

WARRIOR

Summer 2010



...the Centennial continues...



HMS WARRIOR
(150 YEARS OLD THIS YEAR)

“Some fields of human endeavour endure and become routine, while others are cut off before their time but live on in the memory to become legendary. Such was the fate of Canadian Carrier-borne Aviation. In 25 years, aircraft of the royal Canadian Navy reached their peak of efficiency, flying from HMCS BONAVENTURE. Their achievements were equaled by few, if any, Navies of the world.”

Vice Admiral J.C. (Scruffy) O'Brien

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

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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

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Summer	1 July
Winter	15 October

To contact us:

samfoundation@sympatico.ca
kcollacutt@eastlink.ca
1-888-497-7779 (toll free)
(902) 461-0062
(902) 461-1610 (fax) or (902) 720-2037 (fax)

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SAMF website: www.samfoundation.ca

Newsletter/Website Staff:

Editor:	Kay Collacutt
Nsltr Cover Designer:	Jamie Archibald
Photo Coordinator:	Ron Beard
Assistants:	Patti Gemmell Ken Millar
Final Proofreader:	Marie Kieser

FRONT COVER

HMCS MAGNIFICENT

In the Fall of 1953, only ‘A Miracle At Sea’ prevented the mass ditching of 42 aircraft into the North Atlantic.

Photos are provided by several sources:

DND, SAM Archives, 12 Wing Imaging, SAMF website and those sent in with an individual's submission. Front cover photo used with kind permission of ***Vintage Wings***.

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FROM THE CURATOR'S DESK

By Christine Hines

We're into the swing of the high visit season, which came early this year thanks to the Freedom of the City parade on 4 May 2010. Since that very specific date, our visit numbers have been high, uncommonly early in the season for us to be that busy. Nice work!

My report will be short, as we're currently entertaining visitors, reunion delegates, sailors and Naval Airmen from all over the world! It is my pleasure to report that the SAM had a great waterfront display in late June in conjunction with our friends from the Nova Scotia International Air Show and Vintage Wings of Canada, during the International Fleet Review. We met a lot of great people, did some sales, and enjoyed spreading the word of SAM and Shearwater's Naval Air heritage. Additionally, we've been knee-deep in work to prepare the Firefly for its grand debut, hopefully in early September. The old girl is now painted in her coat of Navy colours. We look forward to running the engine shortly, which by the time you read this, will be purring like a very big kitten. The team at SAM would like to thank all of our SAMF, 12 Wing and local community supporters who have stood with us, contributed and provided moral support and enthusiasm for the work on the aircraft. It has truly been a labour of love for the team, and all at SAM are grateful to have all of you in our corner.

Keep your eyes on the sky over Shearwater in September!



Pictured here are student Simon Bennetts and Bud Ayer, a lead technician on the project since the beginning, consulting on the project. Photo courtesy of John Knudsen.

Special thanks goes to SAMF and 12 Wing, who were able

to help us hire three students this summer. Grants available for student subsidies have been scarce in recent years, and without them, our summer activities and ability to keep the museum open is compromised. Of course work on the Firefly in this crucial time is benefitting by their hard work. Returning this summer is Simon Bennetts, and a warm welcome goes out to Chris Rideout and Corey MacMillan, recent graduates from the Nova Scotia Community College Aviation Institute.

From all of us at SAM, enjoy your summer and take in a Canadian Navy Centennial event near you.



Shown here - John Webber and Bud at the controls. Photo by John Knudsen.

(Christine wasn't quite right - it roared like a very big cat. It was wonderful! Bill Farrell would have been overcome with emotion as most of us were. Ed.)



President's Report

The Summer sunshine has arrived, with vengeance! Let's enjoy it while it lasts.

First of all, I want to thank Kay for the outstanding publication she produced in our last "WARRIOR" edition to commemorate the Navy's Centennial Year! Also thanks to all of you who contributed your stories and memories to be published. It was a fitting tribute.

The Dinner/Auction in June was very successful; approximately seven thousand was the amount raised. This was the first time the Dinner/Auction was held in the Shearwater Aviation Museum and everything went well. The food was tasty, the surroundings enjoyable and lots of

auction items. Thanks to Patti for organizing the event and to Christine Hines and her staff for providing the accommodations and set up. All who attended and supported the Foundation event - we thank you!

The Annual Golf Tournament will be held at Hartlen Point on Wed 8th of September. This years Golf Tournament will be organized by the Air Show Committee and supported by Foundation volunteers. For further information, contact Colin Stephenson at colin@nsairshow.ca

The Air Show will be held at Shearwater (our home) on 11th and 12th of September - so come out and support our Naval Heritage. I'll see you there.

The Foundation's Annual General Meeting will be held at the Museum on Friday 10th September at 0900. All members are encouraged to attend.

The Canadian Naval Air Group (CNAG) will be hosting the Annual CNAG Reunion on Thanksgiving weekend 8, 9 and 10th of October at the Marriott Waterfront Hotel and Shearwater. Plans are progressing well and we hope you will join us to reminisce and remember all times together. For more info call me at 1-902-765-3292 or refer to the Centennial edition of WARRIOR or call Kay (toll free) 1-888-497-7779.

Hope to see you soon at some event. Enjoy the rest of the summer and have a great Fall.

Eugene (Buck) Rogers

THE RCN'S FIRST EIGHT NAVAL AIR PILOTS

During the month of March 1917, a total of 571,000 tons of Allied shipping went to the bottom of the sea. Encouraged by this destruction, the first ten days of April saw the Germans torpedo another 205,000 tons of vessels. Shipping insurance rates bounded to heights beyond the reach of anyone. A merchant ship sailing for the war zone was assumed to be as good as sunk, and it was impossible for the allied shipyards to keep up with this rate of destruction. Hence, as soon as the United States declared war in April 1917, it agreed to combat what had become the nearly unrestricted submarine warfare being staged by the German Navy. The majority of submarine attacks had taken place in areas that could have been patrolled by shore-based aircraft. Establishing anti-submarine aviation bases and re-instating a convoy approach to shipping had become crucial objectives.

In March 1918 the British Admiralty informed the Canadian Government through the colonial office that enemy submarines might be expected to operate on the East Coast of Canada in the near future and advised that seaplane stations should be established as a submarine defense. Consequently, the Canadian Government began to make arrangements in April 1918 for a Royal Canadian

Naval Air Service (RCNAS), which would establish two naval air stations in Nova Scotia, to be temporarily operated by the United States Navy (USN) on behalf of the RCNAS. By late August, one station was developed at Indian Point in North Sydney and the other at Baker Point near Dartmouth. Aero planes, kite balloons, and dirigible airships would protect merchant ships and troopships traversing Canadian waters.

The potential use of anti-submarine aircraft was rendered more important with reports in provincial newspapers on August 21st. 1918, that a German submarine had captured the large Port Hawkesbury-based steam fishing trawler Triumph, had armed it, was using it to raid other boats, and had already sunk the Unap Saunders out of Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, as well as other small ships.

The Canadian Minister of Naval Service at the time was The Honourable Charles C. Ballantyne. The Deputy Minister was George J. Desbarat. The Director of the RCN was Admiral Sir Charles E. Kingsmill. The Director of the RCNAS was Lieutenant Colonel John T. Cull, of the Royal Air Force. The RCN and the RCNAS were separate but parallel organizations in this structure.

There exists no document listing the leadership group of the RCNAS in 1918. Therefore, the following is provided. The name of the service, from which the officer was seconded, is recorded. However, all awards and mentions in dispatches have been deliberately omitted. The list is arranged in sequence of appointment from April to November 1918:

Lieutenant Colonel John T. Cull, RAF, Director

Major Norrington, RAF, Supply and Technical Officer.

Flight Commander J. A. Barron, RAF (RNAS), Air Station Site Selection and Development Officer.

Lieutenant Robert S. Johnson, USN, Air Station Site Selection and Development Officer.

Major John Fowler, RAF, Assistant to the Director.

Major Harry Stewart, RAF, Air Staff Officer, Halifax Harbor.

Captain Joseph W. Hobbs, RAF, Air Staff Officer, Sydney Harbor.

Sub. Lieutenant Edward L. Janney, RCNVR, Recruiting Officer.

Lieutenant John H. Cameron, CEF and RNAS, Recruiting Officer.

Captain D. Courtenay, CAMC, Medical Officer.

Captain T.V. Hunter, RAF, Administration Officer.

Lieutenant Commander L.J. McSheehy, RN, Paymaster.

Lieutenant D. Mobsby, RAF, Rigging Officer.

Major Clarence MacLaurin, RAF, Officer in Charge of Recruiting, Training, and Staffing.

As you can observe, no fewer than 7 different military services were represented in the leadership group of the RCNAS in 1918.

The RCNAS was permitted to recruit 92 flight cadets, more or less, and 1000 mechanics so that they might be trained by late spring 1919 to take over duties at the two air stations. The intent was to send 80 RCNAS flight cadets to the naval aviation section of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Tech) for ground school training, and to send 12 to England for combined ground and air training in dirigible airships. Meanwhile 1000 men would be recruited, but not enlisted and trained till later in the fall of 1918.

The RCNAS flight cadet selection committee held the first flight cadet interviews in Toronto at the naval recruiting office at 103 Bay Street, on Thursday and Friday, September 12th and 13th, 1918 for men ages seventeen and a half to twenty six. In his report to the Deputy Minister provided soon after the recruiting committee returned to Ottawa, Lt. Col. Cull indicated some disappointment in this first group. The "cadets selected are of good type, but education low – practically none having any knowledge of mathematics". This, Lt. Col. Cull thought, could become a detriment at Tech.

In the same report, Lt. Col. Cull indicated that, "it is proposed to hold a selection committee in Ottawa on Wednesday and Thursday, the 18th and 19th to clean up the rest of Ontario and Quebec." The selection committee did indeed proceed to Ottawa as planned. Forty-one candidates were examined, and thirty-nine were accepted. By then information had been received that Boston might be out of bounds because of the Spanish influenza. In the fall of 1918, this epidemic was to become a detrimental factor in the organization of the RCNAS and in the deployment of naval air cadets.

The selection committee proceeded to Regina to interview candidates from the western provinces during the second week of October. The final cadet selection site was to have been Halifax so as to encompass the Maritime Provinces and recruit at least 10 more cadet candidates. Arrangements made for October 18th in Halifax had to be cancelled in view of the severity of the Spanish influenza epidemic. It turned out that the committee never did visit Halifax to canvass prospective flight cadets before the armistice was signed.

The first group of 20 cadets bound for the US arrived at Tech on Saturday, September 28th. The second group of 20 arrived on Thursday, October 10th. The third group of 20 arrived on Friday, November 1st. The group of 12 bound

for England had arrived late, on October 23rd, at Roehampton with one cadet succumbing to the influenza as S.S. NORTHLAND approached England. Conversely, ten other cadets awaiting assignment in Canada were not deployed because of the armistice or personal illness.

Ground School Training at Tech

Naval air cadets arriving at Tech were normally assigned to what was called the Receiving Ship for two weeks. The successful Receiving Ship cadets who intended to fly heavier than air machines (HTA's) proceeded to the Main Ship for the eight-week ground school program. Those intending to fly lighter-than-air non-dirigible balloons (LTAB's) also proceeded to the Main Ship for eight weeks but a change in their program was made to allow for greater instruction in ballooning, and meteorology. Both HTA and LTAB cadets undertook a three hundred and twelve hour ground school program.

During the fall of 1918 at Tech, only three Main Ship classes were formed, with Class #34 being the last. Of the 18 Canadian RCNAS flight cadets who reported aboard the Receiving Ship at Tech on Monday, September 30, only 12 were selected when ground school Class #32 was formed on October 14th. It is also recorded that of that 12, only 6 were members of the class when it graduated on December 7th. All RCNAS cadets in classes in Classes #33 and #34 were not able to continue training and were returned to Canada due to the armistice. There was some conjecture that the 6 who did graduate on December 7th, 1918 may have gone on to receive air pilot training at Pensacola or Akron, but extensive research to date has shown that possibility to be unfounded.

Training in England

Since the 12 cadets in England had already undergone the first three weeks of ground school by the time the armistice was signed, they were invited to become balloon pilots instead of undertaking the much longer dirigible airship program. They were also asked to agree that since the RCNAS was being discontinued as of December 31, 1918, they would transfer service and go on the books of the RCN. All RCNAS flight cadets in England did agree to these terms. They would ultimately all be released by the RCN on February 14, 1919, upon return to Canada.

The ground school for balloon pilot at Roehampton, England consisted of lectures in map reading, navigation, field sketching, the properties of gas, meteorology, signaling in both semaphore and Morse codes, and most importantly, the theory of ballooning which essentially consisted of the syllabus prepared by Griffith Brewer, F.Ae.S., special advisor to the balloon branch of the RNAS. As well as ground school, the candidate was required to complete:

- five ordinary ascents in a free balloon, involving three or four under instruction and one or two under supervision.
- one solo ascent of at least one hour's duration.

-at least one night ascent of a minimum of two hours between sunset and sunrise, under supervision.

Each trainee kept a PILOT'S FLYING LOG BOOK showing: Date, hour(s), wind directions and velocities, balloon type and number, passengers if any, time in the air, heights, courses, and remarks. The combined ground school and air training practicum required eight weeks, as long as all support staff and facilities were available at the ready throughout.

To understand the training provided at Roehampton, one must review the type of balloons and airships that needed manning during wartime:

1. Observation balloons: Tethered, spherical, and normally carrying one balloon observer who had to be a qualified balloon pilot.
2. Kite-balloons: Tethered, aerodynamic shape, normally with two balloon observers who had to be qualified balloon pilots. Principally, these kite-balloons were to be tethered to some of the escort ships in the Fleet.
3. Semi-Dirigible balloons: Tethered or free, aerodynamic shape, with either power or steering, but not both.
4. Dirigible airship: Free, aerodynamic, with power and steering.

By late January 1919, eight cadets had qualified to obtain balloon pilot licenses entitling them to fly #1 and #2 types of balloons as confirmed by Peter Elliott of the Royal Air Force Museum in London, England. These cadets are listed below:

Archibald, James William	231
Cook, Francis Daniel A.	237
Foster, George Vance	238
Jackson, Harry James	239
Kissick, William Leslie	232
Secord, Philip Stuart	233
Van Camp, John Lloyd	234
Westman, Albert Ernest	235

The number to the right of the names is the pilot license number issued by the 'Federation Aeronautique Internationale' through the Royal Aero Club of England in late January and early February 1919.

The RCN, late in the spring of 1919, retroactively awarded RCNAS pilot wings to these eight cadets. Only one of them went on to serve in the Second World War. Harry James (Jim) Jackson thus became the only person to proudly

wear wings during World War Two, on the strength of having been a RCN naval air pilot who had joined the RCNAS in September 1918. The following is his short biography:

Harry James Jackson

Harry James Jackson was the eldest son of seven children of Harry D. Jackson and Selina Amelia Hillman. Jim was born on January 28, 1899 in a log house in Purbrook, Draper Township, Ontario. Jim was nicknamed, 'Professor'. He graduated from Hamilton Collegiate at age 16. Being too young for university, he joined the Westinghouse Company where he estimated all production costs to ensure the plant made a profit.

Jim's Dad, Harry had enlisted in Hamilton's 173rd Battalion, Canadian Highlanders and was an armourer Corporal in the Canadian Cyclist Company in Seaford on November 1, 1918 when he wrote his wife that Jim had visited from Roehampton and looked very well and the work he was doing came easy to him. In a November 18th letter, he mentioned that Jim looked fine in his naval uniform and stood as straight as an arrow.

After the war, Jim took university courses and earned a B.A., M.A. and B.Paed. while becoming a very successful teacher. He was then appointed as a master-teacher at the Hamilton Normal School. While there, he wrote several textbooks related to social studies and guidance. He always invited beginners to use vocational instruments in choosing careers based on their strength and aptitudes. During the depression Jim was a leader in the movement that saw Hamilton Board of Education teachers accept half salary for as long as necessary, so as to keep all schools fully operational. Jim was a significant factor in promoting summer school for teachers, especially at Queen's University in Kingston, Toronto University, and McMaster in Hamilton. This development went on to include night courses in satellite communities.

Jim had married on December 21, 1928 to Florence (Florrie) Haslam and they had four children: Margaret Elaine who died in infancy, Dian Florence, Arlene Anne, and James Thomas Ross.

In March 1941, Jim volunteered to serve as a RCAF Flying Officer with the British Commonwealth Air Training Program in Brandon, Deseronto, Trenton, Oshawa and finally in Ottawa until his discharge in 1944 due to diabetes. He was immediately invited to join the Department of Veterans Affairs in Ottawa to develop programs for veterans to complete their academic high school, and to give these veterans skills to re-enter the work force. He used many of the guidelines he had developed in his Ph.D. dissertation on vocational education written in 1939. Jim set up a veteran-learning center in the unused Ladies' College Building in Ottawa, which site is better known today as Carleton University. He worked for Veterans Affairs for eleven years and received

the praise of thousands of veterans for his unselfish and dedicated efforts towards their rehabilitation.

In 1964, Jim was asked to join a group to begin re-writing the Queen's Regulations to reflect required changes as Canada planned to unify its armed forces into one service. He was selected because of his skills as an author of numerous books, and his experiences related to both World Wars.

Jim retired in 1967 but very soon after suffered a series of strokes. Jim passed away at the National Defense Medical Center on June 4, 1971. We shall remember him as one of the RCN's first eight naval air pilots.

NOTES

This article is based on two books: RCNAS FLIGHT CADETS -1918 and NAVAL AIR STATION NORTH SYDNEY. These books are available on loan in the library of various Canadian aviation museums, and may be obtained in a compact disc format by e-mailing Peter E. Lawson, at caperbooks@yahoo.com

The RCNAS wings depicted are courtesy of Warren Carroll of Thornhill, Ontario, author of EAGLES RECALLED, a book available from Schiffer Publishing of Atglen, PA, USA.

Ron Beard's assistance and photographic skills in preparing this article are gratefully acknowledged.

This article prepared by Peter E. Lawson, Ph.D., CD



A Seafire Returns to Shearwater

By C. Barry Alexander

Anyone who visited Halifax harbour side during the International Fleet Review in late June may have been surprised to see a 1948 RCNAS Seafire heritage fighter aircraft sitting on the jetty in front of HMCS Toronto. Well...not quite the real thing, but a ¾ scale version painted in RCN light and dark grey with correct 1948 registration and markings. As a static heritage display, it was well received and "kids" of every size were seen over the weekend getting their pictures taken in, on, or in front of the heritage plane, including sailors from all parts of the world.

Missed your chance? For those who did not see it, the plane is convertible to a parade float, and will be in several major Nova Scotia parades this summer, several community events as a static heritage display, and at the Nova Scotia International Air Show (NSIAS) on September 11 and 12. The model will be on display next to the Shearwater Aviation Museum (SAM) promotional tent. Bring your "big kids" and camera's!

Yes, a few of you will remember the aircraft, which we now call the "model", was originally built as a Spitfire theatrical prop for the 1990 Nova Scotia International Tattoo. Mr. A. Hakkert, assisted by PO L.M. Keizer and Mr. D. Barrett, performed the original fabrication at HMC Dockyard. For a time the model had artefact status at SAM, and was hung in a display hangar. The model was badly damaged at least twice during transport and use, but was refurbished and used in the 1996 Nova Scotia International Tattoo.

For over 13 years, the model was on display at the SAM as a Seafire. It garnered significant Naval Air heritage appreciation as part of the collection. In 2009, directions were received to remove it from the Museum's display, and to have it repainted for the Tattoo as a Spitfire. It was not brought back to the Museum due to the Museum's inability to physically get it back into its "aerial display" position, which was now blocked by the T-Bird display. For over a year, the model has been in storage at 12 Wing Shearwater.

How did this restoration project get started?

In early February, Christine Hines, Curator at SAM, approached me to develop and write a new five-year Strategic Business Report for the Museum. A significant component of any Museum strategic planning is promotion, business cash flows and fundraising. At the same time, I entered discussions with Colin Stephenson, Executive Director of the NSIAS, on how I might volunteer my business development and promotional skill sets to assist with the airshow. As the discussions progressed, both Colin and Christine viewed a heritage parade float/mobile heritage static display as an excellent way to market and promote both the Museum and the Airshow.

After acquiring many ideas, we initially settled on a parade float with four or five scale models. From those

concepts, I developed a parade float design with a central 1/3 scale LAV III APC army assault vehicle, with "top cover" to be flown by models of a new Sikorsky Cyclone, a Snowbird Tudor, a CF-18 Hornet, and a Robert Hampton Grey Corsair. Due to a lack of "professional modeller" volunteer hours to fit the short timeline to build new models for the parade float, the 1990 Spitfire "model" was assessed, redesigned, and restored for service.

It sounds simple, but the direct restoration work required over 750 volunteer hours compressed into 23 working days. The 2010 Seafire Restoration Group met the June 25, 2010 deadline for providing a RCN Naval Air heritage static display for the Canadian Navy's International Fleet Review.

The "model" was assessed in early May after several trips to 4 Hangar and then 3 Hangar, 12 Wing Shearwater. Weights, and dimensions were taken of the model in order to design a trailer float configuration. Subsequently, a custom 18-foot trailer was purchased by NSIAC to suit the large size of the model.

On June 1, hangar space was acquired at the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) to begin the restoration. The NSCC Aviation Institution provided adequate space, miscellaneous material, and volunteer personnel to completely disassemble the Seafire. The following work was completed:

- All fuselage, wing and control surface damage was repaired
- A new static propeller hub assembly was designed and installed
- The canopy Plexiglas/Lexan was refurbished and polished
- Shorter 20mm MkV cannons were designed to scale and fabricated
- All controls were disassembled, repaired and reinstalled
- External surfaces were sanded, primed and painted
- Decals and registration numbers were designed, purchased, and installed
- The transportation/parade float trailer was customized to suit the size and landing gear configuration of the refurbished Seafire model.

Many thanks are extended to the members of the 2010 Seafire Restoration Group:

NSCC Restoration Team:

Daryl Lambert, Painting Lead & Preparation Advisor

Robert DuHart, Painting & Assembly Restoration

Darren Fraser, Assembly Restoration & Repairs

Barry Alexander, Restoration Manager & Design Lead

Noted preparation support from: Mike Henry, Adam Dube, and Dan Sousie

Seafire Restoration Support Group:

Christine Hines	Curator, SAM
Colin Stephenson	Executive Director, NSIAS
Peter Bing	Academic Chair, NSCC Aviation Institute
John Benson	Director, NSIAS – Registration & Marking Decals
Christine Dunphy	SAM Library – Shearwater SeaFire Research

12 Wing Shearwater Coordination:

MWO Kevin Porter	SAM Liaison for the Seafire Project
WO Brian Hann	3 Hgr Coord.

Supermarine Seafire

Type of Aircraft:

Single seat, carrier based fighter
Derived from the famous British Supermarine Spitfire
Began production in 1944 by the Cunliffe-Owen and Westland aircraft companies Canadian production: 35

History with the Royal Canadian Navy:

In early 1945, two British Royal Navy Squadrons (803 and 883) were formed at Arbroath, Scotland by transferring ex-RCAF pilots to the British Fleet Air Arm.

803 Royal Navy Seafire Squadron was re-commissioned on 15 June 1945.

883 Royal Navy Seafire Squadron was re-commissioned on 18 September 1945.

883 Squadron briefly flew Seafires in Scotland, but was disbanded in February 1946

HMCS Warrior, the RCN's first aircraft carrier, was commissioned on 14 March 1946.

803 Squadron became an RCN Squadron on 14 March 1946.

On March 1946, HMCS Warrior, with 803 Squadron Seafires aboard, sailed for Halifax.

The 803 Squadron Seafires were flown from HMCS Warrior and the Royal Canadian Naval Air Section: Lodger Unit of RCAF Station Dartmouth, from 14 March 1946 until August 1947. Primary operational duty was RCN fleet air defence.

883 Squadron was reactivated in May 1947 and acquired the Seafires from 803 Squadron as 803 Squadron converted to the Sea Fury fighter aircraft. 803 Squadron had the honour of conducting the last Seafire operations off HMCS Warrior, which was returned to the Royal Navy in 1947.

RCAF Station Dartmouth was acquired by the RCN on 1 December 1948. The Base was renamed HMCS Shearwater. Operational Flying Training School No. 1 Training Air Group conducted Seafire pilot training from February 1948 to Spring 1949.

The last Seafire was struck off strength from the RCN in April 1954.

Specifications:

<u>Wingspan:</u>	11.23 m (36'-10")	
<u>Length:</u>	9.12 m	(29'-11")
<u>Height:</u>	3.02 m	(9'-11")
<u>Max. Speed:</u>	594 kph	369 mph
<u>Service Ceiling:</u>	11,125 m	36,500 feet
<u>Range:</u>	1024 m	640 mi
<u>Max. Weight:</u>	2911 Kg	6417 lb
<u>Empty Weight:</u>	2267 Kg	4998 lb
<u>Power Plant:</u>	One 1380 kW (1850 hp) Rolls Royce Griffon VI piston engine	
<u>Armament:</u>	Two 20 mm cannons; four 7.7mm (0.303 in) machine guns	

About the Model:

Constructed as a Theatrical Prop for the Nova Scotia International Tattoo in 1990 by HMC Dockyard; The Seafire model served as an artefact at the SAM for many years. The SAM and the Nova Scotia International Air Show will use the model as a marketing tool in the years to come, serving as a parade float and special events static heritage display for all to enjoy.

