the engine by the fall. Turning the engine over has been slowed due to a few factors, not the last of which is a loss of team members. Firefly team member Don Logan has just retired, moving back to Oshawa ON with his wife Lollimae. Don's humour and Lollimae's rum cake are legendary at SAM, and both will truly be missed! Good luck and best wishes to the Logans from all at SAM. 12 AMS technician MCpl Brian Kent has temporarily left the team due to an unfortunate accident; we wish Brian a speedy recovery. Hang in there Brian!

I'd also like to mention the retirement of Michael McFadden, our Administration clerk and Volunteer Coordinator. Michael retired at the end of May, and I'd like to acknowledge his assistance and interest in the museum since joining our team. BZ!

With all of the activity at SAM, installation of new lighting system in the library and fans in the exhibit hall, as well as ongoing exhibit projects like Chuck Coffen & Russ Bennett's 880 Squadron project and our signature display on the Swordfish in its final design phase, we're hopping busy. It's because of our Foundation support, stalwart and unwavering, that we can continue our forward development. Many thanks to all of you who help us tell the Shearwater story..it is after all, our favorite topic! Have a safe and happy summer!

\*\*\*\*\*



### President's Report

by Buck Rogers

21 June arrived but we are still waiting for summer to make an appearance. Summer vacations always brings a new group of visitors to our

famous Museum

The Foundations annual Dinner/Auction was held 13 June in the Shearwater WO/Sgt's Mess. The numbers attending

were down a bit but everyone enjoyed a delicious meal. It was great to see familiar faces and to meet new people as well. There were many interesting items to bid on and the Foundation realized about \$5000. I would like to thank all the people involved in the Dinner/Auction - especially those who organized and planned this event. Thank you for the items donated for the Auction and the fine group of people who attended! Next year we would like to see more local members and their friends attend - this is one of our major fund raisers and we would appreciate your support.

SAMF's next fund raiser will be the Golf Tournament to be held 9 September. For more information, contact Chuck Coffen through the Foundation Office.

If you happen to be one of the Foundation members who have not renewed your membership - we are still waiting to hear from you. Maybe try to recruit a family member or friend.

The Directors of the Foundation are doing a fine job making the organization run smoothly and I'd like to thank each and everyone for their continued support and dedication.

The foundation Tile Programme is on going. Ken Millar has done a great job organizing the Venture Classes Tile Programme. We hope all classes will come "on board" and we welcome any new members to the Foundation from this group.

Remember to keep your stories of "the good old days" coming in. They bring back fond memories.

For the CNAGers - I hope to meet up and enjoy a glass of cheer with you at the Reunion in Trenton, 18 September.

Enjoy the rest of the Summer and early Fall. Keep safe and well.

Buck

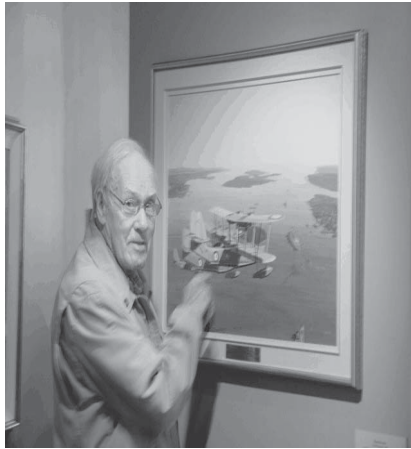
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### Remember when...

If you were around in 1946, do you recall seeing the sign of HMS SEABORNE on an old hotel building at the corner of North and Barrington Streets. Apparently, it was the wartime headquarters for the Fleet Air Arm in Halifax.

**From the Editor:**

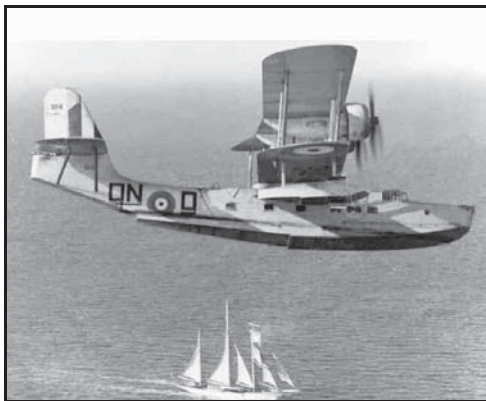
On a Sunday afternoon in June while volunteering at the Museum, I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Allison, his daughter Wendy and her husband Wayne Barnes. I asked Mr. Barnes if he had been at Shearwater before - he replied no - but Mr. Allison said, "I was. In 1941 just before I went overseas.

**Lawson (Bud) Allison**

I was on 5 BR Sqn." Since that meeting we received an email from Wendy which said, in part: "The trip to the museum was the highlight of dad's visit. Dad will be 89 this year. He was thrilled when he discovered the exhibit on the upper floor, and the paintings of the aircraft he knew so well. On behalf of Lawson (Bud) Allison, Wayne and Wendy Barnes, we send our gratitude." (*I can tell you, he was touched by what he saw in the Museum. K*) Ernie Cable, the Museum Historian sent him, by email, the history of 5 BR which was gratefully received.

Mr. Allison, this one's for you, Sir. *Ed.*

### **No. 5 Squadron Battle of the Atlantic Operations**



***A 5 (BR) Sqn Stranraer on patrol off the coast of Nova Scotia".***

After having conducted Canada's very first operational mission in the Second World War, Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) Station Dartmouth's No. 5 Squadron, with their obsolescent Stranraer flying boats, was quickly learning the wartime skills of providing convoy escort and anti-submarine patrols. However, it became obvious very early that a longer range more durable aircraft was required if the convoys were to be afforded

proper protection against the U-boat in the longest campaign of WW II.

### **Borrowed Catalinas**

From the beginning of the Battle of the Atlantic, the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) had been lobbying Britain's Royal Air Force (RAF) and the Americans for a share of the coastal patrol bomber Catalinas coming off the American production lines. The RCAF required these long-range aircraft to counter the expected U-boat threat off Canadian harbours and to escort convoys in the western Atlantic. But, since the U-boat had yet to present a serious threat in the western Atlantic the RAF and the Americans had higher priorities for the Catalinas and the RCAF had to make due with their shorter range Supermarine Stranraers, Douglas Digbys and Lockheed Hudsons.

As a result of the increasing Royal Navy and RAF success in countering the U-boat in the eastern Atlantic in the spring of 1941, the U-boats shifted their attacks on convoys to the western Atlantic, west of 35 degrees west longitude. On 20 May 1941, Halifax bound convoy HX 126 was heavily attacked 680 miles (1130 km) east of Newfoundland. The RCAF pressed again for immediate delivery of Catalinas; the plea was strengthened by the fact that a number of these aircraft were lying idle in the United States and Bermuda waiting to be ferried across the Atlantic. The next day bearings on a German radio transmission placed a U-boat at 55°N 50°W, on the fringe range of No. 10 (BR) Squadron Digbys forward based in Gander. The RCAF made the point that Catalinas with an effective range of 600 miles (1000 km) could have made a thorough search of the area. On 24 May the Air Ministry informed RCAF authorities in London that nine Catalinas on order for the RAF were being diverted from Bermuda to Eastern Air Command. The aircraft were being lent subject to replacement from the first delivery of Catalinas from the RCAF's own orders.

Also on 24 May the RCAF's need for a more effective coastal patrol aircraft was underscored when the German battleship *Bismarck* and cruiser *Prinz Eugen* broke contact with shadowing Royal Navy cruisers. No. 10 (BR) Squadron Digbys searched in vein for the *Prinz Eugen*, which had continued to cruise the western Atlantic, but well beyond the range of the Digbys based in Newfoundland.

The nine loaned Catalinas were promptly delivered to No. 5 (BR) Squadron at RCAF Station Dartmouth in June. Having already sent personnel to Bermuda for training on type, No. 5 (BR) crews were well advanced in converting to the Catalinas by the end of the month. The squadron was considerably shaken, therefore, by orders to transfer its most experienced personnel and all Catalinas to No. 116 (BR), a new Squadron forming at RCAF Station Dartmouth.



***A Catalina at its mooring***

By the end of July No. 116 (BR) Squadron had dispatched a detachment of four aircraft to the seaplane station at Botwood Nfld. where it carried out the important task of escorting convoys routed through the Strait of Belle Isle. In the meantime, No. 5 (BR) Squadron reactivated its Stranraer biplane flying boats at Dartmouth.

### **Cansos Arrive**

During the fall of 1941, Nos. 5 and 116 (BR) Squadrons began to receive the first PBY-5 Catalina flying boats from Canadian orders in the United States.



***A Canso A (Amphibian) similar to that flown by 5 (BR) Sqn was the amphibious derivative of the Catalina flying boat.***

In December the first amphibious versions of the Catalina, the Canso "A", arrived at 5 (BR) Squadron and by the end of February 1942, thirteen Canso A's were on strength. The Canso became the backbone of Eastern Air Command's bomber reconnaissance squadrons and greatly extended the range and endurance beyond the venerable Stranraer on convoy escort and anti-submarine patrols.

### **Gulf of St. Lawrence Operations**

As with the Stranraers, No. 5 (BR) Squadron's many tasks included reacting to U-boat threats in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. In response to a visual sighting at Cape

Ray Nfld. and an unsuccessful attack by a U.S. Army Air Force (USAAF) B-17 (Based at Stephenville Nfld.) on U-553, the first U-boat to enter the Gulf, two Canso A's from 5 (BR) swept the Gulf on 11 May 1942 without results. The next day U-553 sank two steamers off the Gaspe coast and again a 5 (BR) Canso A took off from Dartmouth to search the vicinity of the sinkings in miserable weather conditions. A second 5 (BR) Canso A aided by two 11 (BR) Squadron Hudsons joined the search two days later. This detachment operated from Mont Joli, Quebec until early June, patrolling the St. Lawrence River and the western Gulf. In September 1942 a 5 (BR) Squadron Canso A was dispatched to Sydney to assist Hudsons from Nos. 11 and 113 Squadrons search for U-517 and U-165 that had sunk four vessels in the Gulf and posed a threat to convoys sailing between Sydney and Quebec. These U-boats were able to evade detection and in the following two weeks brought their total to eleven ships sunk.

In the late autumn of 1942 Eastern Air Command deployed its flying boat squadrons to their winter stations as ice drifted into the anchorages preventing operations from their seaplane bases. Although the Catalina/Canso flying boat had flown approximately 35 per cent of the hours of all types of aircraft combined and had better range than the Digbys, it did not perform well in the Canadian conditions of 1942. It could carry only 1000 pounds (450 kilograms) of depth charges with a regular seven-man crew and a full fuel load. It was said about flying the noisy Catalina that the pilot required good training, much practice and plenty of muscle. Stamina was also important because of the length of time it took to get out to the patrol area; efficiency was likely to suffer by the time the aircraft arrived on station. The flying boat also had a poor rate of climb so that it often could not get through the fog quickly enough to avoid wing icing. Consequently, a forecast of heavy icing conditions meant that the Catalina could not be sent out above the overcast to rendezvous with the convoys that were themselves beyond the fog belt. Also the Catalinas and Cansos were particularly cold, but not equipped for electrically heated flying suits.

### **Move to Gander**

As part of the winter move No 116 (BR) Squadron Catalinas departed Botwood Nfld. and returned to Dartmouth. The closing down of flying boat operations in Newfoundland left Eastern Air Command's No. 1 Group in St. John's with accommodations for only one land-based, long-range squadron. No. 10 Squadron's aging and often unserviceable Digbys occupying that billet in Gander were therefore replaced by the Canso A's of 5 (BR) Squadron on 2 November 1942. No.5 (BR) Squadron served at RCAF Dartmouth for eight years, the longest tenure of any of the squadrons stationed there since the base's inception and deservedly earned the right to be known as "The Dartmouth" squadron. The Digbys joined the pilgrimage to Dartmouth, which by early December included the Cansos

of No. 117 (BR) Squadron when the seaplane stations at Gaspé and North Sydney cut back to winter establishments. The movement brought an influx of men and aircraft to the command's main base, Dartmouth, whose complement of operational anti-submarine squadrons now consisted of 10 (BR), 11 (BR), 116 (BR) and 117 (BR). By contrast, No. 1 Group's maritime patrol strength in Newfoundland had been reduced to only No. 145 (BR)'s Hudsons at Torbay and No. 5 (BR)'s Cansos at Gander, which at the end of December were reinforced by a small detachment similar aircraft from the still incomplete No. 162 (BR) Squadron.

The unbalanced winter deployments highlighted the Eastern Air Command's most critical shortcoming: a lack of land-based aircraft able to reach the mid-Atlantic air gap where U-boats intercepted and attacked convoys. RAF Liberators based in Iceland were able to patrol to 35 degrees west longitude, closing the eastern part of the gap, the danger lay in the western portion, between 35 and 50 degrees west. Only the 12 Canso A's of No. 5 and 162 Squadrons had the potential, at the extreme limits of their endurance, to reach the zone of heavy U-boat activity.

Under the direction of Squadron Leader N.E. Small, the new Commanding Officer of 162 (BR) Squadron, No. 5 (BR) crews worked to extend the range of their Canso A's beyond their normal 500 mile (830 km) range by stripping their aircraft of excess weight, including extra guns, ammunition and stores. In all, about 1200 pounds (540 kg) was removed, which permitted the Canso A's to operate out to about 700 miles (1170 km).

No. 5 Squadron carried on in the vanguard of the battle of the western Atlantic until mid-1943 where it played a crucial role in the survival of the convoys, the lifeline that fed the battle lines of Europe. In June 1943 No. 10 (BR) Squadron newly equipped with Very Long Range B-24 Liberators took over the mid-Atlantic patrol duties and 5 (BR) Squadron moved to Yarmouth to provide escort patrols for convoys on the "Triangle Run" from Boston to Halifax to St. John's and return. In this arena 5 (BR)'s Cansos did not have to operate at the extreme limits of their range and endurance. No. 5 (BR) also was responsible for patrolling the Gulf of St. Lawrence where they were instrumental in driving the U-boats from the Gulf during the 1944 U-boat offensive.

No. 5 (BR) earned the "Atlantic 1939-1945" battle honours for their six years of continuous service in the longest battle of WW II, the Battle of the Atlantic. However, the squadron was disbanded in June 1945 before it could be officially awarded its justly deserved battle honours.

**Colonel ESC Cable OMM, CD (Ret'd)**  
**Shearwater Aviation Museum Historian**

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## Colonel S.M. (Sam) Michaud, MSM, CD



Colonel Sam Michaud joined the Canadian Forces in 1986 as Primary Reserve soldier in the West Nova Scotia Regiment. In 1987, he transferred to the Regular Force to undergo training as an Officer and a pilot in the Air Force.

On completion of training, Colonel Michaud was transferred to CFB

Shearwater for employment as an operational Sea King pilot. During his initial 13-year tour in Shearwater flying Sea King helicopters, he completed two operational tours with 423 Maritime Helicopter Squadron, one instructional tour with 406 Maritime Operational Training Squadron, and, upon promotion to Major, a tour as the Officer Commanding the Maritime Helicopter Standards and Evaluation Team. His operational deployments include the 1991 Persian Gulf War, Somalia in 1992-93, and two tours with the Standing NATO Fleet – Atlantic.

Colonel Michaud was posted to National Defence Headquarters in 2002 and was initially employed within the Deputy Chief of Defence Staff group as a desk officer in the Directorate of Joint Force Capabilities. In 2003, he was selected to attend the Canadian Forces Command and Staff College. On completion of Staff College in 2004, he was promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel and posted back to Ottawa to work within the Vice Chief of Defence Staff group initially as a section head in the Directorate of Defence Analysis and, later, as the Director of Strategic Coordination within the newly formed Chief of Force Development organization.

In July 2007, Colonel Michaud returned to Shearwater to assume command of 423 Maritime Helicopter Squadron. Leaving command in December 2008, he proceeded on language training. Promoted to Colonel in April 2009, Colonel Michaud assumed Command of 12 Wing Shearwater on 24 April 2009.

Colonel Michaud has a Bachelor of Commerce from Saint Mary's University, Halifax and a Master of Defence Studies from Royal Military College, Kingston. He is married to the former Christine Young and they have one son, Daniel.

