

Warrior

Spring 2020





PRESIDENTS MESSAGE 4 & 5

Etransfers..... 13

George Plawski Book 19 & 20

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 paragraphs etc. Graphics are best submitted electronically, they should be 300 dpi and a .tif file. A jpg file at 300 dpi is acceptable if no compression is used.

We will attempt to use any pictures, whatever the format.

NOTE WELL:

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

Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation
or
SAM Foundation
12 WING
PO BOX 99000
STATION FORCES
HALIFAX, NS B3K 5X5

Deadlines for receiving submissions are:

Spring 1 March
Summer 15 June
Winter 15 October

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Inside Front Cover Photo.



Front cover picture is MCpl Scott Galbraith. On deck of HMCS Fredericton. Photo Credit MCpl Simon Arcand. Canadian Armed Forces : 20200130RPAA0014D007

MCpl Scott Galbraith has served for 13 years in the RCAF. He works in 12 Wing Shearwater as an Avionics Systems Technician on the CH-148 Cyclone. He is currently deployed aboard the HMCS Fredericton in support of OP REASSURANCE. His wife Amy is an Occupational Therapist who works as a Care Coordinator for the Department of Community Services in Halifax. Their son Oscar is 20 months old, and loves spending time with his family. They are expecting their second child.

ERROR: In our Christmas Warrior edition, there were some poems scattered throughout the magazine. Unfortunately, the poems were stated that Chuck O'Neil wrote them, but they were presented to us from Chuck O'Neil and written by John Thompson. Our apologies to Mr. Thompson.

WE NEED YOUR SUBMISSIONS.

Please send us your stories, pictures etc. We look forward to hearing from you.

Any opinions expressed herein are deemed to be those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation, its members, the Shearwater Aviation Museum and/or 12 Wing Shearwater.



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

**Joseph Howe, 31 August, 1871
A TRIBUTE TO
NAVAL/MARITIME AIR'S BEST
FRIEND, KATHLEEN (KAY)
COLLACUTT.**

On the 31st of December 2019, Kay was finally able to let go of her earthly surroundings, entering into that place we will all eventually go. It is the place where Warriors, Statesmen, our Mom's and Dad's, normal folks like you and I and unfortunately sometimes our youngsters eventually all go. And so for the very few of you who may not have been able to follow Kay's courageous journey all through the fall and right up until Christmas eve, which was by all accounts her favourite time of

the year, I write this final note of farewell to her on behalf of 12 Wing and SAMF. She was a power to be reckoned with in many ways during her 44 years at Shearwater as a Secretary, followed by 25 years as Office Manager of the SAM Foundation: 69 years all told! She came from a very large family and carried on to have six children of her own. As my colleague George Plawski wrote in tribute to her on her passing: "I only met her in person twice. But each meeting had the feeling of a pilgrimage. I spent quite a long time with her in her office on each visit, and both times I walked out inspired by her remarkable enthusiasm and sense of purpose." He went on to say: "It is Kay whom we recognize as the voice of our generations; a voice heard every time we opened the Warrior Magazine, Kay's personal cartouche on which she cajoled us endlessly to carve our versions of our exploits, adventures and impressions, which without her vision would have vanished without a trace. It is thanks to this lovingly nurtured chronicle, the passion of Kay's life, that we retain access to the names and deeds of the extraordinary cast of personalities who enlivened Naval Aviation, for which, unanimously, we shall cherish her memory to the Delta of our days."

One had to be at the celebration of her well lived life and at her reception, at her beloved SAM, to truly realize that she indeed did have a very large effect on not only our brand of Warriors, but on her community, her faith, her church and indeed her family. If you weren't there, you missed the humour the Pastor sprinkled on her service, as he recounted a couple of Kay family stories, which as I glanced over at them had put a smile on all their faces. And at the reception as her grandchildren including the professional wrestler, one by one, told stories of the kind and gentle "Nan"

that they all loved and who cherished the memories they have of her.

From her obituary we learned that her love of Christmas was legendary. And that the Warrior Magazine was started when the Shearwater Base Newspaper, the Warrior, was folded and subsumed by the Halifax Navy newspaper, the Trident. I can attest to this as I was in a place at that time that I would be in the know, as it were.

And she continues to live on at the SAM Foundation, in the form of her daughter Karen Collacutt McHarg is our new Office Manager. Karen has brought a different set of skills to the dance which will only serve to improve our lot in life. You know, one of the nicest things I learned about the future was while Kay was in hospital. I kept up with her challenges by the weekly review of the pictures of Karen, Patti and Mom, with the layout of the Christmas Edition of the Warrior spread all over the bed, as she was teaching the young gals how it was all done. And voila, the Christmas edition of the Warrior is history.

Hope you enjoyed it, and the fact that Karen and Patti have agreed to stay on and produce it for the foreseeable future is great news for all of us at SAMF. One very pleasant side note I am delighted to pass along is that the fund we set up in Kay's name has been very successful. Just a week ago it stood at just over \$54,000.00 donated in her name. She would have been both humbled and very proud if she knew this was the figure as it stands at this time.

But here's the thing for you folks up on the flight line today. These folks who George Plawski speaks of, who paved the way for us in blood and tears, were actually you and I.

Different eras to be sure, different folks, but the same "cap tallies" and responsibilities as you would be used to. They took aircraft and helicopters to sea as Navy personnel, and flew them in all types of weather, just as you take your helicopters to sea as RCAF personnel and fly them all over the world in the same weather we used to do it in. We both served side by side with the Navy. We all rely on your knowledge of your aviation trades and the attachment to your Squadrons and each other for the faithful discharge of your duties in service to the Queen and the Country. We follow your exploits like they were our own. How about sharing some of them with our editors through the Wing PAFO, who has promised she can tart them up for use in our Warrior magazine. The challenge is out. Please join us as we slowly transition the Warrior from the last generation's newsletter to that of your own, while not forgetting for a New York minute our shared past. A worthwhile endeavour to our way of thinking.





Karen Collacutt- McHarg

Dear Friends of The Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation

It's that time of year again when we're selling our tickets to the "500 Club." The cost of the ticket is \$100.00 Per ticket. The draw dates start in June 2020 and run until Aug. 2020. The number of draws and the exact dates of the draw will be sent out when we stop selling the tickets. The more tickets we sell the more draws we will have. There will be weekly and monthly draws, if we sell all 500 tickets, we will raise \$25,000 for the museum.

If you have any questions regarding our fund raisers please don't hesitate to contact us and we will be glad to answer your questions. Please see the rules for the 500 club below.

To Purchase tickets, please contact Karen Collacutt-McHarg at the Foundation office: 902-461-0062 or 1-888-497-7779 toll free or email samf@samfoundation.ca you can also call 902-720-1083 Museum reception line. I want to remind you of our 50/50 draws June 30th and Dec 10th 2020 you will want to purchase tickets for both draws.

Rules of the 500 club

Tickets are \$100.00 each

Tickets are being sold from Jan – June 1st half the proceeds go to the SAM Foundation; the other half is divided into weekly and monthly draws.

All tickets go in for all of the draws. (If you win one, your ticket goes back into the drum for all the draws) No tickets are sold after the end of April.

Draws will start in May 2020 and end in July 2020

Due to COVID 19, our dinner auction may be postponed as many of our donations come from stores and donors closed at this time. If it is indeed cancelled, we will notify everyone ASAP. For now, the following is the tentative date.

Our annual Dinner Auction will be held Sept 26th 2020 at the Sea King Club. Doors open at 5pm to view items. Dinner starts at 6pm followed by fantastic auction items and great prizes. Tickets will be \$35. each available May 1st at the SAMF office, you can call 902- 461-0062 to reserve yours.



If you have any items you would like to donate to the auction please bring them to The SAMF office and a receipt will be given. It was a fantastic time last year the food was out of this world and the prizes and items were great and lots of them.



Gift Shop items

AVAILABLE AT THE SHEARWATER AVIATION MUSEUM GIFT SHOP 902-720-1083

- \$20 Hat
- \$18 Coin Front & Back View
- \$35 GOLF Shirt \$30 Sweat Shirt
- \$60 Windbreaker
- \$5 Bonnie Pin
- \$20 Bonnie Crest
- \$40 Bonnie Book
- \$5 Bonnie Pin

Email: giftshop@shearwateraviationmuseum.ns.ca

From the Curator's Desk

By Christine Hines



By the time you read this issue of the Warrior, a very busy winter and spring seasons will have passed. While the end of the Fiscal Year brings a lot of extra tasks, such as equipment and shop inventories, we have had a lot of unexpected matters pop up. Of note, we had a roof issue as a result of a rain and wind storm in early February that did a lot of damage. Happily, not artifacts or exhibits were damaged, and a great amount of thanks goes out to our Saturday restoration volunteer team that noticed the damage and allowed us to get a jump on protecting the aircraft and exhibits. A special thanks goes out to the staff of 12 Air Maintenance Squadron who helped us staff and volunteers protect the exhibits and to those who loaned us extra tarps. We expect work on the roof replacement to start shortly and be completed in as soon as possible.

We plan on installing a few new exhibits this year, including a retrospective exhibit on HMCS Bonaventure and her years of service to Canada, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the ship's decommissioning. Additionally, a small exhibit on Lt(P) Barry Troy's personal artifacts recovered from Florida in 2018 will be

installed around the Banshee exhibit, and a post-Gulf War exhibit on the Sea King is in the planning. A busy year is planned, to be sure.

Recent volunteer recruitment in the collections unit means that a long-planned artifact digitization project is starting and we also have been working on a massive redesign of our library and archive. Exhibit Technician Duncan Mason has been working on building new shelving for the library stacks, as well as a new compact mobile system for our archive means a much better organized and accessible document and photo collection. This new system will allow enhanced cataloguing and we'll finally be able to upload our archival records to Memory NS, a searchable online tool. While it's a large project, it's coming along nicely, and hope you'll have a chance to see our library and archive on your next visit. It's a largely untapped, but amazing resource for researchers.

At long last, delivery of our first virtual reality viewer is expected in mid-March. Having captured 360-degree video footage of various Sea King flights in 2018, the VR viewer will allow us a better interpretation of the mighty Sea King's role in Canadian service, and give visitors a more interesting, interactive experience at SAM. New technology is a bit daunting, but I am excited to offer some new opportunities for learning at SAM; and it's pretty cool to boot!

