



SHEARWATER AVIATION MUSEUM

Foundation Newsletter

Summer 2000



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READ ME FIRST

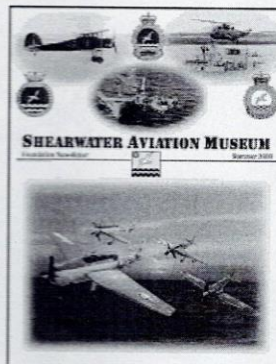
A Newsletter? Why a Newsletter? I begin to wonder. Basically, I guess, it's to keep the supporters of an institution informed about the goings-on of that institution. That's pretty well the case with this SAM Foundation Newsletter. But we have laboured under what now appears to be the illusion that all who shared the Shearwater and/or Carrier experience have fond memories of happy and adventurous times and look to Shearwater Aviation Museum as a sort of Mecca where old airplanes and bright memories are enshrined. Tain't so! We, it appears, were wrong, very wrong: Many names on our address list are, we find on enquiry, those of people who couldn't care less about what many of us regard as the highlight years of our lives. So be it. We now move to restrict the mailing list to those who do care - it's a matter of saving money for useful purposes.

To better serve the 'careers' it's time to ask the question - "What do you want to see in the Newsletter?" Your editor has assumed that a mix of articles about old aircraft, memorable cruises, anecdotes of hairy and of humorous events, homage to naval aviation's roots way back in the 1914-1918 war, a joke or two and a few photographs would cover all bases. Could be he's dead wrong. Tell him what you want. Out pens or mice or phones!

Now, a word to the unreconstructed. SAMF supports SAMI; and SAMI is a Military Aviation Museum. While supporters are predominantly of the naval persuasion they are not exclusively so -

Cover

A combination of flying, photo and model interests provide an interesting view of the spectacular models that the museum has "flying" from the "covered skies".



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Shearwater, under the name RCAF Portmouth, was a significant player in the Battle of the Atlantic. The preservation of the heritage of the boys in light blue who fought the 1939-1945 war from here is part of SAM's mandate. Some of our Directors and contributors to this newsletter had long Air Force careers. One of the two Victoria Cross winners honoured in SAM was an RCAF pilot. This newsletter will continue to cover the Air Force side as well as the Navy side and damn the dissenters!

Bill Farrell, Editor

SAM CURATOR'S REPORT

As we approach the close of another fiscal year for the SAM Foundation, it should be of interest to members to be informed of the Museum's progress over the year. At the outset, I must commend the Foundation for the out-standing support they have provided and continue to provide to the Museum. Fund-raising is probably one of the most frustrating of human endeavours; akin to a night landing on a pitching deck with no alternate airfield. But, what a gratifying feeling when the goal is achieved. It has been encouraging to see the "Wall of Honour" tiles grow to the extent that we have had to move it three times to accommodate the increasing numbers. What a job Al Moore has done! The sale of "Bonnie" books, although slightly behind forecast sales is a guaranteed money maker, thanks to Ted Kieser's efforts. These and other events such as the "Gala Dinner" in June and the NSIAS Golf Tournament, leave me with a very positive outlook to the future.

The results of these successes from SAM's perspective is that the SAMF Building Fund has grown to the extent that we are now negotiating to complete the funding package so as to erect our new addition within the next twelve months, hopefully this Fall.

Chuck LSO's report on SAMF - "OK 3 Wire"

MUSEUM OPERATIONS AND PROJECTS

The Museum enjoyed yet another very successful year. We had approximately 14,000 visitors in 1999 and our Gift Shop sales were very brisk, particularly during the air Show and the recent "Bonnie" reunion.

We initiated a Youth Outreach Program in the summer of 1999. It was enormously successful and is again this summer.

Last Fall, our Historian, Ernie Cable, prepared a very convincing application for a DND Millennium Grant to construct our "Eastern Air Command" exhibit. This proposal was among hundreds submitted and was one of the few that was successful. The \$15,000 grant was used to install an outstanding exhibit which focuses Eastern Air command's contribution to the Battle of the Atlantic. That aspect of Shearwater's history had previously not been well represented.

Well, Ernie was so good at these applications that he, assisted by the Firefly Restoration Crew, secured a \$38,000 Millennium Grant from Canada Heritage for our Firefly Project. This matched with \$10,000 from the Foundation and \$8,000 from the Museum will go a long way to getting our Firefly airborne. Incidentally, by the time you read this, the wings should be fitted to the airframe and engine assembly commenced. We are aiming to roll out next Spring.

Our first "Gate Guardian" aircraft were moved to "H" Hangar last September. This entailed folding the wings on CS2F Tracker 1501. We have commenced restoration of these aircraft to museum exhibit quality. 12 Air Maintenance Sqn has undertaken, on a volunteer basis, to restore our Banshee. The airframe paint has been stripped and it is being prepared for re-finishing. We located a brand new canopy from a generous donor (Mr. Neil Bruce) in Ontario. We will squeeze the Banshee into our Hangar Gallery, but by then we will be bulging at the seams. We surely need that new addition.

Our second annual Model Showcase and Trade Fair was held in the Museum on 27 Nov 99. The event, organized by our modeler, Rob LePine was very successful and attracted 38 exhibitors and over 350 visitors. There were over 300 models on display and 105 entries in the modeling contest with donated prizes in the various categories.

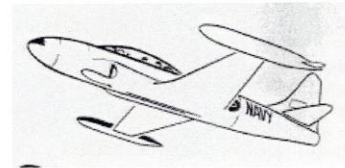
The T33 cockpit that we had obtained from Borden two years ago was completely refurbished by a 434 Sqn volunteer crew in Greenwood and is now on display in the Museum.

The Volunteer Program provided the major source of tour guides and Gift Shop attendants. A well attended Volunteer Appreciation gathering was held in the Museum on 8 Dec 99. A token gift of a pewter Christmas tree ornament was presented to the volunteers. These people, mostly SAMF members, continue to be the backbone of our operation.

On balance, this has been a very rewarding year. Between SAMF and SAM, we have moved the markers closer to the goal line.

On behalf of Col Brian Akitt, Chairman of SAM Board of Trustees, LCol Jim Cox, Director, and the Staff of the Shearwater Aviation Museum - Bravo Zulu to President Bill Gillespie, the SAMF Board and members of SAMF.

*Yours aye, Chuck Coffen
Curator*



WE'RE NUMBER ONE!