ROYAL NAVAL AIR SECTION DARTMOUTH

Ernest Cable, SAM Historian

Founded in 1918, 12 Wing Shearwater has one of the most varied and colourful histories of any air station in Canada. It has served seven different military organizations; one of which was the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF). RCAF Station Dartmouth was Canada's largest air station on the East Coast during the Second World War. It was the home base for nine anti-submarine/convoy escort squadrons that played prominently in the Battle of the Atlantic as well as home to seven fighter squadrons that defended Halifax's strategic harbour. RCAF Station Dartmouth also provided air field facilities for Royal Naval Air Section (RNAS) Dartmouth, a

lodger unit administered by the British Admiralty that serviced and repaired aircraft embarked on Royal Navy (RN) warships and assembled aircraft destined for British merchant vessels. RNAS Dartmouth has a confusing lineage of names because the Royal Navy followed a tradition of double naming its air stations and air sections by commissioning them with second names that did not bear any relation to their geographic names. The identity of RNAS Dartmouth was further confused by the fact that it was known by four different commissioned names during its five year existence.

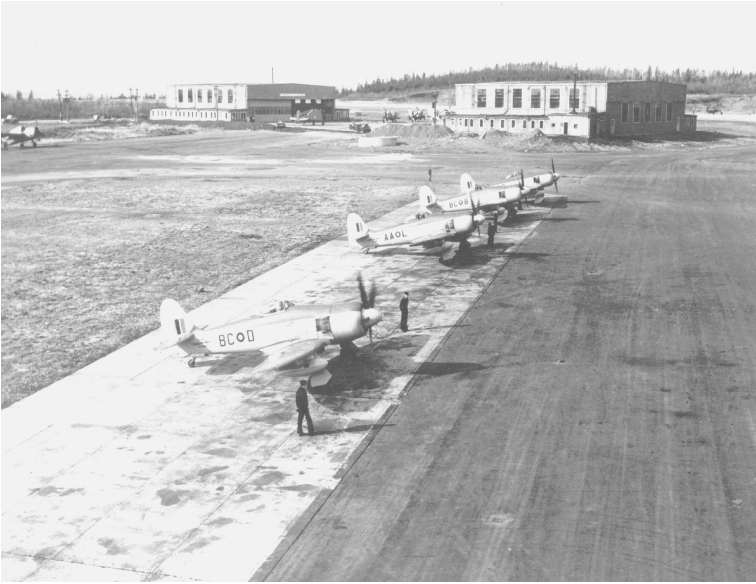
The Beginning

With war on the horizon in 1939, the British Admiralty planned to establish several Strategic Reserve Pools in North America to provide a rapid expansion capability for the RN. However, it wasn't until 14 September 1940 that the Admiralty, with the consent of the Canadian government, established a Royal Naval Air Section as a lodger unit at RCAF Station Dartmouth. The RN required a shore base to service Swordfish and Walrus aircraft belonging to ships of the Third Battle Squadron and other British warships visiting Halifax. Organizationally, RNAS Dartmouth was part of the Strategic Reserve Pool administered by Rear Admiral 3rd Battle Squadron who flew his flag in a converted yacht, *HMS Seaborn*, berthed in Halifax harbour. A month later, on 1 October, the Rear Admiral hauled down his Flag and left RNAS Dartmouth in the hands of Commander-in-Chief Bermuda. This tenuous command relationship was remedied later in 1941 when RNAS Dartmouth was commissioned as *HMS Saker II*, (*HMS Saker I* being the RN Strategic Reserve Pool in New York). Several months later *HMS Canada* was established to administer the Strategic Reserve Pool in Halifax and in September 1942 *HMS Saker II* was decommissioned and became a tender (sub-unit) of *HMS Canada*. Fifteen months later, in December 1943, RNAS Dartmouth was commissioned as *HMS Seaborn*, an independent unit similar to *HMS Saker II* and no longer a sub-unit of a larger organization. During its five year existence the air section was a sub-unit of two commissioned organizations (*HMS Seaborn* of the 3rd Battle Squadron and *HMS Canada*) and was twice commissioned in its own right (*HMS Saker II* and *HMS Seaborn*); therefore, to avoid confusion only the geographic name, RNAS Dartmouth, will be used throughout this article.

RNAS Dartmouth was an independent establishment which was self sufficient as far as aircraft repair facilities were concerned. By arrangement between the Admiralty and the Canadian government, contracts were let for construction of the required buildings with the RCAF supervising the contracts on behalf of the Admiralty. The main RNAS buildings consisted of three hangars, a workshop building, an engine test bed and barracks and messes for the men, and Chiefs and Petty Officers and a wardroom for the officers. The furniture and mess equipment were supplied by the RCAF and all technical

equipment by the Admiralty. The RCAF controlled all flying from their control tower and shared other smaller sections common to their needs such as safety equipment.

The RNAS personnel referred to their hangars as Nos. 1, 2 and 3, but on the RCAF site plan they are identified as 108, 109 and 110 hangars. No 108 hangar was located on the site of the former "D" hangar; and as of 2008, the site of the new 423 Squadron hangar. No. 110 hangar was situated south of 108, while 109 hangar was located east of 108 hangar centrally situated at the north end of the inner ramp. As of 2008, the new 12 AMS hangar is built on the site of the former 109 hangar.



108 and 109 Hangars in 1950's

The RNAS Officers' mess and quarters were located on the site of the current Warrior Block; the NCOs' quarters were located on the east side of Puncher Ave. at the corner of Boundary Road while the NCOs' mess was across the street on the west side of Puncher Ave. The Victualing Stores was adjacent to the mess. The RNAS Administration Building was located on the south side of Boundary Road between Puncher and Warrior Avenues.

In August 1940, LCdr. Dennis Foley, a Canadian engineer/pilot serving in the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm was appointed to the staff of Rear Admiral 3rd Battle Squadron but upon arrival was immediately assigned to be the first Officer-in-Charge of RNAS Dartmouth. LCdr. Foley arrived at the Naval Air Section site with a staff of three, a Royal Air Force (RAF) Sergeant fitter (aero-engine mechanic), a RAF Leading Aircraftman rigger (airframe mechanic) and a naval storesman. They found that most of the buildings had been started but none was near completion. The area where the buildings were being built was remote from the rest of the RCAF station with no roads into the new construction area. With the exception of the taxiways

which had been gravelled the site was a quagmire. For the first few months the RCAF provided temporary quarters and office space at the marine site (lower base on the shore of Eastern Passage) and eventually Foley's small staff moved into their workshop, the first building to be completed.

In May 1941, the number of personnel started to increase and built up to a basic complement of approximately 50 personnel; about half were RAF aircraft trades (the RN was still short of Fleet Air Arm personnel) with the other half naval trades: regulators, writers and storesmen. Eventually, as many as 200 to 300 people could be seen at RNAS Dartmouth. These additional personnel were transients awaiting rail transportation inland for training, or awaiting sea transportation back to England following training. These transients were billeted in a long two-story building at the foot of Morris Street in Halifax. The transients were kept busy by building roads around the RNAS site and landscaping areas around their buildings; they won many awards for their gardens (mostly gladiolas) which attracted many admirers.

The transient ratings wore the traditional British naval uniform with bell-bottom trousers and the regulation black sailors' cap. Fleet Air Arm (FAA) trainees could be identified by the white band on their caps in place of the usual cap tally and the letters "FAA" were worn on the left sleeve just above the cuff. Following successful training their wings were worn just above the "FAA" badge. The officers wore the letter "A" (for Air Branch) in the executive curl of their gold rank braid both on their sleeves and shoulder epaulets. The officers after graduation wore their wings on their left sleeve just above the rank braid.

The first crates of disassembled Swordfish aircraft arrived by sea in June 1941; not all of the shipment arrived as some of the convoy ships had been sunk by U-boats en route from England. Since much of the aircraft maintenance equipment had not yet arrived there were problems handling the oversized heavy crates and assembling the aircraft. However, with much improvising the first Swordfish, V4312, was test flown on 4 August 1941. Eventually, a Swordfish could be uncreated and assembled in half a day; however, rigging the controls took considerably longer because of the wing-fold and spreading mechanisms. By early 1942, operations were in full swing and 25 Swordfish could be assembled in 30 days.

CAM Ships

Not only were ships in convoy being sunk by U-boats but the convoys were also being attacked by Luftwaffe long-range bombers from air bases in Nazi occupied Europe. The bomber attacks occurred well out to sea and once beyond the range of land-based fighters the convoys were left to their own primitive anti-aircraft

defences to fend off the attacking bombers. The few aircraft carriers available had higher priority tasking and the small escort aircraft carriers under construction would not be ready for convoy escort duties for several years. In the interim, a number of merchant ships were converted into Catapult Aircraft Merchant (CAM) ships by having an aircraft catapult mounted on their foredecks. Specially modified RAF Hurricane fighters, colloquially called "Hurricats", were mounted on the catapults ready to be launched to defend the convoy. Several CAM ships sailed with each convoy; when their radars detected Luftwaffe bombers approaching the Hurricats were launched to intercept the attackers under the guidance of naval Fighter Direction Officers. At the end of the sortie the Hurricat was usually beyond the range of land and the RAF pilot bailed out into the sea in the hope of being picked up by a ship in the convoy. (Author's note: ditching the Hurricat was not advised as the large air scoop on the belly caused the aircraft to flip over.)

RNAS Dartmouth was initially responsible for servicing the Hurricats that hadn't been launched after CAM ships anchored in Halifax harbour. The first CAM ship arrived in Halifax in late 1941 and while moored in Bedford Basin RNAS personnel removed the Hurricat from its catapult using the dockyard floating crane and lightered it to RNAS Dartmouth for servicing. The rocket-propelled bogey which launched the aircraft along the length of the catapult was found to be very badly corroded and was taken to the dockyard for cleaning. After servicing, the Hurricat was returned to its CAM ship for the return voyage to England. The RNAS handled the first four or five CAM ship aircraft after which RCAF Dartmouth took over the responsibilities for the Hurricats. The RCAF was more familiar with the Hurricats because of their experience servicing and repairing their Dartmouth based Hurricanes used to defend the air approaches to Halifax's strategic harbour. The RNAS personnel trained the RCAF technicians on unloading and mounting the Hurricats back on their catapults and loaned one of their hangars to the RCAF for the Hurricat maintenance.

Submarine Patrols

During the darkest days of the Battle of the Atlantic every available asset had to be thrown into the battle against the U-boats. In January 1942, the RCAF requested RNAS Dartmouth to help with their convoy patrols. Although the RNAS was manned only to test-fly repaired or newly assembled aircraft, its three pilots and one observer flew Swordfish and Walrus aircraft on patrols from February to April 1942. In March, one of the pilots reported attacking a U-boat 100 miles (166 km) south of Lunenburg NS and witnessing a large oil slick. Unfortunately, the observer did not have a camera and without photographic evidence the crew was reported to have been credited only with a "probably damaged" U-boat. (Author's note: the only confirmed U-boat attack in this area resulted in the sinking of U-754 on 31 July 1942

by an RCAF Hudson from 113 Sqn. based in Yarmouth NS.)

The Catalina and Canso aircraft based at RCAF Station Dartmouth had a very long range and would have been miss-employed flying the shorter range anti-submarine patrols off the coast of Nova Scotia. To help relieve the longer range aircraft of the off-shore anti-submarine and convoy escort patrols the RCAF inquired if an amphibious Walrus aircraft could be operated from Sable Island. After investigating, RNAS Dartmouth responded that it could fly the patrols using the small inland lake (Lake Wallace) in the middle of Sable Island for landings and take-offs. The necessary supplies were assembled and a supply ship accompanied by *HMCS Oakville* transported the ground party to the island. Because of the shallow water it was necessary to anchor about a half mile off shore and the supplies, including a small tractor, were transported to the beach by whaler. The surf overturned both whalers near the beach, but nobody was injured and all the equipment was retrieved. Intelligence analysts believed that once the U-boats discovered that an aircraft was operating from Sable Island a sabotage party could be put ashore to destroy the aircraft. Consequently, Bren guns and Snowflake rocket launchers were mounted on the sand dunes overlooking both beaches and each member of the shore party was armed with a Tommy gun. Sentries were posted each night, but no intruders were detected. The shore party lived in tents for a short time until huts were built; they received weekly air drops of food and mail. The Walrus flew a dawn and dusk patrol each day and was on-call by radio from Halifax. The aircraft operated from Sable Island until mid-August 1942 when the Walrus was forced to land at sea. A search was immediately started, but the weather was bad for the next two days and searching aircraft found nothing. Several days later the Walrus was detected by the radar on a RCN destroyer and the crew was taken aboard. The destroyer attempted to tow the aircraft, but unfortunately while under tow it nosed over and was lost.

RCAF Station Dartmouth did not have a radio Direction Finding (DF) capability to assist patrolling aircraft at sea to return to base in bad weather. Fortunately, the Admiralty had equipped RNAS Dartmouth with a Marconi DF set which was set up and used to monitor RCAF aircraft on anti-submarine and convoy escort patrols on a 24 hour basis. A procedure was established that when a patrolling aircraft was returning to home base, the aircraft contacted the DF station by radio and received a DF bearing to Dartmouth. After receiving a number of valid practice bearings in good weather from as far as 300 miles (500 km) out to sea the crews gained confidence in the DF equipment and personnel. The DF station proved invaluable by guiding numerous aircraft and crews to the safety of home base in atrocious Atlantic weather.

MAC Ships

During the first three years of the Battle of the Atlantic German U-boats were sinking ships in convoys supplying England at an alarming rate; cargo ships were being sunk almost as fast as the shipyards could build them. In the early years in the battle against the U-boats land-based aircraft lacked the range to provide coverage in the mid-Atlantic and the small escort aircraft carriers would not be available until 1944. The Merchant Aircraft Carrier (MAC) offered the interim solution to provide convoy air patrols to keep the U-boats at bay. The MAC ship fleet consisted of 19 grain carriers and tankers which were converted into aircraft carriers by replacing their superstructures with a small island and a flight deck that ran the full length of the hull. The purpose of the MAC ships was to continue to carry their cargoes of grain and petroleum as well as to carry Swordfish aircraft to protect the convoys from the U-boats. Merchant Aircraft Carriers started accompanying convoys across the North Atlantic in 1943. As the MAC's approached Halifax the Swordfish flew off and landed at RCAF Station Dartmouth but were serviced and repaired by RNAS Dartmouth. Because of the MAC's small flight decks and the cruel North Atlantic weather Swordfish casualties were high. Therefore, the RNAS's prime activity for the remainder of the war was to service and repair Swordfish and to assemble replacement aircraft for the Swordfish lost or heavily damaged en route to Halifax. Swordfish were also assembled for the RN's No. 1 Telegraphist Air Gunner School at RCAF Station Yarmouth NS. By the end of the war over 200 Swordfish were shipped in crates from England, assembled and test flown at RNAS Dartmouth.

After the war ended, RNAS Dartmouth or *HMS Seaborn* as it was then known in naval circles was decommissioned on 26 January 1946. The Admiralty donated the 22 Swordfish and three Walrus aircraft still on strength at RNAS Dartmouth to the Royal Canadian Navy. These aircraft helped to form the nucleus of the embryonic Royal Canadian Naval Arm which had just been approved by the Canadian Cabinet on 19 December 1945 and became part of the next chapter in Shearwater's colourful history.

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 The Royal Navy at Dartmouth during WW II, Part II; SAM extracts from Foley paper
 HMS Saker; undated notes by unidentified British author

THE RESERVE AIR GROUP

*From 'A History of Canadian Naval Aviation'
 by J.D.F. Kealy & E.C. Russell*

The Reserve Air Group consisting of five squadrons, VC920, VC 921, VC922, VC923 and VC924, manned by 50 Officers, 60 Men and 10 Wrens, began two weeks of

flying training at Shearwater in August 1957. This was a very important event for Naval Aviation as it undoubtedly increased the operational efficiency of the Reservists who would be of vital importance to the Force in time of war. As it was the first time that the units had been brought together, it is a good point at which to digress, briefly, and review the history of their formation and activities.

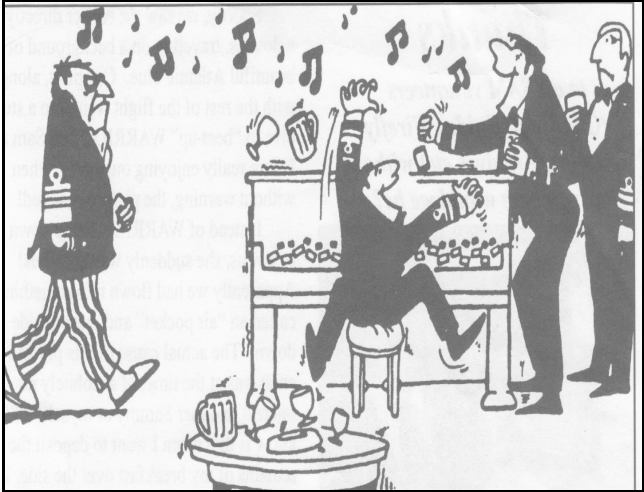
After the Naval Board's decision of August 1946, approving in principle the training at Reserve Divisions of 3000 Officers and Men in flying and ground crew duties, the future looked bright for an RCN (R) Air Arm. The reduction in naval estimates for 1947-48 forced the abandonment of these ambitious plans, but in 1949 the recruiting of 100 men each at York and Star for air maintenance duty was permitted. It was not until the end of 1952 that the "green" light was given to the raising of air squadrons, the first being VC920, which was formed as a tender to York in May 1953. There was an enthusiastic response to the call for volunteers from former flyers, and in October of the same year, four Harvards were flown from their headquarters at Downsview Airport to the East Coast for the first regular training course. The next important date for VC920, now equipped with Avengers as well as Harvards, was August 1955, when its nine pilots qualified in deck-landing aboard the *Magnificent*. The following summer the squadron had its first member win his wings as a result of training received with the unit. With an aircraft establishment of three Expeditors in the autumn of 1962, VC920 was still going strong in the unspectacular but essential role of training Air Reservists.



The second reserve squadron, VC921, was formed as tender by HMCS Catarauqui, the Naval Division at Kingston, Ontario, on 30 Sep 53. Operating Harvards and an Expeditor, this unit soon began to log many hours of flying. It was the first winner (1954-1955) of the Naval Reserve Safe Flying Award, having clocked 1092 accident-free flying hours during the year. VC921 was eventually paid off on 3 Mar 59, as the result of a decision to reduce the aviation complement of the RCN (R).

The prospects for reserve naval aviation were very good when VC922 was formed as tender to HMCS Malahat at Victoria, BC on 1 Dec 53; the previous month approval had

been given to the establishing of three additional squadrons (including VC922), bringing the total up to five with the possibility of ten more being formed later when mobilization requirements had been reviewed. VC922 was the successor to a Cadet Flying Unit (CFU 1), comprising two Harvards, which had been flown from Shearwater to Patricia Bay Airport near Sidney, BC in the summer of 1952 to provide air familiarization for cadets from the Canadian Services College, royal Roads, and from Western University Naval Training Divisions. The former Commanding Officer of CFU 1 assumed command of VC922 and a busy programme of qualifying and re-qualifying pilots began. By 1957, Avengers of the local regular squadron VU33, were being used on weekends by the RCN (R) flyers, who also, during that year logged approximately 1356 hours in their own aircraft, two Harvards and an Expeditor. VC922 has been the proud winner of the Naval Reserve Flying Trophy on three occasions.



**KISS ME ONCE, THEN KISS ME TWICE,
THEN KISS ME ONCE AGAIN**

Kiss me once, then kiss me twice
Then kiss me once again
It's been a long, long time
Haven't felt like this, my dear
Since I can't remember when
It's been a long, long time

You'll never know how many dreams
I've dreamed about you
Or just how empty they all seemed without you
So kiss me once, then kiss me twice
Then kiss me once again
It's been a long, long time

After its formation on 1 May 54, VC923, which made its headquarters at the Ancienne Lorette Airport, Quebec, as tender to HMCS Montcalm, received an allocation of Harvards. The first four officers to be trained by this squadron were presented with their wings in 1955. The last of the reserve squadrons to be formed was VC924. Established on 1 Jun 54, it was quartered in part of the Calgary Flying Club's hangar and had HMCS Tecumseh as its administrative authority. Flying training was carried out in Harvards and with these machines the squadron won the Naval Reserve Flying Award for 1955. Both VC923 and VC924 became redundant under the re-organization arrangements for reserve aviation and were paid off on 3 and 4 Mar 59 respectively.

With the departure of the Reserve Air Group at the end of August 1957, Shearwater reverted to its usual routine. A total of 1384 sorties had been flown during the month, unfortunately marred by a collision between a banshee from VF870, piloted by a USN Officer, and an Avenger from VC921. One plane was just taking off as the other came into land; both airmen were killed instantly and the aircraft demolished.

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A NEAR MISS - ALMOST A ROYAL VISIT

From Stu Soward

The background for this true, virtually unknown incident took place, as near as I can remember, in the Spring of 1962, when her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, Prince Phillip and her accompanying entourage were making an official visit to Vancouver. Accordingly, the Premier of BC, Provincial Cabinet, the Lieutenant Governor, senior military officers and anybody who was anybody from Victoria were all attending the Royal functions in Vancouver. In effect, there was virtually nobody in Victoria immediately available at the senior decision-making level when it comes to a possible change affecting the Royal program. They were all in Vancouver! On completion of the Royal Visit with all the functions over, the official party would then emplane in the RAF Flight aircraft for the long trip to Australia.

I was CO of VU 33 at the time, and in those days, at Patricia Bay Airport, the firefighting and rescue services were provided by HMC Dockyard personnel. Our Naval Air Squadron was the only active military organization based at the airfield. The control Tower was routinely manned by Transport Canada and the Airport Manager was primarily a housekeeper. I think it was about 7PM when at home I received a strange phone call from the squadron Duty Petty Officer. He, in turn had just been contacted by phone from the duty watchkeeper at MARPAC Operations, Dockyard. The message was simple but unbelievable! The solution indescribable! This is what transpired.

The Royal Flight aircraft en route to Australia from Vancouver was encountering unexpectedly strong headwinds and bad weather. In the next 30 minutes the crew were faced with the unexpected return to the nearest West Coast airport .Guess where? Victoria's Patricia Bay Airport of course. Since the squadron was the only active military unit at the airport, I was delegated to receive the Royal Party and make all the necessary arrangements for accommodation them. Yeah right! I did not even know if there was a mobile passenger ramp to get them off the aircraft If there was no ramp how would they disembark. I did not even know the type of aircraft involved. How many are there aboard the aircraft? What about security? Most of all, being the only facility available, any arrangements I could make could only at the best be minimal. I just prayed that this could not be happening to me. As a further complication, the message to me came through the operational aviation flying control system via /MARPAC operations As a result therefore, the Royal protocol/social network in Vancouver would probably not even be informed of the fact that a major change in the Royal schedule was being contemplated by the flight crew.

Fortunately, the RCMP Sidney detachment was commanded by my good friend Corporal Vern Williams who thought he could arrange an escort in time. To where Victoria? All the senior government officials, Lt. Governors

Staff and protocol officers were in Vancouver. There was no way anybody in authority could even make it over in the limited time frame to Victoria to provide a level of assistance. For starters, about all I could do was to organize the duty bar steward, open the bar and ensure my 1959 black Chrysler was given a quick interior clean out by the Duty Watch and hope it would do as the official Royal limousine (no Rolls or Bentley). I would drive and the RCMP would be our escort to wherever we would be going. All this was taking place during the 30 minute notice that the flight was still subject to divert to Patricia Bay. Various thoughts were going through my mind. Maybe the Royal Suite at the Empress was available. Much more regal than a local motel for sure! Still, no further word had been received so I had our small Duty Watch standing by in their best rig, while trying to locate a mobile ramp to disembark the Royal Party. Our school bus/transport was out of the question, anyway there was no driver available.

Of course during this somewhat hectic thirty minute period there wasn't a peep out of MARPAC Operations. Like how are things going out there? I finally decided that this is about as good as its going to get, so thought I would just sit back and seriously contemplate having a drink.(I am sure Phillip would have agreed!) And let's just see how this little drama was going to unfold. One scenario that was bizarre but entirely possible, would be me saying, "Welcome to VU33 Your Majesty. Please be careful climbing down the rescue ladder being held by the Crash crew!"

Thank God, after what seemed forever, a message must have come through from Air Traffic Control via Vancouver ATC and filtered down to me. The pilot of Royal Flight had reconsidered the threat of the bad weather on his planned flight and had decided to continue on to his ultimate destination - AUSTRALIA.

To the best of my recollection, other than the previously described phone calls, there never was any written reference to this particular incident. Perhaps all that exists is a notation made in the MARPAC Operations log to verify that this unusual event ever took place. Please believe me it was **NOT** April 1.