The Shearwater Aviation Museum will be closed as per the directive of the Chief of Defence staff and the Base Commander of CFB Halifax, from 14 March – 5 April 2020, in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. We hope that, in these uncertain times, all of our SAMF, SAM and 12 Wing supporters will remain well during this time and that when we're open again, you'll have some time to come and see us. Stay safe Friends!



FROM THE EDITOR

Well, this year has been quite the roller coaster. As most of you know, mom (Kay Collacutt) passed away on December 31st, 2019 after a long battle with which she fought courageously as she would. I want to take this time to thank all of you for the kind words, the support and overall gratitude I feel to each and everyone of you. I would also like to take this time to thank many people who were there for us at such a difficult time. The Wing Commander, and his staff went above and beyond, his words at mom's funeral were very comforting. I would like to thank Christine Hines and her staff for making the museum accessible to us for her celebration of life and they did a wonderful job with everything as usual. And lastly, I would like to thank John Cody for emceeing (for lack of a better word) your words meant everything, and our family truly appreciated all that you did for us.

Filling mom's shoes is not an easy one, and as she stated herself in the Christmas Warrior, it takes two of us (myself and my sister Karen) to do her job. She will be missed, she is missed, and I know she would love that we are carrying on her work.

To say the least, this year has been crazy beyond. With the pandemic hitting us we have had to be extra vigilant in how the business is being run. As you know, the museum has been closed for some time, but that does not mean that work is not going on still. Like mom, Karen has her office set up in her home as well, so if you need anything please feel free to contact her at the SAMF and she will be there to help you with all your needs. FUNDRAISING, is still going on at this time.

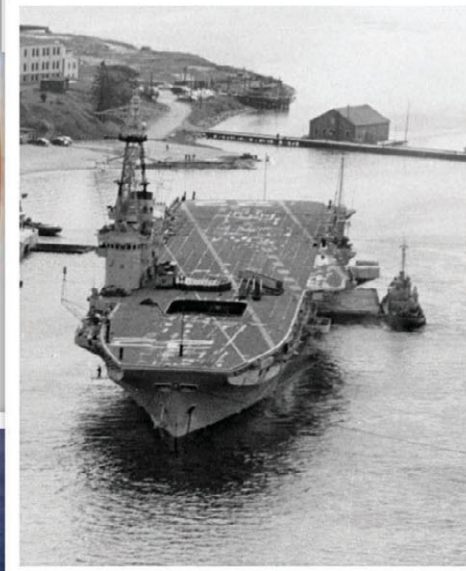
Karen has the 500 club tickets going and also the 50/50 with new extended dates (as per her article), she is also processing membership requests and any other SAMF business that needs to be taken care of. I know, that we are in a situation that none of us has seen before but we will come through it and get back to "normal" and the museum will forge on. But of course, we cannot do it without all of you. So please, get your memberships in and don't forget about the 500 club and 50/50.

As most of you know, I am no longer with the museum as an employee. I am now and have been for over a year, working in Real Estate (Assist 2 Sell Homeworks Realty). I started as an administrator and am still doing that job, but am presently working towards my Real Estate Licence. (I have my mother's work ethic, if you are going to do something, do it all the way). However, I have agreed to work on the Warrior as long as you all will have me. In saying that, I need all of your help. I NEED your stories. All of them. I have heard a few stories over the past few months, that I have told people, write it down, send it to me, that would be great for the Warrior. I would love to do some articles on the ADMIN (secretaries) that worked in Shearwater over the years. PLEASE send me your stories, and pictures. I can edit them, if you want, just send them to me.

Well, that's it for now. I appreciate all of your feedback, and don't forget, letters to the editor. If there is something you would like to see, let us know, if we are doing something you are not crazy about, let us know. Please send all stories, pictures, letters or inquiries to pcollacutt@bellaliant.net

Thank you and take care,

Patti



BONNIE'S STORM

(This story was published in the Crow's Nest in February 1960)

Plagued by rough weather during their operations with NATO forces in European waters last fall five warships of the RCN task force looked forward to smooth sailing on their homeward passage in early December. That their hopes were shattered is now well known. The Bonaventure and her four attendant destroyer escorts, the Algonquin Iroquois, Sioux and Athabaskan, reached Halifax in Mid-December, all reporting damage of varying degrees of severity. In the case of the destroyer escorts, the damage was mostly to deck fittings, although some gear was swept overboard. The Bonaventure, offering a bigger target, suffered heavier damage. An officer in the Iroquois received internal injuries and was placed in hospital in the Azores. Five persons in the Bonaventure were superficially injured. The villain of the story, was a furious storm which wandered from its predicted path. The following account of the storm and what the Bonaventure had to contend with while it rages was written by the aircraft carrier's weather officer Lt. - Cdr. R.M. Morgan.

NATO Exercises and her visit to the United Kingdom ended HMCS Bonaventure slipped from Middle Slip Jetty, Portsmouth, On December 3 and proceeded to sea. For those on board this was the most-anxiously awaited part of the cruise, because we were on our way back to Halifax for Christmas with many surprises for our families loaded on board. There were presents for the dis frilly things and jewelry for the wife, and bargains for the house. Every inch of available space had some thing securely stowed away in it - a toy car here, a chest of china there and in the officers flat, an antique grandfather clock which competed on the hour with the ships bell. At one juncture an enthusiastic homebuilder who wanted space for a dining room suite, suggested that perhaps we could do with one less aircraft on board.

Everyone was looking forward to better weather and a few good flying days on the return journey. We had experience high

winds and heavy seas off Northern Ireland during the previous month, and flying had been impossible most of the time. A number of our pilots had been forced to savor the austerity of service accommodation at diversion airfields in Northern Ireland, Scotland and England, and were hoping for good flying weather, at least near the Azores.

However, the departure did not augur well. Outside the Nab Tower a stiff wind was already blowing and weather was only marginal when we began to take on aircraft. Heavy thunderclouds almost covered the sky, and the visibility was down to two miles in rain at times. The last aircraft was safely on board by 1600, but not a minute too soon, for the wind was now up to gale force from the west as Bonnie turned down the Channel on the homeward leg.

The morning of the 4th dawned brightly. The wind had moderated to 25-30 knots and remained that way throughout the day but the swell which had been generating during the past few days, was too heavy for flying operations. The helicopter was launched off Ushant to land on e of the ship's company for the compassionate reasons, but this was accomplished only by getting in the lee of one of the islands inshore. During the night of the 4th and the forenoon of the 5th, good headway was made across the Bay of Biscay although a heavy westerly swell was still running.

Early Saturday morning, December 5, a small storm was developing in the Gulf Stream to the east of Nova Scotia. It was expected to move rapidly across the Atlantic at 50 knots in an east-northeasterly direction, and then curve northeastwards and pass up the west coast of Ireland. By the time it reached the eastern Atlantic the Bonaventure was expected to be well to the south west of Finisterre, and so the storm was not considered too great a threat to the ship. Until early evening, the storm behaved as expected. The wind had begun to freshen again, and a gale was forecast as the center followed its expected path to the north of the ship. Later, on Saturday evening, a radio reception deteriorated to an almost complete lockout and no reliable

information on the location of the center could be obtained for the next 12 hours.

On Sunday, December 6, the storm struck with such damaging power and severity that all on board will ever remember it as "the day of the big storm". By early morning, the Met. Man (meteorologist) had received enough information to pinpoint the storm again, and he discovered that the path was now easterly and that the storm center would pass into the northern half of the Bay of Biscay, about 200 miles to the north of the ship. A sever gale was expected with winds gusting to 65 knots during the forenoon and continuing during the day. This forecast had scarcely been made when the wind gained velocity and within an hour had reached hurricane force, with gigantic waves building up. By 0900 the visibility was reduced to one-half-mile in blowing spray, with frequent gusts of over 70 knots. At 1000 the wind had reached its maximum with the passage of the cold front, and an average steady wind of 68 knots was recorded. However, there were frequent gusts of probably 80-85 knots, and it is estimated that the maximum was 90 knots. This is only conjecture, though, for the wind-speed recorders on board are not capable of reading above 70 knots. During the forenoon, the waves reached an average height of over 50 feet, and some of the larger ones, rose to more than 60 feet.

Throughout the height of the storm, the ship behaved remarkably well. She was headed into the seas and rode most of the waves with little trouble. However, the occasional wave out of phase was very dangerous as it swept down the starboard side and across the flight deck. One solid jet of water struck the post mirror and twisted it into a grotesque shape as though it were made of tin foil. Another crashed into the starboard mirror sponson, tearing the welded seams open and buckling the steel bracket supports. When the shivering "old lady" dragged her length over another wave, it was the end for the stern catwalk, and the largest wave of all, probably about 65 feet, came green over the compass platform and stove in the window on the starboard side. The most dangerous period occurred when the forward lift opened up and the hangars began to flood. The free-surface water,

which began build up on this large expanse of deck might have threatened the stability of the ship but for the prompt action of the Damage Control Department.

Morale remained high throughout this difficult time. Every possible action to mitigate the damaging and dangerous effect of the storm was speedily executed. Water pouring into the forward messes caused discomfort and soaked personal gear, but all was borne with good humor, and the wits provided many laughs. Mealtime became adventure time. It is to the credit of the galley staffs that hot meals were delivered to the recipients. However, there was many a slip between the plate and the lip.

To the chagrin of a number of letter writers, the mail office was flooded and about 400 outgoing letters were reduced to pulp and were bailed out in a bucket. Fortunately, there was no incoming mail in the office at the time. Looking at the loss percentage-wise, it was not great considering that about 30,000 letters had passed through the mail office during the cruise.

The heavy seas continued until Monday morning. During this period the bow was pounded mercilessly, plates being stove in and the cable locker flooded. On the morning of the 7th, however, the storm began to subside and it was possible to increase speed and run away southwestward from the heavy-weather area. By this time, the center of the storm was moving northward into the Bristol Channel giving rise to severe weather in United Kingdom coastal waters. There were ships in distress in the Straits of Dover and the Pentland Firth. According to the radio, a number of crack ocean liners, including the Queen Elizabeth and the United States, were holed. The French weather ship located about 80 miles to the North of Bonaventure during the height of the storm, reported winds of 100 knots and seas of 60 feet.