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## ACROSS THE FLIGHT DECK



Canadian Naval Air Group

### NAVY LEAGUE CADET CORP VICE ADMIRAL KINGSMILL

#### 21<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL REVIEW

The pictures were taken when the CNAG National Secretary/Treasurer, Gordon Moyer, and I, attended this year's Navy League of Canada, Ottawa Branch, VAdm Kingsmill 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Review. The Review lasts approximately three and a half hours, during which time these proud young Canadians are given the opportunity to demonstrate the skills they have acquired during the year and for a select few the honour of receiving an award for their dedication to the cadet program. For several years Hampton Gray Chapter has had the distinct privilege of presenting the "Best New Entry Cadet" with a plaque recognizing that sincere effort. This year's winner was PO2 Dayna Watt. BZ Dayna!



As you may imagine, this is a well attended event, which has been known to bring out the top brass if you will. This year was no exception, in fact the Reviewing Officer was none other than the Honourable Noel Kinsella, Speaker of the

Senate, Honourary Captain (Navy) Naval Reserve, whom Gordon and I had the opportunity to chat with and enlighten him about Naval AIR during the mid parade repose.

As a footnote, for those of you that may not be familiar with the Navy League of Canada's Cadet Program, their Purposes and Objectives were authorized by Letters of Patent issued on the 28<sup>th</sup> March 1918. I won't mention all of their goals, but suffice it to say that one of the primary objectives is to promote, organize, sponsor, support and encourage the education and training of the youth of the country through Cadet movements and other youth groups with a maritime orientation, and through the provision of recreational opportunities and training, to promote the physical and mental fitness of the boys and girls participating in the Cadet Programmes. The program endeavors to develop good citizenship, patriotism, self-respect, self-discipline, healthy living and respect for others, in a nautical environment suited to young people between the ages of 9 and 13.

What an excellent way to groom the potential of those that may someday be the leaders of this wonderful country of ours "CANADA".

Paul Baiden President Hampton Gray VC Chapter



## **ATTENDEES – NAVAL AVIATION REDEVOUS – 13 MAY 2009**

### **CROWSNEST – BYTOWN NAVAL OFFICERS MESS – OTTAWA**

At the request of the previous organizer, Ted White, the Hampton Gray VC Chapter of the Canadian Naval Air Group volunteered to organize this annual Rendezvous. It is intended that the Chapter will continue to arrange for this popular gathering of those who served in Canadian Naval Aviation, as well as those who served alongside them.

The 2009 Rendezvous was organized by Ted Forman, Director, Hampton Gray VC Chapter, and members Ted White and Robert Ferguson.

Those attending, in order of sign in were:

Vern Miller, Al McIntosh, Stan Hopkins, John McDermott, Bud MacLean, Dave Tate, Bob Ferguson, Ted Forman, Ed L'Hereux, Jack Moss, Bob Murray, Elizabeth Murray, Tony Burleton, Theresa Burleton, Robbie Hughes, Diana Hughes, T.S. Dudley Allan, John Dumbrille, Ray Phillips, Cal Smith, Sandy Dewar, Jim Cantlie, Vic Wilgress, Larry Ashley, Chuck Worton, Stan Conner, Gord Moyer, Mick McClean, Bill Black, I. Ben-Tahir, Fred Herendorf, Bill Christie, R.H. Bob Falls, Bill Babbitt, Paul Baiden, John Frank, Gene Weber, Glen Cook, Roy Kilburn, Michael Clancy, Norm Inglis, Geoff Newman, Chip Milsom, Rod Hutcheson, Don Grant, Ted White, Ron Mace, and Bruce Wilson. (48 Attended)

### **Annual Naval Aviation Rendezvous- HMCS Bytown**

The annual gathering of former naval air personnel was held at the HMCS Bytown mess Ottawa, on 13May. Welcomed at the luncheon event are all personnel who were part of naval aviation or associated with it, and even those who wish they had been associated with it. This year witnessed an especially good turn out- 48 outstanding ladies and gentlemen.





Originally conceived by Lawrence (Laurie) Farrington and continued by Gordon Edwards the event has been held regularly for 10 years. It provides an opportunity for all old hands to gather for a few hours of reminiscences, tall tales and good company.



***Gene Webber, Adm Falls, Vic Wilgress, Ray Phillips, Bill Black***



***Stan Connor  
And  
Bill Cody***



***Dave Tate and Larry Ashley***



***John Dumbrill, Bob Murray,  
Elizabeth Murray and Adm Falls***

During the last several years it was organized by Ted White but he asked, and it was agreed, that the Canadian Naval Air Group (CNAG) would be an appropriate promoter of the event now and into the future. It is hoped that this will continue. However, CNAG itself is expected to be reconstituted after 2010 into a more informal periodic gathering of friends. Perhaps we should look no further into the future than we can comfortably see, but we will be kept posted. The event will be scheduled normally for the second Wednesday in May. Suggest your calendar be marked accordingly.

The RV is an opportunity to display artifacts from the naval air years including pieces of memorabilia, such as Ted's partial Banshee tail hooks (ever wonder why the last few Banshee DLs were bolters?), Line Books, models of Trackers and Banshees and some official records and accident reports that light fingers managed to spirit away before the documents could be destroyed.

We received a message of good wishes from Kay Collacutt, and a reminder that the proud tradition of Naval Aviation, if it is to remain alive if only in memory, rests in the hands of people like ourselves and through continuing support and interest in the SAM Foundation, which is dedicated to that goal.

Ted Forman

### Hampton Gray VC Chapter (CNAG) briefed on Canadian Forces Equipment Programme

At the May meeting of the Hampton Gray VC Chapter members were again privileged to receive a presentation from Mr. Michael W. (Tap) Fawcett, NDHQ Funding Coordinator. Tap has been a frequent guest at the HGVC meetings and never fails to provide a knowledgeable, interesting and entertaining briefing. This year was no exception.

As expected, equipment funding for the Canadian Forces is being stretched in many directions. What else is new, one might ask. However, in the past months priorities have shifted to promote support of “the mission” to the top tier. The mission is focused on Canadian commitments in Afghanistan. All significant funding requests are screened through the Afghan lens. Current major Air Force procurements, such as the C-17, Hercules C130J and even the New Maritime Helicopter owe their high visibility to links with the Afghan mission.

However essential, the changing priorities do not bode well for other high cost re-equipment programmes, such as ship replacements. The long standing government policy is to build warships and other government operated vessels in Canada. However, Canadian shipyards cannot change their outputs over night. Having been starved of new construction for many years the shipbuilding industry has been allowed to atrophy. Looking to the future, and even supposing adequate funding, there may be as much as thirty years of ship construction needing attention. Such construction includes the Joint Support Ships, Frigate replacement, Northern patrol vessels and ice capable vessels required by the Transport Department. The utility of the current fleet is being extended by modifications and refits, but ships wear out and the point is soon reached when no amount of refitting is productive. Further straining the budget is the increasing cost of daily operations, already consuming up to ninety percent of DND funding.

Previously deciding to dispense with armor in favour of lighter forces, the Army reversed its decision as a result of experience in Afghanistan. Canada set about acquiring Main Battle Tanks (MBTs) from various European countries. The MBTs require upgrading and refitting before being committed to battle, again requiring significant capital. Sufficient heavy equipment of the type needed for life cycle support of MBTs is no longer readily available in Canada.

Current economic realities persuade the Government to emphasize funding for “shovel ready” projects. Complex military procurements seldom fall into that happy category. They cannot be relied upon to create near term employment and consequently are set aside when the stimulus funds begin to flow.

From a separate source we are informed that the USN estimates the cost of their new class of multi purpose (Fleet) Destroyer will approach an eye-popping one billion dollars (\$1B!) per unit. One hopes this includes at least some programme and life cycle support cost. Such a cost seems almost inconceivable in the Canadian context. However, it may be remembered that the first post WW2 Frigates built in Canada during the 50s (St. Laurent and Restigouche class) came in at an advertised price in excess of 30 million, probably more because during that period associated programme costs tended to be carried elsewhere in the budget. A 30 fold increase in 50 years may be not unreasonable, but a head-scratching problem for funding.

Not to be forgotten is the pending requirement for upgrades to the CF-18s, to be followed a few years later by their replacement. Canada has limited participation in the the US Joint Strike Fighter programme as a possible contender. The cost of the JSF is expected to be enormous and to secure sufficient priority must be linked to the current CF mission. Like navy warships the CF-18s can be extended by upgrades and refurbishments, but one wonders, in the years to come, how many 40 year old fighters will there be left in the world.

Following the briefing Tap was thanked by HGVC President Paul Baiden and, noting that Tap was already a recipient of copies of most of our Naval Air books, presented him, instead, with a cheque in support of the Wounded Veterans Association.

Ted Forman

## The Fate of Sea Fury TF997

Ernie Cable, SAM Historian

In the annals of Canadian naval aviation history 7 April 1948 marks the commissioning of *HMCS Magnificent* in Belfast Ireland with Commodore DeWolf in command. The Executive Officer was Cdr. D.W. "Debbie" Piers and Cdr. "Cocky" Reed was Commander Flying. After completing flying trials *Magnificent* returned to Belfast where she embarked the RCN's first batch of 28 Hawker Sea Fury F.B. Mk 11's, four Fairey Firefly T 1 pilot trainers and 12 Firefly F.R. IV's. The Sea Furies were a replacement for 803 Squadron's obsolescent Seafires; the Firefly T 1's were required to provide a pilot dual training capability and the Firefly FR IV's were on loan from the Fleet Air Arm (FAA) to give RCN pilots experience in higher performance aircraft prior to transitioning to the new and more powerful Firefly AS 5.



**TF997 in foreground of hangar at Shearwater, Dartmouth, NS 17 Jun 49. TF997 was the Group Commander's aircraft at the time of the photo. Note some Sea Furies in background have been repainted in the new RCN paint scheme.**

The embarkation on *Magnificent* of the 28 Sea Furies destined for 803 Squadron marked the end of a debate over whether to replace the Seafire with former U.S. Navy Grumman Hellcats or new British Sea Furies. In June 1946, the Naval Board considered a recommendation to acquire 50 F6F Hellcats at a cost of \$3,500 each. This recommendation was made as a result of the delay in the production of the British Hawker Sea Furies to replace the Seafires. The Board noted that although the Hellcat would provide an inexpensive alternative to the Sea Fury, it was no longer a first-line aircraft and its acquisition would be a reversal to the present "buy British" policy. One of the most ardent and persuasive proponents of the Hellcat purchase was Lt. H.J. "Dicky" Bird on the Naval Aviation Staff. He had flown Hellcats during the war and knew of their excellent carrier performance. With his large number of U.S. Navy friends and associates he was able to mount a very effective campaign to convince the Naval Staff to buy the Hellcat. In July, the Director of Naval Aviation was directed to approach the U.S. Navy to obtain details about the purchase of Hellcats. At the same time the British Admiralty was also to be informed that the RCN was considering purchase of aircraft from the U.S. Navy. On 20 September, the Admiralty advised that the RCN would receive priority allocation of Sea Furies with the first being assigned to 803 Squadron in March 1947. The sudden change in delivery dates was no doubt prompted by disclosure to the

Admiralty that the RCN was considering a U.S. Navy fighter replacement. The end result being that the RCN officially took delivery of its first batch of Sea Furies on 24 May 1948, before the first FAA squadron (No. 802) received its Sea Fury FB 11's.

From the first batch of 28 RCN Sea Furies, 14, or half met an untimely end through ditching at sea or crashing on land. The most mysterious was the loss of Sea Fury TF997 and 25 year old Lieutenant Mervin (Butch) Hare who began his career in the Royal Canadian Navy Volunteer Reserve (RCNVR) in 1944 (Note 1). On the morning of Friday 30 June 1950, Lt. Hare took off in Sea Fury TF997 from the A.V. Roe plant at Toronto where the aircraft had been overhauled. The aircraft had been severely damaged almost a year to the day, when one of the main landing gear oleos collapsed during an emergency landing in Ontario. Lt. Hare planned to ferry the aircraft back to 803 Squadron at *HMCS Shearwater* with interim stops at Montreal and Ancienne Lorette (now Quebec City's Jean Lesage commercial airport.). The brief stop in Ancienne Lorette was required to allow personnel from the Armament Establishment at nearby Valcartier to take some internal measurements of the aircraft. Lt. Hare took off from the Quebec City airport shortly after noon and proceeded to put on a show of high speed aerobatics before flying off to the east.

Twenty minutes later, a woodsman at a camp on Allagash Lake in northern Maine saw TF 997 pass over on a south easterly course, but low "on the deck". The 8,000 foot ceiling that existed over Quebec when he took off had rapidly dropped to a heavy 2,000 foot overcast with rainstorms in the area as a warm front moved westward. This was the last certain sighting of TF 997.

When Lt. Hare failed to arrive at Shearwater, a massive international air search was launched. The plane's flight plan was to take it across northern Maine and eastern New Brunswick. This left a wide flight path of uninhabited forest on both sides of the Canada-U.S. border where the plane could have made a forced landing or crashed. The U.S. search focused on a 75 mile (125 km) long area from Maine's Mount Katahdin east to the New Brunswick border. Several people at remote camps and a fire tower had seen a single engine aircraft, fitting the description of the Sea Fury, flying at low altitude during the afternoon. The reported directions of travel indicated that the pilot may have been lost or trying to find a forced landing area due to an aircraft problem. Search and rescue aircraft averaged over 30 flights per day without locating any sign of the missing Sea Fury. A ground search team hiked to a possible crash site, but it turned out to be a stand of trees blown over by the wind. After five days of searching with no physical clues, the U.S. Air Force called the search off on the U.S. side of the border. Additional witness statements seemed to indicate that the aircraft had crossed Maine and was most likely down somewhere in New Brunswick. Seven days later, Canadian search and rescue officials called off the search. The disappearance of Lt. Hare and Sea Fury TF997 remained a mystery.

In December 1953, a Maine newspaper reported that in the intervening three years since the crash, two light civilian planes had been lost while attempting to locate the crash site of the RCN Sea Fury and that the Maine forests now concealed the bodies of four men and the wreckage of three aircraft. Ironically, two flyers from Millinocket added to the toll in the summer of 1956 while searching for the Lt. Hare/TF 997 crash site. Their float plane disappeared in the same general area and

remained a mystery until a game warden spotted their crash site from the air 13 years later.

The location of Sea Fury TF 997 and the fate of Lt. Hare remained unknown and were the topic of speculation among aviators and woodsmen alike for nearly 18 years. "Wreck chasers" from the Maine Aviation Historical Society (MAHS) whose hobby is re-locating and researching the history of crash sites, have long recognized that spotting a crash site in dense forest from the air is nearly impossible unless the aircraft cuts a swath through the trees, crashes on barren ridge, or seriously burns the surrounding trees. Then in February 1968, two foresters, surveying a woodlot, found some unusual damage to several trees as they crossed a small finger ridge above a brook. Closer inspection revealed pieces of aluminum stuck in some trees and several large pieces of twisted wreckage sticking up through three feet of snow.

Further investigation revealed that Sea Fury TF997 had struck a tree on top of the ridge with its port wing root and struck the ground about 50 meters further on. The force of the impact dug a crater five meters in diameter and caused the aircraft to disintegrate and scatter over a 50 meter radius. There had been several small fires. Pieces of Lt. Hare's parachute harness were later found near the crater, ending any speculation that he may have bailed out and perished elsewhere in the Maine forests.

The RCN's examination of the wreckage confirmed evidence of a parachute and other indications that the pilot had not bailed out. However, Lt. Hare's remains were never recovered, so a small ridge in the thick Maine woods is the final resting place of the 25 year old Lieutenant. Putting all of the known facts together, there were two likely reasons that TF 997 crashed. When Lt. Hare landed at Ancienne Lorette, he only had 135 gallons of fuel remaining; unfortunately, he was unable to refuel because there was no 100-octane fuel available. This would give him only a 10-15 gallon reserve margin to reach Dartmouth. He had discussed the possibility of landing at Moncton or Greenwood for fuel, but he did not so amend his flight plan. The RCN's investigation concluded that his actual fuel state was around 100 gallons, or 60 minutes after the aerobatics over the Quebec airport. The official inquiry attributes fuel exhaustion caused by the higher fuel consumption during the aerobatics combined with dodging the worsening weather below 2,000 feet instead of 7,000 feet as the likely cause of the crash.