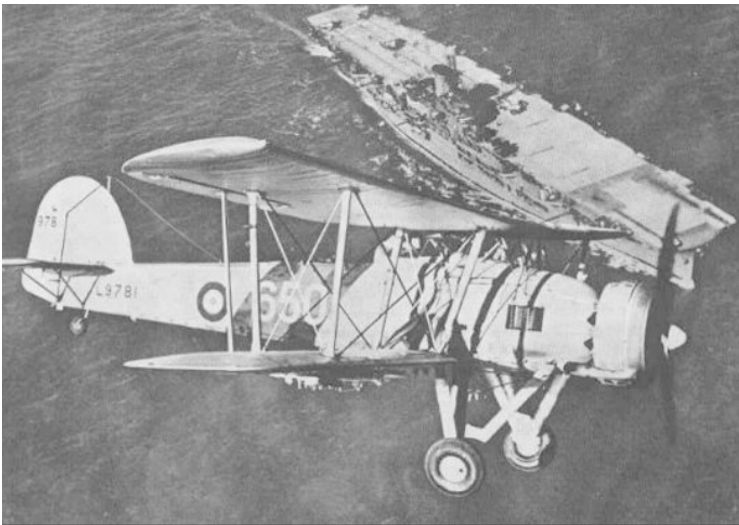
<p>IF YOU ARE NOT A MEMBER OF SAMF - BECOME ONE</p>
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THE ENDURING “BISMARK” LEGEND

My training with the Fleet Air Arm began soon enough after the end of WW11 that many, if not most Instructors and others I met on Air Stations or training establishments in the U.K. had flown off a carrier or two at some point in a war theatre somewhere. One story, repeated often enough in enough places (usually at the Bar admittedly) and which I've never been able to verify, nevertheless rings true to any one who's had the good fortune to fly with some characteristic R.N. types we've all come to know. So here's the story; make up your own mind.

Sinking the German battleship Bismark in the early, difficult, dangerous, days of WW11 was one of the most important victories of the war for the beleaguered Brits. It gave them heart in a dark time. In 1941 on May 23rd Bismark had sunk the pride of Britain's fleet, HMS Hood; almost daily merchantmen carrying much needed supplies were being sunk with impunity and in large numbers by German surface raiders and, almost one year before: Dunkirk. The mood was gloomy.

Admiral Tovey R.N. in King George V, the cruiser HMS Rodney joined by Repulse, Sheffield, Renown and several destroyers set out to find and deal with Bismark. Two carriers were involved; HMS Ark Royal and the newly commissioned Victorious. Both carried Swordfish even then known as “Stringbags”. Most if not all the Stringbag crews aboard Victorious had not yet flown on (or off) at sea. That notwithstanding, it was Swordfish from Victorious that drew first blood against Bismark. Finally



Stringbag over Ark Royal

though, it was the Stringbags from Ark Royal that launched the “fish” that brought Bismark to bay on May 26th 1941. The legend centres on the final section of three Swordfish in the attack on Bismark. It illustrates how courage, daring and commitment can make the difference when equipment and weapons are inadequate or defective.

The Swordfish carried, as did all Stringbags, torpedoes that though improved later in the war, were notoriously unreliable. It was widely known that unless the torpedo was dropped on to a relatively flat water surface, the “fish” would porpoise and quickly dive to ocean floor. Legend has it that in one aircraft of the final flight of three, the crew took matters into their own hands to deal with the problem. The Observer, his ankles held by the Torpedo Air Gunner was (by his own choice) dangled over the side of the fuselage during the attack run.

The Stringbag was flying about one hundred and fifty feet or so over the wave tops in the face of constant but largely ineffective fire from Bismark's guns. When within range, the Observer, seeing a reasonably flat bit of ocean, banged his fists on the fuselage signaling the pilot to drop the “Kipper” as torpedoes were called.

That particular ‘fish’ is thought to be the one that struck Bismark's rudder and steering gear jamming them, forcing her to reduce speed and sail erratically allowing Tovey to close and finish her off.

That's the “Bismark Legend”. Make up your own mind. I'm convinced.

Jake McLaughlin

REMEMBER JULIE GIBSON?



**Ship's Decanter Commemorates 100th
Anniversary of the Royal Canadian Navy**
*Porcelain Decanter Showcases Canada's Rich Naval
History*

Tortola, British Virgin Islands (July 23, 2010) –

PUSSER'S WEST INDIES has unveiled a one-liter porcelain ship's decanter commemorating the Royal Canadian Navy's 100th Anniversary. Less than 6,000 of these exceptionally beautiful decanters have been commissioned. The Canadian Naval Trust, which maintains HMCS SACKVILLE, is to receive \$5 per decanter, or approximately \$30,000.

Charles Tobias, the founder of Pusser's and the one responsible for the revival of Pusser's Rum, the navy's original tot, stated, "It took almost two years to design and produce this decanter. Although I've lived in the British Virgin Islands for the past 30 years, I'm proud to say that I'm a Canadian by birth, and an older one at that. Although I was only seven in 1940, I can still readily recall those early, grim days of World War II, and the major role that Canada and the RCN and the Merchant Navy played in the winning of the critical Battle of the North Atlantic on which the outcome of the war in Europe so much depended. And win it the RCN did! Remembering all these events as I do, we designed this decanter - to try to capture some of that spirit. It's a tribute to all those who stood tall, and had the guts to go out in that big, cold, North Atlantic and the other oceans of the world, day after day, month after month, voyage after voyage, until the battle was won.

That legacy has not been forgotten. Today, my cohorts and I at Pusser's admire greatly the dedication and work shown by members of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust, and the marvelous job they've done, and continue to do, in the maintaining and operating of HMCS SACKVILLE as a memorial to all of those who served in the Naval Service. As a token of appreciation and to further their efforts, we are donating \$5 dollars from the sale of each decanter to the Trust. This should provide about \$30,000 towards their noble cause."

The decanter has been hand cast from porcelain, and hand decorated using glass colored inks, not plastic, that have been permanently fired into the ceramic at temperatures approaching 1600° Fahrenheit. It will provide more than a lifetime of service without any degradation to those who appreciate fine and unusual objects.

All of the decanter's decorative elements are of historical significance. Encircling its neck are the 13 Provincial and Territorial Flags.

Of special mention is the bottom of the decanter on which most every RCN ship of note that was commissioned over the past 100 years has been listed in alphabetical order. There are more than 300 in all. If you served, your ship or ships should be on there!

There are four cameos on the shoulder above the base. One of the main cameos depicts HMCS SACKVILLE (K181). Commissioned in 1941, she is the last surviving Corvette, and

one of the 120 Flower Class Corvettes built in Canada for the RCN during WW II. She saw heavy action from 1941 to 1944.

The adjacent cameo to the right of SACKVILLE salutes the Merchant Navy. It encompasses a painting of the FORT WALLACE, one of the Fort Class cargo ships manned by the Merchant Navy that carried vital supplies on perilous voyages to the Allies throughout the Second World War.

The third cameo, "READY, AYE READY" - the RCN's motto, is backed by the White Ensign of World War II on the one side, and Canada's national flag on the other.

The final cameo, composed of maple leaves and Leviathans, quotes Churchill on the importance of winning the Battle of the Atlantic. It was here that the RCN played the major role at a very high cost of ships and the men who sailed them.

The blue ribbon surrounding the base lists the Seven Seas in Latin.

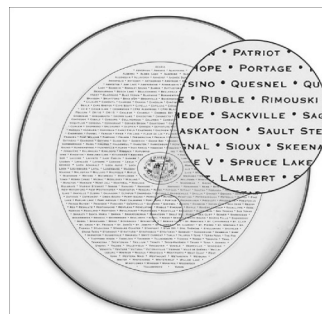
The top of the decanter's stopper commemorates the 100th Anniversary of the RCN, with a Maple Leaf center and a killick's anchor on each side.

This RCN Ship's Decanter is certainly a fitting tribute to all of those who have served over the past 100 years in the Royal Canadian Navy and the Merchant Navy, and to those who still serve today in the cause of freedom.

The selling price is \$75, plus shipping. The price is reduced to \$70 each plus shipping if two are purchased and sent to the same address.

Order on the internet at www.pussers.com/decanter, or by Telephone 1-888-202-2440

For more information, contact Michael Daniels;
mdaniels@pussers.com,
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(Sent to us by Paul Peacey. Ed)

No. 6 J.A.O.B.T.C. Reunion

10 of the original 27 members of *No. 6 Junior Aviation Officers Basic Training Course*, formed in 1953, re-united at 12 Wing Shearwater in July to celebrate their 57th anniversary and the 65th anniversary of Canadian Naval Aviation.

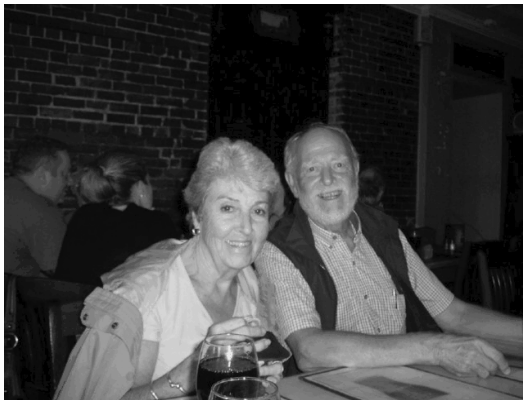
A few members were unable to attend due to poor health and several others were classified "lost contact".

Those attending enjoyed a visit to the Shearwater Aviation Museum, a BBQ at the Officers Mess, and the 2010 edition of the Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo.

A service of Celebration and Remembrance was held at St. Michaels Chapel, 12 Wing Shearwater to remember S/Lt. "Moe" Komarnisky and Lt.(P) Larry Visczko, course members killed on duty, and to dedicate our course tile to the SAM Wall of Honour.



Ken Brown, Jeannie Neilsen, Nick & Ruth Garapick, Ava Hawrysh



Bob and Joyce Bissell



Fred Hawrysh



L-R Bob and Joyce Bissell, Ken Brown, Jeannie Neilsen, Don Jackson, MP Mike Savage who welcomed group to NS, Fred and Ava Hawrysh, Nick and Ruth Garapick and Bill Meehan.

Missing from photo are Glen (Pappy) Wiese and Doug Chiddenton.

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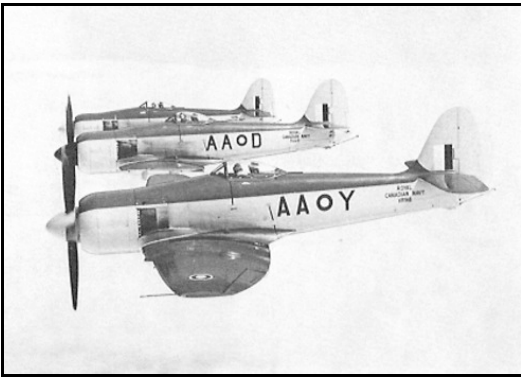
Dave Tate

During the two years, Aug 69-Aug 71, when Colin Curleigh and I were COs of HS 50 and VS 880 respectively there is little doubt that a fair amount of friendly rivalry existed between our two squadrons. This in turn precipitated a number of "hi-jinks", attempts at "one-upmanship"(by both units) and "try and top this" escapades.

One of the more memorable incidents that comes to mind was the time HS 50 won the Cock- O - the Walk. The very fact that they beat us for this very prestigious trophy was humiliating enough but to rub it in the way they did was the last straw. This is what transpired: On the morning following HS50s winning of the Cock-O- the-Walk I received a telephone call from Colin suggesting I take a look at their hangar. There in all its glory was a very large red rooster, painted on the side of their hangar facing ours. Enough is enough I thought and with that I got hold of our Chief OM, Joe Saunders, and mentioned that we couldn't let this display of bragging go unchallenged. He agreed wholeheartedly and with a parting "leave it with me Boss I'll take care of it" he left my office.

The following morning Joe came to my office and told me to have a look at HS 50s hangar. This I did and there ,in all its glory, was 880s mascot, THE BEARCAT, mounted atop THE ROOSTER. I couldn't resist calling Colin and suggesting that he have a gander at the side of his hangar. I won't repeat his telephone call suggesting we call a truce and quit wasting paint, to which I agreed. I then called Joe and advised him of the agreement I had made with HS50 to which he responded that if the agreement pertained to only the hangar wall then the hangar roof should be "fair game". I had no argument with that assumption.

The following day Joe asked if we could take a Tracker and do a short recce of HS 50s hangar from the air. We did just that and there on the roof of their hangar was a white Bearcat stretching from one side of it to the other, painted by none other than Joe and his boys using a number of gallons of pussers white paint. Needless to say I called Colin and told him that the next time he got airborne he may wish to look at his hangar roof. I don't recall his comments after viewing 880s handiwork but can only assume they were not complimentary. It took awhile but 880 finally got revenge and more importantly, the last word (for then).



WESTWARD THE "FURIES"

from Stu Soward

It was following the National Air Show at the PNE Toronto by the 31st Support Air Group (SAG), based at Summerside, that I came up with the brilliant idea of flying four 870 Sea Furies to the West Coast. One selfish reason was to visit my hometown Vancouver and the others being we were already a third of the way there and a Sea Fury had not yet been to the West Coast. Long time genial friends, Group CO. Don Knox, 870 squadron CO. Don (Pappy) Macleod and 880 squadron CO. Ted Davis went along with the idea with Ted agreeing to supply an Avenger for logistic and technical support. So on September 20, 1953 off we went, Pappy, myself, Vern Cunningham and Jake Birks.

All was proceeding normally until about five to ten minutes east of Medicine Hat, when Pappy suddenly announced that he had a rough running engine. Since it was the only one he had, it was a big problem! I took over the lead with Pappy asking if the airfield was in sight. My reply in the negative was of no help but fortunately Vern then picked out the field ahead and Pappy, with his engine blatting, popping away and losing power, made a straight in approach. Unfortunately he was necessarily a bit higher and faster than normal and coupled with a landing at an airport with a higher elevation, he HAD TO GO AROUND AGAIN!! This was not supposed to be part of the drill but we hung in trailing behind him anxiously awaiting a successful conclusion to the drama. He landed OK but the next problem was to fix the bird. This was not a realistic situation since our trusty supporting Avenger with maintenance crew did not happen to have a spare Sea Fury engine electrical harness. (Why would they?) In a remarkable display of on the spot ingenuity, our veteran maintenance Petty Officer found some electrical cable from an auto parts store and installed it in the Fury. Remarkably, it actually worked. Privately I was glad it was not my aircraft that was dependant upon some non-standard auto electric wiring.

Anyway, after a day's delay we restarted our epic journey and once again headed west. As we approached Lethbridge we just happened to notice a wall of high cumulus nimbus cloud ahead. No problem, piece of cake, we can fly over them! When we reached 34000 feet it was

apparent that the top of the clouds were billowing higher and faster than we were climbing. At this juncture the pilot of a Canadian Pacific airliner ahead of us, piped up with the obvious remark "If those four guys in the fighters think they are going over this line of storm clouds tell them to forget it because we are at 37000 feet and still climbing". Well that was the end of that, so we landed at Lethbridge for the rest of the day.

On Sept. 24 we again headed into the blue from Lethbridge, flew over the spectacular Rockies and landed uneventfully at Vancouver. The next day Pappy, in accordance with RCN etiquette, led us over to Patricia Bay where we landed and drove into Victoria to pay our respects to Canflagpac, Rear Admiral Hugh (von) Pullen. As luck would have it, Jake Birks had difficulty in starting his Fury at Vancouver and did not make the takeoff it with rest of us. Once airborne however, and with impeccable timing he chose to do a beat up of the Admiral's headquarters, just as Pappy was presenting Vern and myself to the Admiral. So there it was, the unmistakable, high pitched whistling whine of a high speed low pass of a Fury. Thus were the Sea Furies officially introduced to the West Coast Command.

After a brief visit to Vancouver, the four of us departed for Lethbridge on September 28 with our shepherding Avenger following along. The weather was reasonable and we cruised peacefully along at 25000 feet at 300 knots until arrival at Lethbridge a little over 4 hours later. This is where things started to go wrong for me! I selected wheels down but there was no reassuring THUNKING gear noise and no undercarriage cheerful little green lights showing. I had two alternatives. I could select the hydraulic emergency DOWN. However, if this worked OK that was strictly a one time solution because the gear would be locked down permanently and could not be brought back up until the hydraulics were repaired. The other alternative was to pump the gear and flaps down and back up by the use of hand power.

This was a time consuming exercise but could be done repetitively. So that is what I did. We established a little routine. I would land last, the other guys in the meantime would land, refuel, eat lunch etc. In the meantime I would pump the gear and flaps down and land. By the time all was complete and I had landed, shut the aircraft down, pumped up the flaps and refueled, it was time for takeoff. So I would takeoff first, (mostly lunchless) pump up the gear, then we would head east. This caper took most of the day with stops at Kapuskasing, North Bay (great fun pumping the gear at night) and Toronto. At Toronto I thought I would make my move and suggested to Pappy that I should lay over at Toronto, have the Fury hydraulics repaired and enjoy a little R&R. Pappy did not buy that one since he figured if I had made it this far I might as well go the rest of the way to Summerside. Naturally, his view prevailed.

Anyway that is the true story of the first Sea Furies to greet the West Coast. In spite of the time spent on the hydraulic problem the total flying time from coast to coast I logged on the return flight was less than nine hours. The others naturally logged less time since I was always first to takeoff and the last to land. For the four of us it was actually a great trip and a rewarding experience.

Sadly, the trip was tragically marred by the subsequent crash of the Avenger on October 4th when returning to Summerside, the pilot George Noble and Petty Officer George Wraith were killed at Kenora airport when the Avenger flipped over on landing and caught fire. Fortunately the other two crew members survived.

SAM GETS A BIG LIFT

by Chuck Coffen

Thanks to the generosity of long time SAM Foundation supporter Ted Kieser and his wife Marie, the Museum will literally get a big lift with the installation of an elevator. Ted and Marie have donated the funds necessary to make this happen.

The Genesis vertical lift by Garaventa has been ordered from Home Safe Living Limited and is scheduled for installation by September 2010. It will be located in Building 13 (the old rec centre) next to the "accessible" washroom and the T33 exhibit. The elevator is designed for use by those who may have mobility restrictions and who have difficulty in using the stairs to the second floor of Building 13. Access will be controlled by key operation.



Ted's dedication to the advancement and improvement of the Museum is evidenced not only by his substantial financial support, but by his personal involvement as a volunteer.

He served on the Board of Directors of the Foundation for several years and was President 2000 to 2001.

Ted has marked his 25 year career in the RCN and CF as a Naval Aviator and Marie's 16 year career with DND at Shearwater with this \$30,000 donation. Their names will be placed as "Major Sponsors" on the SAMF Donor Recognition Board in the \$10,000 - \$50,000 category. They have laid down the gauntlet for the rest of us to step up to the plate.

Thank you, Ted and Marie!!



T-33

Also referred to as the "Silver Star" or "T-Bird", the T-33 is a two-place, land-based, low-wing monoplane of all-metal construction powered by a single Rolls-Royce Nene jet engine. The Canadian version of the type was designated T-33AN Mk 3 by the military and CL-30 by its manufacturer, Canadair Ltd of Montreal. The Shearwater Aviation Museum's T-33 is one of 656 examples of the ubiquitous pilot trainer built in the early 1950s by Canadair under licence from the Lockheed Aircraft Corporation. It was allotted the serial number 21038 and the Manufacturer's Number T33-38, indicating that it was the 38th machine on the assembly line.

The Shearwater T-33 originally served with the Royal Canadian Air Force after having been taken on strength in July of 1953. For the next 11 years it was operated by several Air Force training units at various establishments across the country. Its first tour of duty was with No. 3 (All-Weather) Operational Training Unit based at RCAF Station North Bay, Ontario commencing in July '53. As a component of Air Defence Command, the role of No. 3 OTU was the training of aircrews for the CF-100 all-weather interceptor. In the spring of 1954, 21038 was allocated to Training Command, and up until late 1966 was on strength at a number of flying training schools in Western Canada: No. 2 Advanced Flying School (AFS) and No. 1 Flying Instructors School, RCAF Station Portage la Prairie; No. 3 AFS, RCAF Station Gimli; and No. 1 AFS, RCAF Station Saskatoon.

On 15 November 1966, 21038 was transferred to the Royal Canadian Navy's Utility Squadron 32 (VU 32) based at CFB Shearwater. VU 32 comprised several elements, one of which was the "Jet Flight". The latter was tasked with, among other things, refresher and proficiency flying and instrument training for pilots, and it was with the Jet Flight and in these roles that 21038 functioned until it was retired from active duty in mid-November 1974. At that time it was categorized as "Instructional" for the purpose of static display at Shearwater. T-33AN Mk 3 21038 was officially struck off charge on 22 May 1980.

Leo Pettipas



420 Air Reserve Squadron

No. 420 Squadron was formed at Waddington, England on 19 December 1941, as a heavy bomber squadron in the Royal Canadian Air Force's (RCAF) No. 6 Bomber Group. After yeoman service flying from England and Tunisia during the Second World War, No. 420 Squadron was transferred to Debert, NS to train as part of the RCAF's "Tiger Force" for war in the Pacific. When the war with Japan was suddenly concluded 420 Squadron was disbanded at Debert on 5 September 1945.

In March 1948, the RCAF formed Auxiliary Squadrons to supplement its reduced number of Regular Force squadrons. Nos. 400, 401, 438 and 442 were reformed as Auxiliary Squadrons and were equipped with the de Havilland Vampire, the RCAF's first jet fighter. Nos. 402 and 442 Auxiliary Squadrons were issued Second World War vintage P-51 Mustang fighters and Nos. 406 and 418 Auxiliary Squadrons received B-25 Mitchell light bombers. Two more squadrons were formed in 1948: No. 420 Auxiliary (City of London) Squadron reformed on 15 September 1948 at RCAF Station London, Ontario, and No. 403 Auxiliary Squadron reformed at RCAF Station Calgary, both were Fighter (Auxiliary) squadrons and were equipped with Mustang fighters. By the mid-1950's, the

Auxiliary fighter squadrons were re-equipped with the front-line Sabre Mark 5 jet fighters and were assigned the primary role of the air defence of North America. The heyday of the Auxiliary (fighter) squadrons came to an end on 1 September 1956 when the RCAF disbanded 420 Squadron and the remaining Auxiliary squadrons were re-assigned to the light transport role. All of these, except 418 Squadron, were disbanded in September 1964.

Despite defence budget reductions throughout the 1970s, there was a resurgence of the Air Reserve Squadrons (ARS) as military planners recognized that they could save money by using reservists to augment Regular Force units. The concept of "twinned squadrons" or "twinning" was introduced where Air Reserve Squadrons shared aircraft with Regular Force squadrons when not required by the latter, thus eliminating the need to purchase and support additional aircraft.

In Edmonton, 418 ARS shared Twin Otters with 440 Squadron and in Winnipeg, 402 ARS worked with the Canadian Forces Air Navigation School flying the venerable Dakota. On 1 April 1975, 420 ARS reformed at Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Shearwater. The squadron was "twinned" with 880 Maritime Reconnaissance Squadron (MR 880), a regular force squadron with which 420 shared flying CP-121 Tracker aircraft on coastal

surveillance patrols. In the summer of 1981, MR 880 moved to CFB Summerside, PEI; but 420 ARS and its personnel (reservists with civilian jobs) remained in the Shearwater area (Halifax). The logistics of two squadrons and personnel in separate locations and sharing the same aircraft proved to be unwieldy; so in 1988, 420 ARS joined MR 880 at Summerside to better maintain its twinned relationship with its Regular Force partner. No. 420 ARS remained at Summerside until 31 March 1990 when it ceased operations.



Maj Ken Millar and MWO Ron Beard

On 9 September 1991, 420 ARS returned to CFB Shearwater where it was twinned with 434 Combat Support Squadron flying Canadair CC-144 Challenger and CT-133 Silver Star aircraft in the fleet support and coastal patrol roles. On 4 July 1992, the squadron was re-designated from an Air Reserve Squadron to a Composite Squadron. On 1 April 1993, 420 was, again, re-designated as a Combat Support Squadron to reflect the same role as its twinned 434 Squadron. In July 1994, when 434 Squadron moved to 14 Wing Greenwood, NS; 420 Squadron remained at 12 Wing Shearwater but was zero manned (remains on the establishment but no personnel or aircraft assigned).



BADGE

Description: Argent a snowy owl wings elevated and adorsed proper.

Significance: The snowy owl is indigenous to Canada and hunts by night.

MOTTO: PUGNAMUS FINITUM (*We fight to the finish*)

BATTLE HONOURS:

ENGLISH CHANNEL AND NORTH SEA, 1942-1944;
BALTIC, 1942; FORTRESS EUROPE, 1942-1944;
FRANCE AND GERMANY, 1944-1945; BISCAY
PORTS, 1942-1944; RUHR, 1942-1945; BERLIN, 1944;
GERMAN PORTS, 1942-1945; NORMANDY, 1944;
RHINE; BISCAY, 1942-1943; SICILY, 1943; ITALY,
1943; Salerno.

LINEAGE

Authorized as '420 (Bomber) Squadron' 7 December 1941.¹

Disbanded 5 September 1945.²

Reformed as '420 (Fighter) Squadron' 15 September 1948.³

Redesignated '420 "City of London" (Fighter) Squadron' 4 September 1952.⁴

Disbanded 1 September 1956.⁵

Reformed as '420 Air Reserve Squadron' 20 May 1975.⁶

Redesignated '420 Composite Squadron' 17 June 1992.⁷

Redesignated '420 Combat Support Squadron' 1 April 1993.⁸

Reduced to nil strength 15 May 1995.⁹

From Ernie Cable, SAM Historian

SUPPORT YOUR

**SHEARWATER AVIATION MUSEUM
FOUNDATION**

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ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY GRUMMAN AVENGER AIRCRAFT

By Ed Smith

I was asked to do a write-up on the Avenger as there are not many crews left who operationally flew the aircraft. Many years have passed since its time in the RCN. I write this as a personal recollection of my knowledge of and experience with the aircraft as a Navy Avenger line pilot in VS880 Squadron during the mid to late fifties. Others who crewed with the aircraft may well have had different or varied experiences.

It was known commonly as the "Turkey" undoubtedly because of its large and rather bulbous fuselage attached to a thick wing and in flight it did resemble the name given it. A Spitfire it was not. The aircraft, however, in its day, was a key component to the Canadian navy's main reason for existence - anti submarine warfare.