It had been a very unusual storm, both in its track and wind-intensity, and an unusually severe one, even for the notorious Bay of Biscay. For many of the ships complement, it was the worst weather they had ever experienced, and

doubtless everyone hopes it will remain a record.

The following data indicates the unusual severity of the storm:

Duration of winds of Force 8 or over: 1500/5th-2200/7th;
Duration of Force 12 (Hurricane Force): 1000/6th - 1500/6th;
Highest average wind speed: 68 knots at 1000/6th;
Maximum gusts, estimated: 85-90 knots;
Durations of wave height over 50 feet: 1300/6th - 1800/6th
Maximum wave height, estimate: 65 feet

The saga however does not end with this storm, for on the 7th its "little brother" developed in the Grand Banks area and began to move rapidly eastward. Fortunately, this one was only beginning to flex its muscles when it struck the carrier on the forenoon of the 8th, making things uncomfortable again for a few hours. This was the last real blow of the voyaged and the remainder of the trip home was relatively peaceful.

The destroyer escorts had a rough time of it, but came through the big blow with relatively light damage. Here is a description of the Algonquin's experience: The breakwater was struck by a particularly large sea, forcing it aft and opening the forecastle deck where the two joined. Shoring was required internally to stop the holes and prevent gradual flooding of forward spaces. On arrival in the Azores, the breakwater was braced and patches welded in the deck. The port navigation light and screen, situated 40 feet above the waterline, were carried away. A plywood screen fitted with the emergency oil light modified to take a jury electric fitting was secured in place.

Owing to a sprung hatch on the quarterdeck, seawater and several hundred pounds of flour from a provision store made a glutinous mess of the nearby kit bag stowage.

The process of eating in the main cafeteria, already a major operation, was further complicated by an electric water cooler

breaking adrift with an accompaniment of sparks and even more unwanted water.

Although the most spectacular storm occurred on the return trip the bad weather of the cruise was by no means confined to this instance. A look at the weather statistics will give some concept of the persistence of the Bonaventure's "little black cloud", and is of particular interest in view of the difficulties experienced shipping during the latter half of December and early January. Of the 521 hours spent at sea, winds of 30 knots or more were experience for 284 hour, or 54 percent of occasions; the number of hours when either wind, high seas, or poor visibility restricted flying were 344 or 66 percent of occasions.



Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation



We're listening, you asked for it and now we have it!

It's easy and convenient, send in your membership from the comforts of your home.

- * Open your online banking
- * Click on Interac e-Transfer's
- * Add (samf@samfoundation as a contact)
 - * Add amount you want to transfer
 - * Click notify by email
- * Message (tell me what the money is for)
 - Example: Membership, in Memory, Building Fund
 - Your receipt will be mailed out to you the next day.

A TRIBUTE TO SOME OF OUR VETERANS

(We would love to hear from you with your stories. If you are a veteran, family of a veteran, please share your stories with us)



Sept 16th 2019 (First published in the Edmonton Journal Sept. 17, 2019)

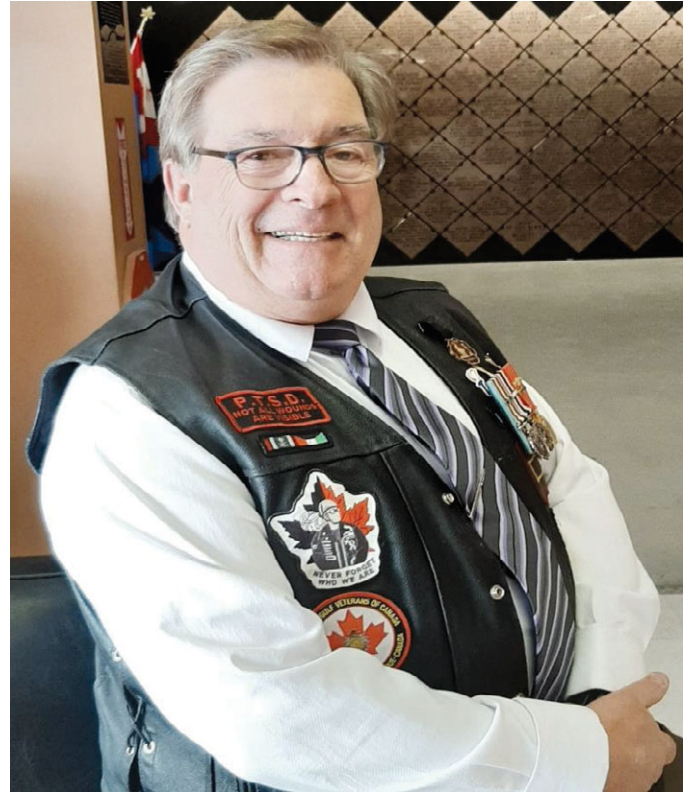
An Edmonton-area PTSD fundraiser had record numbers turn out at its annual airsoft sporting event last weekend.

Over 260 people took part in OP Valour, a large-scale airsoft match, outside Villeneuve last Saturday. Participants purchased tickets to take part in the match with all proceeds going towards the War Horse Awareness Foundation. Over \$17,000 was raised this year to help fund the foundation in providing support and education for military, police and front-line responders living with PTSD.

“That’ll put us over the \$100,000 for seven years,” said co-organizer Scott Collacutt. “It’s a great cause. War Horse is a great society and they do a lot with the funding that they get and they make the most of it for the veterans. I’m talking first-line veterans, police, military, everybody.”

The 260 players were split into two teams of 120 players with a group of 20 rebels thrown into the mix. Alongside the match, PTSD support information was provided on-site during the fundraiser.

Collacutt, a military vet himself, said he started OP Valour with a group of friends when those around him weren’t getting the help they needed from the federal government to deal with their mental health issues.



Doug Saunders was born in Moncton NB but grew up in Sherwood PEI. During high school he worked as a Radio announcer at CFCY and after a couple of years, decided to join the Airforce as an Airframe technician. After trades training, he was posted to CFB Shearwater in 1976. He served aboard a few ships with 423 Sqn Air Detachments.

In 1981 he was posted to CFB Baden Soellingen where he was involved with CFNS Radio as an announcer, play by play sports broadcaster and band interviewer until Nov 1985 when he was posted back to Shearwater. He was posted to VU32 and 2 years later back to Sea Kings. He was part of missions such as Haiti, and the Gulf War aboard HMCS Athabaskan.

In 1993 he was posted to AETE in Cold Lake where he took his release and moved back to Dartmouth, NS. In 1997 he joined 434 Sqn in 14 Wing Greenwood as a Reserve until 2001 when the Sqn started to close down.

As a civilian he worked with Bombardier in Montreal as a quality inspector on the RJ700/900 and the UAE Military and Police Force in the Middle East and at Autoport in Eastern Passage. He is currently a member of a Great group of Brothers and Sisters with the Nova Scotia UN/NATO Group. He is now retired and enjoying life with his spouse and living in Dartmouth, NS.

QCH COUPLE SHARES THEIR UNIQUE EXPERIENCE

(Another great Veteran story that first appeared in the Queensway Carleton Hospital Foundation Newsletter and area paper).



(MARRIED FOR 63 YEARS, CHARLES AND MARGARET KNIGHT WERE ADMITTED TO THE QUEENSWAY CARLETON HOSPITAL JUST DAYS APART)

“When my wife came to the Emergency Department, staff started thinking of ways to keep us together if she were to be admitted the next day. The next morning, the decision was made in Emergency that she did need admitting. So, they simply moved the man in the bed beside me to the room beside us, and my wife was able to move into the room with me.”

Charles explains that he was initially transferred to a different unit but once Margaret was far enough advance, she too followed shortly. “She was in a single bed for a while – a very nice room with a view down the hall so I would get one of the porters to push me over once a day to have a visit. “Thanks to QCH staff, Charles and Margaret shortly found themselves in the same room once again. “The staff had an understanding history of

QCH, we are the 4th couple to be admitted together in the same room. “

Ironically enough, Charles and Margaret were also with us on November 11th. “I did my career in the armed forces – mostly navy, and I retired in 1990.: During his 32 years of service, Charles has gathered quite a collection of medals. “My granddaughter brought my medals in the day before Remembrance Day – she spread them all out on the bed for me. I did not want to bring a suit in and wear the medals as I normally would, so instead I displayed them beside me on my bed. “

Charles and Margaret laid the medals out in their room just before watching the Ottawa Remembrance Day Ceremony on TV with their families. “We put all of my medals on a pillow and well... there they were – all my medals!”

“So, I said two things are happening here: number 1. I’m here on Remembrance Day and number 2. I get to be here with my wife.”

that in the



(Margaret and Charles with his medals)

VIMY FLIGHT

(Below is the beautifully hooked rug by Richard Ratcliffe, that he has donated to the Shearwater Aviation Museum)

The following is a brief summary of Richard's story (as told by himself)

I am a FISHEAD with strong ties to Naval Aviation, having served in all three peacetime carriers, which is more than most ZOOMIES can claim! I was a Direction Officer, controlling the aircraft on radar when distant from the ships. I left the Navy after the Government announced they were scrapping the BONAVENTURE.



The Vimy Flight map..... April 9 – 27, 2017 was the 100th Anniversary of the Victory at Vimy Ridge... my father fought in this battle. I had already hooked a mat of the Monument, but when I read about the Vimy Flight and saw the dramatic color photo of the Flight in formation inside the back cover of the Spring Warrior, I knew I would have to hook a mat of the Flight. It took a while to get around to it, as I couldn't find the Warrior copy... Enter Kay, who suggested the interned which I did. I forwarded a copy to our Photo shop here at Sunnybrook who ran me their largest enlargement, which I doubled the scale and drew it on the plain hooking mesh. No need for further detail, I basically followed the photo enlargement I took out the third plane so I could work in the Monument. As you may know, the Flight did go to France in 2017 and did a fly by. I did not keep track of time, but it

probably took two months to complete, not working steadily on it.

I just recently finished my 23rd effort in my 4 years here. When people as the Happy Hooker at work, "what are you going to do with in when you finish?" In this case SAM was always on my mind, or somewhere here at the Sunnybrook Veteran Center. May the Johnny Bower Arms, our Pub.

When I asked John Cody if somewhere in SAM it might be appropriate, his answer was very much positive, and I am deeply honored to know my Vimy Flight will have a place in Shearwater where I served as a Direction Officer from 1955 – 1957.