Since the direction of flight at the time of the crash was almost due north, not the easterly direction of the intended destination, it is possible that Lt. Hare attempted a forced landing in an open marshland a few hundred meters north of the impact point, or a ditching in a nearby lake. The lack of any evidence of a massive fire lends credibility to the theory that the aircraft ran out of fuel while dodging around patches of severe weather. The inquiry also considered the fact that the Bristol Centaurus engines in the early Sea Furies had a history of in-flight failures. But, because of the lack of concrete evidence the exact reason and the events leading up to the crash will forever remain a mystery.

Peter Noddin, a "wreck chaser" with the Maine Aviation Historical Society (MAHS) first learned of the crash site years later while searching for information about an F-86 Sabre crash twenty miles away. A reported possible witness to the F-86 crash told Peter that he knew nothing about the F-86 crash, but had visited the scene of the Sea Fury crash a few

months after it was located in 1968. He provided Peter a detailed description of the ridge on which the plane had crashed and an approximate location from one of the newer logging roads that traversed the area. Within a few weeks Peter was able to gather information about the incident from the Canadian Archives and newspaper clippings at a local library. On his first visit to the area with two friends, Peter thoroughly searched along the reported ridge unsuccessfully. Two subsequent solo searches were cut short by summer thunder showers. After two days of searching another ridge during a later expedition, Peter noticed a wing spar leaning against a tree. A few steps farther put him in the middle of the wreckage field.

It turned out to be one of the more interesting Cold War era crash sites that Peter had visited. The tree that the plane struck was still standing although new branches had grown up around its severed top. The propeller hub with three bent blades attached, a main landing gear strut and oxygen bottles were still visible in the bottom of the crater. A cylinder and supercharger parts from the radial engine laid about 17 meters from the crater. The barely recognizable tail section came to rest between the engine and the crater. The armour plate from the rear of the cockpit was located nearby. Pieces of the wings and horizontal stabilizers were scattered along with small fuselage pieces for 50 meters throughout the woods. It took several hours of walking around the site to make sense of the wreckage pattern.

On October 23, 1999, Peter, on behalf of the MAHS, led a group of "crash chasers" to the crash site. After a briefing on the disappearance and discovery of TF 997 and a short discussion of "crash site etiquette", nine MAHS members and Jim Cogle from the Canadian Aviation Historical Society in Fredericton, NB explored the site. The group erected a cross and dedicated a memorial plaque to Lt. Hare, with the permission of the woodlot owner. The woodlot owner also agreed to give "special area" status to the site; hopefully, protecting it from logging operations, scrap metal dealers and souvenir hunters; thereby preserving the site for future generations as a memorial to those who gave their lives for their countries. Just a few weeks later on Remembrance Day November 11, 1999, Jim Cogle gave a live interview on CBC describing the MAHS's efforts to preserve Lt. Hare's final resting place.



***Jim Cogle CAHS member from Fredericton, NB stands before the memorial plaque to Lt. Hare before hiking into the crash site on 23 Oct 1999.***

Note 1:

Mervin Charles Hare (Butch) joined the RCNVR as a Sub-Lieutenant on 14 Feb 1944. Because of the shortage of pilots in the Fleet Air Arm (FAA) Britain had an agreement with Canada in which members of the RCNVR could circumvent immigration procedures and be trained as direct entrants into the Royal Navy. Hare took his initial training (Pilot Training Course #51) at *HMS St. Vincent* in the UK and under a wartime pilot training agreement with the US Navy he completed his FAA pilot training at US Naval Air Stations Grosse Isle, Michigan and Pensacola, Florida where he ultimately qualified as a F4U Corsair pilot. Hare was then transferred to the Royal Naval Air Station at Nowra, Australia (now Royal Australian

Naval Air Station Nowra) where he joined FAA 849 Squadron which embarked on the aircraft carrier *HMS Victorious* of the British Pacific Fleet until the end of the war against Japan. In 1946, Hare returned to *HMCS Stadacona* in Halifax, followed in 1947 by a move across the harbour to RCN Air Section Dartmouth (now Shearwater) to instruct at No.1 Training Air Group. In 1948, Hare was transferred to *HMCS Doncona* (Montreal) as the Naval Air Test & Liaison Officer. In 1950, he was transferred to *HMCS York* (Toronto) as the Naval Air Test & Liaison Officer from where he took his fateful flight in Sea Fury TF997.

Author's Note:

I wish to thank Peter Noddin of the Maine Aviation Historical Society and Jim Cogle from Fredericton and member of the Turnbull\* Chapter (New Brunswick) of the Canadian Aviation Historical Society for providing much of the historical research for this article.

\*Wallace Turnbull of Saint John NB invented the variable pitch propeller.

\*\*\*\*\*

Engineering course held at the I.W. Ackerley Campus of the Nova Scotia Community College. Included with the award, was a cash award for each student.



**AWARD PRESENTATION L-R:**

A.W. (Bill) Gillespie, Awards Committee Chairperson, Bahman Farsi-Dooraki, Top Student, Class "A", Barb Ryan, President, CNAG Atlantic, Luke Mahaney, Top Student, Class "B". Rolly West, Committee Member.

\*\*\*\*\*



**Proud Grandmother and SAMF Volunteer.**

*Margaret Ferguson and her grandson, Andrew Pottie, after his swearing in to the Canadian Forces on 30 Jun 09. (Congratulations Andrew!)*

\*\*\*\*\*

**CNAG Atlantic Deserving Student Award**

The evening of June 16, 2009, the President of CNAG Atlantic, Barb Ryan presented the CNAG Atlantic Deserving Student Award to the two top students graduating this year from the Aircraft Maintenance



**Britain honours a Canadian Hero**

Lt. Robert Hampton Gray

## OUR FIRST HERO *by J. Paquette*

During a recent three month camping trip Joan and I stopped in Eureka CA with the sole purpose of visiting the site of a memorial to Al Alltree, one of my VENTURE course mates, who had perished in a helicopter crash near there. At Arcata Airport nearby we found the Humboldt Bay Coast Guard Air Station and the Humboldt Bay Memorial. I expected to view a small "tombstone" type memorial and was staggered to see a large redwood and glass tribute to not one but three separate incidents which took the lives of Coast Guard personnel. In the center of this tribute was a piece of "scrap" aluminum with the US military star painted on it, a piece of the Sikorsky HH-52A Seaguard #1363 in which Al, his Aircraft Commander, his crewman and four civilians lost their lives.



**HUMBOLDT BAY  
MEMORIAL**

As I read the story of that dark night in December 1964 my eyes started to water and my heart was in my throat. Al and the rest of the people on USCG 1363 had perished on the night of December 22 but due to weather the site of the crash could not be reached until December 27.

It suddenly dawned on me that during the first Christmas that Joan and I shared together as a young married couple we were totally unaware of the tragedy and that my friend and course mate was lying on a storm swept California hillside while his family waited for word of his fate.

When Al Alltree arrived in Esquimalt BC to join H.M.C.S. VENTURE in September of 1959 he had come from a unique background. He had been born in Hong Kong while his father was serving in a diplomatic post. Al himself was unusual in that he was able to fit into any group and, with his unfailing good humour, was a delight to be around.

An excellent all around sportsman, he excelled at soccer but his main claim to fame was the fact that with a name like "A.L. Alltree he considered himself to be a "Mark". Looking for volunteers, or a name for a particularly nasty job? ... just go to the top of the list alphabetically and there was Al "The Mark" Alltree ... that is until payday when the RCN, in its perverse way, did it in reverse order.

Like all of us, Al joined to fly and was in his element when we finally got to Fleet Canucks at Pat Bay, then Chipmunks in Centralia, Ontario, Harvards at Penhold, Alberta. and finally Expeditors in Rivers, Manitoba.

Of the hundreds who applied for the VENTURE Program in 1959, only about 60 made it to the parade ground and 18 of those graduated to flight training. At the end of flight training, four were selected for helicopters and in 1964 Al was selected to fill an exchange position with the US Coast Guard at Air Station San Francisco flying the Sikorsky HH-52A.



**PICTURE OF HH-52**

It must have seemed that he was living a dream, flying the first turbine-powered helicopters in the Coast Guard inventory. A delay in the arrival of the SEAKING had resulted in extra pilots hanging around and a need to get turbine-powered helicopter experience into the fleet. Al's posting to Coast Guard Station San Francisco was the envy of the base.

The week of the accident there had been heavy flooding in the Eel River area about 150 miles north and the Air Station had deployed Al's crew 200 miles north to assist in the rescue of the many people stranded by rising water. They rescued 10 people from an island depositing them on a ball field on high ground. They then proceeded about 50nm north to Arcata Airport near Eureka CA to refuel. Refueled; they spent the rest of the day plucking people to the safety of the ball field.

Late in the day, they received word that there were two women and a baby in danger of being swept away by flood waters. A local dairy farmer, Arnold (Bud) Hansen, said that he knew where they were and his offer to guide the crew to the location was accepted. They reached the trio and hoisted them to the safety of the helicopter but darkness had overtaken them and they were running short of fuel so they decided to proceed back to the Arcata Airport with the survivors to refuel and stay the night.

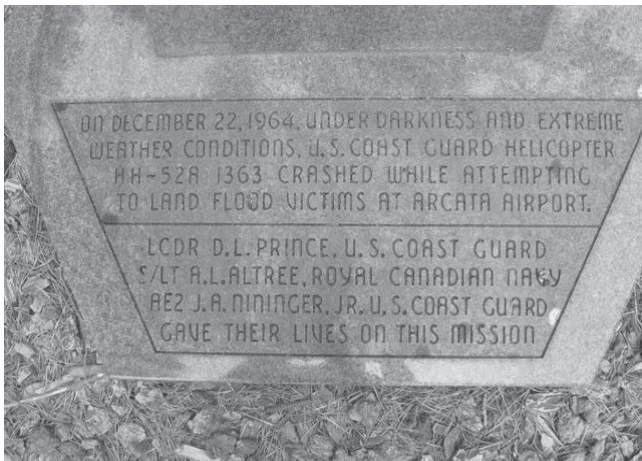
There was no facility for an instrument approach to Arcata so the crew flew west to the ocean then north to the Eureka area. Unbeknownst to the crew, the radio beacon at Arcata as well as the airport lighting had been knocked out by the storm. In the rain and reduced visibility they estimated their position at be abeam Eureka and flew east to pick up the shoreline. We know that they managed to locate the shore because they were seen to be hover taxiing along the Coast highway about 15 miles north of the airport. They asked the airport for a Direction Finding steer based on the helicopter's radio transmissions. A steer was given and the crew decided to proceed directly to the airport based on the steer. Unfortunately they must have thought that they were south of where they were and didn't expect any raising terrain. Instead they were north of Trinidad Head with terrain rising rapidly to 500 feet between their position and the airport ... and in the dark they hit rising terrain in the area east of Trinidad.

Tragically, had they continued to hover taxi south on the Coast Highway it would have led them right to the button of the runway at Arcata. Unfortunately, this was not an area with which they were familiar and the crew had been flying since early morning so fatigue and even fuel could have been a factor.

It would become obvious later that no one survived the crash that night but such was the weather that their fate would not be confirmed until searchers located the desolate and tragic scene some five days later on roughly the last bearing that the tower had passed to the crew.

With Al on that hillside were:

Lieutenant Commander Donald L. Prince,  
Aircraft Commander;  
AE2 James A. Nininger, Crewman;  
Arnold (Bud) Hansen, the civilian who offered his help;  
Marie Bahnsen;  
Betty Kempf; and,  
Melanie Kempf, her infant daughter.



**THE MEMORIAL STONE HONOURING THE CREW OF Coast Guard 1363**

I can't tell you what tributes were paid to Al. For some reason I don't remember a church service nor an Irish wake so this is my way of saying that "I remember".

By the way, guess whose name is listed first on the U.S.C.G Aviation Memorial in Elizabeth City North Carolina ... Al "The Mark" Alltree, our first Hero.

**Thanks to Cdr.(Ret.) Hugh O'Doherty, USCG and Adm.(Ret.) Clyde Robbins, USCG for their assistance in researching this story.**



## IN THE DELTA

**Bailey, Clifford**

**Bezant, Ron**

**Brooks, Sonia**

**Cartwright, Brian**

**Duggan, Dennis**

**Fellows, F.G.**

**Gumbrill, Clem**

**Harding, Ross**

**Harzan, Herb**

**Hayes, Bob**

**Kiely, Dorothy**

**Langman, Ona**

**Linton, Robert**

**MacLean, Angus**

**McGrath, Gerry**

**Noyes, Barb**

**Oland, Bruce**

**Roy, Keith**

**Turnbull, Art**

**Woods, George**

++++++

**SAM FOUNDATION  
ANNUAL DINNER/AUCTION  
HELD IN JUNE 2009**

This year's event was another success, thanks to Patti Gemmell and her band of workers. The success of the Dinner/Auction would not have been realized without those who attended - as they do every year - and the following list of donors. Many thanks to you all. Next year the Dinner/Auction will be held in the Museum - date to be announced in early 2010.

A few of those in attendance:



**Dennis Shaw  
and  
Helga Trenholm**

**Bob Trenholm, Eugene (Buck) Rogers & Minnie  
Rogers**



**Don and Lollimae Logan**

**Bill Mont, Christine Dunphy, Dennis Shaw,  
John Freeman, Claire DeFreitas, Marie Peacocke and  
Bob Trenholm**





Again this year, VIA Rail was our major supporter.

The following donors assisted in the success of the Dinner/Auction:

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**Junica Management**

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**Zwicker's Gallery**

**Thank you to all our Donors - your support is very much appreciated.**



## **Aircraft Recovery**

*from Ron Beard*

Jack Beard Shearwater 5 Aircraft Recovery Unit came out of retirement recently for a very important mission, locate and recover lost F-18 model jet piloted by Marshal D. Beard. The

aircraft was quickly located high in the neighbours tree top and the unsettled weather in our region played a significant role in the recovery effort. We were all relieved the aircraft didn't whack him on the head on the way back to mother earth. The aircraft was found to be in tact and is fully functional--end report-

\*\*\*\*\*

A man walks out to the street and catches a taxi just going by. He gets into the taxi, and the Cabbie says, 'Perfect timing. You're just like Frank.' Passenger: 'Who?'

Cabbie: 'Frank Feldman. He's a guy who did everything right all the time. Like my coming along when you needed a cab, things happened like that to Frank Feldman every single time.

Passenger: 'There are always a few clouds over everybody.'

Cabbie: 'Not Frank Feldman. He was a terrific athlete. He could have won the Grand-Slam at tennis. He could golf with the pros. He sang like an opera baritone and danced like a Broadway star and you should have heard him play the piano. He was an amazing guy.'

Passenger: 'Sounds like he was something really special.'

Cabbie: 'There's more... He had a memory like a computer. He remembered everybody's birthday. He knew all about wine, which foods to order and which fork to eat them with. He could fix anything. Not like me. I change a fuse, and the whole street blacks out. But Frank Feldman, he could do everything right'

Passenger: 'Wow, some guy then.'

Cabbie: 'He always knew the quickest way to go in traffic and avoid traffic jams Not like me, I always seem to get stuck in them. But Frank, he never made a mistake, and he really knew how to treat a woman and make her feel good. He would never answer her back even if she was in the wrong; and his clothing was always immaculate, shoes highly polished too - He was the perfect man! He never made a mistake. No one could ever measure up to Frank Feldman.'

Passenger: 'An amazing fellow. How did you meet him?'

Cabbie: 'Well, I never actually met Frank, he died. I married his \_\_\_\_\_ widow.'

## Flight of Angels *Bill Babbitt*

This will mean much more to an old carrier pilot and all those others who have participated in the adventure. I hope it gives some of them a smile.

Some of the terms and situations might seem pretty perplexing to those who have never flown a propeller driven aircraft from an old straight deck carrier, landing with the aid of a Landing Signal Officer (Batsman). You are confronted with a steel net barrier raised across the middle of the flight deck to stop your careening aircraft in the not infrequent event of failing to pick up an arrestor wire. Fly in just a little too slow and you stall off into the sea, or go over the side. Fly in too fast and you float into the barrier. Take off and formation can be pretty tense at times, too. So please bear with me while I try to recapture some of the feelings of a young pilot of the old days, on a routine flight from H.M.C.S. Magnificent ("Maggie") in the early 1950's.



### Flight of Angels

See the mighty carrier  
Surging through the sea.  
"Maggie" and her escorts  
Are there for you and me.  
Fireflays and Furies, row on row,  
Are ranged on deck, it's quite a show,  
While all the eager fly-boys  
Are briefing down below.