During a recent audit of Canadian Forces Museums conducted by National Defence Headquarters, the Shearwater Aviation Museum was rated the top military museum in Canada. This noteworthy achievement reflects credit upon our curator, Chuck Coffen, and his staff and the numerous volunteers who organize and look after the museum on a daily basis. This top rating is good evidence that your membership fees and donations are spent to good effect. The museum needs your continued support to make it even bigger and better.



JEWEL IN THE CROWN REVISITED

March 19th, 2000, the Halifax Chronicle Herald published an article extolling tourism as a billion dollar industry and the Shearwater Air Base property as a potential hub and center of gravity for the tourist industry in the Halifax metro area. That article went on to point out that the Shearwater Air Base with its associated dock and accommodation for troops is a 'natural' for locating a 'Rapid Response Force' for the peace keeping missions for which Canada has a proclivity. It went on to note that the airfield proper, into which billions of dollars of taxpayer money has been sunk over more than half a century, is a functioning aerodrome, ideally located to serve as a municipal aerodrome for metro's business, tourist and freight air transportation requirements - and that it now supports an active and burgeoning flight training industry.

The article was written because there appeared to be no thought-through plan for the disposal of that part of the Base the Department of National Defence (DND) considered surplus to its future requirements. The 'plan' seemed so murky that this writer feared a piecemeal raffling off and the golden opportunity of a lifetime lost. That golden opportunity, envisioned broadly in the reference (Jewel) article, may now, this very month, be on the verge of vanishing forever. Competing interests, each with its own narrow agenda, are vying for pieces of the Shearwater pie. There is an urgent, immediate need for the emergence of some bold political champion to address the broad picture and lead these competing interests into a synergy of their separate agendas for the common benefit of the whole community. What such a leader could achieve could be a truly remarkable development of Halifax into an independently prosperous society - one without ongoing needs for Federal support. Without such vision and leadership what happens? More of the same chronic aimless, planless meandering about and looking for handouts we've had since the days of sail.

Who or what are the competing interests? Land Developers, The Port Authority, Halifax International Airport, Municipal

Government, Provincial Government, Federal Government..... and there are, as well, airfield tenants (Coast Guard and Shearwater Flight Training Center) whose functioning depends upon a working, serviced aerodrome. And the peripheral interests? All who make a living by the tourism industry and its spin-offs.

Synergy? How? With the following vision or with some other circumspect and comprehensive vision - a vision persuasive to those interests with only narrow, self-serving agenda: And the persuader with the most clout? Probably Nova Scotia's representative in the Federal Cabinet. A looming election tends to loosen Federal purse strings for effective economic initiatives - and an open purse persuades quite effectively.

The Vision:



1. The Shearwater dock, lands, hangars and other buildings along the waterfront to be jointly developed as a world-class aviation and warship museum (a truly great tourist draw), as a base for sealift/ helicopter/troop ships for a 'Rapid Response Force' for peace keeping operations and as a container ship dock. A home for our squadron of new submarines too perhaps? The northern-eastern point of McNab's Island could be brought into play with a bridge or a causeway if expansion is necessary. Space for other heritage museums now desperately looking for a home might be found in existing under-utilized buildings.

2. The Shearwater airfield proper with its runways, hangars and barracks to become a joint military/civil/municipal

aerodrome. These existing facilities to be home to an airlift squadron and multi-purpose helicopter unit complementing the proposed sealift down by the harbour, accommodation for, and training of, a permanent army peace keeping unit, an international peace keeping training centre (Cornwallis can fly on its own now), a municipal aerodrome for passenger and freight flights not requiring national or international connections, an aircraft maintenance and/or manufacturing centre and a flight training centre. It would also secure the future of the Nova Scotia International Air Show.

3. Land development for housing and associated road infrastructure to be fitted in where there is no adverse effect on the use of the runways and flight approach and departure paths. There may well be some Shearwater areas where such housing development could take place but God save us from people who move in next to an airfield and then complain about the noise..... even if the noise is the sound made by jobs. It happens!

4. Halifax International Airport would be free of the congestion of flight training and general aviation activity - free to pursue its prime role as a truly international and national airport.

It is my understanding that the navy has some NATO commitment for hanging onto the lower base (the waterfront area) to the permanent exclusion of the users suggested above. Surely that commitment can be negotiated with NATO and met elsewhere in the harbour or province - the only 'commitments' unalterable and un-negotiable that spring to my mind are those carved in stone in the Ten Commandments. And the military has much to gain in yielding some land and buildings to permit the development of a world class military museum here in Atlantic Canada. (why must all the major museum's be located in Ottawa where they are inaccessible to most Maritimers?). When DND can present to the public, through museums here, the great achievements Canadians in uniform have made and the honours they have won throughout the just-past century, the public will put into proper perspective the recent sins of a few errant soldiers, men quite unrepresentative of the whole.....

and military museums are good value as well for recruiting quality citizens and for instilling the esprit de corps and morale of fighting soldiers, sailors and airmen. It has been said:

"In war, morale is the greatest single factor".... and morale's foundation is noble tradition - and noble tradition is venerated in our museums.

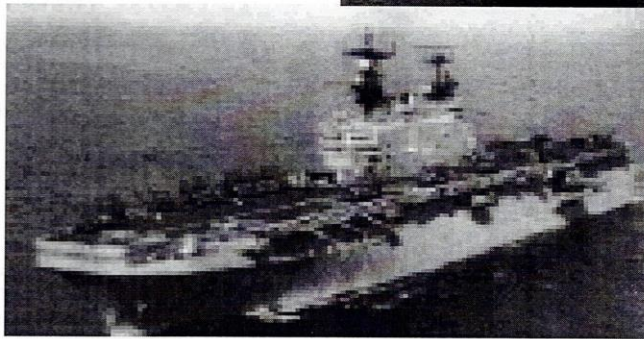
Lastly, we are talking thousands of new permanent jobs, here in Halifax — and that's not even counting a few hundred short term jobs involved in building one or more large helicopter/troop carrying support ships, here or in Saint John.

The message is, in fine, act now or forever rue missed opportunity!

W. L. D. Farrell, ancient aviator/ancient mariner

Canada's International Image

Best served by our own sealift capability or by a rental...GTS Katie with a foreign crew and interests?