Dick Ratcliffe



(Thank you, Mr. Ratcliffe, I know it will be greatly appreciated at the SAM)



(Grandson Joe Gagne, Son Rick Ratcliffe and SAMF President John Cody)

REMEMBERING PRIVATE NATHAN SMITH



Pictured here is Charlotte Smith who was accompanied by her husband Lloyd. These are the memorial cross parents of Private Nathan Smith who was tragically killed during a friendly fire incident in Afghanistan. His parents graced us with their presence at this year's wreaths across Canada at the Fairview Cemetery in Halifax. They along with the surviving son Ron McLean and surviving spouse Angie Gibson Hutchings were all presented with a Memorial Canada flag during the ceremony. It should be noted that prior to the change in policy regarding the memorial cross when it was previously only presented to the mothers of Fallen Soldiers, her husband Lloyd was the first in Nova Scotia to receive a silver cross which was created by a Yarmouth Memorial Group and he was the first of every father in Nova Scotia to receive one of these.

FOR THE FALLEN

“They shall grow not old,
as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them,
Nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the
sun and in the morning
We will remember them.”

- Robert Laurence Binyon -

VOLUNTEERS

The Shearwater Aviation Museum is a great place to bring the family, come as a group, school group or just to come see it for your self. But, like any great museum, or nonprofit, we could not do what we do without the great work of our Volunteers!

Below are some of the volunteers who are working behind the scenes and out front for school tours, group tours or welcoming our visitors to the museum and showing them through our great displays.

If you are interested in volunteering with the Shearwater Aviation Museum, please come in and see us. We would love to have your help.



(Duncan Mason, works on all of our exhibits)



(Jim Elliott, Wayne White and Michael "Mick" Stephenson)



(Margaret Ferguson and Carol Shadbolt front end and gift shop volunteers)

CNAG ATLANTIC CHAPTER

All current Canadian Naval Air Group members and past members are invited to a final BBQ to be held on May 3rd, 2020 at 2:30pm. It will be held at the old Chiefs and Petty Officers Mess at 12 Wing Shearwater, NS at no cost to all members. This is the closing down of the CFB Shearwater CNAG chapter. There will be a final dinner to be held at Boondocks Restaurant in Eastern Passage, NS on June 7th, 2020 at 4:30pm. There will be no meeting of CNAG at 12 Wing Shearwater. All current and past members will meet at the restaurant to talk about the good old times. The meal will be a choice of fish or chicken with tea or coffee. There will be no cost to members. Please contact Robert Shore, President, at 902-465-6888 if you plan to attend. Hope to see you all there.

Robert Shore, President

**G. E.
PLAWSKI**

A MEMOIR OF CANADIAN NAVAL AVIATION, FIREBOMBING AND THEATRE

NEVER A DULL MOMENT



GEORGE E. PLAWSKI

NEVER A DULL MOMENT

A MEMOIR OF
CANADIAN NAVAL AVIATION,
FIREBOMBING AND THEATRE



George Plawski was born in Gdynia, Poland, in 1934. His father, Eugene, was a senior naval officer who fought in both World Wars in the capacities of pilot, and as the commander of surface ships as well as submarines. Before the war, he lived with his wife Maria in Warsaw.

Never a Dull Moment lives up to its title as George takes us back to his youth under the Nazis in WW2, describes his and his mother's separate escapes from Communist occupied Poland to join his father who spent the war years in the Polish Navy in England, and their subsequent immigration to Canada in 1948.

This colorful memoir traces the family's unusual history, and recalls the severe hardships which faced his parents in starting their lives anew in this beautiful and free, yet in the immediate post-war years, a thoroughly challenging land.

In a series of humorously recalled anecdotes, the author portrays the process leading to his commission in the Royal Canadian Navy, to obtaining his wings, and to becoming a pilot flying off the aircraft carrier, *HMCS Bonaventure*.

After leaving the service in 1964, Plawski returned to UBC to finish his BA, then completed three years of post-graduate studies in theatre, specialising in directing, which was funded by his summer job flying air tankers on forest fires.

The book continues with suspenseful accounts of Plawski's founding of Vancouver's City Stage, the thrilling saga of the often hair-raising pioneering days of firebombing in California and in Canada, and of the hilarious aerial circus of budworm spraying in New Brunswick.

This story is embellished with a telling of his meeting with a beautiful and cultured girl from Paris whose name is Rita; of their unconventional romance, their travels around the world, of her loving and essential collaboration in the author's idiosyncratic lifestyle, and of their eventual marriage which is happily doomed to continue to the end of this grand adventure.

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WALL OF HONOUR

Guidelines for designing your “Wall of Honour” Tile.

The tile used is made from high quality marble, which is 12 inches square. The tile can be sand blasted in various ways to suit your wishes. All lettering will be in upper case and the tile will be mounted in the diamond orientation as opposed to a square orientation. All Text will run horizontally across the tile.

The options are:

- Option A:** One half tile 12" X 12" x 17" and triangular in shape with up to 5 rows of 3/4" letters for a maximum of 60 letters and spaces. The longest row can accommodate up to 20 letters and spaces. The remaining 4 rows will decrease in length as the border/edge of the tile dictates. It should be noted that the upper half of the tile would start with a short row and the bottom half will start with a long row.
- Option B:** The full tile with up to 6 rows of 1" letters for a maximum of 55 letters and spaces. The two centre rows can accommodate up to 16 letters and spaces. The remaining rows will decrease as the edge of the tile dictates.
- Option C:** The full tile with up to 10 rows of 3/4" letters for a maximum of 120 letters and spaces. The two centre rows can accommodate 20 letters and spaces. The remaining rows will decrease as the edge of the tile dictates.
- Option D:** The “Buddy” Tile - sold only as a full tile. This tile is divided into 4 quarters - each 6" X 6". Each quarter can accommodate up to 6 rows of 1/2" letters for a maximum of 48 letters and spaces. The two centre rows can accommodate up to 12 letters and spaces with the remaining rows decreasing as the tile edge dictates.

Option A



\$300

Option B & C



\$600

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\$600

Wall Tiles may be purchased through monthly installments.

Half Tiles - \$100 day of purchase - \$100 per month for the following two months.

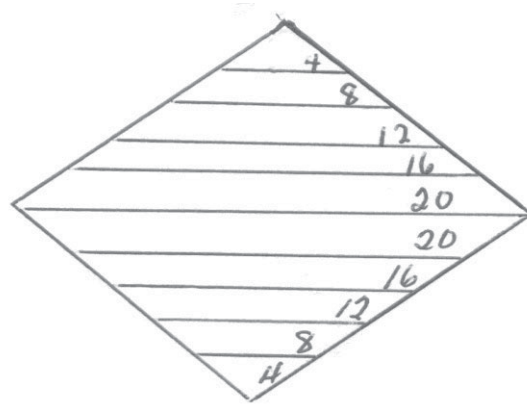
Full Tiles - \$200 day of purchase - \$ 100 per month for the following four months.



(Wall Tiles (continued))

ENGRAVING REQUEST

The colour of the tile will be 'Belmont Rose'. If the submission requires any alteration, the subscriber will be contacted by phone or email by the coordinator for further discussion. **REMEMBER TO COUNT THE SPACES!**



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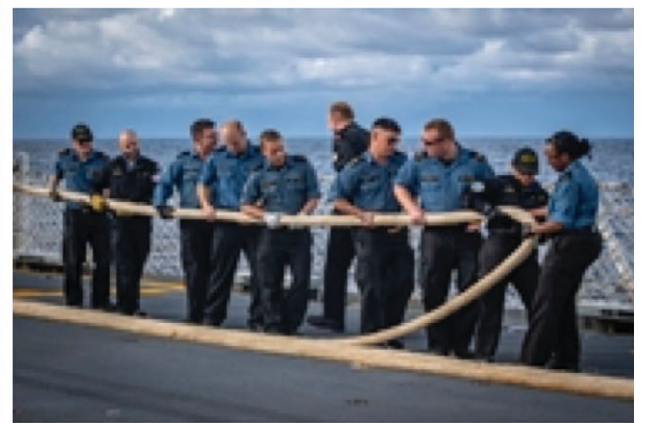
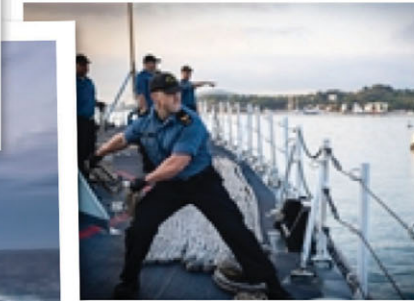
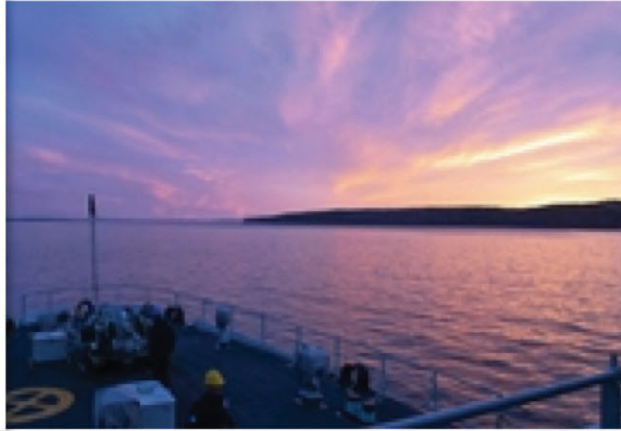
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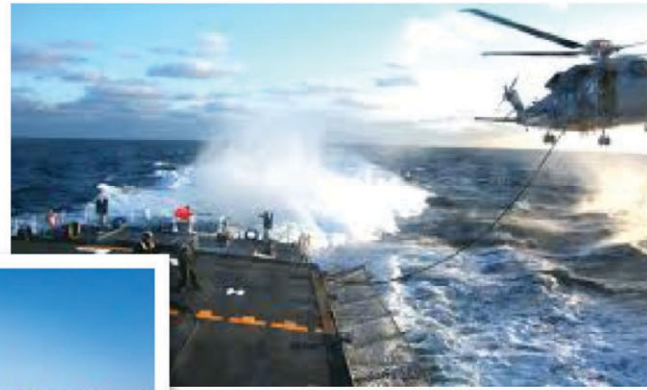
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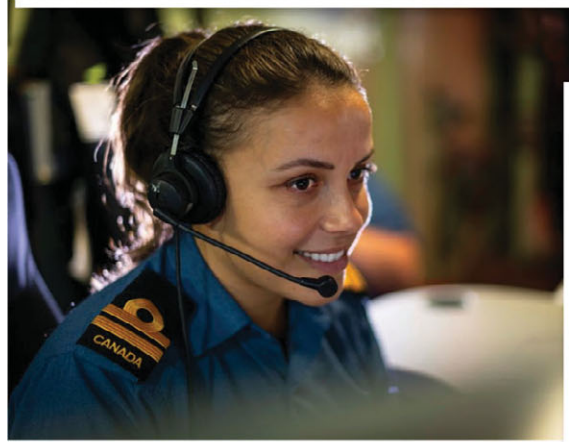
<HMCS FREDERICTON



HMCS HALIFAX



Photos by
Cpl. Trudeau



A MINI NATO GATHERING

This little tale took place in the late 1960's in San Juan Puerto Rico. We (VS 880) had been detached to there to fly out of Isla Grande, the civilian airport of San Juan. This proved to be fortuitous as there were noise abatement restrictions as to the hours we could take off and land, 07:00 for QTO and not after 22:00 for "feet dry". It was (almost) like a civilian job for us with these hours.