For those not familiar with the aircraft here is a brief history. They were built by the Americans as an aircraft carrier-based torpedo bomber medium (TBM) but also had wing and rear firing guns (TBF and TBM models). They figured very prominently in the Second World War Pacific battles. Later the USN converted some into anti-submarine (ASW) hunters. In 1950 the RCN, upon acquiring some 125 Avengers from the USA, modified them for our ASW use. The pilot cockpit remained essentially the same but the rear area was rebuilt to accommodate a navigator (observer) and an observer's mate (equipment operator specialists). There was a third position behind the pilot called the mid upper but it was only a cramped passenger seat shared with equipment stowage. Radar, electric counter measure equipment, sonobouys, homing torpedoes, rockets and depth charges for submarine detection and destruction were fitted. (I was told that we bought them for about 50,000 dollars each – the cost to modify the aircraft may be on record some place but it probably is a sure bet it was more than the purchase price).

The AS3, as it was designated by the RCN, was the world's largest single-engine aircraft until another post war naval aircraft the Skyraider (AD) was brought into service with the USN. Fully loaded with fuel and ASW armament the Avenger could weigh up to 9 tons. The engine was a double- row 14 cylinder Wright Cyclone R-

2600 which developed 1750 horsepower and used 100 octane aviation gasoline. Fuel was normally carried internally in the wings and fuselage. Additional wing and bomb bay tanks could be added but such additions, while considerably extending endurance and range reduced its armament carrying capacity. Normal cruise/patrol endurance (internal tanks) was about 6 hours. Operating speeds allowed for 315 knots in a dive, normal cruise was 140 to 150 knots, climb speeds were about 110 knots and landing speeds 80 to 85 knots for ashore or carrier operations. The builders made it clear the aircraft was restricted from aerobatics but some pilots claimed they completed rolls and loops. (I'm not one of them).

The Canadian Navy with Fairey Aviation later further modified the aircraft to mount more and better anti-submarine detection gear and weapons and designated it the AS3M the M meaning it had new Magnetic detection gear. Some were converted to "Guppies" which were modified with very large radars built into the under belly for airborne early warning and direction but had no weapons delivery capability. They were a unique aircraft with highly trained specialist crews, a sort of forerunner of Airborne Early Warning craft of later years in use in world naval and air forces.

Canada contracted with the USN to train Canadian Navy pilots in the 1950s where they were introduced to the Avenger. Earlier pilots who had transferred to the RCN from other navies such as the Royal Navy had prior time in the aircraft. The last period Canadians trained on the Avenger in the United States advanced program was in 1955 (Kingsville, Texas) when it was replaced by the Grumman S2F. The S2F had been operational in the USN fleet and was being introduced into their advanced course programme while the RCN was in the planning and acquisition process to replace the Avenger with the Canadian version of the S2F (CS2F).

When I started in the advanced training flight in Kingsville Texas at the end of 1955 the S2Fs were in place and we, #6 Junior Air Officers Basic Training Course became the first Canadians trained on the S2F other than those who had been on exchange duties with USN squadrons.

However, when we arrived back in Shearwater with our USN wings, we had to convert to the Avenger pending the arrival of the CS2Fs being built under license to Grumman at the DeHavilland plant in Canada.

The first S2F members to arrive in Shearwater from Texas were Jim Stegen and Morris Komarnisky. Both were, as those of us who followed, checked out on the Avenger. Morris, however, before starting his Avenger time had the honour of piloting the first CS2F to cross the Atlantic to join and carry out trials on Canada's new Bonaventure being built in Belfast Ireland.

I arrived back in June 1956 and was checked out on the Harvard single engine aircraft in preparation to converting to the Avenger. For me this conversion meant, as it did for many others, soloing an aircraft, the Avenger,

without benefit of a dual check-out.

My first flight, after doing the ground school, start-up and taxi practice, was a bit tense. I can still remember sitting on the runway with take-off clearance and hoping I had remembered the essential characteristics learned in ground school of keeping the beast under control.

There was a fairly extensive check list to work through. (I found out on that first trip that the engine in wet and cold weather could load up with serious carburetor icing even at idle on a preflight check). Because there was no challenge and reply two-pilot procedure, a pilot on initial Avenger flights laboriously worked his way through a check list but in time and with experience, soon developed a faster systematic cockpit routine.

Flying a large aircraft like the Avenger required attention being paid to the characteristics of its powerful engine torque, heavy control handling, restricted visibility for landing and take-off and engine monitoring. (I'm referring here to Pilots Notes for the Avenger produced by the Royal Navy and my memory). Engine handling and maximum altitude varied with the type of supercharger that was installed. As I recall RCN Avengers did have the two stage supercharger which allowed for higher attitudes but was not used in normal ASW operations. On take-off one had to be very careful applying the throttle until speed had increased so that you could counteract the engine's torque with the flying control surfaces particularly the rudder. Failure to set trim tabs and carefully control engine power would take the aircraft sideways off the runway quite quickly.

Because the aircraft had an autopilot hooked up to an hydraulic control servo system the aircraft was quite stiff on the controls so upon leaving the runway it was necessary to take charge and muscle the aircraft until one learned to efficiently adjust the trims. (If the servos were not hooked up the aircraft was quite light to maneuver. In fact so much so the servos were always engaged for safety reasons as the tail section was vulnerable to high stresses and the servos made it more difficult for ham-handed cowboy pilots to inadvertently rid the aircraft of some of its tail with a subsequent non-flying attitude). A unique feature of the Avenger was the propeller control. It was used to roughly adjust the RPM by pushing it forward or back but then you could fine tune the revolutions with its threaded mounting. With a little practice a pilot could actually fly level formation using the fine tune control.

As I started the roll down the runway I fully realized this was the time to concentrate on the task at hand and not be distracted by my inner trepidations. It was a real "adrenalin generator" for the take-off run and first few hundred feet of climb-out until I realized I had control and the aircraft wasn't going to fall out of the sky or "split s" all on it's own. As I had managed to get it airborne I thought well, I got this far, I'll just have to play with it for an hour or so before I worry about getting it back on the ground again. In that hour of getting used to the aircraft I learned some fairly valuable lessons about the aircraft and particularly,

engine handling such as controlling oil and cylinder temperatures with the proper use of the appropriate flaps and yes I did get a couple of overheats but relaxed when the engine didn't blow and seemed to be okay when I corrected the errors.

I spent some time going through landing patterns at altitude to get used to power settings, attitudes, flap settings and speed changes. (One can really "grease it on", using an Air Force transport term, when the runway is a fleecy cloud). But there was a real plus - there was no one to criticize my performance, a very distinct advantage to solos without instructors.

When it came time to land it I laboriously completed the checklist then concentrated very intently on airspeed and engine handling and managed to bounce it a only a couple of times as I tried to get it into a good three point attitude (this was a tail wheel equipped aircraft). I was very pleased and relieved when everything settled down and I realized that I and the aircraft were quite undamaged. I had done it and it was a bit of a "rush".

My first solo flight took place July 11, 1956 and I flew the old beast for another 15 months but not to the carrier as my Squadron (VS880) would not be carrier deployed until it received and converted to CS2Fs.

SIGNIFICANT OTHER MEMORIES OF THE AVENGER

I don't know if there is an official count of the number of Avengers lost but I do recall in a briefing room chat with a number of pilots when the Avenger was soon to be taken out of service that we could account for about fifty lost, crashed or damaged beyond repair.

The only member of our course who flew the Avenger from the carrier was Harry Beutel. This was the last days of HMCS Magnificent and Harry went aboard with a minimum of hours on type to do his deck landing qualifications. If he reads this he will be able to verify the hours he had flown it but I believe it was less than fifty. Briefly described he ended up banging up a wing on one aircraft and went over the side with two others all in two days, all without injury, before it was decided enough was enough. It was a questionable command decision to send him to the carrier and to continue to send him on the qualification attempts with so little time on type but Harry had enough character to overcome his experiences and became a good Navy and later airline pilot.

On March 18 1957 my course mate and close friend, Morris Komarnisky, did not return from a flight in an Avenger when on a cloud flying sortie. From March 19 to March 25 we searched for Morris without success. I flew the Avenger 17.2 hours day and 4.5 hours night looking for my young friend. He and his crashed aircraft were found some months later. There is much evidence that heavy icing was the problem. He had a wife, Marian, and a very young son, Michael.

One other search that I remember very clearly while flying the Avenger was for Sub Lt Howie Cooper in October 1957. He disappeared from the Bonaventure on Banshee carrier qualifications off the Nova Scotia coast. That search saw 18.4 day hours and 4.2 night hours logged into my book in three days. Neither he nor his aircraft were ever found.

In late 1957, despite having gone through navigation cross-training with the USN flying the S2F, we now had to do a navigation course as observers in Avengers to prepare for the CS2F. This entailed, as well as classroom instruction, airborne flights with pilots teaming up alternating either as the pilot or the navigator. Placing us on this course was a bit strange because most of us were cross-trained in the USN. But we were junior in the squadron and were required to go into positions of co-pilot/navigator whereas the senior Lts and LCdrs, once they were checked out on the aircraft were given crew commander status and did not do any ASW navigation time. So some of us were pilots trained as enroute navigators as well as ASW tacticians in both CS2Fs and Avengers, whereas our crew commanders were not trained as navigators or tacticians in either aircraft.

Avengers were equipped with gas heaters. We flew one complete winter without benefit of these heaters because it had been reported that the Royal Navy had one blow up. So our senior pilot, ex RN, decided the heaters were to be disabled. This meant some bone chilling hours in the air and for me unproductive trips just trying to keep the body warm enough to make a landing. Two to three hours of cockpit isometrics is a challenge.

One could not help but admire the old machine but it had its quirks. We did not use oil dilution in the squadron and as a result starting those big engines on cold winter days or nights was, on occasion, impossible. The wing folding on the Avenger was part hydraulic and I have to say, part "handraulic". When actuating the wing fold from the cockpit the wings would only fold so far then had to be pushed by ground crew into their final folded position. Upon spreading they had to have a hand boost before the locks would go into place.

But that same engine, treated well, would not quit on you without good reason once it was running. I recall returning from a trip and was following another Avenger in the landing circuit. The pilot (Jud McSweeny- a #6 course mate) called for landing clearance several times without a response from the Tower Controller. Landing without clearance was not on so Jud fed the engine wave-off power to go around again. I also waved off as there was still no clearance and from a position astern of him I saw this great trail of blue smoke come out of his aircraft. To my surprise nothing further happened as he brought the aircraft around and landed on, all the while throwing out blue smoke.

As he reduced the power upon landing the engine quit and the airplane had to be towed back to the hangar. When the cowling was removed it was revealed that one

cylinder head was lifted and separated at least six inches from the base of the crankcase and there was no oil left in the engine. How that head stayed on and the engine continued to function as it did on a high power go-around was hardly credible.

Flying on instruments in an Avenger was always a challenge. The cockpit had a full instrument panel including two gyro horizons, one vacuum driven and one electric except in my aircraft they differed and neither were quite accurate. Basic control of the aircraft on instruments with its engine torque and heavy controls was work but coupled with its unreliable and limited navigation and radio gear, particularly in any kind of precipitation, cloud and icing made applied instrument flying in filed IFR flights a bit of a nightmare.

One of the very good things about the Avenger days was the fact that each aircraft had its own air and maintenance crew. For me, the comradeship that developed between ground and air crews was the only way to operate as everyone cooperated and took pride in ensuring the aircraft was as operationally capable as possible.

After its Navy years many Avengers were converted into forest sprayers and water bombers for use all across Canada. It evolved as the main aircraft for these purposes - a tribute to the tremendous weight, volume capacity and power of the Avenger. Later other aircraft were specifically designed for those tasks but as of 2010 there were still Avengers at that work.

In their retirement years a number of Avenger RCN pilots flew these missions. One, Hector "Buck" Buchanan, a retired Navy pilot and ex Commanding Officer of 880 Squadron, while flying on these tasks in New Brunswick had an engine quit and crash landed into the trees. He sustained a leg injury but was otherwise okay. That big engine (maintained by civilian contractors) had quit but provided a lot of protection for a pilot in this unwelcome situation. Its size and weight cleared a space in the trees and bush for the fuselage with crew to go through enhancing their chances of survival. There are a number of others who can attest to this favourable characteristic.

I last flew the Avenger on November 27, 1957. During my time with the Avenger I logged 443 hours day and 53 hours night for a total of 496 hours in the aircraft. While glad to get into our new and better equipped CS2Fs, I never regretted having the experience of piloting a big, demanding, single engine aircraft but, as a navy tailhooker, I wished I had at least qualified on deck landings with it. Continuous operational Avenger flying from a straight deck carrier was probably less of a wish. But the "Turkey" and the very good and dedicated RCN maintenance personnel never failed me.

825 Squadron

No. 880 Squadron has the longest history of all the units that served in Canada's Naval Air Arm. Although it was zero manned in 1990, the squadron is still on the Canadian Forces inventory today. No. 880 Squadron came into being in May 1951 when 825 Squadron was renumbered to 880. The following is a brief account of the rich heritage 880 inherited from 825 Squadron, its proud ancestral predecessor.



The Royal Navy (RN) formed No. 825 Squadron on 8 October 1934 by combining two Royal Air Force (RAF) flights to form a new squadron and renumbering No. 824, which at that time was embarked in *HMS Eagle*. No. 825 Squadron, equipped with 12 Fairey III F's, continued to serve on *Eagle* in the China Station in the spotter reconnaissance role. *Eagle* transferred to the Mediterranean Fleet in January 1935 and shortly thereafter the carrier

disembarked its aircraft to Royal Naval Air Station (RNAS) Hal Far, Malta and sailed home for refit. In September 1935, 825 Squadron joined *HMS Glorious* for further Mediterranean service and in July 1936 it re-equipped with 12 Fairey Swordfish I's and became a torpedo spotter reconnaissance squadron.

At the outbreak of war in September 1939, 825 Squadron embarked from RNAS Dekheila, Egypt to *HMS Glorious* to search for shipping in the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea. *Glorious* returned to the Mediterranean in January 1940, and the squadron operated from Hal Far until March 1940 when the ship was recalled for the defence of Norway. Upon arrival in the United Kingdom, No. 825 Squadron disembarked at RNAS Preswick and deployed to RNAS Worthy Down, and the RAF Stations at Detling and Thorney Island to carry out operations in the English Channel against U-boats, E-boats and enemy transports in the Calais area during the Dunkirk evacuation. Eight of the squadron's 12 aircraft were lost at Dunkirk, including the CO LCdr Buckley RN; five of the aircraft were lost in a single bombing raid over France on 29 May 1940. To make matters worse, the squadron's carrier, *HMS Glorious*, was sunk by the German battleships *Gneisenau* and *Scharnhorst* on 8 June 1940.

In July 1940, the remnants of the squadron were augmented to nine aircraft and embarked on *HMS Furious* for September operations off Norway that included the noteworthy night attacks on Trondheim and Tromsø. In February 1941, the squadron re-embarked on *Furious* for escort duty with a convoy ferrying aircraft to the Gold Coast.

In May 1941, 825 Squadron joined *HMS Victorious* and took part in the historic attack on the German battleship *Bismarck*. The squadron Swordfish sighted *Bismarck* on 24 May and attacked the following day; a single torpedo hit forced the battleship to reduce her speed. The *Bismarck* was crippled in a follow-on strike by Swordfish from 810, 818 and

820 Squadrons on 26 May and finally sunk by the Fleet on 27 May 1941.

From June 1941 the squadron embarked on *HMS Ark Royal* to provide anti-submarine protection for convoys fighting to reach beleaguered Malta; the squadron also conducted strikes against targets in Pantellaria, Sardinia and Sicily in September. On 13 November 1941, U-81 torpedoed *Ark Royal* 50 miles from Gibraltar and the squadron's carrier sank the next day. The few 825 Squadron aircraft that were airborne at the time flew to Gibraltar, but the squadron essentially ceased to exist.

In January 1942, 825 Squadron reformed in England at RNAS Lee-on-Solent with nine Swordfish I's destined for torpedo bomber reconnaissance duties. In early February six aircraft were detached to Manston to augment strike forces against the possible breakout of the German battle cruisers *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* and the cruiser *Prinz Eugen* from the French port of Brest. When these three capital ships dashed up the English Channel the squadron's six aircraft launched a torpedo attack, which was part of a poorly coordinated strike involving ships and other RAF aircraft; no hits were obtained and all of the squadron's aircraft were shot down. The CO, LCdr Esmonde, was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross and the five surviving crewmembers were all decorated.

The squadron regrouped at Lee-on-Solent in March 1942 receiving Swordfish II's as replacements for their lost aircraft. Three aircraft embarked on *HMS Avenger* for Arctic convoy duties to Russia; 16 U-boats were sighted of which only six could be attacked. The squadron shared in the destruction of U-589 with *HMS Onslow* on 14 September. Upon return to England the squadron carried out strike operations in the English Channel from the RAF stations at Thorney Island and Exeter while seconded to 16 Group, RAF Coastal Command.

From March 1943, 825 Squadron embarked in *HMS Furious* to provide anti-submarine operations for convoys sailing from Scapa (Scotland) and Iceland and to conduct anti-submarine sweeps off the Norwegian coast. In December 1943 the squadron joined *HMS Vindex* to begin a long association during which time it flew many sorties against the enemy in Atlantic and Arctic waters. At this time a fighter flight of six Hawker Sea Hurricane II's was added to the squadron to defend the convoys against air attack. Terrible weather failed to prevent intensive flying and the squadron shared with surface forces in the sinking of U-653 on 15 March and U-765 on 6 May 1944. During April 1944 three more modern Fairey Fulmars from No. 784 Squadron briefly augmented 825 Squadron's Swordfish.

In August 1944, the squadron now equipped with 12 Swordfish III's again embarked on *HMS Vindex* to provide anti-submarine protection for arctic convoys. The highlight of this period was the escorting of Convoys JW 59 and RA 59A to and from North Russia. On 22 August, Swordfish "C" sank U-354 and claimed a possible sinking the next day. A Sea Hurricane damaged another U-boat on 22 August, and two days later the squadron shared the sinking of U-344 with surface forces. The final success of this escort task occurred when Swordfish "A" sank U-394 on 2 September 1944.

In March 1945, 825 Squadron embarked in *HMS Campania* with the Sea Hurricanes having been replaced by eight Grumman Wildcat I's (Martlets in RN terminology) for further Arctic convoy duties. On return from this voyage the

squadron's Swordfish were transferred to 815 Squadron while the Wildcats continued in 825 Squadron until also struck off strength in May 1945 (Victory in Europe) when the squadron was disbanded.

The Royal Navy reformed No. 825 Squadron at RNAS Rattray in Scotland on 1 July 1945. The squadron was a Canadian manned unit initially equipped with 12 Fairey Barracuda II's with Air Search Homing (ASH) radar. These aircraft were replaced in November with 12 Fairey Firefly FR I's that were given to Canada as part of Britain's war claim settlement. By the end of the year all of the pilots and 60 percent of the maintenance ratings were Canadians; observers were in short supply and none would be available to relieve their British counterparts in 825 until a group graduated from course in the summer. The squadron was transferred to the RCN on 24 January 1946 when *HMCS Warrior* was commissioned. In March, 825 Squadron embarked in *Warrior* for her maiden voyage to Halifax where the squadron disembarked for the first time on Canadian soil at RCAF Station Dartmouth. The RCAF provided hangers and accommodation for the RCN's fledgling Naval Air Arm at Dartmouth that formed the Naval Air Section. For the next year 825 Squadron was under training either ashore at the Naval Air Section or afloat in *Warrior*, in which the squadron embarked for a visit to the West Coast in the winter of 1946.

In April 1947, 803 and 825 Squadrons were formed into the 19th Carrier Air Group (CAG) and took part in fleet exercises off Bermuda. On completion, the 19th CAG turned its Seafire and Firefly aircraft over to the 18th CAG and sailed to the United Kingdom in *Warrior*. While in the United Kingdom 825 Squadron re-equipped with 13 Firefly FR 4's and returned to Canada in June 1948 aboard *HMCS Magnificent*. The FR 4's were loaned from the Royal Navy to train for the planned acquisition of the AS 5 anti-submarine version of the Firefly. In preparing for the creation of NATO in 1949 Canada agreed that the RCN would specialize in anti-submarine warfare; consequently, the AS 5 was required to replace the FR I, which was a strike-reconnaissance fighter. The FR 4's were used as an interim trainer because they better replicated the performance of the AS 5 than did the squadron's former Firefly FR I's.

In November 1948, the two Firefly squadrons, 825 and 826, were grouped to form the 18th CAG to facilitate maintenance on similar aircraft. In early 1949, 825 Squadron returned nine of their Firefly FR 4's to the Royal Navy (The squadron ditched two and lost another in a mid-air collision; the RCN retained one until 1954) and took delivery of 18 new Firefly AS 5's equipped for anti-submarine warfare. For the next two years 825 Squadron was stationed at the Royal Canadian Naval Air Station Dartmouth or was embarked in *Magnificent* for cruises.

There was another re-organization in January 1951 when 803 and 825 Squadrons formed the 19th Support Air Group (SAG). All RCN air units were renumbered on 1 May 1951 to better

identify Canadian naval air squadrons in the Commonwealth numbering scheme. Consequently, 825 Squadron was renumbered to 880 Squadron and the 825 identity reverted to the Royal Navy.

No. 825 Squadron garnered a proud heritage during its wartime operations that are reflected in its Battle Honours: **Dunkirk 1940, English Channel 1940-42, Norway 1940, "Bismarck" 1941, Malta Convoys 1941, Arctic 1942-45 and Atlantic 1944.** Although the Battle Honours were repatriated with 825 Squadron when it returned to the Royal Navy, the proud heritage and traditions of the squadron remained with the RCN and established the standard to be upheld by its successor squadron. The spirit of 825 Squadron's motto, "Nihil Obstat" (Nothing Stops Us), is exemplified in the fact that 880 Squadron remains in being today (albeit unmanned), despite political pressures to disband many of our air squadrons that reflect Canada's unique aviation heritage.

The Shearwater Aviation Museum is currently restoring Firefly PP462 to flying condition. This Firefly FR 1 was among the first 825 Squadron aircraft to fly ashore to Dartmouth. To preserve part of 825 Squadron's history and to commemorate the founding role the squadron played in our nation's naval aviation heritage, PP462 will be painted in the traditional RCN dark gray/light gray livery, the paint scheme in vogue when the Firefly retired from the RCN.

Colonel ESC Cable OMM, CD (Ret'd)

Shearwater Aviation Museum Historian

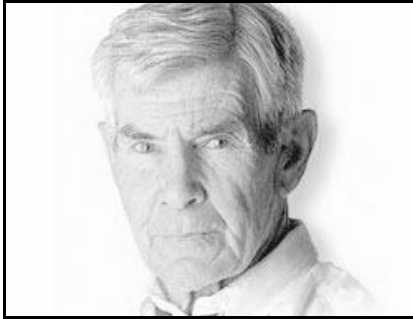
Postscript:

Upon return to the Royal Navy 825 Squadron continued to build on its proud heritage. Flying Firefly FR 5's, it served in the Far East and Korea for which it was awarded the coveted Boyd Trophy. In 1953 it converted to the Firefly AS 5 and was engaged in anti-submarine duties and later participated in strikes against Malayan terrorists in central Lohore.

In 1955, equipped with Fairey Gannets, 825 Squadron saw anti-submarine duty in the Mediterranean and then the Far East followed by shore based duty from Malta. In 1960, the squadron converted to Westland Whirlwind helicopters and saw duty in the Mediterranean, Persian Gulf (Kuwait Crisis) and East Africa (flood relief).

In May 1982, equipped with Westland Sea King helicopters, 825 Squadron prepared for service in the Falkland Islands in the trooping and heavy lift role. The squadron embarked eight aircraft on the SS Atlantic Causeway and two on the SS Queen Elisabeth II. The squadron put a detachment ashore in Port San Carlos in June and returned to RNAS Culdrose, England where it was disbanded on 17 September 1982. (Presumably for the last time as there does not appear to be any further documentation on squadron and it is not listed among the Fleet Air Arm's current squadrons.)





ABOUT PETER WORTHINGTON

Peter Worthington is a Korean War Veteran who served as a lieutenant and platoon commander in Korea. He also was his unit's intelligence officer and later flew with the USAF as an air observer, directing air strikes on enemy positions. ***During World War Two he was the youngest serving officer with the Royal Canadian Navy's Fleet Air Arm.*** He is the founding editor of the Toronto Sun and the Sun newspaper chain. One of North America's most outstanding journalists he has received nearly all of Canada's major awards for reporting. He has reported on wars in Eritrea, Somalia, Kosovo, Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan, to name a few of his overseas assignments. Before founding the Toronto Sun he had been the Toronto Telegram's roving world reporter. He bluffed his way into the Dallas Police parking garage in 1953

Following the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in November, 1953 he bluffed his way as a detective into the Dallas Police garage at the moment assassin Lee Harvey Oswald was driven in. Worthington was a foot away from Oswald when Jack Ruby burst from the scrum of reporters near them. He bumped into Worthington and shot Oswald in the chest. Worthington was seen on television all over the world. He appeared to be one of the detectives that wrestled down and handcuffed Oswald's slayer, Jack Ruby.

THE KISS OF DEATH FOR CANADA'S VETERANS

By Peter Worthington

Arguably, the worst thing that could happen to Canada's shrinking number of WWII and Korea veterans (now down to about 150,000) and the growing number of Afghanistan vets, would be the blending on Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) into the Department of National Defence (DND).