*Here is a Supermarine Stranraer, one that flew from RCAF Dartmouth in the late '30s in 5(BR) Squadron.
Photo courtesy of Rod Bays, taken at the RAF Museum at Hendon, England in July 2000.*

BLACKBURN BOTHA

In another publication, Geoff Bennett writes in part: "I stumbled on a quote from an RAF test pilot reporting on his impressions of flying the quite unsuccessful Botha" - "getting into the cockpit proved very difficult. I recommend that it be made impossible".

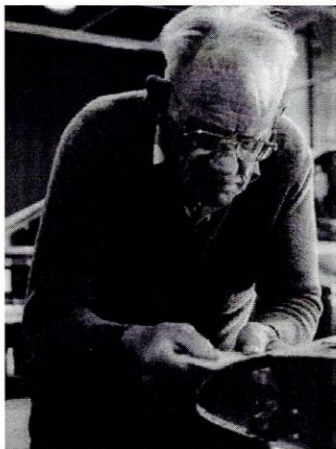
Firefly Restoration Team



FIREFLY RESTORATION

The work is progressing so well that we have high hopes of mounting both mainplanes in time for the International Air Show, just four weeks from now. (The horizontal and vertical stabilizers are already fitted.)

We have Rolfe Monteith in the U.K. running down leads on propellor blades and Frank Tripp getting a final estimate on a whole set of replica blades from a factory in Munich. We will soon be in a position to employ some of the many volunteers who have been kept waiting in the wings while basic assembly was



progressing.

We give a special thanks to the Great C-in-C for extending Doug Ordinal's life long enough to finish mainplane skin repairs - and a special thanks also to Doug himself for the enthusiasm he brought to the team. Doug opened his flight plan (at age 81) to the great beyond on August 6th. Having left his spirit behind in the hangar, we don't know how he'll make out without it in his hereafter. Happy Landing Doug!

Summer 2000

FIREFLY TALK TO CAHS

Doug Peacocke and Bill Farrell recently, on invitation, presented a talk and a short documentary film on the restoration of the Museum's Firefly FR MK1.

The venue - Stad Wardroom. Doug's eloquence was such that an ex RCAF POW was moved to make a cash donation to the project. Further, Doug's delivery moved Eric Edgar to (uncharacteristically) turn over his winnings from the evening lottery to buy a few more rivets for PP462.

**Unveiling of the Fleet Air Arm Memorial London 1 Jun3 2000
(From our UK Diaspora - Rolfe Monteith)**

On Ascension Day, the Prince of Wales accompanied by the Duke of York unveiled a memorial to those who died while serving in the Fleet Air Arm. The statue is a 20ft high bronze depicting the mythical Greek inventor Daedalus.

I will be noted that the Meditation at the end of the service was the poem written by Pilot Officer John Magee, RCAF.

Air Traffic Control authorities would not authorize a Swordfish to fly past at the end of the service - instead the flypast consisted of two helicopters.

As most will know, as of April 2000, all UK air elements from the three Services come under a joint command - at the moment this is headed by a Rear Admiral.

Yours Aye - Rolfe



Bill Atkinson in square rig, prior to beginning pilot training.

**BILL ATKINSON
TACITURN ACE**

Your Editor served in the same air group with Bill Atkinson, drank with him at TGI, sailed in a carrier with him and never, ever heard from him one word about his operational flying in Hellcats, from Indomitable and Formidable during the war in the Pacific. Not a word! One full half-century later, I heard a rumour that Bill had been a somebody out there. Two years of coaxing by mail finally yielded this: His score:

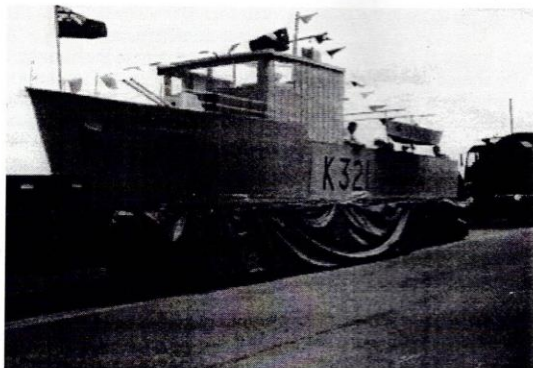
- 1 - Judy
- 1 - Zero
- 1 - Betty
- 3 - Graces
- Also 1 or 1 Tory (prob) and 1 Myrt (shared)

And, after the war, he added a Val to his record.

There will be more on Bill Atkinson in a future issue - he has reluctantly agreed to share.

Ed.





This is the boat that Billy and the Boy's Built!!

What does it take to build a warship? "Four New Waterford men, plywood and three weeks of good Navy stories" Billy MacArthur (ex Shearwater Armourer) of Reserve Mines and formerly of New Waterford said. With the help of three buddies (Cam Lewis, Paul Graham and Moe Campbell (all ex RCN), they built a 40 foot destroyer called HMCS New Waterford K321 which represented the Cape Breton Naval Vets in the Canada Day Parade in Sydney Mines.

Now we know where to go if we need an Ark.... (PS: They won first prize)
(Excerpt, in part, from the Glace Bay/New Waterford News)

Note: The Naval Air Armourer's Association will be fondly remembered for years to come. The generous people have their Association name etched on our Wall of Honour.



Naval Air Armourers, HMCS Shearwater

RECOGNIZE THESE ARMOURERS????

Talk about a typo...

A new monk arrives at the monastery. He is assigned to help the other monks in copying the old texts by hand. He notices, however, that they are copying from copies, not the original manuscripts. So, the new monk goes to the head monk to ask him about this. He points out that if there were an error in the first copy, that error would be continued in all of the other copies.

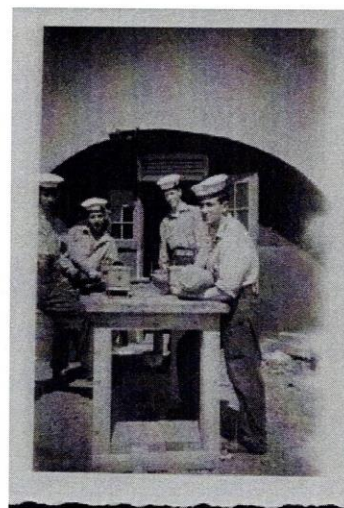
The head monk says, "We have been copying from the copies for centuries, but you make a good point, my son." So, he goes down into the cellar with one of the copies to check it against the original.