"Hands to flying stations!"  
Aircrew on the run.  
Leap aboard your aircraft,  
The fun has just begun.  
Fire up the starter, prime once more.

The engine coughs, then gives a roar.  
Roar on you mighty Griffin  
You'll fly the skies once more.

That fellow there in yellow  
Guides you forward with great care.  
The ship is rolling heavily,  
You'd better both beware.  
You've reached the spot you're  
launching from,  
Now do your checks and show a  
thumb,  
Adrenalin is rising  
For the challenge soon to come.

Turning into wind now,  
Ship goes full ahead.  
All eyes on the island,  
Light's remaining red.  
Up pops the Flag, your leader's gone!  
Pour on the coal, the thrust so strong!  
Off brakes, you navy pilot,  
Get up where you belong!

Starting down the flight deck  
With your throttle, through the gate.  
Lots and lots of rudder  
As you try to keep her straight.  
Deck drops astern,  
You're in the air!  
You feel that rush,  
It's always there.  
So thank your Guardian Angels.  
They're with you everywhere.

Jinking off to starboard,  
Climbing out to port.  
Closing on your leader,  
Space is getting short.  
Now as you slide beneath his wing  
You rise up close and there you'll  
cling.  
"Quite good, you navy pilot",  
Your Angel voices sing.

Little bits of throttle,  
Little bits of stick.  
Minimize each movement  
Or you'll lose it pretty quick.  
"You're very close," your Angels say.  
They may be right, but there you'll  
stay.  
Take pride in good formation,  
Your skills are on display.

Climbing through the cloud breaks,  
Turning left and right.  
Sweat begins to soak you,  
But you will hang in tight.  
Right now your leader is your God.  
He looks at you and gives a nod,  
Which means you're doing nicely,  
Your Angels all applaud.

Signal from the leader,  
"Go to line astern."  
Now he fills your windscreen,  
As you follow every turn.  
So as you fly this cozy space,  
Your leader's tail plane in your face.  
You hear the Angels mutter,  
"This crazy human race."

Half a roll to starboard,  
On your back you go!  
Ocean's up above, and  
The sky is down below!  
Down go the noses,  
Lots of "G".  
The Angels shout in harmony,  
"Please take us back to Maggie,  
No more to fly with thee!"

Pulling through the bottom,  
Zooming for the sun.  
It's a thrilling bit of flying,  
But your body weighs a ton!  
Roll off the top so smooth and slow.  
The loop was great, you feel a glow.  
Glance down and there's the task  
force  
Five thousand feet below.

Leader diving slightly  
As you rise up side by side.  
He's calling for a roll,  
So you're in for quite a ride!  
Ease up the nose,  
The bank gets steep.  
Your ono your back in one smooth  
sweep,  
But the swirling cannot alter the  
spacing you must keep.

Rolling round the barrel  
By yourself is lots of fun,  
But now you're in formation  
And it's one son-of-a-gun!

Ignore your sense's wild protest,  
Just hang in there,  
Just do your best!  
So, back to straight and level, and  
give your nerves a rest.

Let the distance widen,  
You've been working hard and long.  
Cast your eyes about you. Enjoy the  
Griffen's song.  
The sky above an azure tone,  
The sea below as grey as stone  
Survey the vast Atlantic from old King  
Neptune's throne.

Aircraft over water have changed our  
history  
Extending from the Bismark to the  
distant Coral Sea  
That's why you fly so far from shore  
Extend our sting in time of war  
"Ready boys. Aye ready!"  
That's what you're training for.

Voices in the headset,  
Back to base you go.  
The audience is waiting,  
Any you'll put on the show!  
Enter a long descending turn,  
Approach the ship from low astern.  
Look down and view the flight deck  
All set for your return.

Sliding by the carrier,  
Looking mighty fine.  
Check your leader's deck hook  
And he'll return the sign.  
Glued to your leader you have flown,  
Now he breaks, you're on your own.  
You and your nervous Angels  
Must reach that landing zone.

Hauling off the throttle,  
Rolling back the hood,  
Visions of those gremlins  
Who'd grab you if they could.  
Fly in too fast, you'll hit the net!  
A bit too slow, you're in the wet!  
That deck looks short and narrow.  
But it's all you're going to get.

Checks are all completed,  
Rolling in to land.  
Flying near the stall

With just enough in hand.  
Trust "Bats" to handle all the rest.  
He's really sharp. He does his best.  
But watch things like an eagle,  
Right now you're really stressed.

Focus on the batsman  
Working there below.  
He's calling for more power!  
You're coming in too slow!  
Wide go the bats - a welcome sight,  
With little speed and not much height,  
These are the anxious moments  
That come with every flight.

Grinding round the corner,  
Hanging on the prop!  
Try to keep that Roger  
Till he lets you drop.  
Here comes the cut, you hit the deck,  
The landing's hard, but what the  
heck!  
You've caught yourself a three wire,,  
The best you can expect.

Taxi cross the barrier,  
Join the forward park.  
Put the flight behind you.  
It really was a lark!  
Now as you set the parking brake,  
Those Angels sing, "Make no  
mistake,  
This Naval Aviation  
Is just a piece of cake".  
\*\*\*\*\*

### **Sea Fury Story** *by Adm Gord Edwards (Ret'd)*

This a true story from the 50's, and  
even though the pilot in question is no  
longer with us, the name is NOT  
important.

It was the first flight in a Sea Fury,  
and of course it is single seat, so the  
checkout consists of a full briefing,  
sitting in the cockpit with the check  
pilot looking on, going through drills  
and start up procedure. All well and  
good. The pilot in question was  
warned that the Sea Fury was a very  
hot aircraft, so it was suggested to

take it easy on the first flight.

After runup checks and so on, the  
Sea Fury was wheeled onto the main  
runway, and take off clearance was  
obtained.

But here is where the problems  
started. Our pilot had more recently  
flown aircraft with the various levers  
for flaps and wheels reversed. The  
procedure in the Sea Fury was to take  
off with ¾ flap, raising after takeoff.

So.....this pilot had NO flap for  
takeoff, but then, thinking he was  
bringing the flaps UP after takeoff,  
actually put them down. Now the  
aircraft was being flown with almost  
full flap for the entire flight, and he  
couldn't get it over 200 knots.  
Confused, he flew around for a while,  
and decided to head for the home..

But wait, it got worse, as now, on the  
approach, wheels down, the pilot  
brought the flaps UP, so was now  
landing with NO flap and thus had a  
hard time getting the Sea Fury down  
to landing speed, thus landing very  
fast and hot. Well, he managed to  
bring it to a stop at the far end of the  
long runway, breathed a sigh of relief,  
then thinking he was bringing the  
flaps UP, he put them down, and  
taxied in that way.

He came back into the crew room in  
a hot sweat, complaining that IN the  
air the Sea Fury was a dog, but that  
landing was yet another story. No  
one could figure it out, and of course  
the aircraft engine was checked out  
fully for adequate power, etc

After a lot of investigation, questions,  
sitting in the cockpit, and the fact that  
the aircraft was shut down with flaps  
down, not normal, it was finally  
determined what happened.

Needless to say, this aspect figured  
big in future initial Sea Fury first  
flights.

*Pull out section*

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The options are:

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Option A



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Option B & C



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Option D



**\$600**

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(Wall Tiles (continued))

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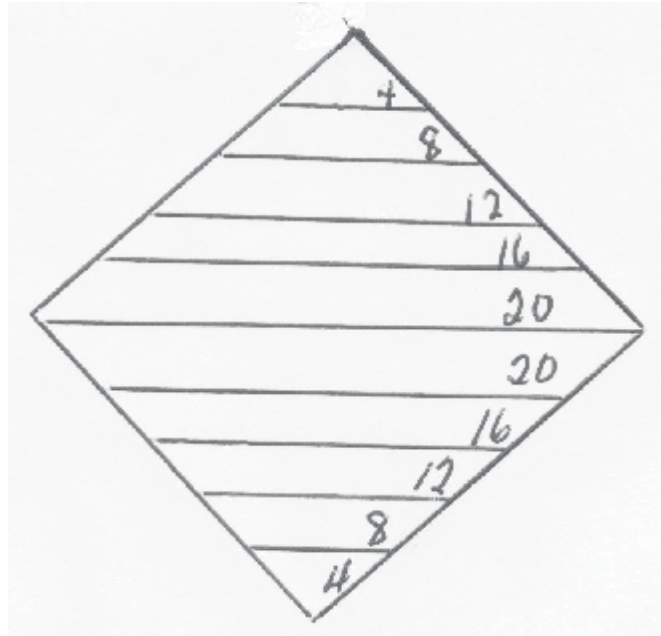
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TYPICAL OPTION 'C' above

CIRCLE CHOICE:    OPTION 'A'    OPTION 'B'    OPTION 'C'    OPTION 'D'

**REQUEST**

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## MEMORIAL WINDOW - HMCS DISCOVERY

### A BELL IRVING WARRIOR

In the military history of Canada, the Bell Irvings of Vancouver stand tall as patriots and warriors. Their magnificent record of service is a source of wonder and pride in this city. Here, the name Bell Irving has carried instant recognition and respect for generations. Elizabeth O'Kiely has published a fascinating story of her father, Duncan Bell Irving, "Gentleman Air Ace", the first native Canadian to be accepted into the Royal Flying Corps during the First World War. A very fitting tribute to Elizabeth O'Kiely and her Bell Irving clan was presented in Denny Boyd's column of the Vancouver Sun on the eve of Remembrance Day in 1993.

Though little is known of him, like the long disbanded aviation branch of the Navy to which he belonged, there was another young Bell Irving warrior who will also always be remembered. He too served our country in the tradition of his clan, but in the guarded peace we called the Cold War. He did so in the most dangerous and demanding profession of the Royal Canadian Navy, as a pilot operating high performance Sea Fury and Banshee fighters from the decks of small carriers in the unforgiving and trackless wastes of the North Atlantic.

Sadly, he did not live to advance to the high positions of leadership and the long distinguished career expected of him. Or to see his second son born. Young Lieutenant Commander Brian Bell Irving was killed in a tragic accident after landing his Banshee jet fighter on HMCS "Bonaventure".

As a graduate of Royal Roads, the Royal Canadian Naval College, Brian could well have proceeded to any specialization in the Navy. That he chose to meet the high standards required in the newest, most rapidly advancing and challenging field in naval warfare was for him, a natural progression.

"BBI" as he was known in the air squadrons, was a born pilot. Commodore R. L. (Robbie) Hughes (Retired), a fellow aviator and squash court opponent, recalls that Brian had the fastest eye to hand reflex and coordination of any flyer he knew. This was the hallmark of an outstanding fighter "jock". I had occasionally battled with him in squash games in Halifax and marveled at his lightning ballistic judgement and counter play. He would have made a superb deflection gunner like Billy Bishop in the dog fights of the First World War. However, unlike Bishop who was a notoriously ham-fisted pilot, Brian gave his high powered fighters a sure and skillful hand under the roughest conditions of air operations and deck landing at sea.

In a sense, he had joined another clan when he became a pilot. Life on the "air side" of the staid old RCN tended to attract the high spirited and mavericks. For them, challenge, change and distinction were the wine of life. With the whole of the Air Branch concentrated at the Naval Air Station in Dartmouth, largely independent of ships based across the harbour in Halifax, they developed a powerful and enduring sense of community and esprit de corps that was absolutely unique in the Navy.

Unlike other former branches, these close bonds have survived the abolition of the Royal Canadian Navy as a distinct service and even the later break-up of Naval Aviation itself. On the hand over of its men and machines to the Air Force, some pilots were given the option of renouncing aviation to complete their careers in general duties. It would have been an agonizing choice for Brian. Like others, he loved the Navy and flying with equal intensity. As in more enlightened leadership of defence forces in other nations where naval aviation continues to adapt and contribute great versatility and value as a vital and inherent element of the fleet in a changing world, he saw them as indivisible.

Many of Brian's old friends and shipmates have ensured that the story of Naval Aviation and of all Canadians who served in it, will never be forgotten. They have encouraged and assisted Robbie Hughes and his co-author, John MacFarlane in the production of "Canada's Naval Aviators", the biographies of Canadians who have served as naval flyers and engineers from the First World War to the disbanding of the Air Branch in 1975. Fittingly for Brian and his distinction as a Bell Irving warrior, his, though sadly brief, joins those of other great British Columbians. These include Lieutenant Robert Hampton Gray, RCNVR of Nelson, the last Canadian to win the Victoria Cross in the Second World War, and the legendary Raymond Collishaw, one of the top fighter aces of the First World War, and a resident of West Vancouver after his retirement.

Brian, his squadron and shipmates are also featured in the fine recollective history of Canadian Naval Aviation by his friend and fellow pilot, Stuart E. Soward, also from Vancouver, entitled "Hands to Flying Stations". Other lovingly crafted accounts which Brian would have enjoyed are "Bonaventure" by Allan Snowie and "Banshees" by Carl Mills, stories of his last ship, the great jet fighters of the RCN and the proud Canadians who flew and maintained them.

All Canadians should remember the great debt we owe to the young men of our Army, Navy and Air Force, like Brian Bell Irving, who served in the Korean and Iraqi wars and in the NORAD and NATO shields. They put their lives on the line to demonstrate our strength, vigilance and absolute determination to repel aggression. By so doing, they achieved a greater victory than any war in history. They have enforced the peace, stared down the Soviet threat and spared the world the ultimate horror of nuclear holocaust.

Few Canadians will have known Brian Bell Irving, his great spirit, leadership and zest for life. Generations of young sailors passing through HMCS "Discovery", however, will be reminded of him and that long ago, almost mystical age he lived in. They will learn that it was a golden era when the Navy thrived with vitality and strength. An era when it had the range of carrier and destroyer based air power essential to the mobility and support of our ground forces as well as the fleet. They will be reminded that it was an exceptionally proud and exciting chapter of the history of the Navy when sea going aircraft and helicopters, their flyers and maintainers were at home as inherent parts of the fleet and the Naval family.





**Lt. Brian Bell Irving, RCN and Sea Fury at HMCS SHEARWATER 1952**

In the tiny chapel alcove of "Discovery" on the West wall towards the setting sun, they will see a remarkable stained glass window dedicated by his family to Brian's memory. It is striking and deeply moving in its artistry and surroundings. An eagle soars in triumph over a serpent. Below, there is Brian's ship, the "Bonaventure" underway at sea. And, a young couple sitting together on a verdant hill on the waters edge - a young man tenderly embracing a woman, lost in thought and contentment to the world beyond. The inscription reads:-

**The way of an eagle in the air, the way of a serpent upon a rock,  
the way of a ship in the midst of the sea, and the way of a man with a maid.**

**Proverbs XXX V. XIX**

**Lieutenant Commander Brian Bell Irving, RCN  
1926 – 1958**

#### **Foot Note**

This was written in 1994 to provide some meaning and understanding of this striking memorial window in a naval setting to those serving and others passing by in the Reserve Division, HMCS "Discovery". Few of these will have met or known Brian Bell Irving. Though he died over 50 years ago, many across Canada are still living who had the highest regard for him as a great shipmate, flyer, leader and friend. It is for them especially that the following recollections have been added.

In 1952, Brian and I were shipmates in the 30<sup>th</sup> Carrier Air Group, embarked in "Magnificent" on a 4 month NATO deployment. During operations in September off Northern Ireland, the engine in BBI's Sea Fury quit and he was forced to ditch. A Portuguese frigate, the "Diogo Gomes" was directed to the rescue. After he had bobbed around in bloody cold seas for 25 minutes, the frigate's boat finally arrived and hauled the water logged wretch aboard. BBI was now in no mood for a slow ride back to the ship. He grabbed an oar, and by his salty account set a brisk racing stroke, bellowing "row you b.....ds, row !".

Back in Halifax, neither of us could organize a lift with the Air Force or afford the trip home by air to Vancouver for Christmas and annual leave. In early December, we took off in the Mercury convertible on a route he claimed to be a short cut, down the Atlantic coast to the Southern states and then West to Los Angeles. Driving flat out 'round the clock in snow, rain and fog, it was the proverbial trip to hell. For amusement, BBI had bought a bag of cherry bombs, virtually miniature grenades, used for "animating" steers and horses at rodeos. With exquisite timing, he would drop them to explode in water buckets at the pumps as we roared out of a rip-off diner-gas station into the cover of traffic. Once, to our near disaster, he rolled one under the highway patrol car of a sleeping trooper. But BBI could charm the birds out of the trees. I swear he talked us out of a dozen tickets for speeding and other violations. When we finally hit Los Angeles, and dropped him off to see his future bride, it was more of a flight than a drive. Thanks largely to Brian, we had averaged 1,100 miles per day, most of it on two lane roads.