But that is precisely what is being considered as a cost-saving gesture – the kiss of death for every veteran, young or old, who needs support. Especially those veterans of Afghanistan, some of whom have horrendous injuries and

have already been given short shrift by those who run the country.

Recommendations to down-size VAC are understandable, since veterans of the past are falling like leaves in the fall. But the new crop of veterans have different injuries and needs – concerns that are difficult enough to get from VAC, and virtually impossible from DND.

The difference between DND and VAC is that DND is an aggressive, dogmatic bureaucracy with the bit in its teeth, and is virtually uncontrollable. A law unto itself. VAC has always been a low-priority department with neither clout nor resources – a second tier ministry comprised of people who have good intentions but little influence.

Melded into DND, it will have even less influence. DND exudes arrogance, disdain and stubbornness, while VAC traditionally lowballs applicants for disability pensions, but is open to argument and can be persuaded to be more generous.

A case in point is Cliff Wenzel, a decorated WWII bomber pilot who earned a Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC), then won the Air Force Cross (AFC) during the Berlin blockade, and flew in the Malayan insurgency and Korean war – four wars and 20 years active flying with the RCAF, then nine more years in the RCAF auxiliary, teaching pilots.

In 1960 Wenzel was wrongfully denied a reduced pension. He appealed through a succession of federal governments, and was always denied. Some 44 years later he got the ear of then Liberal Defense Minister Bill Graham, who saw the rightness of Wenzel's case, turned the ombudsman loose on it, and personally apologized to Wenzel on behalf of Canada.

When the Harper Tories ousted the Liberals, Defence Minister Gordon O'Connor took the torch on Wenzel's behalf and got him a grudgingly lump-sum settlement that was roughly 25% lower than actuarially it should have been – and then took back 60% of the payment in taxes.

"My case was never about money," says Wenzel. "It was about what's right and what's wrong. How many others are there who've been cheated?" For Wenzel, VAC was no help and DND was (is?) adamantly hostile. He recalls senior DND people telling him he'd not get one penny.

As for the ombudsman's recommendations as ordered by Bill Graham – not one has been implemented. This outrages retired Col. Michel Drapeau, now the country's most prominent lawyer on military matters who represented Wenzel, and whose legal fees have yet to be paid by DND.

Wenzel credits O'Connor and Graham with doing the right thing – but they were both transitory mirages in the DND hierarchy where deputy ministers last longer than

ministers, and wield real power. (As deputy minister, Robert Fowler outlasted half a dozen defence ministers and virtually ran the department).

Canada's present Defence minister, Peter McKay, is a nice guy, but a neophyte who is captive of the DND mindset. If veterans become a DND responsibility, whatever problems they now encounter will increase exponentially.

As it is, Canada's decision to award a maximum lump-sum \$250,000 to badly wounded vets sounds generous, but it's really a cop-out if it negates long-term care and responsibility.

Those who care about our citizens in uniform, had better do what they can to preserve Veterans Affairs as an independent department, because if it's blended into DND, forget about any debt the country owes to veterans.

DND is answerable to no one – just look what it wastes its budget on! *National Post*



ODE TO 1501

In the days of naval "In" routine
I was a young sailor in my teens
I walked along the aeroplane line
And watched as they launched
To the missions intended
To train to be fine and keep us free
With rumbles and smoke and avgas too
With an awesome power away they flew
A very grand sight for me to see

As I toiled upon the old turkey

Then one day I chanced to see
A brand new model looking at me
She was high in the tail
And stout in the middle
And with one look you could tell
She was tough as hell
And sure would be there at the ding of the bell

She looked like an angel
So white, clean and pale
And she had a large flag just under her tail
And below the flag in numbers so terse
Saying 1501 and I am the first
And still I can see her
With nose held so high
and saying to me
O.K young fella what will it be
And a bond was formed between she and me

Over the years our paths have crossed
First at the school
When she was the boss
We took her apart
And rebuilt her to spec.
And started her engines
And ran her like heck
Away she would go with a great jesus roar
And you could tell that she wanted to soar
Through my next two courses she was there
To guide me through so I could see
And become the tech I wanted to be

Then when all her goodness was gone
To the main gate she was posted
To sing her song
But her voice was lost
And she could not sing
But for many long years
She stood at that gate
And watched and waited
To meet her fate

Now her final resting place will be
At our museum where she should be
We'll remove the rust and clean inside
Fresh paint will then be applied
And there she will be in her shiny new coat
To sit forever in shining splendor
And we can look at her and remember
What fun it was when we were young
And learning with 1501

To a fine old girl
From an old friend-----Bud-----
Bud Ayer

THE TRAGEDY OF SUCCESS

by Stu Soward

How Politics Destroyed RCN Aviation

Politics:

- Factional scheming for power;
- Implications of seeking personal or partisan gain;
- Strife of rival parties.

The formation of RCN Aviation began with a study report in August 1943 by Captain H.N. Lay, RCN, in proposed the establishment of a Naval air service modeled upon the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm. Lay in his memoirs candidly expressed his preference for an Air Branch modeled on the USN, but believed this would not be politically acceptable to the pro RN senior RCN officers.' There was one major modification. The new branch would be carrier-based only. The role of the surveillance of coastal operations would continue to be provided by RCAF shore-based aircraft. The proposal was presented to the Cabinet War Committee on 7 September 1943, which authorized the formation of a joint RCN and RCAF Committee to study the proposal. A month later the Committee recommended the formation of the Naval Aviation Branch. It was also recommended that the development of supporting shore-based facilities be delayed for the time being, since it was expedient in wartime for facilities to be provided by the Royal Navy as applicable and by RCAF when in Canada.

In spite of the War Cabinet decision authorizing the carrier force, service politics reared its ugly head in November 1943, at a Joint RCAF and RCN Technical Committee, when RCAF Air Commodore Guthrie flatly stated that it was stupid for RCN to be undertaking a carrier program when it had been proven that carriers were completely obsolete. Fortunately Captain Lay was present as an observer and shot Guthrie down in flames, with the tart rebuttal that since the USN and RN were currently building over 100 carriers for the Pacific War, they should be immediately informed of this major mistake. Guthrie's comments were incredibly obtuse when one considers the enormous impact the carrier strikes at the battles of Taranto, Pearl Harbour, Coral Sea and Midway had upon the course of the war. Significant however was that such a point of view was expressed, and if nothing else brought out into the open the deep antagonism toward RCN Aviation held by senior influential RCAF officers such as Guthrie.

In May 1945 the Cabinet War Committee established an RCN force for the Pacific War Theatre of 13,000 officers and men. Included was a fleet involving two Light Fleet Class carriers, two naval air stations and 10 naval air squadrons totaling almost 2000 aviation personnel. There was no indication that shore-based support facilities were to be provided by the RCAF.

Although the requirement for an RCN Aviation Branch was greatly reduced following the end of the Pacific War, a smaller peacetime Branch was approved. Once more the RCAF opposed the RCN plans when, in October 1945, the RCAF insisted that the original 1943 RCN/RCAF Agreement was still valid and it was the mandate of the RCAF to control, maintain and operate the shore facilities for RCN Aviation. By 13 December 1945 the post-war permanent RCN Air Branch was approved in principle by the Canadian Cabinet to be 11% of the total RCN peacetime force of 10,000 personnel.

In March 1946, as a result of extensive RCN/RCAF discussions, the RCAF was granted funding and management of all RCN shore-based aviation facilities and supporting air services, including air stores, major aircraft repairs and overhaul. It was clear under the leadership of Air Marshal Leckie that the RCAF was determined to inhibit wherever possible the development of RCN Aviation. Certainly the long and acrimonious wrangling that took place between the RAF and the RN over the custody and control of the RN Fleet Air Arm from the early 1920's until 1938 was well known to Leckie's generation of airmen. Equally certain were the devastating impact of the split ownership on the FAA as the Second World War broke out. For the RCN to have blindly walked into the trap of dual control with respect to the shore-based RCN Aviation facilities was a colossal and expensive blunder.

Political influence became apparent when on 12 June 1946 a proposal to buy 50 USN Hellcats (\$500 each) by Naval Staff was rejected by the pro-British Naval Board. Finally in October, after being aired once more by Naval Board, the decision was made to proceed with the purchase of Sea Fury and Firefly aircraft (the Fury at \$80,000 apiece). As late as June 1947 the Hellcat deal was still being pursued following delivery problems with the Sea Fury. Again it was rejected, largely due to the strong pro-British RCN senior officer cadre, and the influence of the newly appointed Director of the Naval Aviation Division, Royal Navy Captain G.A. Rotherham. It was always well known that Rotherham and the subsequent Royal Navy successors to the Directorate had a mandate to lobby and encourage the RCN to "Buy British" on behalf of the British Board of Trade.

The difficulties being experienced by the RCN with the RCAF were not unlike those of the Royal Australian Navy, which, in June 1947, was given approval to form its own Naval Air Branch with two Light Fleet Carriers. The RAAF Chief of Air Staff with the argument that it would be more efficient if the RAAF provided personnel mounted the strongest objection to the decision. Not only the RAN but even by a joint RAAF/RAN Committee considered this argument specious. The viewpoint of the RAAF once more indicates the total lack of understanding held by the RCAF and RAAF of the expertise and knowledge required in performing the unique role of Naval carrier aviation operations in the maritime environment.

It was not until the summer of 1948 that Naval

Board re-opened negotiations with the RCAF to commence transfer of RCAF Station Dartmouth to RCN control. By this time RCN Aviation had grown to 900 personnel with 56 aircraft and operating from 11 hangars. The RCAF detachment on the other hand was installed in two hangars with 250 personnel and two aircraft. The original agreement had turned into a real farce with virtually no funds being provided by the RCAF for infrastructure upkeep, while providing indifferent service in their assigned responsibilities. Although Leckie had indicated he was sympathetic to the need for the RCN to assume a major role in the operation, it was only through a unilateral decision by the Cabinet Defense Committee in September 1948 that the process to transfer the Air Station to the RCN was grudgingly accepted by the RCAF. After brief negotiations the station was taken over by the RCN in December 1948.

One of the most obvious attempts by the RCAF to destroy RCN Aviation was at an Armed Forces Five Year Plan review by the Chiefs of Staff Committee on 31 January 1950. When the plans for RCN Aviation was being discussed, the CAS Air Vice Marshal Curtis describing Naval Aviation as a 'problem' asked "It be placed on record that the CAS recommended the disbandment of the Naval Air Arm and a study be made of how the funds saved could be more suitably allocated among the three services. The CNS, Vice Admiral Grant, although not a strong advocate of the Air Branch and lacking knowledge of aviation generally, bristled at the effrontery of Curtis' remarks and declared that RCN Aviation was an organic component of the RCN, and as such Naval aviation plans were purely an internal naval matter. Further, Naval Aviation had been established by the authority and approval of the Canadian Cabinet. Although Grant rebuffed Curtis and Committee Chairman Lt. General Foulkes obliquely diverted the matter, it showed once again the high level of resentment and determination on the part of the RCAF to eliminate RCN Aviation. During this rather acrimonious discussion, Curtis complained that since the RCN was now developing a balanced force concept, it was only reasonable that the RCAF should be allowed to do the same by developing a strategic bomber force. This statement never made much sense, since the requirement for a Canadian offensive bomber force had never been nor ever would be a worthwhile factor when developing the post-war Canadian Defense policy.

It was at the Annual Senior Officers Conference of January 1951 that Commodore Lay first tabled a proposal to have the RCN take over the maritime aviation role in its entirety. He noted the RCAF had not only badly neglected their Maritime Air Command, but also the dual service involvement in the maritime environment was inefficient in the command, control and operational deployment of aircraft, systems and tactics. Lay's proposal was supported and he was directed to proceed with his concept and present a more detailed study the following year.

In December 1951, at the Annual Aviation Conference, the implications of RCN aviation being held to 11% of the total RCN strength was discussed in some detail

in comparison, the RN was at a 21.7% level. RCN Aviation, while assuming additional commitments with no increase in personnel, was facing a clear shortfall in manning. The inference was that the operations and role of RCN Aviation could become increasingly burdensome and less cost effective without more personnel, as new equipment and aircraft would increase the need for additional manpower.

In January 1952, at the next Senior Officers Conference, the subject of Maritime Air was again discussed. Commodore Lay emphasized two significant points. One that the RCAF was now questioning naval supremacy in the command sphere in maritime warfare and now wanted co-equal status with the RCN. The second was that the rapid development of aviation sensors and weapons in ASW warfare was propelling the aircraft to the forefront, while the development of more effective ASW surface units was relatively static. In addition to other recommendations in his strong endorsement of his original proposal to assume Maritime Air, Lay summarized his paper with two principal recommendations:

- That future naval policy should emphasize more strongly the growth and development of Canadian Naval Aviation;

- This policy should concurrently include the planning for the absorption by the RCN of all maritime air operations.

In a surprising rebuttal - CNS Admiral Mainguy stated it was the task of the RCN to convince as many as possible of the importance and place of Maritime Air, and encourage the RCAF to build up an efficient Maritime Air Arm. This complete and personal rejection by CNS of the previously accepted recommendations was a disturbing and sudden change of policy, which had a potentially serious and negative impact on the future of RCN Aviation.

One must question this about face. Was this a move to obtain RCAF support for the RCN in the surface fleet rebuilding program in exchange for RCN support of Maritime Air Command at the expense of developing and expanding RCN Aviation? It is particularly significant that there was no further mention of Lay's recommendation to emphasize more support toward the growth of Naval Aviation.

A final discussion of major concern to Naval Aviation was a paper presented by Lay, which outlined the case for helicopters in the ASW role operating from ship platforms. He logically stated that by concentrating on sea borne helicopters it would avoid the major joint control problems currently being encountered by the RN and RAF Coastal forces in the employment of helicopters in the ASW role. This was an astute move because, if nothing else, it could hardly be subject to criticism by the RCAF, since without question the ASW role of the ship-borne naval helicopter could be justified as an exclusive and integral extension of the ships' overall detection and weapons systems. Whereas it would be very difficult for the RCAF to try and justify a new role for shore-based ASW helicopters operating in Canadian coastal

waters.

In April 1952, at a meeting of Cabinet Defense Committee, the decision was made to acquire an aircraft carrier to replace the loaned Magnificent. Such a carrier, i.e. ex-Powerful Class, also a British Light Fleet would be purchased by Canada and incorporate the latest carrier modifications, including improved arrester gear and the steam catapult. Significantly the angled deck and mirror landing system were not proposed. Initial cost estimate for the ship was \$15M. There was no evidence to suggest that any other ship than a British Light Fleet Class carrier was ever considered.

In May 1952 a visit was made by Commodore Keighly-Peach, RN Asst. Chief of Naval Staff (Air) to Washington, to discuss a replacement fighter aircraft for the Sea Fury. There was intensive pressure on the RCN to purchase the next generation of British carrier aircraft, namely the Sea Venom jet and the ASW Fairey Gannet. The purpose of the visit was to study the most suitable and available USN fighter aircraft.

The outcome of the meeting eliminated the British fighter as unable to satisfy the requirement and the USN Banshee became the logical choice for a replacement fighter. This was a major breakthrough for RCN Aviation since Keighly-Peach ignored his mandate from the Admiralty and the British Board of Trade and chose to support the best fighter aircraft, rather than follow the "Buy British" policy of his RN predecessors. The decision to buy a British carrier, however, was to a considerable extent due to the political climate, which was affected by the limited financing available and the close ties with the Admiralty. In short, the decision to purchase a Light Fleet Carrier was made because it was cheap, available and the only ship ever offered.

Whether such a carrier would ever be capable of being operationally compatible with the type of aircraft being planned by RCN Aviation had yet to be established. In fact there was virtually no aviation expertise sought when the selection for a carrier was being made.

In September 1952 Naval Headquarters approved the purchase of USN Banshees. Simultaneously, and although not widely known, the prevailing official USN view was that all weather jet aircraft cannot be operated 'efficiently and economically' from CVE and CVL class carriers in the North Atlantic. This had ominous implications for the RCN since the proposed carrier was not only classed as a CVL but it was also considerably slower.

In the spring of 1953, and assuming the Banshee and S2F aircraft would be the RCN choice, the USN proposed the loan of an Essex Class carrier to the RCN for \$1 per year. The pro British Light Fleet advocates rejected this apparently due to the fact that the ship would require a larger crew and major changes to the existing catapult. The fact that it was the USN view that a ship the size of the proposed

Powerful Class could not operate efficiently and economically in the North Atlantic did not appear to have been a consideration.

In the Summer of 1953 the RCN purchase of 60 Banshees was approved at a cost including spares of \$39M, but the Treasury Board decided at the last minute to delay payment until March 1954... this killed the program. The USN was justifiably annoyed at the Canadians for renegeing on the deal, particularly since special cost saving production arrangements had been made purely for the benefit the RCN.

Before departing in June 1953 a detailed Memorandum by Commodore Keighly-Peach was prepared which proposed major changes to the RCN Five Year Fleet Plan from 1961-1965. He roundly criticized the one carrier force with 43 escorts, and stated, "This fleet composition was arrived at without sufficient attention being paid to present and near future technical advances vitally affecting naval warfare." He noted RCN Aviation has remained virtually static in numbers of operational aircraft over the past decade in spite of the fact that the emphasis on aircraft in maritime warfare has greatly increased. During the same period, the RCN surface fleet has more than doubled.

He proposed shifting the concentration upon a sizeable fleet of Destroyer Escorts and Patrol Frigates by transferring existing or planned manpower and financial resources to a balanced force of two hunter killer groups built around one Essex Class carrier, the proposed Light Fleet carrier and 25 Destroyer Escorts. This would place the emphasis upon flexibility encompassing ASW capability, support of ground forces, offensive air operations against enemy land targets and enemy naval forces, and providing air defense of shipping. Keighly-Peach also noted that a fully supported proposal and justification for a second carrier had never been made. But if successful, by 1965 it would ensure the RCN an effective capability to participate in limited wars and in the peacekeeping role.

The Commodore also warned that if the RCN fails to pay nothing more than lip service to the requirement for naval aircraft in maritime warfare, the RCAF would become the prime maritime authority in the Canadian defense organization. Recognizing the shift in emphasis in ASW to the aircraft with its obvious speed, mobility and weapon-carrying capability, the surface fleet would accordingly have a diminished role.

A key point emphasized was if the RCN was willing to provide the personnel and funds from within existing RCN resources, the RCAF would have no legitimate reason to begin an inter-service squabble over how the RCN allocated internal resources in fulfilling its naval mandate.

Keighly-Peach's report appears to have been virtually ignored, suggesting senior RCN officers were obviously quite content to live with the imbalance and lack of flexibility inherent in a navy composed almost entirely of small ships and capable of only a limited role.

It is worth mentioning at this point that an agreement was finally reached in March 1954 for delivery of used Banshees, but unfortunately expected deliveries were now spread over a 30-month period commencing in late 1955. For the saving of a mere \$14M, the fighter program was delayed a year, numbers reduced, with the added cost of refurbishing old aircraft which in some cases were in a barely flyable condition.

In December 1955 the senior Naval Liaison Office Ottawa, Capt. W.G. Parry RN, sent a highly classified and candid assessment of the future of Canadian Naval Aviation to the Admiralty. In his view, RCN Aviation was about to fight for its life with increased pressure from the RCAF, on the grounds that the RCAF could do the job better and cheaper. Although Parry considered this argument both specious and insidious, he noted that such statements attract politicians.

Parry also expressed the view that the Naval Board did not support the proposal that the navy should take over Maritime Air Command. He further noted that there were senior RCN officers brought up in a small ship navy who found the present size and configuration of the RCN "beyond their mental digestion", and accordingly would oppose any assumption of Maritime Air Command by the RCN.

Parry also forecast the gradual demise of Canadian-based RCAF fighters rendering it imperative the RCAF maintain their Maritime Command, since there would be little else left except a Transport Command.

He pointed out the determination of the RCAF to be the dominant shareholder of the defense budget, while the services were under pressure to reduce their expenditures. Parry believed the RCN would be tempted to downgrade Naval Aviation in order to protect the planned surface escort construction program.

There was an interesting Admiralty response to assist the RCN, where possible, by continuing to emphasize the need for carriers in the ASW role while stating "Also global war likelihood is steadily decreasing, whereas emphasis is shifting strongly for a need for more forces for cold and limited wars requiring mobile, versatile forces with other members of the Western Block and Commonwealth, providing ability through carrier forces which are the only force unaffected by limitations and restrictions i.e. over flying, landing rights, refueling rights etc. and can bring pressure to bear in any part of the world accessible by sea where there is trouble."

The Royal Navy's Director of Air Warfare noted as follows: "There is a good case for a strong Canadian Fleet Air Arm which alone can give Canada a mobile versatile force. A Canadian naval force of 2-3 carriers could be built at the expense of a declining RCAF-the time is indeed ripe for the RCN to attack the kind of defense policy advocated by the RCAF and press for a strong FAA which could do far more to maintain and extend Canada's prestige as a world power than her already moribund Air Force."

It is ironic to note that the foregoing mobile concept has been recognized and implemented over the years e.g. the Falkland War and the formation of mobile NATO and UN Peacekeeping Quick Reaction Forces.

An opportunity was provided in the summer of 1956 to enhance the capability of the RCN in a letter from UK Prime Minister, Anthony Eden, to the Canadian Prime Minister, proposing that Magnificent be retained by RCN (on loan) in addition to the purchase of ex-Powerful (Bonaventure). Naval Board were prepared to keep the carrier in dehumidified reserve but the Federal Cabinet decided to return Magnificent to the RN. If retained, the carrier could have played a significant role in the RCN. As subsequent events proved, Magnificent would not only have been an economical proposition as an ASW helicopter carrier manned with a greatly reduced crew, but in addition would have been indispensable to the Canadian army units subsequently assigned for UN peacekeeping duties.

In December 1955 the Deputy Minister directed that a critical review be conducted of RCN Aviation due to his concern about the considerable number of units (squadrons) and aircraft in use to support the two front line aircraft squadrons assigned for Bonaventure.

The review, recognizing that RCAF reserve squadrons were being disbanded, also proposed the disbandment of the reserve navy air squadrons. However, the Committee came up with a greatly different series of conclusions and recommendations and in a Top Secret report stated:

In the Eastlant role, Bonaventure would require an AEWcapability, fighter air defense and an ASW squadron. The carrier was too small to perform these functions.

Conclusions:

Bonaventure could carry only a mix of ASW aircraft consisting of fixed wing and helicopters and was therefore inadequate for the assigned role.

Recommendations:

The ASW group (hunter killer) should comprise two Light Fleet Class carriers which combined could provide AEW aircraft, fighters and ASW aircraft (helicopter and fixed-wing), or

A single carrier e.g. (USN Essex Class) be procured, which could fulfill the need for the required AEW, air defense of the fleet and the ASW role.

Observations:

Current naval plans failed to reflect the growing importance of the power of naval aviation in maritime warfare;

Operational Research Studies established that under certain circumstances two CS2F aircraft are more effective than a St. Laurent Class escort;

Developments lead to the conclusion that a more effective navy could be achieved if a better balance of air to surface units was contemplated;

A serious imbalance of forces exists in the RCN insofar as the surface forces have steadily increased in personnel and ships, whereas Naval Aviation, even though rearming with new aircraft, had not grown proportionally;

Helicopter platforms for escorts were proposed to augment the range of carrier-based ASW helicopters and have an independent increased search capability.

The reference to the carrier limitations, although disturbing news to some, confirmed exactly what the USN had earlier stated. Now four months before the commissioning of Bonaventure, it was now officially established that the ship was incapable of meeting its assigned role. Air defense of the fleet was virtually impossible without severe degradation of either the ASW or AEW capability.

As far as can be determined, the report prepared by non-aviators and remarkably similar to the one previously proposed by Keighly-Peach, was never discussed by Naval Board. There was no immediate reduction of aircraft and squadrons. There was no change of emphasis and the RCN continued with shipbuilding plans. This is not surprising since it would be suicidal for the CNS to admit to the Minister that naval planning had been on the wrong course, that the new carrier was inadequate, the new St. Laurent ships too slow, and an unbalanced fleet existed. The Committee clearly suggested the RCN, by concentrating on a small ship navy, was not only unable to meet its assigned role but remained inherently inflexible. Planning would continue unchanged.

Following the successful helicopter operating trials in 1956 aboard HMCS Buckingham, the decision was made to modify the St. Laurent Class ships to provide a ship-borne ASW helicopter capability. This was considered essential in the light of the recent developments in submarine high underwater speeds and would considerably enhance the detection ranges of the D/E's while at the same time offering a greatly improved level of protection for the relatively slow ships against submarine attack.

With the commissioning of HMCS Bonaventure in 1957, fitted with the angled deck, mirror landing system and steam catapult, the RCN was able to operate successfully with the Trackers. The Banshees however, although flyable from the carrier, were never fully operational in their assigned role of air defense of the fleet. This was due to a variety of reasons, including lack of sufficient carrier time, the recognized limitations of Bonaventure, but also the difficulty of maintaining and operating the necessary number of used Banshees with their shortened life span and reduced numbers. Also confirmed, as feared, were the major problems in operating a Light Fleet Class, slow carrier, with a requirement to maintain a first-line carrier readiness capability of two ASW squadrons, two jet squadrons and an ASW helicopter squadron.