We were quartered in the USN barracks which also was close to being in the city. There was a favorite watering hole just outside the main gate named The Black Angus which was not only handy but it was normally full of military patrons. The NATO exercise comprised of us Canucks, the USN, the Dutch and the Brits were Marines and sailors who would rotate through a British Frigate, which was on permanent Caribbean position.

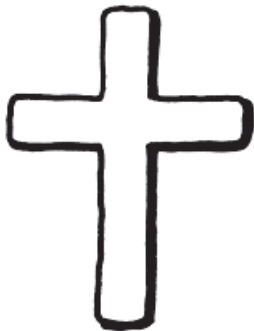
The Marines at that time were The Royal Scottish Regiment and as we all were in uniform when downtown. There were about 4 Marines standing at the bar side by side and one particular curious "B" girl kept lifting up his kilt from behind every few minutes, we could hear him tell her "git away lassie" numerous times as he wanted nothing to do with her. Finally after doing it one more (and the last) time he swung around and backhanded her knocking her to the floor. Immediately there were about 6 local lads who formed a semicircle around the Marine who said "gentlemen, I asked her many times to leave me be, now I've got no problem taking all of you on or one at a time, the choice is yours". At that instant the sound of chairs being pushed back together was loud and clear as ALL us military lads stood up and took a step toward the 6 locals. They must have read about General Custer and after a few glances around decided they would simply pick her up and "depart the fix" as it were. Everyone sat back down, the Marine came to attention and snapped off a thankful salute to us all. The "brothers in arms" words were loud and clear that night and the spirit of NATO obvious.

As an aside, who remembers the chicken legs being served at outside restaurants in San Juan with the feet still attached? They were really tasty if you could get by the appearance.

Charles (Chuck) O'Neill.

IN THE DELTA

BLANEY Brian Alan
COLLACUTT Kathleen "Kay"
DOUGLAS Melville Malcolm
HAWRYSH Fredrick
JACKSON Dennis Steven David
LINDSTROM Lennard Allen
LUSTER John R
MCQUINN Everett
MAXWELL Donald Earnest "Kam"
NIMMO Richard "Dick"
OSTER Brian
SMITH John Basil
TURCOTTE Gaetan
ZINCK Irvin Erick "Charlie"



AND WE THOUGHT THAT WE'D BE FOREVER YOUNG

And we thought that we'd be forever young,
As those that shared our friendship forged
while crossing over the "Round Down",
With nothing but steady hands and a
protruding "Tail Hook" to get us safe aboard.
We were proud young naval airmen, destined to
become eternal shipmates,
And share our dreams of professionalism as
we ruled the anti- submarine-warfare
world.

We shared the hiss of Sea Kings, with their
big sonar domes a dipping,
And the ribbing they took as sun-downers
while the Trackers still met the call.
We watched in awe as their "Sting" advanced
into a stand-alone force on DDH's ever so
small,
And continue too revel over their development
of a Hal-down System that is now world
renown!

We were immortal young naval air comrades,
With that undaunted, exuberant fortitude, to
overcome the tribulations of our tasks,
And reminisce daily about those wonderful
adventures, that the boundaries of time will
never surpass,
Surviving moonless night wave-offs, broken
bridals launches through waves, ditching at sea,
And horrific hurricanes, all of which only served
to make our friendship even stronger!

This comradeship engraved in moments of
hardship,
Has provided us with the courage, wisdom, and
enduring friend- ship, that will forever last,
So, let's crank up those tired old engines,
rejuvenate the past, and until we join
our comrades in the "DELTA",
Let's live our lives with that same steadfast
enthusiasm that so long ago made us, "Forever
Young"!

In Memory of Our Shipmates in the DELTA:
Paul Baiden, 2015

NANAIMO HERO REDISCOVERED OSBORNE ORR, DFC

BY ANGUS SCULLY

(This story was published in the VIMM
(Vancouver Island Military Museum
Newsletter Spring 2020)

In November 2019, Allan Snowie visited the Nanaimo Cenotaph and hoped to see there the name of a locally born hero of the Great War, Osborne Orr. Orr was a fighter ace killed in October 1918 and awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for bravery. Allan is a retired RCN pilot and Air Canada pilot who has written several books on Canadian military topics. He is also a friend of this Museum. Allan wondered why a local hero would not be on the Cenotaph. He had written briefly about Osborne Orr and had found his Nanaimo birth certificate. WE decided to look into this, and even consider having Orr's name added to the Cenotaph. My research soon found two major errors that have entered the on-line world about Osborne Orr.



(This photo of Osborne Orr is
Posted on Canada's virtual war
Memorial)

Americans Claim Nanaimo Hero

The first of the errors was a shocker. On Wikipedia
and other Internet sites, Osborne Orr is claimed as

an American born fighter ace that served in the
Royal Flying Corps. This is easily proved not true, but
Wikipedia errors have a way of being repeated and
repeated across Internet sites. The Canadian Virtual
War Museum does correctly list Orr as a Canadian
and even has a phot of him, but the record across
the Internet needs to be corrected. The Wikipedia
record has been partially corrected, but other errors
may be beyond reach.



The document record about Osborne Orr is clear.
We have his birth certificate and his BC marriage
certificate. Local business records and the Census
begin to reveal his family's life in Nanaimo and
Vancouver. We have the Attestation Papers he
completed upon joining the Royal Flying Corps in
Toronto in 1917. Adding his service record from the
UK National Archives gives us a nice history of this
young Canadian hero. How could the Americans end
up claiming Osborne Orr? Records show that he had
an uncle in St. Paul Minnesota and Orr lived and
worked there for several years after finishing high
school in Vancouver. In St. Paul, he met and became
engaged to Virginia Kennedy of Akron, Ohio. That
seems to have been fact that started the errors
repeating and repeating.

2ND LIEUTENANT OSBORNE ORR – ROYAL FLYING CORPS AND ROYAL AIR FORCE

Another error about Orr is that he served in the
Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS). This seems minor
compared to the American claim, and comes from
confusion about the time lines. Orr joined the RFC
Toronto in October 1917. On April 1, 1918, the RFC

and the RNAS were merged to form the RAF. When Orr completed his RFC and RAF training in June 1918, he was posted to 204 Squadron RAF, which had been 4 Squadron RNAS. Orr's records show he was entirely RFC/RAF in training and service. Not a big error, but the truth should be protected.



(A Camel fighter on display in Perth, Western Australia)

OSBORNE ORR – SHOE SALESMAN AND FIGHTER ACE

Osborne Orr was born on July 15, 1895, in Nanaimo, British Columbia, to William John and Caroline Orr. He had a sister, Vera Eleanor, born in 1898, in Wellington BC, which is now part of Nanaimo. William Orr owned Orr and Rendell, Boot and Shoe Dealer, in Nanaimo. Shortly aft the birth of Vera, the Orr family moved to Vancouver, and William opened William J. Orr Boots and Shoes at 420 Westminster Ave., with the family living nearby. Some years later they moved to Point Grey. Osborne attended Grandview Public School and Britannia High School. In June 1914 he visited his uncle, Dr. O. G. Orr, a dentist in St. Paul MN. We do not know if Osborne returned home before he enlisted, but he did take out (but never used) a Minnesota marriage license to marry Virginia Kennedy in 1917. Business records show hi working as a show salesman in St. Paul. Osborne married Virginia in Vancouver on September 14, 1917. He was 22m she was 19.



(The German D. VII fighter. Aircraft on both sides were brightly coloured)

Two weeks later Orr joined the Royal Flying Corps in Toronto. Virginia was living at 20 Grosvenor St. in Toronto. Orr would have attendee the School of Military Aeronautics at the University of Toronto, then proceeded through flight training, gunnery school, and completion of a minimum of 30 hours of solo flying. He was then commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant and sent to England. Records show that Virginia returned to Vancouver.

By June 1918m Orr was in England and posted to 45 Training Squadron, then 1 Fighting School. On July 20, he was posted to France and on August 1, joined 204 Squadron as a fighter pilot flying the famous Sopwith Camel. Orr had his first victories on August 12, shooting down two Fokker D. VII's on the same day. He was a good pilot and a good shot. He shot down another D.VII on August 14, and his fourth victory was on August 15. It was another two months before he got his fifth victory, on October 14, and became an Ace.

On October 23, Osborne Orr and three other pilots from 204 Squadron were shot down by German fighters. Orr's body was never found. He was 23, his widow, 20. In January 1919, Orr was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) for bravery.

Thus, two men from Nanaimo became fighter aces in the Great War. Raymond Collinshaw shot down 60 German aircraft.

The VIMM will now work with local authorities and explore the possibility of having Osborne Orr's name added to our Cenotaph. Allan Snowie has donated money for a plaque.