**Commander Ralph E. Fisher, RCN**

## READERS COMMENTS

Hi Kay: I've been meaning to do this for quite a long time, but, being on the lazy side, have never gotten around to it.

But, after seeing the current issue of the "Warrior" ( an inspired title by the way, just perfect for this magazine), I just have to thank you and congratulate you for the outstanding work you have done on this publication, from way back during Bill's tenure and, particularly since you took on the demanding task of Editor. Bravo Zulu and all the very best, Sincerely, **Les Rosenthal**.

**Bob Bissell** writes: Just received E no middle initial Cruddas newsletter and note that I have been rumbled by ?? the underground communication system.

So I have to own up that Joyce, whom you have met on a couple occasions at Shearwater, and who has been my 1st Mate for many a year, were married in South Africa on the 13 Apr this year, that was Easter Monday. The Vicar assured me that it was all legal and in fact issued a South African marriage certificate, if that means anything. Anyhow, I took the precaution on an anti-nuptial agreement. Even at my advancing years you can't keep an old sailor down!!

As we have only been back in Blighty for a couple weeks I admit that I have not been able yet to read WARRIOR from cover to cover. But you have done a terrific job and a great decision to hit on a name that reminds us of the early days of Naval Aviation in Canada.

Every time I step off the Gosport Ferry I am greeted with the view of the original battleship, HMS WARRIOR, with all her flags flying. I hope your Warrior lives on as long! Cheers, from Bob & Joyce



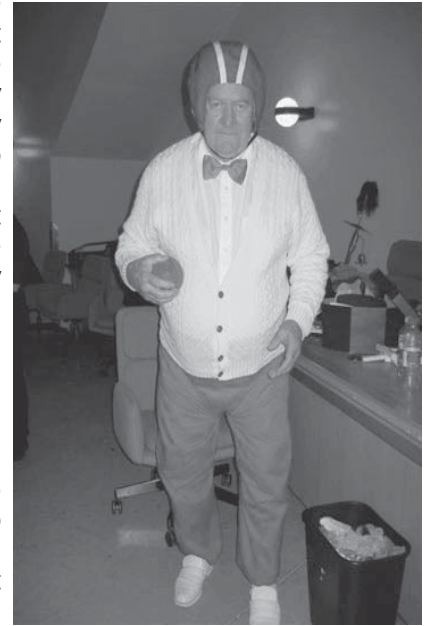
From **Butch Carmichael**:

I thought it would be a bit of a change, to let my former friends, and athletic supporters, to know what an ex Shearwater Flyer, is up to these days. With out going into my life story, I'll start when I retired in 2001.

I am a Shrine Clown, and instead of working out at a gym, I took up tap dancing. That's right tap dancing. Tap dancing gives you a good work

out, and a lot of the steps are related or similar to athletic movements. Being a big guy and having a lot of clown costumes, my dance teacher put me in her shows. What!!!

I couldn't even dance properly. She taught me a couple simple steps, and had my wife dance a very complicated step around me. Boy did I look good. My first dance routine was me miming to Shirley Temple singing Good Ship Lollipop.



Well it's eight years later and I have been in about a dozen shows since. I still do comedy routines, tap dancing, and occasionally, they get me to sing. I am having a lot of fun performing. I recently, performed in a Suzart production, called "That's Entertainment" . I was with Pat Black's Capital Tappers, doing a football routine. I was the football hero, and the rest of the dancers were the cheerleaders.  
*Butch*

From **Dan Farrell**: I have just received word from Bill (via his ouija board) that he appreciates your kind words in the SAMF Spring edition. Apparently it is quite warm where he is staying and he hopes you will be able to join him for a holiday. Cheers, and Thank You

From **Pete Fane**: Hi,

What a pleasant surprise to open up my mail box and see that great picture of the "Warrior" entering Halifax harbour for the first time on 31 March 1946, When the ship left Portsmouth for her journey across the Atlantic she was freshly painted but due to some awful weather on the journey across the paintwork suffered as shown just above the waterline in the photo. "Warrior" was a happy ship for her first commission under Captain Houghton and I can remember the trip around to the west coast in the fall of 1946 with stops at Kingston, Jamaica and Acapulco, Mexico an after enjoying lovely sunny weather we arrived in Esquimalt in snow flurries. A better choice of name for the SAM magazine could not be made, Thank you.

**Cal Withers** writes:

I scanned the by-line on the letter submitted by Si Green (Spring 2000) and I immediately remembered the writer and the visit to Rotterdam that he mentions. Si and I were probably in the same mess on the Maggie; the forward

torpedo workshop where some eight of us “air types” lived and occasionally repaired radio/radar units in relative luxury. Although some of us slept in hammocks, the more wealthy ones bought camp cots and sheets and pajamas.

The Forward Torpedo Workshop had a few amenities that regular mess decks didn't; namely a slop sink with running water and a small storage room that was used for various purposes, infrequently to dry-clean a uniform\*. There were empty torpedo racks that could and were used occasionally for a surreptitious snooze. The smooth-topped workbenches were used for writing letters, lively card games, snoozing and repairing aircraft electronic equipment.

Best of all though was the fact that our “mess deck” had doors that could be locked. This meant that when the rest of the poor sods had to muster on the cold and wind-swept flight deck for Entering or Leaving Harbour, we could lock ourselves in and wait very quietly until the pipe announcing regular routine was heard. Of course the pulse would speed up a little if an RPO came by and rattled the door before carrying on his rounds.

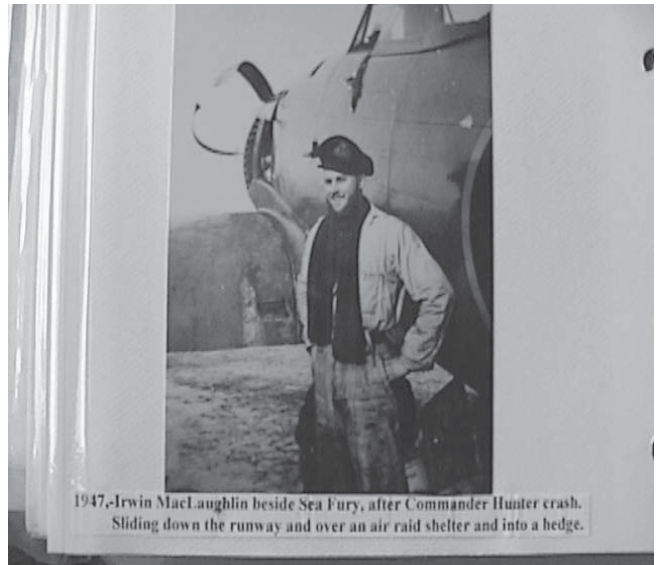
As for Rotterdam, I remember visiting a bar with two or three friends and on being recognized as young compatriots of the liberating Canadian Army of WWII. The proprietors treated us almost as family. They assigned one of their sons to drive us around the city and I remember being driven along one of the famous dikes. We returned as friends of the family two more times while still in port.

Another recollection is embarking on a liberty boat for the trip back to the ship at night. A German navy ship was also in port and they were using the same landing stage to embark their sailors. A German sailor, no doubt in his cups, was standing in his boat alongside and stretched out his hand. I thought he wanted to shake hands, but I realized at the last moment that he wanted to jerk me into the water! I was able to keep my footing and release his hand. Nice guy!

Hi! Kay

Here's a shot of Irwin "Bash" "Mac" McLaughlin who was with us on 19TH CAG in Ireland. This was the first Sea Fury prang due to an engine overspeed if I remember correctly, that was followed later on by several more over the years.... due to engine malfunctions that plagued a beautiful and still very popular aircraft in the air racing world! The pilot was our CAG Commanding Officer LCDR Jim Hunter who was uninjured and managed to make the field after losing his engine.

Look forward to the next issue of WARRIOR. Love that new name!! Al Whalley



1947,-Irwin MacLaughlin beside Sea Fury, after Commander Hunter crash. Sliding down the runway and over an air raid shelter and into a hedge.

**George Pumple writes:** Hi Kay - Was down South to escape the “Frozen North” for a few weeks. We (Merle and I) are not very active but we do a lot of reading- mainly paper-back mysteries, plus “Scrabble”.

Reading a paper-back named “CARRIER” by Keith Douglass (he has written a series of them) started me wondering if our own ex- “Nasal Radiators” of bygone days (1957-69) remember the drills for “Launch” and “Recovery” of Trackers on board our favourite flat-top, HMCS BONAVENTURE, (“Club 22” to many).

I have tried to remember the most important drill, namely the Recovery. Here goes:

**Recovery on board HMCS BONAVENTURE, ( THE BONNIE, initials BV, hull no: 22)**

Return to BV. Switch radio channel to “Flyco”; check in. Report in the “Delta”.

Signal “Charlie”. “Hook” down, descending to 200’, up the starboard side of the ship. When nicely ahead, a sharp bank to port, ease power, “gear” down, full flap, mixture full rich, props to full fine, overhead hatch full open. (Completion of the pre-landing check list).

Rounding to the “downwind”, airspeed 90Knots, power up, level at 200 feet.

Opposite the ship an easy bank to port. Inform Flyco of aircraft call sign.

At the “90”, pick up the “meat ball”. Call “ball”. Power to keep the ball centered vertically between the green “horizon bars” at the mirror.

Line up with the center line of the angled deck, power as required for 90 knots with “SFI” centered.

Over the “round-down” and up the deck, catch a “wire” and come to a full stop. Power to idle.

Deckhandler signals “off brakes, hook up” and the Tracker backs up a tad, releasing the hook from the wire. Hook up, flaps up, wings to “fold”, taxi forward as directed to the “deck park”.

(Congratulate self on another triumph of powered flight, especially if it's a black-ass night!!)

### **GLOSSARY:**

Launch- usually a catapult assisted take-off; occasionally a “free deck” take-off, when most of the flight deck is available.

Recovery- a full-stop landing on board the carrier.

Flyco- the flying control “tower”, manned by “little F”, “Commander (air)” and staff.

Delta- a race-track holding pattern overtop the carrier.

Signal Charlie- directive from Flyco to approach and land.

Hook- structure at rear of aircraft to catch a wire on landing.

Gear- the undercarriage.

Props- propellor adjustment.

Downwind- opposite direction to the ship.

90- half way around the turn to final approach.

Meat ball- a bright yellow ball of light reflected by the gyro stabilized mirror, providing a visual glide path.

Horizon bars- green lights in a horizontal row mid-way, on each side of the mirror.

SFI- safe flight indicator, a cockpit instrument at eye level.

Round-down- down-curving after end of the flight deck.

Wire- a cross-deck pendant for arresting the aircraft in about 200 feet of deck.

Fold- the position of the wings for minimum width.

Deck Park- area ahead of the island to the bow, clear of the angled deck.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **SEA FURY INSPIRATION**

Driving through Calgary in 1982 I spotted a lonely Sea Fury parked on display at a CFB facility. Stopping I peered through the fence then drove around to inspect it more closely and to see if I could identify it. There were no markings but it was in great shape and looked ready to fly.

My interest was piqued by the fact I had worked as an Air Rigger on these aircraft during the early '50s. For a period I was with 871 Squadron with Ron Heath as our CO. Dave Tate was our superb and uncomplaining pilot. Fitters were Paul Muggah and then Gerry Holder when Mike

Wasteneys became CO. Also we had Benny Oxholm and Shamus Dawson who also played hockey, amongst other great pilots and ground crew. Brian Bell-Irving was special.

All my life I have regretted not being able to fly such an aircraft and time was passing me by.

A few years later at an air show in Victoria BC there was on display a two-seater Sea Fury which was a trainer so the thought of flying was once again re-kindled after a demo flight in this beauty.

On my 55<sup>th</sup> birthday in 1986 I gave myself a gift of flying lessons. The introductory flight was FREE and after that you get to spend 10 or 20 thousand dollars.

Joining the Victoria Flying Club it was there I ran across Vi and Al Whalley, also members with their Cessna 172, Snoopy. Turned out they had bought my old home in Sunset Acres in Dartmouth, so we had lots to chat about. Gordie Foster worked for Transport Canada and was in charge of the examinations out there. Turned out that we played hockey for the Flyers. He is probably still playing like Les Shatford.

Flying became my life between 1986 and 1994 when it became just too expensive and I was nearing 65 as well. The favorite activity I enjoyed was taking the little 150 aerobat out to the practice area and dipsy-doodled the hours away.

The flying was easy but the ground school I found challenging but nevertheless persisted always keeping in mind the Sea Fury and telling myself that if others could fly I could too.

Stu Mingo and I visited the Hamilton Air Museum last year and we saw a most unusual Sea Fury which was locally owned. It had a replacement engine and cowlings that Stu noticed right away as there were only four prop blades. Then we discovered that the canopy had been extended and enlarged and a back seat created where the owners wife was accommodated for extended flights. We have pictures of that aircraft if anyone is interested.

Lastly in this missive we saw a Firefly all duded up with bright paint and wings folded of the type my older brother flew when in the British Navy in the late forties.

Hats off to all who flew Sea Furies over the years but especially our own Naval Air types.

**Allan Browne, LSAR1 1950-1955**



*The Sea Fury articles by Dave Tate, John "Deke" Logan, Stu Soward, and Brant "Pop" Fotheringham were collected by Steve Schaefer of Calgary several decades ago and subsequently passed on to Leo Pettipas in support of his research and writing on Naval Air. Leo has in turn forwarded them to us for publication in "Warrior." The article by Roy de Nevers was extracted from Roy's unpublished memoirs, which he gave to Leo shortly before his (Roy's) death several years ago.*



As a matter of interest, this picture of Fury, Side #106, is yours truly entering the barrier, having pulled the tail hook off on Maggie's rounddown. I was "low & slow" and just made the deck, rather than the Quarter deck.

**Dave Tate**

### The First Helicopter Rescue in the RCN

**Dave Tate**

On 21 September 1953, as a member of VF 871 Squadron embarked on board *HMCS Magnificent*, I took off as No. 4 in a flight of four scheduled to carry out combat air patrol duties for the carrier. My aircraft was WG 568/side # 134. Although she had performed normally during start-up and catapult launch, it was during join-up that a problem appeared. While joining up, at climbing power, the fuel pressure began dropping and the engine started to "run down." I immediately reduced power (0 boost and 1500 rpm), the fuel pressure started to rise again, and at this lower power setting the engine appeared to function quite normally. In the hope that the problem had perhaps been only temporary, I once again tried a higher power setting. Unfortunately, the results were the same – loss of fuel pressure and engine run-down.

As it was obviously impossible to participate in the exercise under these conditions, Commander Air decreed that I orbit the carrier and be recovered on completion of the scheduled exercise and after all the other aircraft had landed (in about 1½ hours time). During this waiting period the time was put to good use in experimenting with

various power settings, simulated approaches at altitudes, etc to determine maximum power and engine running time available in the landing configuration at final approach speed. It was ascertained that above 2250 rpm, the problem reappeared, i.e., drop in fuel pressure and engine run-down. As this was the minimum rpm required for a carrier landing, my next investigation was to find out exactly how much engine running time I had at this rpm, with gear and flaps down and sufficient boost to sustain the final approach and landing speed (approximately 95 knots). On the average, the engine operated satisfactorily for about 15-20 seconds in this configuration. That meant that if a landing was attempted, the gear and flaps would have to remain up and a lower power setting used until about the 15-20 degree approach position. The alternative of ditching the aircraft alongside the carrier rather than attempting a landing was also contemplated but, after due consideration of both, it was agreed that I have a go at getting on the carrier. From this point on, I simply orbited the carrier and waited until all other aircraft had been recovered.

When it came my turn, a normal break was carried out and the downwind flown with gear and flaps up, 1500 rpm and boost to maintain a speed of about 130 knots. At the 180° position, the turn-in was initiated a little earlier and about 150 feet higher than normal. At about the 20° position, gear and flaps were dumped, the rpm increased to 2250, and the speed gradually reduced to about 100 knots. This time, however, the engine started to wind down much earlier than had previously been the case. I immediately throttled back and selected the gear and flaps up, hoping the engine would respond as it had previously and that it would be possible to carry out a controlled ditching alongside.