In 1958 a detailed study to transfer Maritime Air Command to the RCN was implemented under the authority of Commodore Tony Storrs, Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Air and Warfare). This was a well-prepared document, which outlined financial savings by eliminating the duplication of manpower and resources. It was proposed that this be a gradual process, which would amalgamate the shore-based RCAF Maritime Air with RCN Aviation. A further benefit would result from providing a more stable, rewarding and varied career for aircrew. To have all Maritime Aviation assets combined in one service was obviously functionally desirable from the perspective of organization, command and control. The study never saw the light of day and was rejected outright by CNS Vice Admiral DeWolf. One assumes he believed it was not a politically acceptable risk to antagonize the RCAF, since RCN policy was co-operation not confrontation. Perhaps the policy even became conciliatory, bearing in mind the fact that the RCN, the smallest of the services, needed all the support it could get from the more influential and powerful other two services. On direct order of the CNS all copies of the report were ordered destroyed.

A significant section of the Report disclosed that by the end of 1958, with the introduction of the Argus aircraft, Maritime Air Command would total a staggering number of 4600 uniformed personnel and a civilian complement of 750 to support a mere 50 aircraft. At the same time RCN Aviation was supporting over 100 aircraft with no more than 2100 uniformed personnel.

By 1959 Naval Board, recognizing the need to extend the range of the ships' ASW weapons system, agreed that new helicopters were required. A program was therefore approved to integrate ASW helicopters into the fleet. About the same time there were reductions imposed upon the fixed-wing training squadrons, which followed on from the Deputy Minister's previous directive to cut back support squadrons. Similarly, as a result of limited carrier time available and shortage of aircraft, the two Banshee squadrons were reduced to one through amalgamation. By the end of the year another squadron identity was lost with the amalgamation of VS 880 and VS 881.

In 1960 a letter, written by Air Commodore Lister to the CAS, once again revealed the ongoing attempts by the senior RCAF brass to limit the scope of RCN Aviation. In this memo Lister pressed for the rejection of an application for an RCN pilot to serve on exchange duty with an Argus squadron. Lister's reasons were that the RCN had been attempting to have one or more of their officers fly the large RCAF aircraft. He was concerned this could happen if a naval pilot was sent to the Greenwood Argus base. There never was an exchange of aircrew between the RCN and RCAF, yet the RCAF exchanged their aircrew on a regular basis to fly in USN Neptune squadrons. This was a clear intention on the part of the RCAF to avoid any intermingling of RCN and RCAF Maritime aircrew.

In 1961, when the selection of an RCN ASW helicopter was finally approved, one justification made at the Naval Board level in favor of the Sea King (HSS2) was that it could be considered as a possible replacement of the Tracker. Subsequent discussion with senior naval aviators, including Captain Ted Edwards, disclosed that there never had been any suggestion that the Sea King could or would be suitable as a replacement for the fixed-wing Tracker and Naval Staff had never considered such a justification. It would appear therefore that it been solely the result of a Naval Board initiative.

This initiative, however, falls in line with the so-called Brock Report by VCNS Rear Admiral Brock, which proposed a restructuring of the RCN by 1975 through building the fleet around what was called a General Purpose Frigate, Helicopter ships and submarines. Although generally supported by Naval Board this concept eventually died 'stillborn' for a variety of reasons, including financial. There was also major concern expressed by the current government that the GP frigate did not have the flexibility to satisfactorily carry out the ASW task. In short, by being a general-purpose ship, although capable of performing a number of roles, it would not be on a cost effective basis. If nothing else, however, it did indicate that there was a decided lack of overall support for future fixed wing carrier aviation being expressed by the current Naval Board. They saw the ASW helicopter as the only ship-borne weapon system that could provide not only an improved level of detection but also greater defence of the individual surface units from submarines.

The emphasis on the surface fleet was to a degree later affirmed in the fleet review by the CNS Vice Admiral Rayner in a year-end summary. Rayner disclosed that the number of ships in the RCN had tripled in ten years. Meanwhile RCN fixed wing aviation was currently undergoing a reduction. It was now becoming evident that there was shift toward helicopters at the expense of fixed wing carrier aviation where growth had virtually slowed to a standstill.

By 1962 the Banshee fighters were withdrawn from service, leaving the RCN bereft of any air defense capability of the fleet. Recognizing the limitations of Bonaventure, exploratory discussions at the Naval Staff level with the

USN established that a fully modernized Essex Class carrier could be provided for \$5-6M. Nothing ever resulted from this attractive offer, which would have created a balanced RCN fleet. There was also a growing concern being expressed by the surface executive branch officers at the number of aviation specialized officers who were filling sea-going command and XO billets. For example, during the Cuban missile crisis there were 11 ships commanded by aviators, another five were in XO appointments. Overall, airmen or ex-airmen commanded 25% of the operational ships. An additional 33 more air officers were in the process of obtaining their upper deck watch keeping certificates. This situation had culminated in a growing groundswell of antagonism from the regular executive officers, who were now more and more being denied full access to what they considered to be their exclusive career-making appointments. Not only was the RCN Aviation Branch in direct competition with the surface fleet for the budget allocation, but also as Executive Branch members, the airmen were increasingly becoming rivals in the officers' personnel career structure.

As overall budget restrictions came into play during 1963, a further cutback in RCN fixed wing aviation took place with a reduction of 10% in aircraft numerical strength. The surface fleet remained virtually unaffected as only 10 auxiliary vessels were withdrawn out of a total of 125 surface vessels. This disparity further suggests that as progressive financial restrictions were applied, invariably Naval Aviation would be the most adversely affected.

As integration was finally implemented in 1964 and the Defense White Paper was presented, there was considerable political in fighting among the three services. The RCAF, with a large well trained staff and a powerful lobby, was in the best position to capitalize upon the absolute confusion that prevailed. There was an attempt to apply the flexibility and mobility requirements of the White Paper by a triumvirate of senior officers at the Commodore level from the three services. Their proposed sea-lift with a brigade-sized capability and tactical fighters for UN operations never gained the necessary degree of support, even though at the final Naval Board meeting in July 1964 the A4E fighter was approved for Bonaventure. Later, the capital Maritime program assigned it the lowest priority along with the heavy sealift requirement for the Army.

Bonaventure, flying with Trackers and Sea Kings, together with the surface escort squadron, was consistently providing a level of ASW proficiency that was the envy of other NATO ASW carrier groups. VS 880, the Tracker squadron meanwhile was establishing a standard of carrier all-weather ASW operations not being achieved by any other squadrons. Similarly, the Sea King helicopters were now becoming increasingly proficient in combined ASW tactics with the Trackers, while breaking new ground in developing innovative ASW tactics and procedures for integrated helicopter and DDE operations.

Although, operationally, RCN Aviation was at its highest level of ASW excellence, all did not appear to bode

well for the future of the fixed-wing ASW forces. In November 1964 Rear Admiral Landymore, replaced Maritime Commander Rear Admiral Brock who was forced into retirement. Some time later in a visit to Shearwater, Landymore made a candid and somewhat ominous speech to the assembled squadron commanders. There he made it abundantly clear that the future emphasis of RCN Aviation would be directed toward integrated helicopter operations aboard the destroyer escorts. This was a disturbing statement, which flew in the face of the concept of a balanced RCN Aviation Branch, with fixed wing and helicopters working jointly in the ASW role.

The Naval Aviation staff had initiated and developed the concept of the Sea King helicopter in the tactical ASW role both aboard the carrier and the destroyer escorts. Any change in this concept of operations was certainly not known or supported by the Naval Aviation Staff at Canadian Forces Headquarters and Shearwater. How much of Landymore's statement was a personal belief or a hidden agenda that was yet to be finalized, will probably never be known. What is known, however, is that a variety of options were surfacing which collectively appeared to indicate that the surface fleet was increasingly dependant on the integrated helicopter/DDE concept to help justify their operational existence. Accordingly, the prime concept of the fixed wing/helo carrier team could well be in jeopardy in the years ahead. In addition, as unification commenced, there would be few influential senior naval officers at CFHQ who had the necessary understanding and appreciation of the scope and flexibility of carrier aviation to be their advocates.

By 1966 the Naval Staff, as had previously existed, was disbanded. Naval Board had been abolished. Next followed the resignation of the navy's most senior officer, Vice Admiral Dyer, and the firing of Rear Admiral Landymore. The exodus of Admirals began. Among them was Rear Admiral Welland, who was the only senior naval officer serving at CFHQ in a position to speak for Naval Aviation with any authority. By late summer, Commodore J.C. O'Brien was promoted to Rear Admiral and replaced the forced out Landymore as Maritime Commander. While the turmoil continued unabated at CFHQ, another problem arose with the announcement at the end of 1966 that the major refit of Bonaventure had risen in costs by an additional \$3M, which extended the refit an additional six months. Although the increase was unforeseen, the costs were well justified in light of the fact that the hull of the carrier was over 22 years old and many repair items could not have been accurately identified and realistically coasted until all spaces and compartments could be opened up. The adverse publicity that resulted from the cost escalation and the extended time the carrier was out of service however was a situation just waiting to be exploited by those who were unsupportive of carrier aviation.

By 1967 the Sea King helicopter air detachments of HS 50 had commenced operations aboard the modified destroyer escorts, while Bonaventure returned to operational

service with her complement of newly improved Trackers and the Sea Kings. The often criticized refit, although over budget, provided the carrier an estimated 10 year period of operations with an enhanced performance provided by the various modifications to operational equipment and crew habitability. In spite of the size and speed limitations of the carrier, flying operations and the ASW performance of Bonaventure and her escort group over the next 18 months was second to none in the ongoing NATO exercises involving both the USN and other western navies.

Maritime Commander, Vice Admiral O'Brien, however, was under increasing pressure from the highest levels at CFHQ. O'Brien, facing an often unsupportive Defense Council with its controlling majority held by the top echelons of the RCAF and Army, was constantly having to defend his management and policy decisions. With virtually no senior naval staff in positions of influence at CFHQ, the Maritime Commander was on many occasions almost completely isolated. In one graphic example he was told to provide no further fuel for Bonaventure, which was scheduled for a major exercise. He managed to bypass that directive by filling the supply ship Provider with fuel and then transferring it to the carrier.

With regard to career planning for the naval aviators, they were almost completely blocked off for promotion. Air Vice Marshal Reyno, when in the position of Chief of Personnel, adroitly filled many officer billets with newly promoted and available Wing Commanders and Squadron Leaders as the positions were established. Many of the experienced naval aviators in the similar ranks of Lt. Commander and Commander were conveniently bypassed during the confusion, and until each individual was laboriously transferred to the Air List from the naval Executive Branch, virtually no career planning took place.

In another equally discriminatory move, the qualifications and specifications for the newly established MARS (Maritime surface officer branch) neatly excluded, with but few exceptions, the existing naval aviator cadre as they were automatically transferred to the Air Force dominated and administered Air List.

In the spring of 1969, with cutbacks facing the forces, rumors began circulating that the carrier was a particular target insofar as Prime Minister Trudeau's announced change in defense policy included a phased reduction of the Canadian Commitment to NATO. Later in June a stated personnel reduction for the forces over the next three years was announced along with cutbacks in the budget.

There was definitely a sense of foreboding following word of the defense reductions and it was inevitable that it would have a negative impact on the number of operational ships in commission. On the night of 20 September 1969 Bonaventure and her escort group were in the midst of Exercise Peace Keeper, one of the most intensive and wide-ranging, with but few exceptions, the existing naval aviator

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The bombshell arrived in the form of a CBC short wave news service. Bonaventure was to be scrapped, and VS 880 was slated for disbandment. The duplicity of the new Defense Minister Leo Cadieux together with his insensitivity was unpardonable. Only one week earlier he had dismissed a report of Bonaventure's retirement as pure speculation. Vice Admiral O'Brien had assured Captain Jim Cutts, the CO of the carrier, that he would inform Cutts if there were to be any change of status in the carrier. Even O'Brien, the Navy's top operational commander, was not given the courtesy of being advised prior to the media that his most valuable fleet asset was being scrapped. Also humiliated was the Parliamentary Committee aboard Bonaventure who had prepared a complete dossier of the role and scope of Maritime Command for presentation to Parliament.

Those who engineered the demise of the carrier well knew the implications of what they were doing. It would not be long before Canadian Naval Aviation was to become a non-entity, since the withdrawal of the carrier virtually ensured the demise of the Tracker squadron and the operational fixed wing-training units. The remaining support units would be progressively eliminated through amalgamation and reductions, as would the associated aviation infrastructure. Today there is little information provided about the rationale behind the decision to scrap the carrier. There are many theories including: - the political fallout from the cost overrun of the carrier's refit - Trudeau's antipathy toward the military and NATO generally - the financial cutbacks - limited personnel to man the new Tribal escorts - a separate unpublicized naval agenda to shift to a helicopter only force - a lack of will to maintain a balanced Canadian Naval Aviation - a muted naval voice with no common objective - a determination of the Air Force to eliminate the sharing of aviation funds with the rival carrier Naval Aviation. All the foregoing are no doubt likely factors, all hearing a degree of credibility. Individually none are dominant, collectively they are overwhelming. As retired Admiral Bob Falls stated some years ago, the proposal to scrap Bonaventure could well

have been made by the Minister of National Defense in a one-on-one meeting with General Fred Sharp, the Chief of Defense Staff. Sharp, then the highest ranking military officer and a former senior officer of the RCAF, would have little reason to disagree. It is highly doubtful if it was ever even discussed by the Defense Council. So ended the painstakingly developed, proud, highly motivated and skilled RCN Aviation, which in its assigned role was second to none. The 25 years of Canadian Naval Aviation and ultimate successes were not achieved without cost since 101 aviation personnel were killed on duty serving in their chosen field. Cynics will no doubt say politics is a way of life in all endeavors. One might ask however, can political actions ever be justified that result in the calculated destruction of a proven force which in 1969, for its size, was one of the most operational and cost effective branches of the Canadian military forces?

Who was responsible?

Was there ever any measurable benefit?

We will probably never know!

IN THE DELTA

CATTRAL, Earl

CHOUINARD, R.J. 'John'

COOKE, Doug

FRENETTE, John

MELDRUM, Shirley

SWAN, Andy

WHITE, JOHN

Your Other Right Stupid !

(Things we don't speak of too often)

You know that after many years, certain things simply stick in your mind. My approach to any learnin' was simply to try to absorb more, hoping some of it would be covered up...like the over-writing a computer does after you dump files. Despite this, it all seems to be recoverable in the end by some means. Just ask a hypnotist or someone that hates the way you did something back in 1952!

The parade GI's in the basic training I attended made a habit or point to scream into your ears whenever they had a chance! This took the form of calling you "four eyes" if you wore glasses or even "sissy" if you acted a little bit lady-like for some reason. I knew a guy we shall call "Hank." He always seemed to turn right when it was a "left turn" command! Would you believe that this guy didn't get his sailor's cap until almost the end of basic because he had this odd shaped head that they just could not fit...It seems funny now, but it was something best left unmentioned back then! It sure was a relief near graduation when he finally got his cap. Otherwise, he was as smart as a whip. He was one of those guys that came to boot camp with officer stamped on his ID card, rather than "Man." Some of them got the call while others got a new card!

The thing about the "old" navy (and it is likely true today) is that you were trained and drilled until it all became second nature. Later on, when I became a Warden in the National Parks system, we took many law enforcement courses and had to learn different techniques for putting the 'cuffs on violators and the best thing to do in the end was to practice one method until it became instinctive. Otherwise, when "all hell" broke loose, you'd likely get messed up in the heat of action. Military training was the same, 'duck or die' as I called it!

I grew up in the country and had done more than my share of hunting and fishing before going into the navy and considered that I was a fair shot until meeting the FN's on the rifle range. Peep sites were a whole lot different than the semi-buckhorn on the thirty-thirty. I recall the first time on range with the military and sending splinters from that white triangle they'd stick up there to show you where you were hittin'. After a good lecture, from the range officer, I actually got pretty good at it!

I remember doing emergency response training with the crash rescue team in Shearwater and being sent by the tower to mock crash sites on and between the runways...One day, I was driving one of the big trucks and had arrived at the site only to discover and be told very distinctly that there was nothing there. Oops! This caused quite a stir and I ended up on a hose line instead! Chasing birds and deer off the runways was more fun anyway!

Most everyone has heard the story of the guy who was asked to go get a bucket of "prop wash." They never did get me on that one. Not yet anyway! I remember going to the N.B.C.D. warfare school all psyched up and storming into an aircraft form mockup to rescue someone only to discover I could not lift the dummy they had in there and somehow ended up dragging it out, which I later found out you were supposed to do anyway. Thank gosh those suits were quite fire resistant!

Speaking of "goof-ups", I was out on the "Bonnie" one night, somewhere down near Bermuda and we were landing Sea kings.. I went in with the chocks and forgot all about that door being dropped open on the port side. Bang! Well, got it right on the head. Damn, no time to look stupid. I had to get the job done and out of there! And, never did tell too many about that one...It was no place to make mistakes!

Usually, I was waiting in the gun sponson for trackers on recovery as I would have to signal that the hook

was up and off the wire. My ship mate would duck down to the galley and bring up a couple of hamburgers he was somehow able to beg away from the cooks. Later on in life, I learned that it really is supposed to be good job therapy to put something for yourself into every working day! By this, I don't mean the supervisor's car or nuttin' like that but grab a coffee or a pop along the way!

Somehow, writing this made me think of my most embarrassing moment in the navy...Are you ready? I was walking to the recreation centre in Cornwallis one evening wearing a clean, white front (gun shirt.. 2 A's I believe) when a seagull flew overhead and bombed me right fair in the chest! This is where I learned the most about the diet of waterfowl. Scrap one white front! You know, I really liked that uniform and if I some day become Minister of National Defence, I'll bring it all back again! Unfortunately, the tide of acceptance may have turned by now! Wearing those 'bell bottoms, jumpers and gun shirts were actually quite comfortable. Things have definitely changed!

Well, that is part of my story and I may as well stick to it now!

John Gorman - ABAM R.C.N.

SONAR OPERATIONS

My Sea King pilot asked me if I had anything on my sonar, I told him to switch on and listen to the whales talking!

I also told him I had recently read where scientists think that whales may be able to communicate up to a thousand miles away, if they are both in the same thermocline.

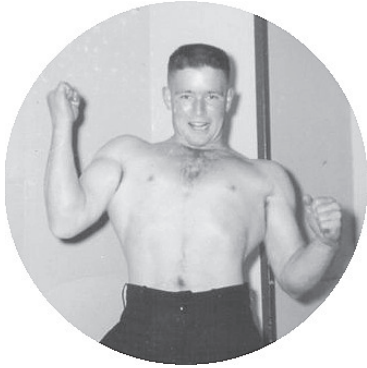
A little while later, he asked if I still had the whales. I answered, yes. He said, "What do you suppose they are saying? I told him, I knew exactly what they were saying. " They are saying, "Can you still hear meeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee?"



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Remembering...



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17.

Names on page 48.

In the Fall of 1953, only 'A Miracle At Sea' prevented the mass ditching of 42 aircraft into the North Atlantic.

A Miracle at Sea

From Bryan Hayter

In September of 1953 an almost unknown and incredible event took place on the high seas. This is the story.

I was aboard HMCS Magnificent, the RCN's Majestic class British light fleet carrier when she sailed from Halifax to join a fleet of NATO ships and aircraft on what was heralded as the greatest maritime maneuvers in history, Exercise Mariner. Over a 19 day period 300 ships, 1000 aircraft and half a million men from nine NATO countries took part in coordinated operations in the North Atlantic, North Sea and English Channel. The primary object of this massive undertaking was to test the efficiency of the participating naval forces under simulated conditions of war. What I am about to relate to you is the story of a miracle and it is told not only through my personal recollections but also through my good friend Stuart Soward's book *Hands to Flying Stations* Volume 1 and the recollections of Magnificent's Captain, Vice Admiral H.S. Rayner.



Sea Fury

For Magnificent the exercise began on September 16, 1953 when she sailed as the senior ship of a task force to provide anti-submarine and air defense for a 10 ship logistic force convoy. Flying intensity was of high order with our squadron Avengers flying around the clock on anti-submarine patrols maintaining four on station. Our fighter aircraft, the Hawker Sea Fury's were conducting dawn to dusk air patrols in defense of the fleet. An additional asset to the air surveillance of the fleet was provided by a flight of airborne early warning Avengers called Guppies.

After the first phase of Mariner was completed the convoy group assumed the role of a logistic support force. Replenishment was carried out and Magnificent and her escorts were now integrated in a fast carrier force with two American Essex class carriers, Bennington and Wasp.

The fleet was now transiting one of the most treacherous and unpredictable ocean areas involving the combination of the Labrador and Greenland currents and the Gulf Stream. The ensuing merging of these different over-running currents was not only subject to changing air masses overhead but the entire region was notorious for its unpredictable weather patterns.

On September 23 a series of events unfolded around the 3 carrier task force which swiftly deteriorated into an extremely dangerous situation. It was feared that a catastrophe was about to take place and of such proportions that it would result in the worst peace time disaster in history. Let me share more of this unbelievable story through the eyes of Vice Admiral H.S. Rayner in a newspaper article 11 years after the event. I quote "Probably the most hair-raising incident in the peace time history of the RCN has been recounted for the first time by Vice Admiral H.S. Rayner who retires this month as Chief of the Naval Staff. Admiral Rayner told a reporter that the September 23 incident, when Canadian and American carrier borne planes were almost lost en masse sticks out in his mind as vividly as his battle actions as a destroyer commander during WW 2. At the time Rayner was commanding the aircraft carrier Magnificent which was in company with US carriers Bennington and Wasp, the US battleship Iowa and a host of other Canadian, American and NATO ships on Exercise Mariner in the mid Atlantic. The nearest landing field was an unmanned strip on the southern tip of Greenland 450 miles from the fleet. Admiral Rayner tells the story this way. "Weather information on that particular afternoon was unusually meagre. At 1330, 52 aircraft were launched in good weather to carry out an exercise some distance from the fleet. Without warning a blanket of fog rolled in. The aircraft were recalled at 1440 but only ten managed to land. Repeated attempts were made to talk down more planes using radar and radio but the pilots couldn't get low enough to see the decks. We could hear the unseen approaches through the solid wall of fog. The Iowa and cruisers were ordered well astern of the carriers to eliminate the hazards of masts and high structures for the aviators. The three carriers were in line abreast. We were entirely dependent on radar because the ships had lost site of one another in the fog. The planes formed up high above the position of the unseen fleet below. At 1620 it was estimated the planes had enough fuel for another two hours. Plans were made for a mass ditching of aircraft. Boats were manned with picked crews, ropes were rigged to hang down over the sides, life rafts were readied for slipping and the sick bay was prepared. Then came a call from a US submarine, Redfin, 10 miles to the west. She said the ceiling near her was 100 feet with two miles visibility. The carriers could not reach the area before dark but the aircraft could so we decided to head for Redfin where the pilots could ditch in a group near the submarine. Just as darkness approached there was a miracle! That is the only words for it. The fog ahead began to thin and lift a bit. We began to make out other ships. The planes were recalled and came down one by one on whatever carrier was convenient. At 1820 it was

dark and 10 planes were still in the air even though there estimated fuel time had passed. But they all got down. Within minutes after the last plane landed the fog shut down again. An isolated patch of warm water on the way to Redfin had opened up the fog at exactly the critical moment” and so the article ended.



Avenger

As I was flying one of the last 10 aircraft my perspective was much different. After our 1330 launch we formed up in two groups of four with a Guppy Avenger leading and were vectored by the ship in the direction of the ‘enemy’ submarine Redfin. Not long after turning on course we were instructed to begin an orbit in loose formation until further notice. What was happening? When the minutes grew into hours a real sense of alarm crept over me and my crew. Where were we going to go? About this time the Guppy was ordered to attempt a landing using its great radar to track in. They couldn’t get low enough to see the ship. Before long they were called in again and again to no avail. There was utter silence in the cockpit. It slowly began to dawn on us that we might have to ditch our aircraft and by the look of our dwindling fuel supply and gathering darkness it would be sooner rather than later. I began going over the ditching procedures. My thoughts were suddenly interrupted by the ship calling the Guppy in again. We held our breath. Minutes later a triumphant cry broke the silence. They had made it aboard! We had a chance.

With that initial success the ship began to clear us in two by two and when it came to our turn I closed up on my leader as near as I dared. He signaled a descent and before long we entered the dense cloud and fog. Visibility deteriorated drastically. When my radio altimeter registered 150 feet and I could barely make out the water I despaired..

Suddenly a light flashed by, then another and another. What were they? We found out later that they were flares thrown into the water by the ships crew. Our leader followed them until we came upon wake and then the stern of Magnificent and we came up along her starboard side and into the upwind leg of the landing circuit. When the leader turned down wind I counted to 12

and did the same. It was completely dark and as we came abreast of the ship downwind we could barely make out her silhouette. When we turned onto the approach I settled down to watch the LSO’s signals like never before for we didn’t feel we had enough fuel for an overshoot. As we approached the ships round down with a roger signal the tension eased. The LSO gave a cut and we landed on with a welcome thud. As I was clearing the deck, I noticed an US Skyraider. I thought any old port in a storm I guess. When I climbed out of the cockpit my legs gave way and I slid off the wing into the arms of a group of cheering deckhands. One thoughtful lad thrust a cup of navy rum into my trembling hands and as I slowly drank it down I felt the tension of all those hours in the air begin to ebb. The remaining aircraft came aboard safely. We had all made it. HALLELUJAH!. And the fog closed down again.

There was great rejoicing and thanksgiving in the ship and indeed, in the entire fleet that night. Aboard Maggie we attended Chapel to give thanks for the safe return of all of our aircraft and for the blessed miracle that let it happen. We also welcomed our fellow pilot from Bennington and he was overjoyed to share in the libations that the wardroom bar served. The USN does not serve alcohol aboard their ships.