Hours go by and nobody sees him. So, one of the monks goes down-stairs to look for him. He hears sobbing coming from the back of the cellar, and finds the old monk leaning over one of the original books crying. He asks the old monk "What's wrong, and in a choked voice he replies..."The word is celebrate."



Jake Birks Fund-Raising Initiative


Jake, by his own assessment, not the smartest guy around - but not the dumbest either, has produced for sale in the SAM Gift Shop, an extraordinary T-Shirt representation of a Banshee catching the sixth (and last) wire ("Big Jim told me to do it"). Jake was disinclined to pull number six again but you've got to give it to him for precision landings. Jake is alive, in horrible shape (what's new?), living in Dartmouth and a regular attendee at the monthly "nasal radiators" gathering in Shearwater.



Naval Air Armourers, HMCS Shearwater



ADIEU, SAYONARA, SO LONG, ADIOS, FAREWELL?

nce upon a time, long, long ago, way back in the 20th century there dwelt a happy band of Canadian men who sailed the oceans and the seas of Planet Earth in flat-topped ships. They amused themselves, when at sea, by launching and recovering 'great iron birds'. When in harbour they found their amusement in the pursuit of birds of a softer substance; and they worshipped the refined juice of the sugar cane. They won little gold of the kind trinkets are made of, but stored away much gold of the kind memories are made of - memories of the sounds and scents of tropical islands - memories of the noise and smells and intense action of a carrier at flying stations..... a melange of calypso, rum, avgas, throbbing drums, beating screws, cordite, shrieking sirens, screaming wires.

Alas, one day, an evil prince of the realm, **dief** to their protests, took away their flat-topped ships and broke up this band of comrades, this happy breed of men. Most continued to follow the sea until they grew old - but life at sea was never the same without the flat-topped ships and the great iron birds. Though the evil prince was able to take way the flat-topped ships he was powerless to destroy the magic memories. Those memories live on, perhaps growing even more golden in the savouring thereof. Some old guys, former flat-toppers, determined that those precious memories of a vibrant life, a life envied by lesser men who had chosen plain pedestrian vocations, should never die - should outlast their own mortal selves. So they builded them a museum and filled it with artifacts to speak to the generations following them - to speak of the lives they had lead - of high adventure, of blue days at sea, of typhoons and hurricanes, of battles and of tragedy; and they called it the Shearwater Aviation Museum.

Alas! alack! woe! and all that, this museum, this preserver and custodian of fond recollections has not won support from all it was built to serve. A precious few are shouldering the burden of support, all the while looking over their shoulders for the gentleman shown here.

As each issue of this newsletter shows, with its ever-lengthening obit column, the ardent few are becoming fewer. Your editor himself has felt the tap on the shoulder and the response 'Take a number and wait' doesn't cut it.

And now we come to the point of this article: Our mailing list includes, or is meant to include, everyone who shared the carrier experience - whether you did your bit



deep in the ship making the engines do their turns, in the galley feeding your shipmates, in the hangar servicing aircraft, on the flight deck launching and re-covering, in the island controlling, or in the air being the sharp end of the whole effort, you shared in the flat-top experience and

you shared the shipmate comradeship. This is YOUR newsletter and YOUR key to open one door to the misty halls of time. But, and this is an important But, if you have no interest in reliving those great days, then this is the time to throw away that key. We will redirect the savings toward the enhancement of the museum - toward building extension, aircraft acquisition, other things.

One Parthian thought: Do you want your children and grandchildren, your relatives, your lifelong friends and the public at large, to be left without an answer when they ask, 'Did old whasisname ever really have a life or is he just a name on an urn or marble slab?'

A phone call renewing your membership (\$30 - no matter how lapsed or how never you were) is a simple answer; 1-888-497-7779 (your phone is right at hand) - or a mailed response to the address inside the front cover. Editor

And all I ask is a merry yarn with a laughing fellow rover and a quiet sleep and a sweet dream, when the long trick's over.....Sea
Fever, John Masefield



GOOD CITIZENS!

We note with pride that one of our own, Davis (Doc) Edwards, was a driving force behind the establishment of a STARS helicopter pad in his own community near Po Lake, NS. STARS (Shock Trauma Air Rescue Society) airlifts critical cases to Halifax hospitals. Doc's wife provided a temporary windssock by giving up her red bloomers.

REMEMBRANCE

Here's a tribute to our Brothers-in-Arms, the Tommies, as we leave the bloody 1900's behind. (Tommy Atkins was the eponym of the common soldier in the 1914-1918 War.)

TOMMY ATKINS

This was written in the 1880's, under Barrack Room Ballads. Apropos even today!

Tommy
I went into a public- 'ouse to get a pint o' beer,
The publican 'e up and sez, "We serve no red-coats here"
The girls be'ind the bar they laughed an' giggled it to die,
I outs into the street again an' to myself says I
O it's Tommy this and Tommy that, an' "Tommy, go away";
But it's "Thank you Mr Atkins" when the band begins to play,
The band begins to play my boys, the band begins to play.
O it's "Thank you, Mr Atkins," when the band begins to play.

ent into a theatre as sober as could be,
y gave a drink civilian room, but 'adn't none for me:
They sent me to the gallery, or round the music - 'alls,
But when it comes to fightin', Lord! They'll shove me in the stalls!
For it's Tommy this, and Tommy that, an' "Tommy, wait outside";
But it's "Special train for Atkins" when the trooper's on the tide.
The troopship's on the tide, my boys, the troopship's on the tide.
O it's "Special Train for Atkins" when the trooper's on the tide.

Yes, makin' mock o' uniforms that guard you while you sleep
Is cheaper than them uniforms, an' they're starvation cheap;
An' hustlin' drunken soldiers when they're goin' large a bit
is five times better business than paradin' in full kit.
Then it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' "Tommy, 'ows yer soul?"
But it's "Thin red line of 'eroes" when the drums begin to roll,
The drums begin to roll, my boys, the drums begin to roll,
's "Thin red line of 'eroes" when the drums begin to roll.

We aren't no thin red 'eroes, nor we aren't no blackguards too,
But single men in barracks, most remarkable like you;
An' if sometimes our conduct isn't all your fancy paints;
Why, single men in barracks don't grown into plaster saints.
While it's Tommy this, and Tommy that, an' "Tommy, fall be'ind"
But, it's "Please to walk in front, sir" when there's trouble in the wind.
Then there's trouble in the wind, my boys, there's trouble in the wind,
It's "Please to walk in front, sir," when there's trouble in the wind.