With the gear and flaps up (or on their way up) the engine did catch momentarily but then it failed completely, even at these lower power settings. As 95 knots (final approach speed) was below the clean power off stall speed, the aircraft did just that and the right wing dropped sharply. At this point in time it appeared that the aircraft was going to roll over completely and enter the water upside down. In an effort to prevent this, and as there was nothing to lose anyway, I put on full left aileron and hard right rudder, more or less putting the aircraft into a spin. This fortunately prevented her from rolling over, and the right wing hit the water, broke off, and turned the aircraft to 180°, hitting the water tail first. After the impact, once I regained my senses I unfastened my harness and started to get out of the aircraft which was almost totally submerged.

As a little aside, this was the first cruise during which we had been issued hard hats (crash helmets). Had I not been wearing one, there is little doubt I'd still be with the aircraft, for when I looked around, there floating beside me in the water was my hard hat, in two pieces. I therefore owe a great debt to our Squadron Commander Mike Wasteneys who insisted that we be issued hard hats before embarking on this cruise.

During all of the foregoing and unbeknownst to me, Angel (the H04S Sikorsky rescue helicopter) piloted by Lieutenant Ian Webster with co-pilot Frank Harley were positioning themselves for what turned out to be the first helicopter rescue in the RCN. Accordingly, once clear of the aircraft there was Angel overhead with the rescue horse collar settling in the water beside me. In less than a minute, I was safely stowed aboard by the crewman and we were on our way back to the *Maggie*, a distance of a few hundred yards. Less than two minutes later we landed aboard the carrier and no more than five minutes after that Roy Findlay, the Squadron Chief, had me in the Chief's mess for "up spirits" (foregoing my tot of medicinal brandy from Eric Kierstead in the sick bay). From this point on things became rather fuzzy – need I say more?

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*One of the Sea Furies that participated in the 1952 CNE air show, Toronto*

### Over 400 Knots on the Clock

*James Brant "Pop" Fotheringham*

I took command of the 31<sup>st</sup> Support Air Group in March of 1952 and remained only until April of the following year. The Sea Fury squadron in the Group during that period was initially 870 Squadron which became VF 870 in November 1952 when we adopted the US-style designations. The SAG was based ashore, being embarked for brief periods to be reasonably current for operations at sea. We did some carrier qualifications in *Magnificent* in May 1952, and we were embarked for about three weeks in November 1952.

One of the main activities of the Group was to put on an armament display during the International Airshow at the Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto in August and September of that year. We actually fired live ammunition at a target in the water in front of the grandstand. Horrors! We were competing with the RCAF who were using F-86 Sabres in the show. By resorting to some subterfuge, we succeeded in having the Sea Furies accepted by the crowd as of nearly equal performance to that of the Sabres.

The 31<sup>st</sup> SAG at the time was composed of 880 Squadron commanded by Lt. Cdr. E.M. (Ted) Davis flying Avenger aircraft, and 870 Squadron, commanded by Lt. Doug Peacocke. I was the Air Group Commander. If you are not familiar with the waterfront of Lake Ontario at the CNE, the shoreline runs east and west at that point with a breakwater about 150 yards offshore parallel to the shoreline. The shoreline in the specific area was lined with bleachers for the crowds of spectators who were on hand. A target (supposedly a submarine conning tower) was moored inside the breakwater in front of the stands.

The RCN portion of the show consisted of the Sea Furies conducting a rocket attack on the target, followed by a strafing run. The rockets were fitted with concrete heads. The Sea Furies were flying a left-hand circuit over the lake and attacking from east to west. We subsequently found that spent cartridges were landing on the Island Airport as we started the strafing runs! Imagine conducting such a hair-raising event in front of thousands of people. We had many routines worked out in the event of a runaway gun, etc, but even so it would hardly pass safety standards today. Of course, the crowds loved it!

After the Sea Furies were finished, the Avengers took over, making their runs from west to east. Our show was preceded by the RCAF who were displaying their F-86s for the first time. The Air Force finale consisted of a low-level, high-speed run from east to west in open line astern at the maximum speed of which the Sabres were capable, observing the conditions. It was the speed that was the real crowd-pleaser, so we had tough competition. After hearing of their show, we made some modifications.

At the end of the strafing run by the Sea Furies, we climbed as steeply as possible to the west in a circuit over the mouth of the Humber River just to the west of the CNE. When the Avengers were reporting the start of their final run, the Sea Fury in the circuit nearest to a heading of east peeled off and dove steeply from the height of about 10,000 feet which we had then attained. He was closely followed by the rest of us and we went by "on the deck" in front of the crowd with something over 400 knots on the clock.

The show was done in the mid-afternoons of a hot summer and there was always some heat turbulence that made for a very rough ride. There was always, or nearly always, a westerly wind blowing along the shoreline. A wind of 15 knots immediately gave us a relative 30-knot advantage over the Sabres, who had flown their gaggle in the opposite direction and against the wind. The whistle so characteristic of the Sea Fury engine led many of the crowd to believe that the Navy also had jets and, certainly to the unpractised eye, we went by the crowd every bit as fast. I don't know how rough a ride the Sabres were having with the turbulence, but from a competitive point of view, as well as a fish-eye view, we kept our ends up!

We had quite a lot of trouble on the carrier deck with tail oleos. A number of seemingly smooth deck landings resulted in a broken oleo, with the tailwheel

scuttling up the deck after the aircraft was arrested. Fortunately for my “face” as Group commander, I lost no tailwheels!

On one occasion I suffered loss of oil pressure while flying in the vicinity of *Maggie*. In response to a frantic plea, the ship immediately turned into the wind, cranked up the revs and I got aboard with a pound or two of oil pressure still showing.

#### At Least the Manual System Worked

*Stu Soward*

I had no barrier accidents or any accidents other than damaging a tail oleo on 5 November 1952 aboard *Maggie*, a tail oleo on 7 November 1952, and a number 10 wire on the same day caused by hook bounce. The tail oleos were subsequently modified, as were the hook dampers, and the number of such incidents did decrease.

On my last trip off the carrier, there must have been a drop in the wind speed over the deck, and since I was the LSO aboard, I was the last one to fly ashore. I remember dropping off the bow and, with full power on, I could not climb and could not descend into the sea, so I skittered over the waves in an incipient torque stall to starboard until I could get my airspeed up and regain control. With full power on, full left rudder to keep the starboard wing out of the water (at the same time trying to get the gear up and unable to climb), I was able to increase my airspeed and regain control. All ended well.

On 28 September 1953 I took off at Vancouver in Sea Fury 117 with three others to head back to our base at *RCAF Station Summerside*, PEI. As we approached Lethbridge, I noticed on selection of undercarriage that I had no hydraulics. So as a consequence I had to revert to the emergency pump system. I then had to continue all the rest of the way across Canada to PEI, pumping down the undercarriage and flaps, pumping gear up and everything to do with the hydraulics. As a consequence, I had to land last and take off first at each stop, and invariably missed my meal since the other guys would be sitting on their butts while I was going through this evolution. I suppose I am probably the only Sea Fury pilot that flew approximately 5,000 miles in over two days with no hydraulics. At least the manual system worked.

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#### They Were Completely Demoralized

*John “Deke” Logan*

The Sea Fury was probably the finest single-seater, piston-engined fighter aircraft ever built. I can recall that the latest Corsair could out-climb us at higher altitudes and that the USN Bearcat and British Sea Hornet were slightly faster at low levels, but overall we out-performed even the earlier jet aircraft.

The Sea Fury was a demanding aircraft; because of its high performance, the wise pilot knew his engine, his instruments, and his emergency procedures so well that he reacted automatically to most situations. The aircraft performed well on such diverse missions as combat air patrol, photo-reconnaissance, strike (rocket and strafe), dive-bombing, or long-range escort. It would lug anything that could be hung on it; I have even towed a drogue for air-to-air cannon-firing practice and also towed the same off the carrier, having the cable and drogue streamed on deck beside the catapult.

I first flew the Sea Fury in the Carrier Trials Unit at *RNAS Ford*, in Sussex, in July 1947. Pat Whitby, Jeff Harvie and myself were sent to the UK ahead of 803 Squadron to assist the RN in completing the service acceptance trials, since the Canadian squadron was to be the first to put the Sea Fury into squadron service.

The 19<sup>th</sup> CAG formed at *RNAS Eglinton*, Northern Ireland in early September 1947. H.J. (Dickie) Bird was CO of 803; Jack Sloan, XO; and Pat Whitby and myself, Flight Commanders.

During my Sea Fury squadron time, I flew the aircraft for 940 hours and made 223 deck-landings. We knew we were the elite among all Navy and Air Force pilots, as so many otherwise excellent pilots just were unable to cope with the demands of flying this superb aircraft from *Maggie’s* tiny flight deck. We were wonderfully served by absolutely first-class maintenance people throughout my Sea Fury tours. Engineers particularly remembered include Al Brown, “Rocky” Campbell, Craig Balson, and “Dudley” Allan. Dudley was also an excellent pilot, so we used him as a squadron pilot much more than in engineering.

On 28 February 1951 I was orbiting astern of the carrier off Bermuda during deck-landing refresher training for 883 Squadron when the CO, “Chiefy” Munro, got a late wave-off and torque-stalled, entering the sea on the port side. To everyone’s amazement this durable character shortly reappeared, bobbing down the side of the carrier and shaking his fist at the LSO, who he felt had spun him in.

In August 1951 I got my “barrier.” I was flying in “Pappy” MacLeod’s pride and joy, “AA\*S” VX 675, which had even been simonized. When I landed on, the deck was clear, so “Wings” sent me off for a second practice landing. I entered the landing circuit directly and without the usual “down hook” check. I came all the way and landed on negative hook, careening straight into the barrier. Both LSO and his “Teller” had reported the hook down, but it surely wasn’t. “Pappy” probably put a hex on me, as my similarly beautiful “AA\*0” was ditched and lost at sea two days later by Mike Turner.

Another interesting episode occurred a few days

later. As we were approaching Malta, the British asked our permission to carry out a simulated torpedo attack by Blackburn Firebrand torpedo-strike fighters. This they attempted to do at dawn, but Commodore Ken Adams wasn't napping. He shot a few of us off the catapult about an hour before dawn into the blackest night I can remember. Shortly thereafter, "Big Art" McPhee vectored us right through the Firebrand flight – they had dim navigation lights for station-keeping, but I don't think they even saw us until they felt our slipstream. Anyhow, they were completely demoralized and returned to Malta without completing the mission.

We were embarking ten Sea Fury aircraft in *Maggie* in September 1954, flying almost daily throughout a return trip to Vancouver via Panama. Our Avenger flying counterparts were down about six aircraft as there was a lot of marginal weather. Our boys, both pilots and maintenance, were terrific. Partly as a result of this performance, VF 871 won the Navy "Safe Flying" Trophy for the second time – they also won it when Mike Wasteneys was CO, and this was most unusual for an embarked squadron.

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### A Passenger in a Single-Seat Aircraft

*Roy de Nevers*

I joined VX 10 as a test pilot on 28 April 1954. Contractor acceptance testing (CAT) of aircraft was a routine duty for test pilots, and it did not take me long to get checked out in the procedure. In the RCN we had a standard type of test card, similar to that used by the RCAF, for each aircraft. There were spaces for recording relevant data such as oil pressure, manifold pressure and, if relevant, cylinder head temperature, airspeed at lift-off, stall speed and speed attained in a full-power dive. The purpose of the dive was to check that all panels were securely attached. A Sea Fury would be taken up to 20,000 feet, then dived at full power to check that a speed of 425 knots was achieved.

On 30 April 1954 I did my first familiarization flight

in a Sea Fury, WG 575, which took one hour. This consisted of take-off and climb, turns, stalls and other manoeuvres. The five-bladed propeller did have a noticeable gyroscopic effect when the tail wheel lifted off the runway. The countervailing rudder had to be promptly applied at the appropriate moment, else one would have become a passenger in a single-seat aircraft. It had a tendency to take charge and head for the boondocks if one was not prompt enough in getting the rudder applied.

I did a second familiarization flight in WG 575 on 3 May, and on the same day I did an oxygen climb and an acceptance sequence in the same a/c. Since I had used oxygen regularly on all of the Bomber Command operational trips that I had done during WW II, using oxygen was nothing new for me. The oxygen masks were quite similar. All of the wartime ops trips over Germany were flown at 24,000 feet, with oxygen being used from ground level after take-off.

One of the pieces of equipment that underwent testing by VX 10 in a Sea Fury was the ADF-14 radio compass, something that had not been previously been fitted in the type. The purpose of the project was to determine the suitability of the ADF-14 for installation in the aircraft Characteristics such as ease of maintenance, accuracy and operation were taken into consideration. Trial installations of this nature were the justification for VX 10 having its own Sea Fury (WG 565).

Near the end of May 1954 I did a practice flight in WG 575 in preparation for a planned trial installation of a "G" suit and meter. The fittings had been installed, the training flight carried out, and I conducted several test flights with this gear the following August. A second Fury, WZ 639, was subsequently fitted with a "G" meter so that Bert Mead and I could determine how many "G" Ron Heath had applied to the WEE Sea Fury (TG 117) that he had stressed back in 1949 at an airshow in Edmonton. A reading of 7.7 "G" was registered with no evidence of distortion. Bert then did a flight in which he applied as close as he could get to 8.0 "G." When his turn came up for a second flight in October, an 8.3 "G" was applied in a 20-minute flight. On examination it was found that the former had bent about the same amount and in the same spot as that in the aircraft that Ron, *without a G-suit*, had been flying in '49!

Another project in which I was involved in the summer of 1954 was a trial installation and testing of a position light flasher. The idea was to have the navigation lights flashing rather than being on steady as had been the practice until that time. The argument for the change was that a flashing light was less likely to be confused with a



light on the ground of the same colour. It is possible, by autokinesis, to have the optical illusion that a fixed light is moving. One clear night over France in WW II our rear gunner had our pilot madly corkscrewing to evade what the gunner believed to be a Ju 88 doing a curve of pursuit attack on us with a small searchlight trained on us (the

pilot was carrying out the normal gentle weave that was done at times so that the gunners could spot enemy night fighters more readily). It finally dawned on the gunner that he was looking at a planet that was low near the horizon. As navigator I was able to confirm this, knowing as I did the approximate position of the planet Jupiter and its relation to the aircraft and the course we were steering. The gunner apologized to the pilot and crew for the error and unnecessary consternation he had caused. Returning to the summer of 1954, I could see from the cockpit of the Sea Fury that the lights were flashing satisfactorily.

In September of 1954 I was appointed Commanding Officer of VX 10. Flying duties continued, some of them in Sea Furies, including the aforementioned "G" trials and navigation flasher tests. The Fury was capable of towing aerial targets, and in August of 1956 I carried out a drogue-towing test in Sea Fury WJ 301. The drogue was not streaming properly after take-off, so I came back to have it straightened out. On the second attempt I was able to get to 15,000 feet and then to 20,000 feet. The purpose of the test was to check whether the drogue would be suitable for towing behind a T-33 for ship gunnery purposes. It worked well enough for me, and was subsequently tried on a T-33.

Back in March of 1954, VF 870 had relinquished its Sea Furies and paid off to prepare for re-equipment with jets. The squadron aircraft had been flown to the Navy's aircraft storage facility located at the airfield at Debert, Nova Scotia. In May of 1956 the unit was moved to another airfield, this one at Scoudouc, New Brunswick, and in that month I ferried to Scoudouc some of Furies that had been in mothballs at Debert. In June I went to Scoudouc to conduct a test flight on one of the Sea Furies quartered there. It needed a modification to its engine, which was duly carried out by the Scoudouc maintenance crew. At the time it seemed a bit odd to me to modify an engine on an aircraft that was not likely to fly ever again. However, had it been required at least it was serviceable at that time. By now, the Sea Furies' tenure with the RCN was rapidly drawing to a close, along with my involvement with them.