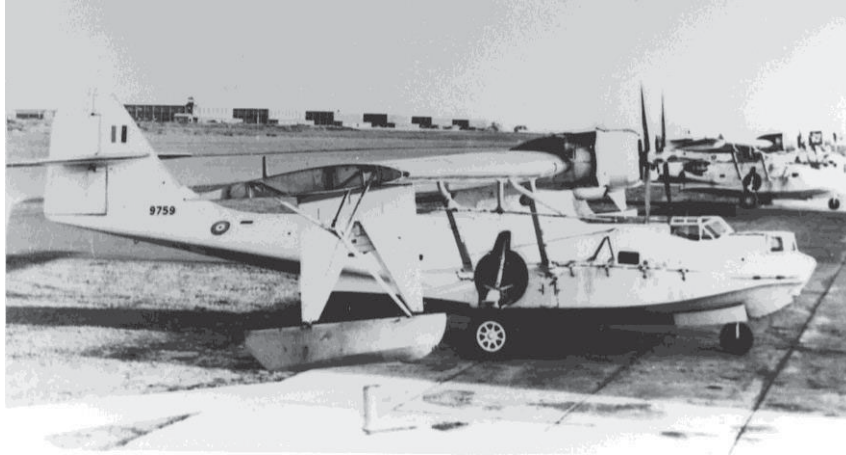
(The RFC under canvas at the University of Toronto.)

PBY 5A Canso At Dartmouth And Overseas

Ernie Cable

Shearwater Aviation Museum Historian

Part 2



Cansos At RCAF Yarmouth Before Move To Dartmouth

Canso Aircraft Arrive

Part 1 concluded with No. 5 BR (Bomber Reconnaissance) Squadron receiving the RCAF's first PBY-5 Canso flying boats at Dartmouth in October 1941. The Cansos from the first Canadian orders in the United States greatly extended the range and endurance beyond the venerable Stranraers on convoy escort and anti-submarine patrols. By December 1941, small numbers of Canso A aircraft, were becoming available off both American and Canadian production lines and by the end of February 1942 thirteen Canso A's were on 5 (BR) strength. The Canso A's operated from the Dartmouth airfield and conducted anti-submarine and convoy escort patrols south of Nova Scotia. The squadron also escorted convoys in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and south of Cape Breton Island and Newfoundland.

In November 1942, winter conditions at the Botwood, Newfoundland seaplane station forced 116 (BR) Cansos to temporarily return to Dartmouth while their new seaplane base was being established at the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) base at Shelburne on the south shore of Nova Scotia. But early icing of Shelburne harbour prohibited flying boat operations and 116 (BR) permanently relocated at Dartmouth, using the moorings in Eastern Passage. At the same time, 10 (BR)'s aging Digbys in Gander were no longer reliable for sustained long-range operations and the squadron was withdrawn to Dartmouth. The anti-submarine forces in Newfoundland were brought up to strength by transferring Dartmouth's 5 (BR) Canso A's to Gander along with a small detachment of Canso A's from the still incomplete 162 (BR) at Yarmouth, NS. The Canso A's extended endurance allowed Eastern Air Command aircraft to range closer to the German U-boat mid-Atlantic operating areas. Under the direction of Squadron Leader "Molly" Small, the 162 (BR) Gander detachment commander, 5 (BR) extended the range of their Canso A's beyond their normal 500 miles (830 km) by stripping excess weight from the aircraft, including extra guns, ammunition and stores. In all, about 1,200 pounds (450 kg) were removed, which permitted the Canso A's to operate out to 700 miles (1,160 km) from base. The move to Gander was fortuitous for 5 (BR); as the squadron went on to conduct 17 U-boat attacks on 25 sightings, resulting in two successes. With the ability to make a series of promising attacks at maximum range, the Canso A's became the backbone of Eastern Air Command's bomber reconnaissance squadrons. However, the RCAF would have to wait until the arrival of the Very Long Range (VLR) B-24 Liberators to close the mid-Atlantic gap between Iceland and Newfoundland where U-boats operated with impunity beyond the range of land based air cover.

Coastal Command Lessons

Early in the war, there were no RCAF personnel experienced in maritime operations and coordination with the RCN's convoy escorts was non-existent, so the neophyte Eastern Air Command crews had to learn through the painful process of trial and error. In 1942, officers from RAF Coastal Command visited Eastern Air Command Headquarters to brief crews on their British coastal operations and the offensive tactics used by the RAF crews to push the U-boats back 350 miles (580 km) from Coastal Command bases. Eastern Air Command's performance slowly improved by adopting Coastal Command procedures, including copying Coastal Command's all matt-white paint scheme to make their aircraft less visible to U-boat lookouts. Patrol altitudes were increased from 1,000 to 3,000 feet (330 m to 1,000 m), a more effective height for visually detecting surfaced U-boats. The RCAF also ventured into operational analyses, which indicated that most of Eastern Air Command's patrols were flown within 200 miles (330 km) of base, thereby failing to strike the U-boats before they reached the convoy focal areas in the harbour approaches where they inflicted the most damage. Eastern Air Command also abandoned the practice of attempting to escort every convoy without regard for the U-boat threat and concentrated on protecting those convoys where intelligence reported a high probability of encountering shadowing U-boats or U-boat "Wolf Packs" consisting of 10 to 15 U-boats positioned at 5 to 10 mile (8 to 16 km) intervals across probable convoy routes to the UK. When a Wolf Pack U-boat sighted a convoy it called in the other U-boats for a mass attack. The Cansos' endurance and longer patrols over the convoy provided better continuity for convoy protection that consisted of sweeps along parallel tracks 50 miles (85 km) on either side of the convoy's mean line of advance, as well as searches 50 miles (85 km) astern and 100 miles (160 km) ahead.

Coastal Command's successes against the U-boat greatly improved through closer cooperation with the Royal Navy, which provided intelligence largely derived from high frequency direction finding (HF/DF) bearings on U-boat radio transmissions. Following the British example, Eastern Air Command's success against the U-boat started to improve after the RCN, in cooperation with the Department of Transport and the RCAF, developed a dramatically effective Canadian HF/DF organization. Using information from the HF/DF network the RCN's Operational Intelligence Centre (OIC) in Ottawa became one of two U-boat plotting centres for the Western Atlantic (Washington, DC was the second centre). Initially, HF/DF information arrived at Eastern Air Command's operations centre in Halifax via Teletype messages, but the transmission procedures were too slow and messages often arrived too late to be of operational value. Therefore, a new system of passing HF/DF information by commercial telephone using code words enabled Eastern Air Command to react to the most recent HF/DF bearings by re-positioning patrols to high U-boat probability areas. In fact, Squadron Leader Small who was an enthusiastic proponent of naval intelligence maintained one of his squadron's aircraft on immediate alert to respond to "hot" HF/DF bearings.

Until early 1943 Eastern Air Command crews abandoned U-boat searches after losing contact, but Coastal Command aircraft persisted in their searches for about six hours and achieved second sightings about 25 percent of the time. British studies concluded that a U-boat attempting to escape quickly was likely to surface and present a good visual or radar target, or if it remained submerged at a nominal speed of two knots a U-boat's farthest-on circle after two days would be no more than 100 miles (160 km) from the last known position. Coastal Command, therefore, developed a hunt to exhaustion search tactic where four aircraft on task at a time, continuously searched a lost contact datum for 48 hours. Eastern Air Command also adopted a hunt to exhaustion tactic code named "Salmon" that could only be carried out once a U-boat had been sighted. Good intelligence was the key to making initial contact and usually depended on OIC "Otter" signals transmitted to Eastern Air Command. "Otter" signals contained the OIC submarine tracking room's forecast of the areas where U-boats would probably be found the next day. The predicted locations were based on fresh intelligence; a sighting, an attack on shipping, accurate HF/DF bearings or German signals decrypted by Bletchley Park in England. Again, the Canso's endurance enabled longer on-task times during Salmon searches providing better search continuity and a higher probability of regaining contact.

Cansos In Iceland

No. 162 (BR) was the last of five Canso A Bomber Reconnaissance squadrons (The others being Nos. 5, 116, 117 and 161.) to operate from RCAF Station Dartmouth during the Second World War. No. 162 formed at Yarmouth, NS in 1942 to provide anti-submarine and convoy escort patrols between the American Eastern Seaboard and Nova Scotia. But, as the U-boat "Paukensschlag" (Drumbeat) offensive moved farther south to attack the South American tanker routes supplying oil to the United States, the U-boat presence south west of Nova Scotia diminished. Therefore, 162 (BR) moved to Dartmouth to cover the target rich approaches to Halifax's strategic harbour. Notwithstanding, that six of the squadron's 15 aircraft were deployed to the U.S.A.A.F. base at Stephenville, Newfoundland, 162 (BR)'s nine remaining Canso A's announced their arrival with a low-level fly-past over their new base on 3 October 1943. Two days later all available aircraft and crews were ordered to Goose Bay, Labrador to counter a re-invigorated U-boat offensive in the western Atlantic, returning to Dartmouth only for major servicing. At the end of November, 162 (BR) finally returned to Dartmouth but their Canso A's had to operate from the water at Eastern Passage, as there was no ramp space on the airfield.



Geoff Bennett Painting Of 162 Sqn Canso Taking Off From Eastern Passage

Only a month after returning to Dartmouth from Goose Bay 162 (BR) was ordered to RAF Station Reykjavik, Iceland, an airfield commandeered by the British in 1941. The airfield's strategic north Atlantic location enabled RAF and American aircraft to patrol the convoy routes between Greenland and the United Kingdom. Anti-submarine forces at Reykjavik consisted of a very successful Coastal Command VLR Liberator squadron and one Hudson squadron plus one U.S. Navy Ventura squadron; neither of the latter two aircraft had sufficient range to cover the convoys on the Arctic routes or reach the U-boats as they slipped through the Iceland-United Kingdom gap into the north Atlantic. To bolster their long range capability Coastal Command requested a Canso squadron from the RCAF, resulting in 162 (BR) being ordered to Reykjavik. It was agreed that the squadron would remain under the administrative control of Eastern Air Command, but under Coastal Command's operational control.