You talk ' better food for us, an' schools, an' fires an' all:
We'll wait for better rations if you treat us rational.
Don't mess about the cook-room slops, but prove it to our face
The Widows Uniform is not the soldier-mans disgrace.
For it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' "Chuck him out, the brute!"
But it's "Saviour of his Country" when the guns begin to shoot;
An' it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' anything you please;
An Tommy ain't a bloomin' fool-you bet that Tommy sees!

(With thanks to Robbie Hughes)

STILL IN THE DELTA



Harry Brown

Bill Ganong

Garth Hodgson

Blair MacMillan



HOW TO GIVE TO SAMF INSTEAD OF TO REVENUE CANADA!

As many of us are approaching (or have reached!) retirement age, the concept of an estate becomes more of a concern, and the whole notion of leaving something that will last longer than we will is appealing to more and more people.

Throughout the course of their lives, many Canadians have given to their favorite charities. This type of giving has become an important part of the fabric of our society, especially now as we are seeing dramatic government cutbacks, forcing charitable organizations to rely increasingly on the generosity of the private sector.

The estate planning process offers individuals the opportunity to make a significant contribution to SAMF. Here is a way you can leave a large donation to the SAM Foundation for a small investment. And your beneficiary gets a tax credit for the full amount of the charitable donation.

Industry professionals have long recognized the value of Life Insurance as an excellent vehicle to use when considering your final and potentially most generous contribution to a non-profit organization.

The 2000 federal budget has recognized the importance of gifts from private citizens and has improved the rules governing charitable gifting.

Since the last budget changes, the policy owner can designate the charity as beneficiary and a donation credit will be permitted on the final tax return for the amount of the insurance proceeds, bypassing probate fees in the process.

Let's take a look at some numbers: Here are some examples for a couple, both 65, with a life expectancy of 20 years. Annual premium \$1000 Upon the second death, the policy would provide a \$70,000 tax-free benefit to SAMF. Furthermore, the final tax return can claim a \$70,000 charitable tax credit thus reducing the final tax bill!

Other examples:

Premium \$435 annually-Benefit \$25,000
Premium \$300 annually-Benefit \$15,000

There are some real opportunities for giving through life insurance. Talk to

your financial planning professional to see if this concept should become part of your estate planning process. And, don't forget, TELL SAMF YOU HAVE DONE IT!

* E&OE, numbers based on a 6% return on a Universal Life policy.

Ted Kieser

Saturday's Toast for Ancient Mariners

(To) Our wives and sweethearts.....may they never meet!



A LITTLE BIT OF CANADA

(A Little Bit of Heaven)

Sure a little bit of hades rose from out the sea one day,
And it settled down near Imperoil not vary far away,
And when the Navy saw it, sure it looked so bleak and bare,
They said "Suppose we grab it, we can send the fly-boys there".
So they sprinkled it with pot-holes, as the Sailors came and flew,
And here and there a hangar, to obstruct the Tower's view,
Now the Government supports us, as our twitch we all suppress,
Sure it never will be Heaven it's just RCNAS.

Now they said at SNAM the old Avenger is a lovely kite,
So go and keep 'em flying lads all day and half the night,
We stayed at SNAM, a week, a month, a year and half a day,
We tried to keep 'em flying, but they spin the other way,
Still when we go out to Luna Park to case

the Junior Prom,
Then stagger down to old Pop's Grill to have a yarn with Mom,
It's then we miss the old Avenger though it makes a fuss,
Sure it's so much more reliable than any old Bell's bus.

Now they're building us a Living Block, although it's still not there,
But we're slowly making progress and the future it looks fair,
The WRENS have come to join us and they make our dull lives bright,
They charm us in the daytime, but where do they go at night?
Now we'll have a brand new Carrier, two years from now they say,
We believe them cause we want to, we're so gullible that way,
Till then, dear friends, Shearwater will be our fixed address,
Sure it never will be Heaven, it's just RCNAS.



President's Report

(Bill Gillespie)

It is difficult to believe that my term as President of the Foundation is fast drawing to a close. Upon reflection, it has been a year of a few achievements and a year of major disappointments.

On the positive side, we have improved our overall organization and hosted a number of successful fund-raising ventures. We have established a budget so we can now judge where we are going. Thanks to the work of Lem Murphy, we can now produce a Business Plan for corporate sponsors when soliciting their support. The Wall of Honour Tile Project is exceeding our expectations to date and is one of our steady fund raisers. Our Fund-raising Dinner and Auction was a great success with over 140 in attendance. Last September's Nova Scotia International Air Show Golf Tournament provided a large donation to the Foundation and is expected to do the same this year. Through the hard work of a couple of members of the Board, we were able to obtain a grant from the Canadian Forces Museum Fund to erect a replica of the Eastern Air Command Operational Board, complete with some of the original equipment. We were also able to obtain a Millennium Grant to help purchase the Firefly, albeit with strings attached.

On the negative side, there are a number of significant goals we have still not accomplished. Work on both the Firefly and the Banshee have slowed down. The Firefly due to the lack of volunteer labour and the Banshee due to operational commitments of the Maintenance Squadron. The Air Maintenance Squadron is hopeful to start working on the Banshee again this Fall. With our budget, we are able to accurately track our income and expenses. Although overall we are only slightly below budget to date, a review of the complete budget reveals that our Regular Membership is down along with donations to the building Fund. These, coupled with the slow sale of the "Bonnie" book have wiped out any gains we had made with the sale of the Wall Tiles. The lack of renewal of the Regular Memberships is of major concern as this is where we derive the funds to cover our administrative costs. One of these administrative costs is the Newsletter. In its present format, the Newsletter is becoming too pricey to continue the blanket distribution we have been doing in the past. This may be the last issue you receive.

Our most glaring non-accomplishment this year is the fact that we have still not reached a point where we can start digging for new addition. Every time we think we are there, something else happens and we must revert back to plan "A". If we are to build the addition then the funding must come from the

members. All of our experience to date in seeking outside help indicates member support is our only viable means to make this happen! Although we are attracting new members our overall numbers are declining because existent members are not renewing. Why is this? If something isn't working let us know, otherwise we must assume it is apathy. Indeed, the apathy shown by so many of the people who have served at Shearwater in one of its many modes is most dis-heartening to the Members of the Board. There are so many of you out there that if you all provided even a small show of support - \$100 for example - we could make the new addition a reality and our history would be sure of being preserved. IT IS UP TO YOU! We everything in place except the CASH.