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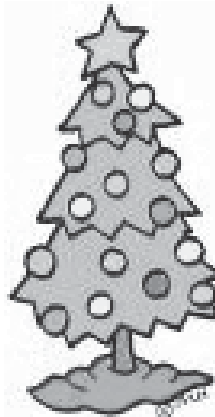
## SHEARWATER AVIATION MUSEUM FOUNDATION

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

0900 11 SEPTEMBER 2009

### IN THE BONNIE ROOM OF THE MUSEUM

#### *Merry Christmas*



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## Memories of a Back Seat Naval Aviator

by Peter Bruner

It all started in 1946 when I was a Sea Cadet in Calgary at RCSCC "Undaunted". A WWII Fairy Swordfish had landed at RCAF Lincoln Park for delivery to HMCS Tecumseh, The Naval Reserve Division. The local newspaper said it was to be delivered to the parade square in a few days. As a young cadet who lived fairly close to the air station, I decided the next day to bicycle to the air station and have a look at this aircraft which had an illustrious career in WWII. I cycled to "Lincoln Park/Currie Barracks" the next day and was allowed to view the Swordfish on the tarmac. While I was checking out the swordfish a pilot approached in his flying gear. I asked if it was his aircraft and he replied yes and introduced himself as S/Lt Knobby Westwood who had ferried it from Nova Scotia. I told him I was a sea cadet and had a lot of knowledge about the Swordfish exploits during the war. In the course of our conversation he said he had to do a short flight to check out some repairs. I told him I would really like a ride with him. His reply was "why not". He proceeded to brief me on the aircraft and strapped me into the Air Gunner position. We then taxied out and took off, climbing up to about a thousand feet, circled Calgary and landed back at the air base, a total of about 15 minutes in flight. This was my first flight in an aircraft which not many young sea cadets, if any, ever had a chance to fly in.

Two days later Wasteneys landed the Swordfish on the parade square at Tecumseh.

1954, I was an "Observer's Mate" flying with VS 881 Sqn on HMCS Magnificent. During a flight from the carrier to Pat Bay Airport to deliver some cargo we had to refuel at the Victoria Flying Club. As they had no fuel trucks we had to taxi to the fuel pump and refuel our aircraft. Being the low man on the totem pole it was my job and I was perched on a wing topping up the tanks when a Lieut. Commander pilot walked out of the flying club to see how things were going. I told him I was the OM and he asked me how long I had been flying. I replied since 1946 to which he replied that I had to have been very young. I added that it had been in a "Swordfish" in Calgary and I suspected that he was the S/Lt pilot on my first flight. The light turned on and he remembered the brash young kid and that day from my first flight in 1946. Many times during my military career we had occasion to meet and I always called him my "First Crew Commander".

My next flight in a Naval Aircraft was in 1953. I was a "Stagehand" with "The Shearwater Players" and was required to fly to attend at the Dominion Drama Festival in

New Glasgow. Del Brooks and myself along with Kip Reeves were placed aboard an Expediter flown by my Harry Hollywood, he delivered us to the festival so we could set up the stage for our presentation of "An Inspector Calls". Needless to say, the "Shearwater Players" won the festival for 1953. An event not to be forgotten in my Naval Memories or those of the Dominion Drama Festival.

In mid-summer 1953 two of my "Wingers", Don Dudder and Al Burroughs approached me as there was a call for "Observer Mates" applications from any trade. As I was a new "Air Fitter" I was not too interested but they convinced me to apply for the selection board. It turned out that I was selected and they were not. A footnote to this story is that Don Dudder left the Navy along with Al Burroughs at the end of their 5 years. Don became an Insurance Agent and the top salesperson for "Equitable Life" in the 1970s. Al Burroughs moved to Los Angeles and into the car business and was the top Mercedes-Benz dealer in North America in the mid 1980s for 5 years before retiring.

Under training at the Observer's School and with VU32 in the fall of 1953 I was airborne in an Avenger for a famil flight with Keith Cole and Bud McLean. Keith in the "Mid-Upper", Bud in the "Observer's Seat" and I in "The Well". Lt. Terry an exchange pilot was showing us some of the movements of the avenger and I happened to look up at a pale faced Bud who was anxiously trying to get a "barf bag" open, dropped it on the deck in the bottom of the Well about five feet below his seat. With a shower imminent over yours truly a desperate move recovered the bag and delivered it post haste to the by now almost green faced Bud. All was well thereafter and it is with a chuckle that the memory of this event comes to mind whenever I think of Bud as the commanding officer of VU32 in later years.

Observer's Mate Course #6 graduated on February 26, 1954 and we were all posted to VS880 in Summerside. On march 11, 1954 flying with Lt. Burns, we were dispatched to the Magdalen Islands to assist a sealing ship "Truls" as one of their sealers was on an ice flow suffering a serious injury. We found the ship but could not contact them as we did not have a radio frequency for them. Flying low over the ship we dropped a note to them and they responded by writing a radio frequency on the snow with seal blood. Gaining contact on the H/F radio we determined the patient needed immediate medical evacuation. Contacting Shearwater the "Angel" Helicopter was dispatched. Refuelling in Summerside it proceeded North to our position. Angel picked up the patient and proceeded to Halifax. The patient survived and sent us a note of thanks for our assistance. Our total flying time was five hours and five minutes. One of my longest flights in an Avenger.

In March 1954 VS 880 deployed to Bermuda, Kindley AFB for ASW exercises. My first trip to Bermuda which was almost like a holiday. When we were not flying we toured the island. One of my wingers was Bob "Boots"

Booth. Another school chum from Calgary and a "Rigger". We bunked in the barracks at Kindley AFB and traveled the island when not on duty. There was a problem to this as we did not have any civilian clothes and wore our uniforms wherever we went. Prominent signs in Hamilton Bermuda were "No Dogs or Sailors Allowed". Obviously a WWII leftover. One of "Boots" any my school chums George Lemmon was the assistant manager at the "Elbow Beach Surf Club". One of the most exclusive hotels there which required formal dress after 5pm.

We had contacted George and told him we were there for 6 weeks or so and George invited us to the hotel for the weekend and we were totally enthused with the idea. We also told George that we had nothing but our uniforms to wear. He told us not to worry but present ourselves at the hotel on Friday PM. This we did and on our arrival he met us, conducted us to a suite of prominence, had the clothing rental agent supply us with the appropriate garb for the pool to the ballroom tuxedos and advised us it was all "On The House". For two able seamen it was the greatest weekend at our tender age that we had ever experienced. It is to be noted a couple of squadron pilots also attended a few functions but never commented as to our presence there except for curiosity at a later time.

On May 6, 1954 we departed Bermuda for Summerside. My crew was Pilot Jerry McMillen, Observer Whitey Williamson and yours truly OM. The mid upper was occupied by Shakey Elliot a safety equipment P2. We were flying in a 8 plane formation. Approximately 150 miles South of Yarmouth NS we encountered heavy weather and were told to climb from 3000 ft to 10000 ft through heavy rain and cloud. There were two flights of four aircraft and we were number 4 of the second flight.

When we broke out of the cloud I observed only 3 Avengers in the first flight and 4 in the second. At the same time two of the aircraft reported rough running engines and diverted direct to Shearwater. The other 5 aircraft proceeded to Yarmouth. We were unable to contact the missing Avenger side No. 340 piloted by S/Lt Macleod and crew of Jones, Holden and White. We commenced search operations on May 7 until May 13. Nothing was found except a wheel hub and tire by one of the 10 search ships.

Billeted in the Grand Hotel in Yarmouth and having nothing to do after dark we had "Shaky" break out the life raft in which we had stored 20 duty free 40 pounders to take home. At the end of 3 days it had all evaporated and none of the other people had any more. A couple of the fellows were in contact with the local hospital nurses who supplemented our rations with surgical alcohol (180 proof). I never suffered a sore head before or since that would equal it.

June 16 I was posted to VS 881 and thus ended my tenure with VS 880. July 2 - VS 881 posted to Magnificent.

To be continued...

***Yours Aye, Peaches***

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## Status of Shearwater Lands Recovery

**The MND has been successful in his fundamental objective of restoring Shearwater to its original boundaries and strategic land, marine and air capabilities, particularly the upper airfield, its 10,000 ft runway system, buffer and reserve development lands.**

**Stories that the long runway would now be given to and converted by the City to a road connector are sheer nonsense, denied by both the Minister and the Mayor.**

**However, the latter's request for land and routing of an arterial connector at the eastern boundary along Morris Lake that would have no adverse impact on Shearwater's capabilities and lands, especially the airfield and its long runway, is being considered jointly by DND and City authorities.**

*Ralph Fisher, Sea Horse Defence Advocates Group*

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## NAVAL AVIATORS GATHERING (Old Farts) 21 May

*from Dick Pepper*

We had 27 attend the Gathering at the Museum and Wardroom. A number of ancient aviators who had not participated in previous activities showed up. There's much interest in the Fall Gathering.. Initial plans call for an event in early October. We hope to be able to have a tour of the new hangars and facilities as well as an update on the Cyclone.

The group were invited to a briefing and lunch at Survival Systems on May 16 and 25 members participated. We were all amazed at the development of the various systems and the worldwide market that the team there is servicing. A superb show. The systems have certainly come a long way from the old "Dilbert Dunker" days at the gymnasium and in the harbour.

When one surveys the Naval Aviation scene we have to be impressed with the "spirit" that lives on. The Banyans, Gatherings and Rendezvous during which many stories and experiences are shared (many factual, certainly colourful and some, stretched) are certainly strong evidence that the family is very much alive and well.

I'm certainly looking forward to 2010 with the Navy 100th activities, the Tattoo, Fleet Review, another Gathering and Banyan around that time at Shearwater and the CNAG Reunion at Thanksgiving.

I understand there's also a Venture Reunion this year and a UNTD event next year. Sure are lots of opportunities to generate interest in OUR MUSEUM.

## The Great Eagle - Albatross Controversy

from John Bowser

Time was, says the oldsters, when a simple statement in a Service Mess about the bird that appears on RCAF buttons, and badges was sure to start an argument that would last far into the night.

This once-burning issue about the bird's true identity has all but flickered out, and (it is hoped) new members of the Force are correctly "indoctrinated" that the bird is an eagle. Mention that to a veteran wearing First World War ribbons, however, and you run the risk of becoming involved. If he flew in the Old Royal Naval Air Service (and three of our four Chiefs of Staff did), a gleam will come into his eye and he will begin convincing you. By the third round you will find yourself tactfully agreeing that it isn't an eagle at all, but – as any clod can plainly see – an albatross.

Actually the controversy was settled – officially – long before it even began, and, for the benefit of those who have endured, or have yet to face the argument, here are the facts.

It all started in the summer of 1914 when the board of Admiralty took upon itself, in defiance of Cabinet orders issued two years earlier, to rename the Naval Wing of the Royal Flying Corps as the Royal Naval Air Service. These regulations of the 23rd June 1914, clearly stated that officers of RNAS would wear an eagle on the left sleeve above the rank lace. An eagle was substituted for the anchor on buttons, cap badges, and other insignia. According to tradition, the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty adopted the eagle design (outstretched wings with head inclined to the right) from a brooch which the wife of a naval officer had purchased from Paris. So, from the very moment it was hatched, the bird was an eagle.

But, as many will tell you, regulations are meant to be printed, not heeded. It may be that the outbreak of was a few weeks later caused the details of the regulations to be overlooked or forgotten –or read in true Nelson fashion with telescope to the blind eye. Or maybe the Navy fliers

decided that the eagle, a land bird, had no place in a naval service. At any rate, before long the members of the RNAS considered as high treason any suggestion that their bird was other than a proper seagoing albatross.

Then, in 1918, the RFC and RNAS were merged into the Royal Air Force, and the new Air Force took over the RNAS rank insignia – and the bird. Quite naturally, ex-RNAS members carried with them into the RAF their unswerving loyalty to the albatross, although there is nothing to show that the RAF ever regarded it – officially – as anything but an eagle.

When the CAF was formed in Canada in 1920 it carefully sidestepped the issue by adopting a uniform with army ranks badges and insignia that contained wings but no bird. The first dress regulations issued for the RCAF in 1925 leave no doubt that the featured creature was still officially, as it had been since 1914, an eagle.

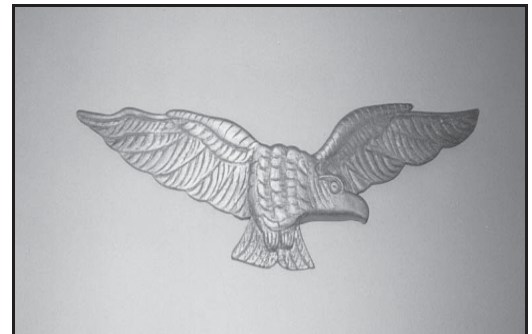
Many of the RCAF's personnel were veterans who had flown with the RNAS and, true to the tradition of the "Silent Service," they eloquently and persuasively spread the myth that the bird worn by the RCAF was really an albatross. The argument smoldered for years, mostly in the messes, although occasionally someone actually sat down to write a memo about it.

When the Second World War came along, the controversy flared again. Thousands of wartime recruits were told that the bird they wore on their shoulders and brass buttons was an albatross. Thousands more were told that it was an eagle. To others it was simply a bird, although one officer irreverently suggested it was a pregnant duck. Of course, no one bothered to consult the regulations.

The controversy should have been settled, once and for all, in January 1943. Ever since 1924 the RCAF had been using as its "official" badge the badge of the RAF, modified by the addition of a scroll bearing the words "Royal Canadian Air Force." After 18 years of use it was, somewhat

belatedly, discovered that this RCAF badge had never been officially approved or sanctioned. The Chester Herald, who had been appointed Inspector of RCAF Badges, accordingly prepared a proper design, improving upon the 1924 version, and in January 1943 this general badge of the RCAF was approved by H.M. the King. The Chester Herald's description of the badge clearly and specifically refers to the bird in the design as "an eagle volant affronte, the head lowered and to the sinister." In short, it was still an eagle and always had been – although the albatross was a very nice bird, too. Nevertheless, rumblings of the controversy was still heard until the end of the war.

Today, former members of the RNAS are so few in the RCAF that there is little they can do about it except mutter in their beer. But even so, if the subject should ever come up and there's an old veteran about, be careful. He may be an ex-RNAS type, and if he is, it's still an albatross to him.



Wartime Pathfinder WO1 George Bova of 410 Wing hand-carved this likeness of the Pathfinder Force Eagle that he proudly wore on his WWII uniform, and that he still wears today below his AFAC blazer badge. Since the war, our Air Force Eagle has been seen in various forms; including the broad-winged RCAF version, the "old bird" and ruffled-feathers version of the RCAF Association, and most recently the streamlined version in the new AFAC badge.

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**Back row L-R:** Ben Oxholm, Mike Turner, Whitey McNicol, Mike Wasteney (CO) Bob Williamson (LSO), Dave Little (AEO).

**Front row L-R:** Archie Benton (USN), Shamus Dawson, Harry Frost, Dave Tate, Bryan Bell Irving

(Photo quality not bad for being 56 yrs old.)

### CORONATION SPITHEAD REVIEW

On 15<sup>th</sup> June 1953 VF 871 participated in an impressive Coronation flypast, over the Royal Yacht HMS Surprise, as part of the Spithead Review. Over 600 aircraft, from the UK, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada participated in this undertaking which also involved 4 rehearsals prior to the Big Day. This was a most complicated flying display led by an RN Admiral in a Sea Vampire, followed by Squadrons of Sea Furies, Sea Hawks, Sea Hornets, Meteors, Attackers, Sea Vampires, Avengers, and Fireflys to name a few. Squadrons were based at various airfields around Southern England with 871 and 881, along with some RN Squadrons, located at Lee on Solent. The join up took place as the formation leader, an Admiral in a Sea Vampire, proceeded around the "pick-up" route with Squadrons joining on astern from their holding positions until the "gaggle" eventually became a formation of over 600 aircraft.. We (871) took off with 2 flights of 4 aircraft (and one spare) along with some RN Furies, 881 and some other RN aircraft and proceeded to our holding position until the Admiral and lead aircraft came by. Our

spare aircraft was to orbit in the vicinity and be prepared to join up should one of us go unserviceable. By the time the main formation reached our holding position it numbered over 400 aircraft with the remaining 200 or so subsequently joining on astern prior to the final straight in run over the Royal Yacht. Needless to say with 400 aircraft in front of us, and at roughly the same altitude, the turbulence from their slipstream was rather severe and made formation flying more than a little difficult, especially when we had to close in for the final "run in" to the yacht. In fact one commentator put it this way "those pilots flying in close formation on their leaders had an exceptionally uncomfortable flight" (AMEN to that).