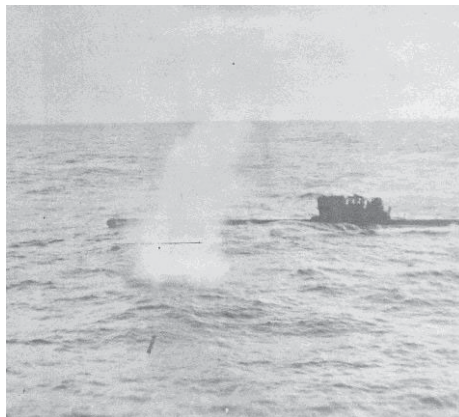
After a frenzy of activity to give their Canso A's a thorough overhaul, 162 (BR) departed Dartmouth on 1 January 1944. The aircraft were brought ashore and towed up to the airfield to avoid the possibility of frozen brakes from a water takeoff. The journey from Dartmouth to Reykjavik, Iceland was made in three stages via Goose Bay and Bluie West 1 in Greenland. The 15 aircraft were loaded to the maximum weight with 60 ground crew, personal kit, and spare parts; knowing that there were no Cansos in Reykjavik, spares from Canada were essential. Dakotas and Liberators flew the remainder of the ground crews to Reykjavik. The remainder of 162 (BR)'s spares and heavy equipment was delivered to Reykjavik by two modest size coastal freighters from RCAF Station Dartmouth's Marine Squadron. The *Eskimo* and *Beaver* made the perilous voyage unescorted through U-boat infested waters and tumultuous gale-driven winter seas. The move was the first by an RCAF squadron using solely RCAF resources.



Armed 162 Squadron Canso At Reykjavik Iceland

During the first three months of 1944, 162 (BR) was part of the Coastal Command offensive in the western approaches to defeat the U-boat Wolf Packs attempting to strike convoys en-route to the United Kingdom. It was during this offensive that the squadron made first contact with the enemy on 22 February 1944 when Flight Lieutenant Cunningham and crew in Canso 9841 attacked a surfaced U-boat (later identified as U-550) through heavy flak. Despite good placement of the depth charges the U-boat was not seriously damaged and the subsequent hunt to exhaustion yielded no results. The squadron's first victory came on 17 April 1944 when Flying Officer Cooke and crew in Canso 9767 attacked U-342 south west of Iceland. The nose gunner silenced return fire, allowing the Canso to drop three depth charges from 50 feet (16 m) in a perfect straddle of the U-boat's hull. The U-boat circled, settling lower in the water. The Canso circled firing from the blister position. Eventually, the pressure hull collapsed from the initial attack and U-342 sank.

During May and June 1944, Coastal Command launched an Arctic offensive in the waters off Norway to counter a probable U-boat breakout from ports in Norway and Germany to interfere with the forth-coming D-Day invasion across the English Channel. Because of the Canso A's amphibious capability, 162 (BR) was advised that it would probably be required to move rapidly and work under difficult conditions. Between 23 and 25 May 1944, the first 162 (BR) detachment arrived at Wick, Scotland, a Coastal Command airfield on the North Sea near the entrance to the northern transit area to the English Channel; by the end of June all of the squadron's aircraft were flying from Wick.

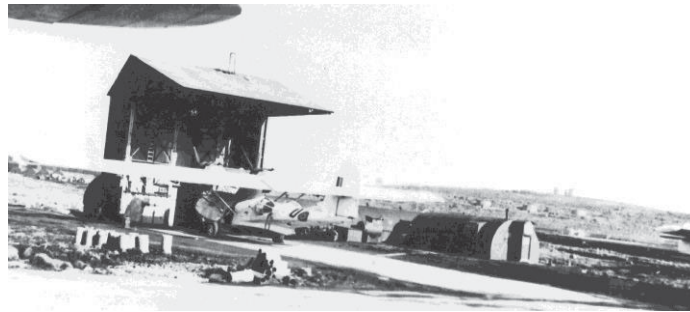


Aft Facing Camera Show Depth Charge 1 (Far Side Of U-boat), 2 (Plume) and 3 (Foreground) Straddle U-342

On 24 June 1944, the attack by Flight Lieutenant Dave Hornell and crew on U-1225 brought the squadron its greatest fame. U-1225 was sighted on the surface about 120 miles (200 km) north of the Shetland Islands. Hornell turned Canso 9754 for the attack and encountered intense accurate anti-aircraft fire, which knocked out the starboard engine and started a fire in the starboard wing. Hornell held the violently vibrating aircraft steady for a successful depth charge attack, after which the starboard engine then fell off the wing and he had to ditch only a few miles from the sinking U-1225. As the crew abandoned the flaming wreck, one of the two dinghies overinflated and burst, leaving only one four-man dinghy for all eight men.

Two crewmembers at a time took turns in the water, but after several hours everyone squeezed on board with limbs trailing over the edge. After 21 hours in the frigid stormy water a rescue launch from the Shetlands finally arrived, but two crewmembers had died from exposure and Hornell was in the last stages of exhaustion and could not be revived. For his determined and skillful attack in the face of withering fire, and selfless succor for his crew after ditching, Hornell was posthumously awarded the Commonwealth's highest award for valour, the Victoria Cross; the first to be awarded to a member of the RCAF. Hornell's five surviving crewmembers were also decorated. (Hornell is honoured in the SAM's Victoria Cross Gallery.)

June was a remarkable month for 162 (BR). Of the eight U-boats destroyed in the northern transit area, 162 (BR) claimed four, shared in a fifth and damaged a sixth at a cost of three aircraft downed, thirteen aircrew dead, and one taken as prisoner. Coastal Command senior officers were most impressed and attributed 162 (BR)'s success to excellent training and determination plus "bags of guts". Coastal Command stated if they have really good intelligence, "We'll put 162 right in the middle". On 6 August, 162 (BR)'s large detachment at Wick returned to Iceland to strengthen coverage of the UK's western approaches and the northern transit area. By the end of the summer of 1944 the exciting and dangerous work of attacking U-boats was coming to an end. The mundane escort duties, no less vital to defeat the U-boats, would go on without pause.



162 Sqn Canso In Maintenance Nose Dock On Bleak Icelandic Landscape

According to German records Catalina/Canso aircraft sank 38 U-boats, second only to the B-24 Liberator for the number of U-boats sunk by aircraft. Another important measure is the inestimable number of convoy ships that were NOT sunk because of the unknown number of U-boats in the vicinity of convoys that were undetected but deterred from their attacks by the visual presence of aircraft; thereby allowing their critical cargoes to reach their destinations.

All of the RCAF's Second World War Canso squadrons were disbanded in the summer of 1945. However, in the late 1940s a number of RCAF Cansos were refurbished to equip 13, 408 and 413 (Photographic) Squadrons, which were reactivated to complete the aerial mapping of northern Canada. Thirteen RCAF Cansos were converted from patrol bombers to freight carriers with a crane mounted by the port blister for handling cargo. These were used to haul freight and supplies to remote communities and isolated survey sites in northern Canada and the Arctic. The Cansos last call to duty in the RCAF occurred in the early 1950s when Cansos formed the backbone of four search and rescue flights across Canada; 121 Flight in Sea Island, BC; 111 Flight in Winnipeg, MB; 102 Flight in Trenton, ON; and 103 Flight in Greenwood, NS. The last Canso was struck off RCAF strength in November 1962.

162 Squadron Family Connection

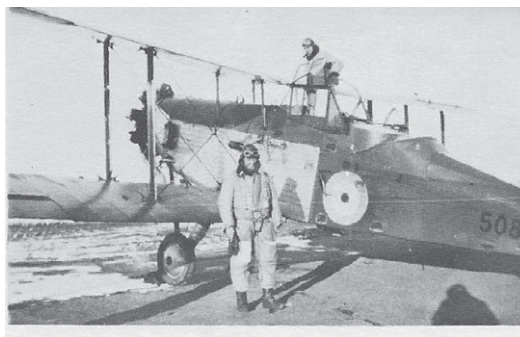
Colonel (Retired) Ernest Cable
SAM Historian

The part 1 of the article “PBW-5A Cansos at Dartmouth and Overseas” was published in the 2019 Christmas edition of the Warrior and was originally written for the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of 12 Wing Shearwater, formerly known as RCAF Station Dartmouth. Writing the article about Cansos and 162 Squadron, became a labour of love because it also involved my Father who was the Warrant Officer in charge of the Cansos’ maintenance throughout 162 Squadron’s entire existence.

My Dad was Warrant Officer First Class (WO 1) Stan Cable who joined the RCAF permanent force in 1930 at Camp Borden, ON, just six years after the RCAF came into being. The strength of the RCAF in 1930 was 177 officers and 729 airmen. After training at No.1 Technical Training School in 1930 as a rigger (aero engine mechanic) Dad remained at Camp Borden as part of the maintenance organization and worked on various types of biplane training aircraft in support of the station’s three flying schools.

In 1936, Dad was transferred to No.3 (Bomber) Squadron, the RCAF’s first bomber squadron, which was just forming at RCAF Station Trenton. The squadron was taking delivery of its first obsolescent Westland Wapiti biplane bombers, which the RAF had withdrawn from India and Iraq and declared surplus. The two-place Wapiti bomber crews were formed by pairing a pilot with a second crewman selected from among the squadron’s aero engine and airframe mechanics. Dad was selected and qualified as an Observer, entitling him to wear the Observer’s aircrew half wing on his uniform. As a Sergeant Observer, Dad was paired with Sergeant pilot “Mic” Michalski and performed as the crew’s navigator, wireless operator, bomb aimer and air gunner. After each flight the Observers reverted to their mechanic trades to carry out maintenance on their aircraft as well as supervise the assisting ground crew to prepare the aircraft for the next flight.

In 1937, shortly after taking delivery of four Wapitis at Trenton the squadron moved to Rockcliffe where it was brought up to full strength of eight aircraft and continued its intensive training program, which included night flying, both level and dive bombing, and long-range navigation. In 1938, No. 3 Squadron was transferred to Calgary where it expanded its bomber training role to include air support to the army garrison at Camp Sarcee. With war clouds on the horizon in 1939, Dad was transferred with the squadron to its war station at Halifax. The 3,000-mile (5,000 km) flight was the first trans-Canada flight performed by RCAF. It was also the first time a RCAF squadron had flown a long distance to a new posting rather than the previous practice of shipping the aircraft by train.



Dad standing in front of Wapiti, his pilot in the cockpit at Rockcliffe.