In sum then, it has been a roller coaster ride as your President this past year. Decisions have been made with which not everyone has agreed. To those who think things can be done better, there is always room on the Board for you to step up and I heartily encourage you to do so. Speaking of the Board, I wish to thank the members for their support and effort in making this one of our most successful years in fund-aiding. Hopefully such success will continue in the future.

Thanks to everyone for your support and we hope to see you at the Annual General Meeting followed by the Dedication of the Wall of Honour on 8 September.

OPEN HATCH PROGRAM

Make a sizeable donation to SAMF and have your name and/or your families name displayed prominently next to one of the artifacts in our Museum.

For further information, please call:

Tom Tonks (902) 435-3055 or
Harold Northrup
(902)462-8757

BLAMESTORMING:

Sitting around in a group, discussing why a deadline was missed or a project failed, and who was responsible.

NEW T-BIRD CANOPY FOR MUSEUM

Earlier this year the Shearwater Aviation Museum (SAM) agreed to trade artifacts with the Greenwood Military Aviation Museum (GMAM). SAM traded its Argus Wright 3350 engine, which had little relevance to Shearwater, for the cockpit section of a T-33 Silver Star jet trainer. Jet flight of VT 40 took delivery of the Navy's first T-33 in January 1955 and the jet was subsequently flown by VU 32 and 434 Squadron at Shearwater until the latter squadron moved to Greenwood in May 1995. As part of the trade 434 Squadron in Greenwood fully refurbished the forward and aft cockpits with ejection seats, instruments, circuit breakers, sticks, throttles and canopy to exactly replicate the operational T-Birds. SAM received the new exhibit in July and built a catwalk along side the cockpit section so that youngsters can climb into the cockpit, see the interior of a real jet and let their imaginations run wild through the skies. Older aviators have also been seen climbing aboard and reminiscing of how it used to be or the day when....



Sea King
Replacement

NOVA SCOTIA INTERNATIONAL AIR SHOW / SHEARWATER AVIATION MUSEUM GOLF TOURNAMENT

The charity tournament which has become an annual event means a great deal to the museum for the simple reason it brings in some \$10,000 of much needed revenue if we are to continue to complete the present plans of expansion. It won't do us much good if we can't get our aircraft and other artifacts under a roof.

As one of the volunteers helping set up this fun affair which takes place at the Hartlen Point Golf Course on Thursday, 7 Sep 00 commencing at 12 noon, I will be looking for volunteer help. The museum will be responsible for registration, organizing golf bags to get to the right golf car, set up the prize table and two people to monitor each of the par three's to register a "hole in one" which will result in winning an Acura car. Other small tasks will no doubt be added to this list.

Volunteers will get tickets to attend dinner. Please leave your names with the museum secretary.

The format for the tournament will be a scramble with a shotgun start. The fee is \$140 which is very reasonable considering this includes Green Fee's, shared cart, lunch on course, supper and a prize no matter where your team ended up. This is a charity, after all, and compares much better than many others that are going on.

You can enter a team of four for \$560 plus HST, or enter individually but in all cases please provide your index or handicap so that teams can be organized with close to the same handicap level.

This is a fun tournament to raise money for the museum and if you come in first as Martha Stewart would say "that's a good thing" but if your last it's also a good thing for the museum and our history. 40 tickets are being held for museum members but will not be held after the 1st of August, so it is important to get your ticket early. The tickets can be purchased through the Museum or directly from:

Nova Scotia International Air Show
Box 218
Shearwater, NS B0J 3A0

I hope to see you there.
Walter Sloan



Tracker '181 of VU-33 on patrol along the West Coast. (DND CX81-2519)

TRACKER

(From Doc Schellinck to Dave Tate)

I was looking through some yellowed newspaper clippings and came across the report on the belly landing I did in VU33 on Sept 14 1964 in tracker 1530. Do you know if the aircraft was repaired or what was its fate? My co-pilot was Stan Woods who came over from VR to get some proficiency flying during exercise Hardshot. The two crew members were our Sqdn bar steward and a PO from safety equipment. Their names escape me and they aren't listed in my log book. There were a few amusing consequences of the flight...the main hydraulic system failed as well as the emergency system which was said to be impossible...ho ho! The fluid from both systems drained out the same leak. While we orbited and burned fuel Technical services in OW was contacted for advice which consisted of "put all available liquid in the hydraulic tank and hope for the best". It was pretty obvious that that wouldn't work and that we were in for an exciting

event. However, I decided it was best to give the sage tech advice a try at least and we filled a milk carton with what milk etc was left from our lunch and then passed it to the steward to go first and do the right thing. He apologized with "I'm sorry, you're 5 minutes too late". That approach was abandoned and I briefed each passenger ("lookouts") in detail on the emergency escape procedure for a wheels up, flapless landing. The final instruction was that when the aircraft came to a full stop, undo the harness and out the hatch and hit the deck running. After jettisoning the escape hatches over water, the landing was uneventful except for the fireball and smoke from the skag (dork) as it carried us down the runway. When it came to a stop we popped out like champagne corks and raced a short distance away...But there was only three of us! Then a head appeared from #3 hatch and the steward was heard to say "Where is everyone?"



RCAF SHARK FIRST TO EMBARK ON HMS PUNCHER

The Blackburn Shark was designed to meet British Air Ministry specifications for a torpedo-spotter-reconnaissance aircraft that was also responsible for the Fairey Swordfish.

The Shark was a product of Blackburn Aircraft Limited in England, a firm that had specialized in the manufacture of naval aircraft with a reputation of exceptional sturdiness since WW I. It was the last in a series of Blackburn single-engined torpedo carrying biplanes that had been embarked on Royal Navy aircraft carriers since 1918. The wheeled undercarriage could be replaced by two floats with pneumatically operated rudders. A total of 238 Sharks were built for the Royal Navy and served with 820, 821 and 822 Squadrons on board the aircraft carriers *HMS Courageous* and *Furious* and as catapult seaplanes on the battleships *HMS Repulse* and *Warspite*. However, the Armstrong-Siddely Tiger engine proved to be exceedingly troublesome and in 1938 the Royal Navy replaced all Sharks in operational squadrons with Fairey Swordfish. However, the Sharks continued to serve the Royal Navy in a training and fleet support capacity until 1942.