All went well except for one RN Firefly who had engine failures but fortunately force landed successfully. I can still hear the radio transmissions from both he and his leader which went something like this --"leader I have engine problems and will have to force land" the reply from the

leader was typically Brit --"very well carry on".(as if he had any choice) After almost 2 hours the flypast was over and all squadrons landed at their respective airfields without incident, that is until we arrived back in the crew room.

As mentioned previously we had a spare aircraft take off with us who was supposed to orbit somewhere in the vicinity and be available to fill in should one of us go unserviceable. Our USN exchange pilot, Archie Benton, won the dubious honour of being the spare by drawing the shortest straw. He wasn't needed during the flypast and although at the time we never knew where he was orbiting we found out after landing. On our arrival in the crew room there was an urgent phone call for our CO Mike Wasteney and on the other end of the line was a most irate Commander Air. Apparently there had been a Canadian Sea Fury orbiting the Royal Yacht during most of the flypast and he, Commander Air, wanted that pilots head on a platter. After a rather lengthy discussion Mike placated Commander Air, somewhat, by assuring him that the matter would be taken care of properly and immediately. There was then no doubt where Archie had been orbiting. Not only was he orbiting the Yacht but was also taking some of the most unique photos of the flypast as it passed by underneath him.

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### A Magnificent Fury Story.

Maggie was seconded to Lord Mountbatten's Med fleet in the summer of 1952. His last sea command. We left our

destroyers at Gibraltar.

Four of us from VF871 were airborne approaching the west coast of Greece. Joe Becket, Ben Oxholm and I were led by our USN exchange pilot - a great little guy whose name I can't remember - Ben might. The carrier told us that there was no wind and we could not get back aboard. We were vectored to a tiny Greek airport called Araxos on the west coast. It turned out to be a sand strip with a couple of Nissan huts and a bunch of Greek lads who spoke no English.

The Furies were rigged for sea without air filters. We asked the carrier for instructions and were told to take off and fly over the mountains to Athens. We tried to communicate to our Greek hosts that we wished to fly to Athens and would they radio Athens to alert them of our intentions. They cranked up their ancient magneto radio and made some kind of message which we didn't understand.

Our dilemma was the sand and the possibility of fouling our engines. In order to take off with the least risk, we asked the Greeks to lie on our tails to hold us nose high until we had sufficient speed up for take off. Each of us would signal the fellows when to drop off with a hand held high in the cockpit. We all got safely airborne. And the Greeks survived - we think!

We crossed the mountains in glorious weather and approached Athens. In that year the Greeks and Turks were decidedly hostile to one another. On landing we were met by armed soldiers and stripped of our side arms. The Fury had a distinct resemblance to the Folkwolf 190 and the Greeks thought we were invading Turks. We were rescued by the Canadian Attache from the embassy and spent five glorious days in Athens waiting for the fleet to arrive. We each took turns flying over the Greek countryside during this interlude.

Our USN exchange pilot took us to the US PX where we all kitted out as USN pilots. We had nothing except our flying suits and helmets. I was elected treasurer and got 400,000 Drakma from the embassy which I recall lasted just over one day. We actually had more fun in Athens after the fleet was in for a few days.

All was over when the fleet sailed and we could be brought back aboard.

**Harry L Frost II** In Canada, +1 416 320 5509 In Europe and UK +44 (0)777 165 2796

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**From the Ed.** Hi there. Many thanks for your comments on WARRIOR.

So much is happening around Shearwater these days - lots of changes on Base and as shown in this photo from Clayton Developments - lots of changes in the surrounding area.



*(Note the houses on the far side of Morris Lake getting closer to 16/34.)*

As you are aware, 2010 is the Naval Centennial Year. Upon searching through their brochures and on the website, I was only able to find very little on the Naval Air years - the operative word here is 'Naval'. There was a small photo of a Tracker aircraft flying over a carrier and the following para written in their on line write-up: 'Canadian Naval Centennial'

**Although Canadian sailors manned five aircraft carriers; the only Canadian owned aircraft carrier was HMCS *Bonaventure*. She was Commissioned on 17 January 1957 and was named after a bird sanctuary in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. She was launched as HMS *Powerful* of the Majestic class but work stopped at the end of the Second World War.**

And that's all they wrote! Very disappointing.

The Spring 2010 edition of WARRIOR, will be dedicated, in part, to the Naval Air years.

In order to do this, I will need your help. I am requesting an article or comments on what you remember of that period of time that would have been of assistance to the Navy. New aircraft - special events etc.

It shouldn't be too difficult for you to send along an article - even a few words. There are so many of you out there that know exactly what went on. Please share it with us.

Take care and keep well. *Kay*

## KOREAN WAR RAMBLINGS

BY CARL MILLS

I have been toiling over my "Canadian Airmen and Airwomen in the Korean War" project for the past ten years and I recall that you once had an article about the "Bridges of Toko-ri" in a past issue. It is always informative to get a differing view of an important topic such as this and the only point that I have to make is that it did not mention the USN's Task Force 77 (TF77). TF77 was the large carrier fleet that plied the Sea of Japan and from which the naval air strikes, basically against targets in the eastern half of North Korea, were launched. The fleet consisted of three or four Essex Class carriers, on rotation from a pool of carriers, with a significant entourage of a dozen destroyers, cruisers, supply ships, and battleships. TF77 was established just after the beginning of the Korean War (June 1950) and was operational until well after the Armistice (July 1953).

The only Canadian ship to be directly involved with TF77 was HMCS Crusader, for a period of time in April 1953, when the destroyer's duties included; plane guard, screening, and guide ship to the fleet. There was, however, a slightly more substantial Canadian naval air connection with TF77 and other aspects of the Korean Air War. The naval air connection to TF77 included pilots; LCdr. Pat Ryan, Lt. Joe MacBrien and Lt. Frank Herrington (USN). Frank Herrington served as a special weapons pilot on the F2H-2B (aka Banshee Mk2 - bomber version) aircraft in Korea. This meant that he was trained to deliver nuclear weapons from within TF77. Herrington later served as a USN exchange pilot with VF-870 at Shearwater (1956-57) where he flew our F2H-3 Banshees. For the Herrington stories see "Banshees in the Royal Canadian Navy" book pages 15+ (VF-870) and 238 (Korea).



**Lt. Joe MacBrien prepares for a mission in an F9F-5 Panther aircraft over North Korea during his combat tour with the USN aboard USS Oriskany in TF77**

The most notable Canadian naval air connection to TF77 is the amazing participation by Lt. Joe MacBrien (LCdr., RCN, ret'd). The MacBrien story

is amply covered in the Banshee book (page 239). Briefly, MacBrien was assigned pilot-exchange duties for Korea in April 1952. He travelled to NAS -Miramar where he joined VF-781 (later renamed VF-121). Here the squadron did

work ups on the F9F-2 Panther. The squadron, along with several other units, joined the carrier USS Oriskany (CVA 34) with new F9F-5 aircraft and after passing combat readiness testing at Pearl Harbour, pressed on to Japan and then joined TF77 in early November 1952. Oriskany left TF77 in late April 1953 and returned to the US.

During deck landings and 66 combat missions in the F9F over North Korea. For an outstanding mission on 3 February 1953, in which he led eight Panthers on a very successful ground strike, near Pukchong, North Korea. Pukchong is located near the east coast approximately 200 miles north of the 38th Parallel. MacBrien was awarded the US DFC for this mission and was the only RCN pilot to be awarded this medal. The DFC citation quoted, "For

extraordinary achievement while flying a jet fighter on a combat mission over North Korea --- his courageous leadership and outstanding demonstration of pilot skills --- were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Navy."

As a part of the Korean War project, a painting of this DFC mission was commissioned (by Carl Mills and sponsored by CNAG with information and details from Joe MacBrien - the artist was Layne Larson) and now hangs at the Shearwater Aviation Museum. I have recently received photos of MacBrien's flying helmet which was donated, by him, many years ago to the Oriskany Museum (a small combined civil war and carrier museum) in up-state New York.



**Pat Ryan (the photo is circa - say 1949. No photo of Pat Ryan in Korea could be found.)**

The 'adventures' of LCdr. Pat Ryan (Capt. (N), RCN, ret'd) in Korea are varied and exciting. I had three great interviews with Pat a few years prior to his departure to the "Delta." In late 1950, Ryan was 'Little F' at Shearwater and was assigned to go to Korea and report on "anything naval air" that would be of interest to the RCN with respect to a carrier deployment. He joined the carrier USS Leyte at NAS North Island and, in the week prior to sailing for Pearl Harbour and joining TF77, checked out in both the F6F-5 Hellcat and the F8F-2 Bearcat.

At Pearl, Leyte failed its combat readiness testing for Korea. While Ryan waited, he was loaned an Avenger and "catted" off to tour the islands and otherwise enjoy the Officer's Club. In the meantime, the carrier USS Philippine

Sea was just arriving from TF77 for aircraft replacements and would return to operations a week later. Ryan 'jumped ship' and was onboard the carrier when it rejoined TF77 in mid-October. He then flew on three combat missions as the ECM operator aboard an AD-4Q aircraft. On the last mission he was dropped off at the USAF base at Kimpo, South Korea and joined a USAF tactical aircraft control group known as the 'Mosquitoes.' Kimpo was located just south of Seoul, South Korea.

The role of this organization was to control fighter-bombers (Air Force and Navy) against front-line enemy targets - both from the air and from the ground. Ryan chose to observe from the ground and during this time, he was actually assigned to a US infantry unit and transformed into an infantryman complete with infantry clothing, helmet, rifle, and Army rations. During his time, his three-man, jeep-equipped, air control unit was shot at many times (with small arms and mortars) and was ambushed once by North Korean troops. At this point in the war, the North Koreans were noted for not taking prisoners. After more than a week of this duty in Korea he returned to Japan where he boarded an Australian destroyer, HMAS Waramanga.

Along with all RCN destroyers which served in Korea, Waramanga was part of the UN Task Force 95 (TF95) which also consisted of light carriers from England, Australia and the USN. Their area of combat was along the east and west coastal waters of North and South Korea. Waramanga rejoined TF95, on the east side of Korea at the end of October, and Ryan was jack stayed to the British carrier HMS Theseus. After observing combat operations from the carrier, the carrier departed for resupply in Hong Kong. At this time, Ryan flew to Japan via Kimpo and departed for home. He arrived back in Shearwater by mid-November 1950 to report his findings. Capt.(N) Ryan passed away in December 2002 in Ottawa, ON.



**Lt. Irv Bowman with a Sea Fury ready to be launched with rockets.**

Unknown to each other at the time, a Canadian-train

ed pilot, Lt. Irv Bowman (LCdr. RN, ret'd), was also on Theseus at the same time as Ryan. Bowman received his RCAF 'wings' just in time not to be required for war duty and was released from the RCAF. At the prompting of several RN classmates he joined the Royal Navy in mid-1945 and continued his military flying career. When the Korean War broke out he was on Theseus (August

1950) as a Sea Fury pilot en route to Korea. The carrier joined TF95 in October and was on and off station until May 1951.

During this era Bowman flew over 100 combat sorties and about 40 were over-ocean combat air patrols (CAP). A number of the squadron pilots were lost due to ground-support combat activities, CAP duties or taken as POWs after being shot down over North Korea.

Bowman's own excitement occurred on 14 May 1951 when his Sea Fury was hit and downed by enemy ground fire, approximately 10 miles inland and south of Hamhung, North Korea, during a low-level ground attack. Hamhung is located near the east coast approximately 150 miles north of the 38th Parallel. After making a "near perfect" wheels-up landing he was protected by the remainder of his flight who strafed the area as a USN HO3S (aka S-51) helicopter, also under attack, hoisted him to safety. He was initially taken to the USS Manchester but soon boarded HMCS Huron, at sea, and then jack stayed back to Theseus a few days later. On Huron, he knew that his rescue would soon make the press and he wanted to tell his mother, in Calgary, that he was alright. He was later invoiced by Huron for \$2.16 for the radio telegram.

During his Korean War activities, Bowman flew 53 combat sorties, 40 combat air patrols (CAP), and 15 other flights for a total of 108 launches but only 107 carrier landings. He accumulated a total combat flight time of over 230 hours. Of the 53 combat sorties there were 22 armed reconnaissance and sweeps, 14 Army ground support, 12 strikes and attacks, two anti-submarine, two bombardment spotting, and one forced landing. Although there were never any enemy aircraft along the 'front lines' in Korea and because there were many support missions by friendly aircraft along the 'front lines', all Commonwealth aircraft were marked with the 'very visible' black and white D-Day markings.

In 1954, Bowman was given a three-year exchange posting to the RCN at Shearwater where he was appointed as the Executive Officer (XO) with VU32. LCdr. Bowman passed away in July 2006 in Victoria, BC.



**Lt. Roger Fink in South Korea ready to fly in a HRS-2 (aka S-55) helicopter with USMC HMR-161 - Aug. 1953**

Lt. Roger Fink (Cdr., RCN, ret'd), after completing two years of Avenger flying from Magnificent, was just



completing helicopter conversion at NAS Pensacola in early 1953 and decided to request a tour of duty in Korea. After conversion to the S-55 at MCAS Cherry Point NC, he was assigned to Marine Base A-17 near Kimpo, South Korea and flew with HMR-161. He arrived just days after the Armistice (27 July 1953) and was kept busy flying newly released POWs (part of operation "Big Switch" - the exchange of POWs) from Panmunjom to hospital ships near Inchon. The Armistice was very tenuous in those days and most missions still included huge supplies of munitions. In addition, all crew members wore side arms. His last flight in Korea was in March 1954 and he accumulated 265 hours of S-55 time while in Korea. In 1957, he was appointed as CO of HS50 at Shearwater.

The only other RCN personnel mentioned in the Korean project are ABs Frank Laker and Robert Moore. Both men were drafted to HMCS Sioux and were being flown over in July 1951. Canadian Pacific Airlines flew over 700 charter flights for the UN as part of Canada's contribution to the Korean War Airlift. They flew from August 1950 to July 1955 between Vancouver and Tokyo via Anchorage and the Aluetians. On the evening of 20/21 July 1951, a CPA DC-4 aircraft with 38 passengers and crew (a Canadian crew of seven, the two RCN sailors, and 29 USAF and US Army officers and men) disappeared along the coast near Juneau, AK. In spite of a massive search, organized by the USAF, no trace was ever found.

*Carl Mills is the author of 'Banshees in the Royal Canadian Navy', and, during his Air Force Reserve tenure, was the project officer on the restoration of RCN Banshee '464' which now resides at the Canada Aviation Museum in Ottawa. He is retired in Toronto, is a 'Life' member of CNAG, and a past member of both 400 and 420 Squadrons.*

*He has researched several Canadian aviation historical projects and was awarded the Minister of Veterans Affairs Commendation for this research.*

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## UNIFICATION

Canadian Naval Aviation and its VX 10 Squadron, initiated and perfected the operation of ASW helicopters from escort ships. Subsequently it developed the ability to track a submerged nuclear submarine from the air. It is difficult to imagine either of these developments emanating from a group of naval ships or from the Royal Canadian Air Force. I have no recollection of VX 10 ever receiving so much as a Bravo Zulu from any Canadian source. Finally the whole of Canadian Naval Aviation was discarded in order to facilitate unification. Amen.

May I be allowed to grieve the loss of a component of our service responsible for a major aspect of our present capability?

*Pop Fotheringham*

## ***My kind of pilot***

Aircraft in the Persian Gulf AOR are required to give the Iranian Air Defense Radar (military) a ten minute 'heads up' if they will be transiting Iranian airspace.

A pilot overheard this conversation on the VHF Guard (emergency) frequency 121.5 MHz while flying from Europe to Dubai .

*The conversation.....*

**Iranian Air Defense Radar:** 'Unknown aircraft you are in Iranian airspace. Identify yourself.'

**U.S. Aircraft:** 'This is a United States aircraft. I am in Iraqi airspace.'

**Iranian Air Defense Radar:** 'You are in Iranian airspace. If you do not depart our airspace we will launch interceptor aircraft!'

**U.S. Aircraft:** 'This is a United States Marine Corps FA-18 fighter. Send 'em up. I'll wait!'

**Iranian Air Defense Radar:** (no response ... )

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## **Here's one for the piston pounders out there:**

In 1980 there was a sign in the Tuktoyaktuk Airport washroom that said:

"Pilots with short stacks and low manifold pressure - taxi a little closer: we aren't all on floats."

*From Les East*

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