The following morning I made my way to the flight deck to clear my head from the celebration of the night before and to have a look at the visiting aircraft. It was covered with graffiti! As I began to chuckle at the scene the Captain appeared. He was not chuckling. He ordered the crew to erase the graffiti but did acquiesce to leaving a small red maple leaf with Maggie below it on the fuselage as a memento of that terrifying night when an American pilot found safe haven aboard a Canadian carrier.

When Mariner was completed and the ship back in Halifax my time in 881 Squadron came to a close. I went on to take a helicopter course and spent the next two years helping to form up and then serve in the RCN’s first anti –submarine helicopter squadron.

When my seven year short service commission ended a group of great friends threw a farewell party for us. As I looked into their dear faces I was reminded of the life and times that we had spent with this unique and happy band of warriors with whom I was so proud to have served and of the miracle we had been given. It was a life that was so aptly described by an unknown American naval pilot when he said, *“It gave us moments of fear and loneliness, kinship and challenge, joy and sorrow, pride, tragedy and triumph. It became a part of us then and is a part of us now. It will be with us until the end of our days, the carrier experience.”*

The Battle of the Atlantic

Feature of the month - Crown & Anchor

by Jim Jameson, May 1967

Submitted by David Bakody

The Battle of the Atlantic ended 22 years ago May '67 and although that may be a long time in the minds of a younger generation, to those kids who sailed the ships and watched their chums die in the North Atlantic, its like yesterday. Billy Bloggins joined the RCNVR many miles from the Atlantic. He'd never really seen it before and had never really given much thought to it. Within 24 hours of joining he learned such ribald songs as "Roll Along Wavey Navy", "All The Nice Girls Love a Sailor." He removed his manure covered boots, his bib-overalls, his straw hat and substituted an off-the-shelf pusser uniform. It looked great to his mother. Everything was too big ...except the hat... it was too small. Four years later Billy returned to Medicine Hat, Weyburn, Brandon, Kingston, or Trois Rivières. He wore a jumper that was so tight it took two mess-mates to remove it. He also wore a port & starboard cap...low over his eyebrows, turned up in the front. His Med blue collar, hand stitched, having been scrubbed religiously to give it that salty look. His jumper cuffs were turned up and he had a Newfie nickel tied in the tiddley-bow of his cap talley. He had abandoned the flannel and singlet for a dickey-front & combined with a U-fronted jumper left him bare almost to the navel. He'd learned salty songs in Kipper NAFI that would curl his fathers hair, and then he'd made-up a few himself. He'd set the dress and disciplinary regulations of the RCN back by thirty years --- but HE HAD JUST WON THE WAR!

He didn't win it by himself; he was guided by the professional navy man some pre-war Volunteer Reserves and he learned much of his sea-lore from the leather-skinned barely understandable Maritime & Newfoundland fishermen, who answered the urgent call of the Canadian Navy for skilled seaman. A granny-knot in a roll of binder twine became a bowline in a heaving line. They re-taught him to lace his boots in a proper service manner. The confusion amid tapes, buttons and ribbons of his uniform was exceeded only by the terror of Navy-issue beds. He thought a mattress was ridiculous and thin, until he discovered it was meant to hang in thin air, getting it into position was a feat in engineering. which he was soon to master, by necessity. A bunch of rope called clews, left him cold, and he didn't have a clue what to do with them. He found out, and subsequently discovered that his hammock is the only place on a ship he could find comfort.

Some of the meals were fair; most of them were bad not always because the cook was lacking the culinary art but in many cases this was a contributing factor. Rations were short; and a four week "cruise" with a slow convoy, with too many men and not enough space didn't make things any easier. At times things appear to improve for the individual; but even when the dizzy heights of a destroyer's life were reached mess deck life was no picnic. Every new

piece of equipment took more space and more men, & new equipment was necessary to survive.

On-time-testable living conditions in Naval Barracks became a real treat. Billy remembered some strange stories such as the corvette, with a dummy gun as her main armament, who had the temerity to challenge the battleship HMS Rodney. RODNEY'S reply was "Carry on Canada with your gallant little ship". He remembered the kid in HMCS CLAYAQUOT who shouted as he jumped over the side "NEWS FLASH---CLAYAQUOT DESTROYS NAZI TORPEDO". He remembered the destroyer C.O. who after abandoning ship, gave his life jacket to a rating and was never seen again.

Billy wasn't always on the North Atlantic. He remembered standing for what seemed hours in a line to get two glasses of green beer in the Stadacona wet canteen, and going to the back of the line to drink it so he could get two more. He remembered being hit by a quart beer bottle at the debutante's ball in the "Gay Paree" on Barrington Street, and even after they changed the name of the establishment to the "Silver Slipper", the décor remained much the same. He remembered well the waitress in the Bon Ton who threw him down the long flight of stairs to Sackville Street because he got fresh with her. He remembered the relief he felt to find you could bribe clerks in the Liquor Store with a dollar bill folded behind your permit, and thus get more than one bottle for a month.

Billy Bloggins wasn't an individual. He was the personification of Initiative, ability self-sacrifice and devil-may-care, of Canadian youth. He was the apple of the ladies eyes, a puzzle to his superiors, a chum to his peers, and a nice kid. Whether he returned to the bib-overalls or not, he left a heritage which will be difficult to follow.

What causes arthritis??

A drunk man who smelled like beer sat down on a subway next to a priest. The man's tie was stained, his face was plastered with red lipstick, and a half empty bottle of gin was sticking out of his torn coat pocket. He opened his newspaper and began reading. After a few minutes the man turned to the priest and asked, "Say Father, what causes arthritis?"

The priest replied, "My Son, it's caused by loose living, being with cheap, wicked women, too much alcohol, contempt for your fellow man, sleeping around with prostitutes and lack of a bath."

The drunk muttered in response, "Well, I'll be damned." Then returned to his paper.

The priest, thinking about what he had said, nudged the man and apologized. "I'm very sorry. I didn't mean to come on so strong. How long have you had arthritis?"

The drunk answered, "I don't have it, Father. I was just reading here that the Pope does."



Bras d'Or Voyage. Halifax to Bermuda to Norfolk to Halifax. 15-29 June, 1971

By Gordon Edwards

After three great years in command of HMCS Assiniboine, 1967-1970, and with four years seniority as a Commander, I was expecting some kind of career enhancing appointment, such as one staff course or another. Out of



the blue in May, 1970, I was surprised to read a signal that appointed me in command of HMCS Bras d'Or, perhaps at that time the last position I would want, having **Adm G. Edwards (Ret'd)** seen her going through many trial tribulations, and indeed being towed back into harbour on some occasions. However, that was to be it, so get on with the job! I also

subsequently found out that the project manager, Captain Dudley Allan, wanted an aviator in command, as in fact Bras d'Or actually "flew" with its anhedral fins, thus leaning into a turn and requiring some degree of coordination in that regard.

During my turnover with the previous Commanding Officer, Tino Cotaras, I stated that I would like to consider taking advantage of all the privileges of a fully commissioned ship, which she was, and the desire to take the ship somewhere. Realistically, observing the complete trial nature of the ship at that stage, Commander Cotaras advised me otherwise. Well, I was determined, but of course it was early. But in spite of many technical problems, mostly with the main foil, made of maraging steel, which seemed to develop cracks when under strain at high speed and in turns, and some other problems with lubrication of the main drive systems, the ship finished successfully ALL rough weather and other trials in early 1971. One remaining outstanding issue was replenishment at sea. Accordingly, I looked at the Fleet Schedule with regard to getting use of a tanker, while at the same time taking the ship on a voyage of significance, in order to prove once and for all that she was seaworthy. My plan

was either St. John's, NL, or Bermuda, and thus I took this proposal to Commodore Ian Morrow, the Marcom Chief of Staff. He immediately suggested I not only go to Bermuda but Norfolk as well. This was a surprise, but of course more than welcome to me, as frankly I had not even thought of Norfolk, realizing that this was going to be more than "ambitious". However, Commodore Morrow encouraged me to consider it, and that he would provide all the necessary support. It didn't take long to make a decision to go for it.

The project officer in NDHQ, Captain Allan gave immediate approval, and thus planning for all the technical and support aspects began, in particular approval and so on for both Bermuda and Norfolk. In particular, special arrangements were required for berthing, as in the hull mode, Bras d'Or drew about 25 feet, and the foils extended well out from the hull. It was of course possible to Mediterranean moor at each place, but that is not very convenient for a lot of reasons. However, in trials at Shearwater, it had been proven to be feasible and easy, so it was a last ditch possibility. In fact though, both Bermuda and Norfolk provided a shallow barge alongside which accommodated the extended foils. Also, as it was planned to berth in Hamilton in Bermuda, it was necessary to ensure adequate and clear depth alongside. It turned out we had just enough in Bermuda, but I did want to ensure that some "disposed" vehicle or other wasn't lurking on the bottom, knowing Hamilton's history of shorefront shenanigans.

And so planning all completed, Bras d'Or sailed along with HMCS Preserver and four destroyers, they off on another exercise under the Command of Commodore Bill Hayes.

(As an aside, we also sailed with some 200 cases of Olands beer, donated by Commodore Bruce Oland. Some suggested that we would now never get foilborne, without realizing that Bras d'Or had more than ample power for any extra weight of this kind. My next problem was how to USE the beer, as of course it was NOT for sale. Thus I just gave the order that anyone off watch was welcome to a beer at any time, and that the privilege was NOT to be abused. This worked just fine with a very professional crew, and the beer lasted almost until Norfolk.)

After departing Halifax, Bras d'Or sailed with the fleet for several hours until well clear and at sea, and then replenishment trials commenced. At 13 knots, it was all very easy and station keeping alongside with the diesel engine and controllable pitch screws was more than easy. In an hour various solid stores and then fuel was transferred, and then, topped up, Bras d'Or detached from the fleet, going foilborne and the usual trip around the other ships at 50 knots, always exciting. After a three hour foilborne run to make up some time lost in the trials, it was back on the hull and set sail for Bermuda. Mainly, it was an uneventful passage, delayed for about 30 minutes with a broken lubrication line, and then some higher seas, but the weather did not hamper the ETA.

Navigation was quite basic as being overcast, the sextant was useless, and in general, all that was available was the small radar. Accordingly, the course and then homing for Bermuda was accomplished using a hand held battery radio, using aural null to home on a local Bermuda radio station. (An aviation background helped!) Thus we hit Bermuda perfectly and right on time.

All necessary arrangements were made in Bermuda by the Canadian Naval Liaison Officer, LtCdr Ted Kieser. It was fortunate that due to past visits to Bermuda I knew the waters and channels very well. We entered the main channel foilborne and then did a brief demonstration in front of several thousand spectators who had been informed of the event beforehand. Then back on the hull for the tricky part of the south channel. I had asked permission to traverse Two Rocks passage into Hamilton, but that was turned down with a message that for some reason was not "received" in time! We then went foilborne just outside the main channel into Hamilton, and proceeded foilborne at 40 knots down Dundonald Channel and through Two Rocks passage, alighting right in front of the Princess Hotel. After that it was an easy alongside at the Flagpole Jetty in Hamilton, in front of yet more thousands of spectators, many who had come from the other side of the Island where they had watched the foilborne demonstration.

The stay in Bermuda was marvelous, with the only real problem alongside being the requirement to run the GT-85 gas turbine for power supply, somewhat noisy, and also requiring watch keeping. There was an open house on Sunday when the ship received a few thousand visitors, and a small reception was held onboard for local dignitaries.

The ship departed Hamilton Harbour with the Governor and a number of other dignitaries for a foilborne demonstration in Port Royal, before proceeding alongside a barge for fuel before departing for Norfolk. Port Royal is not a large body of water, but it was sufficient to provide a good demonstration. The Governor and party departed the barge by boat, and the ship slipped and proceeded to sea and for Norfolk.

(A curious aside was that when the ship was proceeding on the hull to Port Royal, she passed an American ship, USS Diamond Head, a smaller replenishment ship, who was proceeding out of harbour. Late when Bras d'Or departed and went foilborne, she quickly caught up with the Diamond Head, did a complete circle and proceeded on to Norfolk, which also appeared to be the destination of Diamond Head. This proved to be fortuitous in that in Norfolk the crew of the Diamond Head sought out the ship and adopted and took care of the ships' company in a number of ways!)

Another interesting aspect on the way to Norfolk was that there was yet another problem with the diesel engine, and if that could not be fixed, then the ship would have to

proceed foilborne. Thus a message to Norfolk stated that if the diesel couldn't be fixed, the ship would arrive 24 hours early. As expected, this made a great headline for the Norfolk newspaper....."Canadian naval ship breaks down, will arrive 24 hours early!" Well, after several hours it was found that the diesel engine could be repaired, so all was back on schedule.

At Norfolk there is a long channel into the main harbour, and the plan was to traverse that foilborne, but of course once that decision was made, then the ship had to enter foilborne in order to ensure the time of arrival. Fortunately, there was no problem and timing was right on. It was a slightly hazy day, about 1-2 miles visibility, and thus when no ship was in sight with about 10 minutes to go, Captain (N) Fotheringham was getting a bit worried. He told me afterwards that one of his proudest moments in all his time in the navy, was when Bras d'Or came out of the haze foilborne at 50 knots, right ON time. After a foilborne turn off the jetty, the ship alighted and then easily went alongside.

The stay in Norfolk was excellent with, of course, a lot of interest shown by the USN, Saclant and others. On the second day, we had FIVE demonstrations for about 75 NATO officers, 15 at time, and these entailed a 20 minute briefing and then a foilborne demonstration. These went off without a hitch, greatly impressing all those who took part.

Before departure at noon on the last day in Norfolk, a special demonstration was scheduled for Admiral Duncan, Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic, but this had to be changed to a briefing only, as there was a bad readout on the ST-6 gas turbine. This defect was resolved after sailing, however, as the readout was an essential part of the engine, it was determined to be too risky to continue with a foilborne demonstration at that time. The ship sailed for Halifax at 1300, in good weather conditions, which prevailed until Halifax.

The passage to Halifax, mostly on the hull, was mostly uneventful. Knowing that the Standing Naval Force of six destroyers was coming down from Halifax, it was hoped to "attack" them when passing. However, at rendezvous time, they couldn't be seen on radar, so the ship went foilborne, and the extra height on the radar revealed the force about 20 miles on the port beam, a bit too far, so it was decided to give up the chase! The statement that the return was uneventful does require a bit of elaboration as the end was anything but uneventful. The ship was cruising along the Nova Scotia coast, just past Yarmouth, on a lovely evening, and I was sitting outside with some of the crew, when all of a sudden, there was a bang and a large puff of black smoke from the stack. It seemed that half of the diesel bank had blown, and thus only could be used very sparingly at half power. After sitting in the water for several hours and then determining that a repair was impossible, it was decided that in order to make the ETA, the ship would have to proceed foilborne for several hours, in the dark. This was done easily, but some very

surprised fishing boats were passed in the dark at 50 knots. The ship then arrived off Halifax at 6 in the morning, for an 0900 ETA, however, once again the ship would have to depend on the foilborne mode.

The ship went foilborne at 0830 and proceeded up the channel and into Halifax harbour at 50 knots, passed the dockyard at 0845, up to Bedford Basin, turned and came back down under the bridges, and alighted off the jetty at 0855, allowing 5 minutes for the alongside.

And that was a definite moment of truth, as the diesel was still somewhat of an unknown, however, it started, and we proceeded alongside, with only half the engine, very slow and carefully, and thus arrived right on time. No one of course knew anything about the diesel engine, so the end of the voyage, with the Band of the Royal Canadian Regiment playing on the jetty, was a marvelous event. I always shuddered to think how it could have happened otherwise, with a delayed ETA, no diesel engine, and with the possibility of a foilborne problem.....being towed back in would not have been the same!!

And this ended all the trial period for the ship and seaworthiness. All that remained was to fit the fighting equipment and carry on with the final trials, proving the ship once and for all, one way or the other. Unfortunately, this was not to be, the ship was "mothballed" for a number of years, and then ended up at the Maritime Museum of Quebec, where she sits proudly on the foreshore, and is one of the biggest attractions at that museum.

It could have ended otherwise, with a fleet of very capable small warships, but now we will never know.



(An OM was airborne in a Sea King when he heard the CO of the Bras d'Or, who was also a Pilot, asking for landing instructions from Shearwater tower. He was sailing up the harbour, at a high speed, at the time. The tower asked him to confirm his position as they could not find him on radar.)

MID ATLANTIC FUN

Twas a dark and stormy night, no I lie, it was a bright and sunny day in the mid Atlantic onboard HMCS Huron

enroute to Portsmouth and the Silver Jubilee Spithead Fleet review. June 18th 1977 to be exact. Huron had joined a group of American ships heading in the same direction, USS Milwaukee, California, Francis Marion, Julius A. Furer and USS Brown.

Huron had embarked only one Helo for the voyage as the other half of the hangar was taken up with an EW van we were returning to Jolly Old. There we were boring holes in the sky on your standard crew trainer and about half an hour prior to recovery the fun began. It seems that a H2 Seasprite had come to visit from the Furer and had gone unserviceable on deck.



H2 Seasprite

Then the fun really began. The H2 had shut down and there were problems getting it restarted. "Stinger 23 this is Huron it appears your recovery will be delayed how much fuel do you have remaining? Stinger 23: 45 minutes." The time ticked by, and we continued to bore holes in the sky. A short time later Huron – "Stinger what's happening? Huron: standby." And so it went. "Huron – Stinger if you are going to delay our recovery much longer we will need to refuel." This was not going to happen from Huron as the deck was fouled and there was no way to safely rig the HIFR hoses. Time again marched onward. Huron – "Stinger arrange with Milwaukee for a fuelling. Stinger- Huron unable Milwaukee's flight deck is Notam'd for a party. Huron – Stinger right! We should be able to refuel from California. Stinger- Huron unable California is not cleared for a CH124. Huron-Stinger perhaps then we could find another source." Time continues to march on.

Huron - "Stinger the USS Furer is prepared to HIFR you." So off we truck to the Furer. As we hover alongside the Furer internal conversation in the aircraft went something like, Pilot- "OM this doesn't look like it's going to work. OM-PLT my thoughts exactly would you like me to bring the hose up just to confirm? PLT-OM: yes." So up comes the refuelling hose and suspicions are confirmed. OM-PLT: this definitely isn't going to work! PLT-"OM get it back on deck, OM-PLT its half way there." An aside, the H2 HIFIR receiver was inside the cabin and a female fitting designed to accept the male fitting on the ships hoses. By this time the low fuel lights were flickering and as I was securing the cabin to move forward the last thing I heard the PLT say was "I am declaring an emergency I am going to Milwaukee and if they don't clear the banyan off their

flight deck I will!" Moving forward to my seat out the windshield I could see a mast, and thought that doesn't look like a Milwaukee to me, and bump we were on a deck. Getting reconnected to the ICS, I asked "so where are we. We were planted on the USS Francis Marion."

PLT: "go find out if they have starting power or if we are going to have to hot refuel." So out I go and pose the question to a young deck crew gaily lashing us to the deck. His instant reply is "we got no gas for these Helos on this boat". Connecting to the external ICS I pass that good news on to the pilot although the young lad thought they had starting power. His immediate response is go find someone that knows for sure. Now we have just arrived on board like I can find he with that knowledge for sure. Anyway peering over the edge of the flight deck are a number of Ships Company so I pose the question to a CPO and LT (JG) who have the same story. By this time the low fuel lights are burning brightly so we shut down. Do we want to fold? Let's not complicate things even more!

So there we are on the Marion and about to embark on the next phase of this adventure. The senior officer of the US task group was riding in Marion so we joined him for lunch. The initial lack of services was confirmed. Now how do we get fuel for Stinger 23 into Stinger 23? Many plans were discussed and abandoned. The one I liked the best was pull Huron into a RAS position to give us gas. So as greater minds were at work we settled in with our hosts.

A few words about the Marion she was on her last legs as a USN ship, the crew was primarily made up of USN Reserve troops doing their callout time and a number of Naval Academy Cadets. A friendly and resourceful bunch as I shall explain later. The Marion had not conducted flight ops except for VERTREPS in a number of years had a wooden flight deck. Think the vintage of our Cape Boats.

Up the following morning after breakfast I wandered up to the Marion's bridge which was conducting a RAS port side with Milwaukee and Huron was on the starboard. Sometime previous the final refuelling plan had been adopted. This involved jack staying a Sea Knight long range auxiliary fuel tank (resembling a Propane tank you would find in your back yard) from Milwaukee to Marion, once on Marion the crew manhandled it from the RAS point aft to below the flight deck activated an elevator that hadn't been used in years and lifted it to the flight deck. In shifts they then hand pumped fuel into the thirsty Sea King. Idling around the bridge I noticed our Detachment Commander observing from Huron's upper bridge as signalmen were talking back and forth with light I had one send a message to the effect of "for the Air-O: Having a wonderful time send clothes and money CU in England!" Watching through a pair of borrowed binoculars as the Air-O got the message he replied with a very Un Maj. Type salute. Back on the flight deck the troops from Marion had

jury rigged a power cable for our start, and we prepared to get underway. Start attempt #1 and half of Marion's power blew out the same scenario with attempts #2-3. So it was back to the mess for another coffee while we waited for the SOP time to expire. On the 4th attempt number one caught just before the ship again went black. So it was off to home again.

Wandering up for briefing the following morning our tasks were to Pax transfer a number of naval cadets from the USS California to Huron for a Cross Pol. Why I asked 2 days ago we couldn't land on California to fuel and now we were doing milk runs. Oh said the brain trust from Huron's Ops Room that's because the "Americans" didn't understand that a CH124 and H3 was the same thing!

Yours aye, Paul Peacey

Post Script:

The preceding is factual as my 32 year memory can make it. I was the OM and do remember some but not all of the major player's names I have little doubt they will recognize themselves. Although the Detachment Commander may still be attributing the Aldus message to the Crew Commander we also had one of the detachment tech's onboard I may be wrong but it seems that in the majority of Sea King incidents and accidents we also had passengers. Some may ask why we didn't land on Julius Furer we knew they couldn't handle a CH124/H3. One can only hope in today's navy that ops room staff has a copy of HOSTAC.

Names for Photos - pages

1. Pat Ryan
2. Flt Deck Crew - we need names, please.
3. Ron Kay
4. Stu Mingo
5. Ed White
6. Moose Mills
7. Bud MacLean
8. Joe McBrien
9. Dave Warner
10. Denny Shaw
11. Jack Beard
12. Jack Moss
13. John Webber
14. Peter Pinnoy
15. Ron Caudle
16. Steve MacDonald
17. Curt Miller, Moose Mills,
George Plawski, Paul Legere

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.
Fireflies 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.

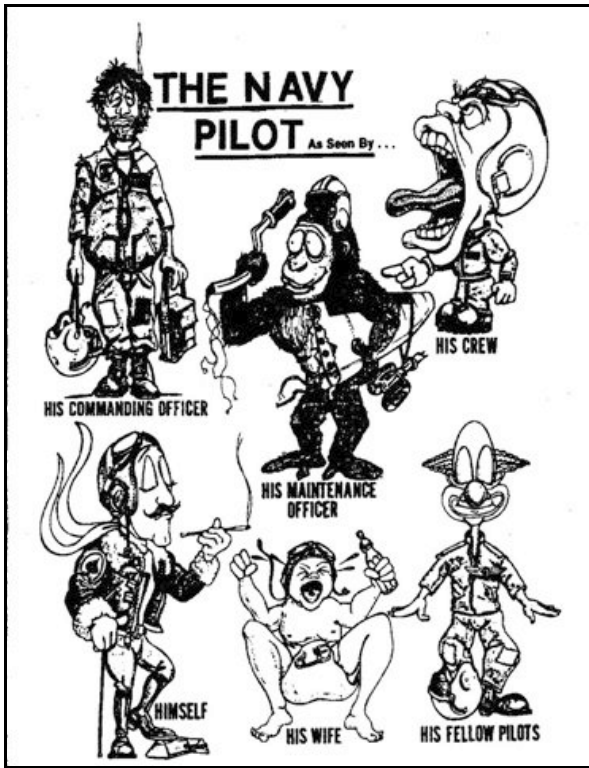
Hauling off the throttle,
 Rolling back the hood,
 Visions of those gremlins
 Who'd grab you if they could.
 Fly in too fast, you'll hit the net!
 A bit too slow, you're in the wet!
 That deck looks short and narrow.
 But it's all you're going to get.

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".



D. Piers, N. Unsworth, A. Williams, N. Winchester



Pete Hamilton, David Matheson, Barry Montgomery, Curt Millar, U/K Norm Ethridge, Jav Stevenson, Joe Gallant



B. Montgomery, Norm Ethridge, Ken Waterman, Keith Sterling

READERS COMMENTS

Editor,

Have just been passed a copy of your excellent magazine - of interest to me as I spent two years in Bonaventure - the last two years of her active life and participated in the three "final" cruises and the decommissioning ceremony. Having said that, I must point out the picture on page 8 is not concerned with naval aviation, but instead was a presentation of a token of appreciation by Capt Harry DeWolf (note spelling) to Angus L. MacDonald as a thank you for the minister's assistance in the founding of the HMCS BYTOWN Officers' Mess in the summer of 1943.

Pat DC Barnhouse, 535 Kenwood Ave.
Ottawa, Ontario K2A 0L7 (613) 728-5648

From the Editor:

While the JAOTC visitors attended the Officers Mess at Shearwater for their reunion, they found the following behind the Mess.



Blowing our own horn a bit...

Congratulations for the best ever Edition of the WARRIOR. I've gone through it several times and picked up stuff that I had missed during earlier "reads".