In 1935, in response to increased tensions in Europe, the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) considered it prudent to draw up a Minimum Peace Establishment which included two torpedo-bomber squadrons. On the recommendation of the British Air Ministry the Blackburn Shark was chosen to be the standard RCAF torpedo-bomber. The 1935-36 Defence Estimates provided for nine Sharks to be purchased from Blackburn at a cost of \$65,000 each, however, the RCAF incorporated several modifications which included a new Bristol Pegasus engine and a canopy to enclose the open cockpit. A contract to build 17 additional Sharks was awarded to Boeing Canada in

Vancouver in 1937.

Mountainous terrain on the Pacific coast rendered the construction of suitable airfields extremely difficult and costly. Indeed, the only well equipped airfield in British Columbia was the Vancouver civilian airport at Sea Island. Because of the rugged country and the abundance of large sheltered inlets and harbours the RCAF decided to commit the aerial defence of Canada's West Coast almost entirely to water-based aircraft, including the Blackburn Shark configured with floats. The Shark was flown by Nos. 4, 6 and 7 (Torpedo-Bomber) Squadrons and provided yeoman service on shipping identification and anti-submarine patrols from RCAF stations at Jericho Beach,



RCAF Shark on wheels as used on HMS Puncher rather than its more usual float configuration)

Patricia Bay, Ucluelet, Alliford Bay, Seal Cove, Coal Harbour and Bella Bella. In late 1941 the Sharks were gradually phased out of the Bomber-Reconnaissance (BR) role as the twin-engine, biplane Supermarine Stranraer flying boats became available. Wheeled versions of the Blackburn Shark also served at Patricia Bay with No. 111 (Coastal Artillery Cooperation) Squadron and with No. 122 (Composite) Squadron, which was primarily used for towing targets.

In August 1939, Eastern Air Command in Halifax requested a land based aircraft to tow targets for both air and anti-aircraft gunners. Shark 526, which was already modified as a target tug, was dispatched to Halifax (civilian airport on Chebucto Road), arriving 7 September 1939. No. 526 was taken on strength of No. 10 (BR) Squadron, which was still flying

antiquated Wapiti bombers. Except for a period of approximately four months when loaned to No. 118 (Coast Artillery Cooperation) Squadron in St. John NB, Shark 526 saw a great deal of use as a target tug since pre-war opportunities for live practice for Canadian air and anti-aircraft gunners had been negligible. Shark 526 continued to fly with No. 10 (BR) after the squadron converted to Douglas Digbys and moved to the new land base at RCAF Station Dartmouth in June 1940. No. 526 served at Dartmouth until 22 August 1940 when it was run into a crash tender after which it was shipped to 3 Repair Depot at Jericho Beach for repair then returned to the Western Air Command.

The RCAF began scrapping the Shark fleet during the first half of 1944 with the last Shark written off 13 July. Five Sharks, however, met a more useful and totally unexpected end. *HMS Puncher* had just been built by the Seattle-Tacoma S.B. Corporation as a Royal Navy (RN) escort aircraft carrier under the American - British "lend-lease" agreement. The Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) had agreed to provide the ship's company for *Puncher* with the understanding that the RN would contribute the aircraft and air personnel. After commissioning in Seattle on 5 February 1944, *HMS Puncher*

immediately steamed to Esquimalt BC where she was fitted out with British equipment at Burrard's shipyard. Lieutenant Commander Godfrey, RNVR, *Puncher's* Commander (Flying) was extremely anxious to have an aircraft to exercise his aircraft handling parties, particularly as there seemed no immediate possibility of aircraft being embarked. His representations were rewarded by Shark 549 being transferred to the RN on free issue. No. 3 Repair Depot just had time to convert Shark 549 from floats to wheels before it was ferried by lighter across Georgia Strait to *Puncher* on 31 May. While en route to Norfolk VA via the Panama Canal, Captain R.E.S. Bidwell, RCN, *Puncher's* Captain reported, "This is proving invaluable for training the flight deck party in actually handling planes and it will do everything but fly. We have repaired it and made the engine run".

Four other escort carriers, *Reaper*, *Patroller* and *Ranee* were fitted with wheeled undercarriage and following *Puncher's* success, Sharks 502, 522, 546 and 550 were issued to these ships after being fitted with wheeled undercarriage. It is highly unlikely that these Sharks ever flew as they were not airworthy, but undoubtedly proved most useful for training. No indication of their eventual fate has been discovered, but since they were free issue and hence no "book value", it is probable that they were unceremoniously given the "deep six" as soon as the carriers' own aircraft or aircraft to ferry were embarked. (*HMS Puncher* embarked 40 USAAF aircraft, which included P-61 Black Widow night fighters, in Norfolk VA to be ferried to Casablanca on her first operational mission).

Prepared by:
Colonel ESC Cable OMM, CD (Ret'd)
Shearwater Aviation Museum Historian

Sloan



Naval Pilot, J.C. Sloan was named, in 1973, a member of Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame.

"His record can be matched only by those airmen of high endeavour and professional calling, who have devoted their lives and skills to the benefit of the world, despite adversity, and whose contributions have substantially benefited Canadian aviation."

Friends Of Maritime Aviation:

The following letter has been sent to Mr. Eddie Goldenberg, Senior Policy Advisor to the Prime Minister.

August 10, 2000

Mr. Edward Goldenberg
Senior Policy Advisor
Prime Minister's Office, Langevin Block
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A2

Dear Mr. Goldenberg:

Recent newspaper articles state that the Maritime Helicopter Project file rests on your desk. Moreover, the articles suggest that the file is unlikely to move forward because of concern that the process of replacing the Sea King helicopter fleet will cause embarrassment to the government. As Friends of Maritime Aviation, we are particularly concerned that the ability to sustain safe and effective Sea King operations is being undermined by political interference with the Canadian Forces procurement process. Please assure us this is not the case.

The requirement to replace the aging Sea King fleet has long been acknowledged and supported by the government. Most recent statements by the Prime Minister indicate a summer announcement will be made. Considering the time it will take to procure and place in service a new fleet of helicopters, such a decision is long overdue. Recent experiences, both locally and abroad, clearly demonstrate the requirement for a robust maritime helicopter. Clearly the requirement is for a multi-role, capable helicopter for use in an unpredictable and diverse environment in support of Canadian missions for the next thirty years.