The Wapitis' role at Halifax was to form an "air striking force", either in cooperation with the RCN or independently against any enemy force that came within range. However, just days before Canada declared war on 10 September 1939 the RCAF conceded that the obsolete Wapitis would have been easily overwhelmed by enemy forces and No.3 (Bomber) Squadron was disbanded on arrival in Halifax. Squadron personnel were transferred to form the nucleus of two new squadrons, No.10 and No.11 (Bomber Reconnaissance) Squadrons, to be established at RCAF Station Dartmouth. In October, Dad was sent to RCAF Station Rockcliffe where No.11 Squadron was taking delivery of their new Lockheed Hudson maritime patrol aircraft. The Hudsons, which were built by Lockheed in California, represented the latest in aircraft technology, a quantum jump from the former Wapitis. Because the United States was still a neutral country American laws forbade the Hudsons from being *flown* to a belligerent country, the American hierarchy circumvented the law for Canadians by allowing the Hudsons to be *towed* across the border at Emerson, Manitoba by teams of horses. In November 1939, on completion of conversion training on the new Hudsons at Rockcliffe, No. 11 Squadron moved to its war station at RCAF Station Dartmouth. The Hudsons had the distinction of being the first aircraft to land on the newly constructed runways. (Previously Dartmouth had been solely a seaplane station). The Hudsons were tasked to protect the approaches to Halifax's strategic harbour by conducting anti-submarine and convoy escort patrols.



Lockheed Hudson in 11(BR) Sqn markings at Dartmouth

In September 1940, Dad was posted to the newly established No.4 Service Flying Training School at RCAF Station Saskatoon. Being one of the most experienced maintenance NCOs in the rapidly expanding RCAF, Dad set up the maintenance organization for the school's Cessna Crane and Avro Anson aircraft. The school was established as part of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan (BCATP) to train Commonwealth pilots on multi-engine aircraft. I was born while Mom and Dad were living in Saskatoon. However, the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour in December 1941 cut short Dad's time at Saskatoon. With the threat of an imminent Japanese attack against Canada the RCAF placed a priority on augmenting its west coast squadrons. Dad was transferred on short notice to No.7 (Bomber Reconnaissance) Squadron at RCAF Station Prince Rupert, BC, where construction had just been completed. No.7 Squadron was one of five recently formed bomber reconnaissance squadrons to protect Canada's Pacific approaches. When Dad arrived to help with No.7 squadron's maintenance the squadron was just taking delivery of their Blackburn Shark floatplanes, built under licence by Boeing Canada. In February 1942, the threat of attack on the West coast was deemed unlikely and Dad was posted to the BCATP flying school at RCAF Station Edmonton.

A few months later, in May 1942, Dad was posted to the newly formed No.162 (Bomber Reconnaissance) Squadron at RCAF Station Yarmouth, NS. Dad was the Warrant Officer in charge of maintenance and responsible for setting up the squadron's maintenance organization. When Dad arrived, the squadron was in the process of taking delivery of their first four Consolidated Canso flying boats, built under licence by Canadian Vickers in Montreal. The squadron was tasked with conducting anti-submarine and convoy escort patrols between the American eastern seaboard and Nova Scotia. Delivery of follow-on Cansos on order was slow, creating a chronic shortage of aircraft for operations. In frustration, the squadron joked that new members joining the squadron bring their own aircraft. It was not until June 1943 that the squadron had its full complement of 15 aircraft, allowing it to attain a high level of efficiency by the summer of 1943. However, the U-boats had shifted their operations farther south to attack the oil tanker routes from South America. This resulted in Dad moving with the squadron to RCAF Station Dartmouth from where it protected convoys in the outer approaches to Halifax's strategic harbour. While in Dartmouth Dad's maintenance crews supported deployments ranging from two to nine aircraft to Mont-Joli, Gander, Stephenville and Goose Bay to counter shifts in U-boat concentrations in the western Atlantic.



162 Sqn Canso 9754 flown by F/L Hornell when shot down during successful attack on U-1225.

In January 1944, Dad moved with the squadron to Reykjavik, Iceland from where the squadron patrolled the Greenland-Iceland-UK gap including the western approaches to the UK. Dad talked very little about his time in Iceland, but I do remember a few of his rare reminiscences. He talked of flying as a passenger in the bomb bay of a B-24 Liberator en route to Reykjavik, the sides of the bomb bay had been configured with troop seats for 15-20 maintenance personnel and the floor consisted wooden planks laying on the bomb bay doors. There was no heating in the bomb bay, and everyone was frigidly cold; the flight became even more uncomfortable when the flare chute that doubled as a toilet froze up. At the Reykjavik airfield the squadron was initially billeted in the RAF compound called Camp Corbett. The camp consisted of rows of Nissen huts (tunnel-shaped huts of corrugated iron with cement floors) that were heated by single coal stoves and were very cold. Messing provided by the RAF was a major dissatisfaction because the quality and preparation of the food was well below Canadian standards. Fortunately, the squadron was able to move into the vacated US Navy compound called “Camp Kwitchebelligiakin” where conditions were somewhat better, although less than ideal. The squadron later renamed their new abode “Camp Maple Leaf”. Dad also spoke of F/L Dave Hornell’s saga of ditching in the North Atlantic after his successful attack on U-1225. After 21 hours of battling the waves on the frigid ocean in their four-man dinghy, three crewmembers including Hornell died from hyperthermia. Fortunately, five crewmembers survived because of Hornell's selfless efforts, for which he was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross for putting the lives of his crew above his own. Hornell is honoured in the museum’s VC Gallery.



B-24 Liberator that flew Dad to Reykjavik, Iceland from Dartmouth (Note Bomb Bay Doors partially open)

Just before Dad moved to Iceland my Mom and I moved to Toronto, our family’s hometown. While en- route to Toronto on the ferry between Digby, NS and Saint John, NB, a U-boat was reported in the Bay of Fundy and all passengers had to don life jackets and stand by our lifeboat stations. An aircraft was patrolling around the ferry and fortunately we were not attacked. We arrived safely in Saint John where we took the train to Toronto.

After the war in August 1945, 162 Squadron was disbanded at Sydney, NS, but Dad was posted to Yarmouth, NS to help prepare 419 and 428 Squadrons, two of eight RCAF Lancaster squadrons assigned to the “Tiger Force”, which was earmarked for the Pacific theatre to take part in the war against Japan. However, after Japan surrendered the “Tiger Force” was disbanded in September 1945. After helping to close RCAF Station Yarmouth as part of the massive post-war reductions, Dad was posted to RCAF Station Aylmer in October 1946 to help reorganize maintenance training in the post-war RCAF.

Dad's post-war career in the RCAF was not nearly as hectic as his wartime service. His subsequent postings included: permanent force support staff for Nos. 400 and 411 Reserve Squadrons at RCAF Station Toronto; Training Command Headquarters at RCAF station Trenton where he monitored and inspected maintenance practices at all Training Command stations (Nine of the stations were dedicated to aircrew training for the RCAF and the NATO Flying Training Plan); RCAF Station Winnipeg as supervisor aircraft maintenance support shops; and RCAF Station North Bay, initially in charge of the CF-100 NORAD alert line and later as the station's technical maintenance inspector. Ironically, while at North Bay we lived in the station's PMQ patch, which was named "Hornell Heights" in honour of F/L David Hornell who served with Dad on 162 Squadron.

Dad retired from the RCAF in 1967 after 37 years' service during which he witnessed the greatest changes in RCAF history. Beginning in the RCAF's formative years in 1930 with 900 officers and airmen on strength he witnessed the RCAF grow to 215,000 personnel, the fourth largest Allied Air Force at the end of the Second World War. He was involved in the maintenance of aircraft in all three areas of RCAF involvement in the Second World War: home defence, the BCATP and operations overseas. In home defence he maintained Wapitis and Hudsons with Nos. 3 and 11 Squadrons respectively; as part of the BCATP he was involved with the maintenance of Cranes and Ansons at No.4 Service flying Training School in Saskatoon; and overseas he was responsible for 162 Squadron's Canso maintenance in Iceland. He also witnessed unprecedented changes in aviation technology as it evolved from fabric covered Wapiti biplanes in the 1930s, to Canada's front line, world class CF-100 twin jet interceptor in the 1960s.

Although Dad passed away in 1980, the Cable family connection with 162 Squadron was re-established in 1995; 50 years after Dad had left the squadron. In 1995, while Deputy Commander Maritime Air Group in Halifax, I received a phone call from F/L (retired) James McRae, who introduced himself as former member of 162 Squadron. He explained that he was the coordinator for the 50th year reunion of RCAF Station Yarmouth, and included the three Canso squadrons (160, 161 and 162) that were stationed at Yarmouth at various times during the war. He was calling to request a flypast by a CP-140 Aurora during the reunion's finale parade down the main street of Yarmouth. The Aurora was important because it was the RCAF's current maritime patrol aircraft that performed the same role as the Canso three generations earlier. After arranging the details for the flypast and exchanging names, James asked if I was the son of the 162 Squadron Stan Cable, which I confirmed. He said that he remembered my Dad well and invited me to attend the reunion as a son of a former 162 Squadron member and asked me to be the guest speaker at the banquet.

Attendance at the reunion was a euphoric occasion for me. I met many members of Dad's squadron all of whom, aircrew and ground crew alike, spoke of Dad in very glowing terms. They lauded his tireless determined efforts to keep 162's Cansos flying under very challenging working and weather conditions. I heard interesting reminiscences about Dad and what he did on the squadron, things Dad never talked about. Air Commodore (Retired) Bill Chapman, Dad's 162 Squadron Commanding Officer, spoke very highly of Dad and I met Mr Cy Green who introduced himself as Dad's best friend in Iceland and with whom he shared a passion for photography. I also met Mr Ron Harris, a former 162 Squadron flight engineer, who revealed that after the squadron identification letters had been removed from the Cansos as a censorship measure, air and ground crews had to walk around the aircraft to the tail to find the serial number to confirm they had located their assigned aircraft. Mr Harris and Dad came up with the idea of painting the last three digits of the Cansos' serial number on the nose so that the aircraft could be identified from the front, the usual approach to an aircraft parked on the tarmac. He believed that 162 Squadron was the first in the RCAF to initiate the nose-number practice that is still used on RCAF aircraft today.

After the war RCAF Station Yarmouth was closed and the hangars, including the one used by 162 Squadron, were torn down. Much of the material was salvaged and sold including the highly valued massive wooden beams that supported the hangars. At the reunion banquet, as a token of appreciation I was presented with a highly finished wooden block with a plaque mounted on the bevelled edge. The plaque was inscribed with my name and date and the fact that the block of wood was hewn from a beam in 162 Squadron's hangar. The block was presented to me as, "Coming from your Dad's hangar". What a wonderful memento of Dad's connection to 162 Squadron! It is among my most prized memorabilia.





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