BZ's to all contributors as well. It's a *Keeper* for sure.

Bill Cody

Hi Kay: What an outstanding effort! We all owe you a great deal for the tremendous job you have done on our behalf. Ralph Fisher's article on page 87 takes the cake! Again, many thanks and take care of yourself.

Pop Fotheringham

A masterful job on the centennial issue. Certainly one of the best issues I've ever received. Thank you from all of us and keep up your great work, although beating the quality of this last and most treasured Centennial issue would be

a difficult task . BRAVO ZULU and thanks again. **Dave Tate**

Bob Bissell writes: Hi Kay:

It was easier for me to send a magazine rather than take a picture of the original HMS WARRIOR. Our's was probably the last!

After ARK ROYAL was in Halifax, she was heading south for a bit of R & R in Rio De Janeiro, so no carriers for Navy Day. INVINCIBLE in reserve, ILLUSTRIOUS in refit.

The type 23's or Duke Class are very like our 'City' Class. They can all carry 'Merlins' and some are already in refit having been built in the same time frame as the 'City' Class.

The new 'Daring' Class destroyers are the replacement for some of the Type 42, one of which was in Halifax. We now have two Daring's in Portsmouth and a third has been launched.

The replacement for some of the Duke Class is now on the drawing board for construction in 2020. Canada will only have the 'City' Class refitted for the new Cyclone helicopter by 2020.

Our new carriers will be in commission by 2018 and will fly the Lockheed F35, already ordered by Canada for the Canadian Air Force (but no ship?).

Many thanks for the picture (by email). I passed it on to SA where it was very popular.

Great to have a meeting with you on my last day. The IFR, the reunion, the Museum and the NS Tattoo were terrific. I think all on No. 6 JAOTC really enjoyed the period. Thanks to Ken Brown and you.

Keep up the good work.

Yours Aye

Bob

From Clint Halfkenny.

In the last issue of WARRIOR, there appeared a story by then BComd, Captain Robert Welland, HMCS Shearwater, concerning the Soviet aircraft with an engine problem and Deputy Premier Mikoyan aboard. I have some personal information regarding this story that I would like to pass along.

At the time, anybody who read the papers or listened to radio or watched TV was well aware of who Deputy Premier Mikoyan was due to the serious problem among the Soviet Union, the U.S. and Cuba. Canadians and

Americans alike did not trust Soviets and having a Soviet plane land on your Base was a very trying situation.

This Soviet aircraft had to be guarded 24/7 while on our Base. I was one of the guards. My watch was from midnight to 4AM. The one night of my watch, it was very cold and rainy, but we did our duty. We guarded that Soviet plane with our rifles at the ready. I wonder what would have happened if the Soviets had known that the Royal Canadian Navy hadn't issued us any bullets!
(Probably nothing.)

From **R. Ratcliffe**

The joy of your Spring '10 WARRIOR brings the following to mind: HMCS Magnificent early 50's. For those that don't know, the communication link between the Aircraft Control Room and Flying Control was by voice pipe.

Harry Swiggum was ACR Officer - need I say more! Flying Ops was underway and the usual 'balls up' was in action on the flight deck. The conversation went like this:

FLYCO TO ACR: "Do you read?"

ACR: "Sir!"

FLYCO TO ACR: "Who is the horses ass on the end of this voice pipe?"

ACR TO FLYCO: "Which end, Sir?"

John Eden writes:

Received my photo back that you used in the Warrior. Thanks so much. Nice personal articles in one of the best editions to date. That's my honest opinion and also of many other CNAGers in the Trenton/Sea King area.

Hope to see you in October at the reunion.
Very Best Regards, Aye

For Harold Northrup

Dear Harold: I was delighted to note that you were a receipt recipient of the Minister of Veterans Affairs Commendation. This is a most deserved accolade. My heartiest congratulations go out to you for the great volunteer work you do on many fronts.

Best regards, **Barry Keeler**

(**Way to go Harold! Kay and Patti**)

KNOWING WHEN TO LET GO

Jake McLaughlin

In the summer of 1954 the Support Air Group VF 771 Fury fighters and VS 881 Avenger Anti-Submarine aircraft was moved temporarily away from HMCS Shearwater. The circuit, shared by Naval aircraft ranging from helicopters, C-45s, Harvards, Furies and Avengers, plus the then Air Canada and Maritime Airways DC3s and occasional USN aircraft of several types had become too limited, too crowded.

We moved first to Scoudouc, an abandoned wartime RCAF airfield close to Moncton and just outside the coastal town of Shediac in New Brunswick.

We were warmly welcomed, made honorary members of the Moncton Golf Club and the social Club Bois Hebert in Shediac itself. We flew regular training missions over the Atlantic always making sure that our return path to base took us over the beautiful coastal beaches close to the town of Shediac. Life was good.

One day, a pair of Avengers were returning from an A/S exercise at about 2000 feet closing the beaches, the crews admiring the assembled pulchritude on the sand. Suddenly I noticed a Sea Fury diving on us from about 10,000 feet seemingly intent on jumping our two helpless Turkeys. But that's not what the pilot had in mind, he hurtled past, continuing his trajectory toward the beach where at a few hundred feet he pulled up and began a beautiful "upward twizzle". The aircraft rose, the sun glinting off its wings when at about 5000 feet it abruptly stalled and began to fall, inverted, toward the water below. We watched, absolutely certain that we were about to witness the Fury, flown by a friend (by this time we'd figured out who was flying the aircraft), crash into the sea.

No more than one hundred feet above the waves, the aircraft, still inverted, appeared to regain control. It climbed and as sedately as a Fury could do it, headed inland to the airfield.

Later, at the Wardroom bar, I joined my friend Jake Birks acknowledged by all as a superb pilot who was still obviously shaken and "wan with care". He explained that the aircraft had gone into a "flick spin" as he twizzled away from the beach (it was a notorious Sea Fury characteristic from which few pilots survived). He tried every thing he knew to regain control as he hurtled down. Finally and in resignation, he decided to take his hands and feet off the controls and await the inevitable. By Jake's reckoning the plane recovered itself, still inverted, at less than 100 feet. He flew home, landed and adjourned to the bar a wiser and very much surprised to be alive, Naval Aviator.



Crew Members of HMCS MAGNIFICENT Visit with Pope Pius in 1957.

ON THE BEACH

HMCS *Warrior*, light fleet carrier, was a ship upon which the heavens smiled. There was always an element of good luck even in her rare misfortunes. *Warrior's* maiden trip to Montreal was one such occasion. This greatly enriched her reputation among the most jaundiced and superstitious of sailors as a prize choice for sea duty, excitement and fun. On a beautiful summer morning in August 1946, the bright new pride of the Navy bounded up the St Lawrence, marked as an aircraft carrier for ignorant eyes ashore by a vicious-looking Seafire ranged aft on the flight deck. After an overnight stop in Quebec City, her departure for a gala reception in Montreal was delayed by the round-up of revelers from the flesh pots of a hospitable town. Speed was therefore a thundering 20 knots much in excess of the norms for large vessel traffic but she had on board two of the most senior pilots on the River.

As a lowly sub-lieutenant under training, I was umpteenth officer of the watch, required to log the passage of each channel buoy and record engine and steering orders. The

bridge was jammed with other officers relaxed and confident in the skill of the pilots. This August assembly included the captain, commander and navigating officer, a troika whose power in the ship rivaled God's. Like others lower in the pecking order, they chatted in great bonhomie, anticipating the fun and games awaiting us in Montreal.

Upstream of the Quebec bridge, the ship approached a dog's leg in the channel. This required, initially, an alteration of course to port, towards the south bank. As the ship swung to port, the pilots called for corrective starboard wheel but the ship continued to swing to port. Unfazed, the pilots ordered more starboard wheel. The ship, unchecked, continued her swing toward a now rapidly closing river bank. Immediately, the pilots screamed for full starboard rudder. No response: the steering system had failed! *Warrior* was now charging directly at the shore like a maddened bull elephant, trumpeting wildly on her horn and piping damage control states.

At that speed and short distance, even at full power astern, all realized stopping the behemoth was impossible. The unthinkable was happening. Pandemonium broke out on

the bridge. Innocent of error and unable to help, the pilots swore in soul-rending anguish at the impending disaster.

The frenzy was quickly communicated to other parts of the ship. On a cool but urgent pipe from the bridge - "*This is Not an exercise, repeat this is Not an exercise, let go the starboard anchor !*" an officer on the Cable deck ordered release of the Blake slip, streaming the anchor in a deafening roar of chain at a mind boggling speed. It was a valiant but doomed attempt to bring the ship's head 'round and perhaps reduce her headway. Too late! The ship slammed into the shallows with the momentum of over a billion pound-feet per second, tobogganing over the undulating shoals and driving up the beach to a graceful full stop, upright, her stem virtually high and dry. With incredible luck, *Warrior* had stranded on the only clear stretch of gently shelving beach in sight. To either side, the piled rocks had missed their prey. An accomplished magician himself, Captain Frank Houghton must have regarded his ship's escape as surpassing Houdini's best.



During the millisecond of stunned silence that followed, an agitated voice ordered the port anchor let go. With his usual poise, the CO quickly countermanded with a wry: "Belay the last pipe! We've enough aground already." No sooner had his words officially confirmed the unthinkable, than the Captain's secretary materialized like a genie from a long corked bottle. He snatched the rough log from my hand, scooped up the ship's log, all note books and the charts. Mumbling darkly about evidence for the board of inquiry, he vanished as abruptly.

For a moment, the ashen multitude on the bridge looked in disbelief at the scene: Ahead, a wide and serene beach bordered by huge orchards. Astern was the treacherous

river and distant north bank. From the bow, the flight deck sloped down, more steeply as the tide fell. Cars and trucks began to flock onto the beach, driving up to the ship's side. Their occupants gaped up at the beached monster with total incomprehension. Timidly, they engaged some of the old salts in a dialogue that at times, eclipsed the best side-splitting episodes of Monty Python. It began when one wag asked the earthlings to call a tow truck.

Meanwhile, the ship was a hive of activity and consultation. I was quickly dispatched by the captain to obtain a report from the engineer officer who was directing damage inspection and emergency action in the bowels of the ship. After undogging and redogging a zillion watertight doors and hatches, I staggered into the wardroom flat, ready to make the plunge below to the steering compartment but the deck was heavily flooded. I thought of my new uniforms, which had bankrupt my whoopee fund, sloshing around in the nearby gunroom annex. In the gloom ahead was the Commander (E), frustration and anger lighting his face. "Och," the tough old plumber spat, "we're not holed.

I told the bloody idiots to pump ballast to starboard, not in the frigging wardroom." His message to the CO - the ship's structure is sound, a few frames and bottom plates bent, no significant leaks, propellers in clear water; steering gear now functioning, problem yet to be diagnosed but apparently in the steering control system.

The engine room was then called upon for full speed astern in an effort to unbeach. The ship shuddered and shook as propellers created heroic turbulence and churned up tons of soil, but *Warrior's* bottom remained firmly fixed in the growing embrace of mud and sand. The news of our humiliating contretemps had now reached Montreal as well as the brass in Halifax and Ottawa. Radio station disc jockeys had a field day at our expense. Small planes buzzed the ship, taking pictures for late edition front pages. It was not our finest hour.

Desperate times demand desperate measures. The bow was lightened at the rush by bringing up from forward all aircraft, bombs and stores and ranging them aft on the flight deck. All the many hundreds of officers and men available were mustered aft, and solemnly timed by the conducting officer, the great symphonic mass of humanity jumped up and down in synchronized unison on the flight deck. Their flatfooted impact, it was reasoned, would reinforce the dead weight of stores, wiggle and further lighten the bow. Simultaneously, the engines were once more put to full speed astern. Officers and chief petty officers in the front rows of the ballet were scarlet with humiliation at the ribaldry directed at them by old stokers and seamen in the ranks behind. Carefully concealed engineer officers and lesser mortals with merely a smattering of high school physics rolled about in near fatal mirth at a spectacle as

ludicrous as a swarm of fleas doing formation jumps on the rump of a half-stranded hippo. *Warrior's* torment only came to an end when, on the afternoon full tide, she was refloated with the gentle aid of tugs.

A more dignified account of the incident by naval scribes in Ottawa, preceded *Warrior* to Montreal. This accurately described the ship as the victim of gremlins but tough enough to withstand the drive of 18,000 tons ashore at high speed virtually unscathed. The ship arrived majestically, an instant and lionized celebrity, endowed with the luck of her Irish ancestry and the blessings of her Patron Saint.

Epilogue. Our chief host in Montreal was the legendary Camillien Houde. His Worship was a ladies' man of great and roguish charm.

He asked one officer at the city hall reception why *Warrior* had so misbehaved. "*Ships are like women*", the engineer explained, "*Sometimes they do the damndest things*". "*Ah oui*", winked the Mayor, "Women, I understand perfectly.!"

Ralph Fisher . Originally published in the Naval Officers Association of Canada "Starshell", June 1991

FOOT NOTE :

Despite their best efforts, the Board of Inquiry and HMC Dockyard Halifax could find no evidence of a malfunction, temporary or otherwise, in the steering control system. Nor was it experienced in the remainder of her commission. As suggested by Stu Soward in "Hands To Flying Stations", it was widely believed that someone in the special sea duty watch assigned to the steering compartment was responsible. Perhaps bored and a tad hung over after nocturnal festivities in Quebec City, idle curiosity had caused him to fiddle with a hydraulic valve, thus cutting off power to the rudder. Thereupon, it was reasoned, he was galvanized by the resulting panic and quickly re-opened the valve, never exposing or admitting his guilt. This was hotly contested by the "plumbers" as sheer nonsense and the foulest of libels on a noble profession. Hal Zerbin, editor of the Chief & Petty Officers Association "Bulletin", then a young Stoker in *Warrior*, points out that this was impossible. Apparently for safety, the valves did not have hand wheels. . They could be turned on or off only by a special wrench under control of the watch leader.

Two other differing reasons have been advanced. Each attributes loss of rudder effectiveness by hydrodynamic forces generated in the ship's high speed transit of the

relatively narrow and shallow waters of the dog's leg in the marked channel. One by Dan Fairney, a highly respected senior engineer in *Warrior* concludes that once the huge underwater hull was broadsided by the river, forming a semi-dam against a current of 11 knots, attempts to turn starboard were doomed with little time at 20 knots before the ship hit the beach. Another is by Hal Zerbin backed by 20 years experience in freighting operations on the MacKenzie River following his retirement from the Navy. These involved tug propulsion and control of linked barges often with a collective size and weight exceeding that of *Warrior*.

Since 1946, there has been enormous world wide growth in development of large container, tanker, cruise ships and barge systems and their traffic in relatively restricted waters, including bays, inlets, harbours and rivers. It has spurred a volume of research on the hydrodynamic forces involved. One of the most instructive dealing with Hal's view of the behaviour by *Warrior* is that by Dr. E. Tuck, entitled - "Hydrodynamic Problems of Ships in Restricted Waters". It concludes that the loss of rudder effectiveness from hydrodynamic effects at speed in restricted and shallow waters is sometimes contrary to intuition and conventional expectations. These can effectively shift rudder forces amidships where they can have little or no steering effect.

In brief, here is the essence of Hal's assessment. "*Warrior* was running at undiminished speed as she entered this shallower stretch of the river. It is a common and well known phenomenon, one which I have personally experienced with others many times on the Mackenzie, that entering shallower water requires a reduction of speed. Otherwise, the water leaving the hull at the stern accelerates faster than water entering at the bow. The bow is thus "sucked down", raising the stern and losing steerage way. This is exactly what happened that day in *Warrior*. I distinctly remember the stern rising up just before we turned into the river bank and slid majestically ashore. I had been in the tiller flats many times and the idea of anyone "shutting a valve" just to see what happens is not only offensive but completely impossible. All of us in the Engineering Department disputed and disagreed with the official explanation. I am very confident that if this phenomenon that many other "river rats" on the Mississippi have also experienced and guarded against had been considered and thoroughly investigated, it would have been recognized as the ultimate cause of *Warrior's* grounding".

Finally, after almost 64 years, there is a long deserved recognition and vindication for Hal and the proud community of plumbers at "*Happy Warrior's Beach Party*" in August, 1946.

COLD WAR VETERANS

Ed Smith

On a visit to Annapolis Royal on Canada Day 2005 Lieutenant Governor Freeman paid tribute to and met with veterans who were present at the veteran ceremonies in the Legion hall. When speaking with her regarding the recognition given to military participants and losses in World War 1 and 2, Korea and Peacekeeping, I lamented that on this day and many other such times, Cold War casualties are rarely acknowledged. During our very brief discussion I stated that with her permission I would send her some thoughts regarding this oversight that is so prevalent in our country.

In writing to her I explained, as a naval pilot during the Cold War, I was very much involved in that conflict and had first hand knowledge of some of the fatalities suffered by military personnel during that period.

At the risk of lecturing her on a subject with which she may be very familiar, I outlined some aspects of the Cold War particularly those regarding Canada's naval activities and personnel. The lack of recognition afforded this very dangerous period with the loss of life and the injuries that occurred is an affront to those and their families who were directly involved.

Possibly the term "Cold War" implied to many Canadians there was no shooting and therefore no risk involved. Didn't everyone just sit around and pick up their pay while the diplomats debated and the Strategic Air Command kept the "enemy" far away? That was far from the total reality.

Pointing out that from the partitioning of Europe after WWII to the collapse of the Soviet Union there was a heightened state of conflict between the Soviet Union and the Western Allies centered to a great extent on nuclear weapons potential. Much of the confrontation involved Intercontinental missiles as well as missiles of shorter range. Most were designed to carry nuclear warheads. That stand-off impinged greatly on our military.

Canadian and NATO navies were directly involved in countering the Soviet Navy's nuclear powered submarines operating off our shores. These submarines could launch missiles capable of reaching military and civilian targets well inside our country. As well there were, constantly, many large Soviet Bloc fishing fleets and, at times, naval surface ships off our coasts. Most were equipped to monitor our civilian and military communications, giving them much intelligence that could be significant in the event of situations leading to conflict.

These Soviet forces, particularly the submarines, had to be located and tracked. Canada's defensive operations to these threats were carried out from shore air bases, listening stations and naval ships. Canadian manned

aircraft carriers, Warrior, Magnificent and lastly, Bonaventure with escort and support ships, formed the backbone of Canada's naval reaction to the submarine and intelligence menace until Bonaventure was removed from fixed wing operations in 1969 and decommissioned in 1970. (Another aspect of the Unification story)

To illustrate this tense, little known and largely forgotten period of time one only has to read of or, for some of us, remember the Cuban crisis in 1962. While most recall it as a United States' affair, Canada's military and particularly naval and air forces were on high alert in every respect. Our country's naval concentration in the Halifax area and alliance with NATO made it one of the prime targets for Soviet strategists. How many recall the "Diefenbunkers" and the warning sirens that were installed and the population being advised, particularly on these Maritime coasts, to know their escape routes out of target areas such as Halifax? Who remembers households being told to establish tight, nuclear fallout-protected basements and stock up with food supplies to allow a chance of survival in the event of nuclear attack? This was the scenario in the Cold War which Maritime Naval and Air Force's were trying to prevent.

The many Soviet submarines operating off our coast in a clandestine manner were highly mobile and therefore it was difficult to pinpoint their locations and monitor their activities.

Locating and tracking them demanded intense coordination between not only our and allied naval and air forces but also shore based listening stations, to ensure that the Soviet commanders were well aware that any overt action on their part was likely to be observed, reported and risky for them. This was not just military action; it was very much a part of international political Cold War stand-off strategy. Such operations led to perilous military confrontations in which neither side wanted to show any indication of backing away.

As only one personal example, in 1968 I was the flight leader of four anti-submarine carrier-borne aircraft due to land back aboard the aircraft carrier at night. We had been monitoring and were close to a mixed Soviet naval force. The Soviet surface units intentionally boxed in Bonaventure so she could not be turned into wind and therefore unable to land the aircraft. With no alternate landing facility, as we were far out in international oceans, we would have had to ditch in the sea. ***The Soviets continued the provocation but finally opened away when Bonaventure's Commanding Officer turned Bonaventure into wind forcing the Soviet ships to give way or accept a collision.*** Sixteen aircrew members were very relieved that "Bonnie's" Captain won that clash. Dangerous times with no weaponry directly involved.

Foul weather conditions in demanding low level operation-

al and training roles along with the inherent high risk of aircraft carrier operations led to crashes and other incidents culminating in the loss of some 51 lives in carrier operations alone as well as some 50 lives in naval aviation shore-based activity. Many of these crew members I knew well, several were close friends.

This loss of human life and the remembrance of them are rarely acknowledged by media, governments, the public, or indeed the present day military. These lives were lost defending our country and should at least be recognized when memorial ceremonies take place.

Many fatalities occurred far off our shores and most Canadians were quite unaware of such activities working on their behalf. Naval activities did not have the general recognition of the Army and the Air Force simply because the other Services had and still have a much higher profile with their more visible presence throughout Canada. (Prime evidence of this is the Snowbird air display squadron.)

A third generation Western Canadian living in Manitoba until I joined Naval Aviation, I know how little the 'Rest of Canada' is aware of or understands Maritime affairs, most particularly Defence. As well as Naval Aviation deaths, there were other Cold War Canadian military losses of life (other than Peacekeeping) such as the fighter pilots of the Royal Canadian Air Force stationed in Europe, the North American Air Defence all-weather intercept squadrons and long range maritime patrol crews, all involved in the Cold War standoff. Those fatalities also are little known or recognized by the Canadian public when tribute is paid to veterans in ceremonial honors or by the erection of monuments.

There is one Halifax memorial structure devoted to essentially Maritime Cold War fatalities. The Bonaventure Memorial in Point Pleasant Park is structured around one of the aircraft carrier's anchors. Listed on plaques are Naval and Air Force members who lost their lives with no known graves. It stands almost unnoticed. In one visit there I was somewhat taken aback with a young couples surprise and disbelief that so many military deaths occurred in peacetime. It was a bit of a challenge to try and explain to them the facts of the Cold War and why and how so many were lost. Their lack of knowledge was probably typical of most Canadians not actually involved in that conflict.

I stated that I knew of no medals created for those involved in that unseen but highly volatile and dangerous threat to our country.

After thanking the Lt. Gov. for her visit to Annapolis Royal, I completed the letter with the hope that she would find it informative and appreciate the slight felt by those who served in the "Cold War" and the lack of recognition of those lost. My letter was responded to with her thanks and the wish that I would be successful in furthering

recognition of these veterans.

(I'd venture to say there are many 'serving' today that have no idea of what the Cold War was all about. Let's hope history does not repeat itself. Ed)

The Last Word

Here we are, just four months and a bit away from the end of 2010. We've lost several friends and several more aren't all that well. Keep in touch with each other as much as you can.

The best thing about this year is that it is the Navy Centennial Year. Even today, the Navy is still fighting for their existence or perhaps I should say, more than just existence - they need ships and not just little ones.

The Centennial issue of WARRIOR was fairly successful except for a few errors. We hope to acknowledge them in this edition. For instance - the '*Miracle at Sea*' article by Bryan Hayter. (Hope this makes up for it, Sir.)

The articles sent in that helped us provide the Centennial issue were great and most appreciated. It would be perfect if you'd like to send us an article regarding your participation in this Centennial. Maybe you might like to say thanks to those you served with that treated you well, or if, God forbid, you got into any scrapes during your service time you might like to write about those.

On the inside back cover you will see an aerial photo of the Base showing the new fencing in orange. Yep, 16/34 is now between two fences. I have no idea if it is being maintained. The outer fencing around the long runway is beginning to lean and there are so many small trees and bushes around it, it would be easy for anyone to get on to the Base/Wing. I don't think this is what Mr McKay had in mind when he got that property back for Shearwater.

Thank you for your support in the past. The Museum staff thanks you as well. Look guys, *they need us now more than ever*. Another new building is required and that takes much money. We need all the support you can muster up. Please dig deep and if you know anyone who should join the Foundation and isn't a member, try to encourage them to join.

Keep well dear hearts - we look forward to hearing from you soon.

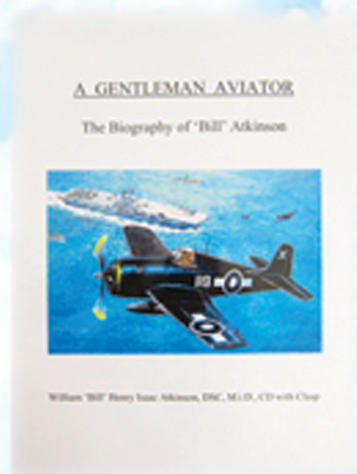
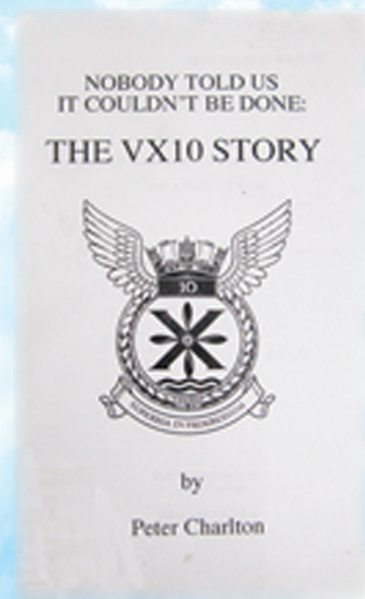
Kay Collacutt, Editor



New Shearwater Fencing

Return Address
Shearwater Aviation
Museum Foundation
P.O. Box 5000 Stn. Main
Shearwater, N.S., B0J 3A0

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