In view of the widespread public interest in and support for this project, and, most important, the legitimate concerns for the safety of personnel, we sincerely hope that the file will be moved forward before a serious mishap occurs. Mr. Goldenberg, the many Friends of Maritime Aviation are aware of this letter and are anxious to hear your reply.

Sincerely,
Lee Myrhaugen
Colonel (Ret'd)
Coordinator, Friends of Maritime Aviation



MUSICAL LEGENDS

(By Tom Pollard)

Musical legends come in all shapes, sizes and colours as everyone knows. They make their mark on the musical world by impressing their audiences with their talent, verve and stage presence. A few examples of such talented performers are Louis Armstrong, Mick Jagger, Celine Dion and of course the legendary Gut Bucket Five (Plus Two). Wait just a darn minute you say. Who or what the heck is the Gut Bucket Five (Plus Two)? Be patient, the whole point of this little story is to answer that question.

The origins of this fabulous group are truly lost in the mists of time but a popular legend has them first performing (??) At a ships concert in the hangar of BONAVENTURE in 1961. Whatever the truth of the matter is, from that day forward their name resounded (noisily) throughout the music world.

In the beginning, the group consisted of a rum and beer soaked box which pretended to be a bass fiddle, a piano, a trumpet, a clarinet and a collection of oversized peanut tins which served as drums, plus approximately four warm bodies committed to doing strange things with the equipment. Their first performance was received by the assembled ships company with constraint and resignation, after all, there was nowhere else to go when your venue is a ship in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. Since they only knew one tune at that time, they played it twice just to add insult to injury.

In spite of the underwhelming reception at their debut they decided to persist in perfecting their peculiar form of musical abuse, and over the next couple of years grew into a group of seven equally salacious, incompetent no-talent guys, the players changing frequently as various drummers and gut bucketeers were hauled away in funny white jackets. By the time they had reached this stage of maturity, or what passed as maturity for this weird bunch, the instrument collection had expanded to include a trombone, a banjo and a genuine antique gut bucket, as well as real drums and a cymbal.

With the advent of a full complement of instruments and "musicians" and a minimal amount of talent, they proceeded to play to a variety of audiences up and down the East Coast of North America and the Caribbean. Audience reaction to their music was

mixed, ranging from horror to simple disgust, however the fan club membership never wavered, with all seven members remaining steadfast.

Rumour suggests that a performance in Quebec City may have helped spawn the separatist movement in Quebec. When the group was asked to play Allouette (not in the repertoire) and substituted several choruses of Chinatown instead, the audience reaction was less than enthusiastic. In fact, you might say it was a bit hostile. Nevertheless, we did manage to escape the lynch mob and repair on board the Bonaventure with our instruments, if not our dignity intact.

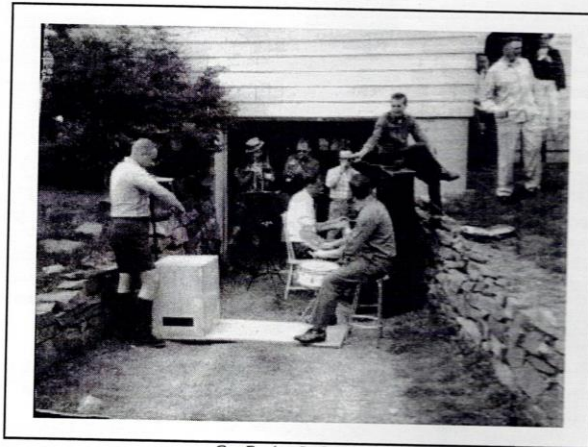
After several years of continuing success on the road, the group was forced to break-up due to the "exigencies" of the service, which was a nice way of saying "you guys have tormented the world long enough, so we are going to post you all

out". Nothing daunted, we decided not to go without a fight and leaving something to posterior, oops! I mean posterity, we made a record. It was an outstanding success with everyone in the group buying several so they could send them to their least favourite friends and relatives to get even.

In due course, the postings took effect and the group slipped quietly into obscurity never to entertain their faithful fans again. However, the memory lives on.

Authors note:

To all those out there that can't stand the thought of never hearing this fabulous group, the author still has a tape of the final performance. Copies can be had for an absolutely exorbitant price. Well, after all, they are collectors items.



Gut Bucket 5 - Jam Session!

Gut Bucket 5 Memories from Ted Kieser:

We took two Trackers to Hamilton (Nav Trip!) For Jack Ford's wedding to Judy. Apparently Jack's dad thought we should play at the reception. Unfortunately, he heard us play the night before and decided to use records instead. Later at the motel, Jim Merwin, Mickey MacIntosh and I were playing a little quiet stuff in the room with the door open. In walked a drunk. He sat down on a bed and listened. After we finished he slurred. "Say, you guys are great! I own a radio station in Chicago. How about

coming out and playing for us?" We didn't. After all, who would fly the aircraft home?

See picture: It was decided to have a Sunday session at our house in Fall River. We had no piano, so a couple of the boys "borrowed" the one out of the Shearwater Gymnasium (now the SAM) and brought it out on a truck. Unfortunately, Cdr Joe Paul did not appreciate it. However his threats never materialized! Many cars were present but did not want their pics taken with the Gut Bucket Five, plus one!



ANGLED DECK

We note the passing, at the age of 92, of the inventor of the angled deck - Rear Admiral Dennis Cambell. While the idea was Cambell's (it was received by Admiralty "with an indifference amounting almost to derision". The result: The first true angled deck was fitted by the USN to the carrier USS Antitam and British pilots then tried out this British invention on board an American ship! Our own Bonnie owed her configuration to this brilliant Brit.



GUPPY FLIGHT DISPLAY

We are planning to set up a display in the museum dedicated to those who served in the 881 Guppy Flight in the late '50s.. We are looking for artifacts, memorabilia and, in particular, pictures (Groups or individual). Please send them to Kay at SAMF. Ted Kieser will be coordinating this and can be contacted through Kay, or at tkieser@accesscable.net.

QUARRY or QUANDARY or BOTH ?

A quarry is a place where you are between rocks and a quandary is where you are between a rock and a hard place. Your editor finds himself stoned (pun intended), beset in an ocean of stories of naval aviation's near-incredible past - and unable to decide which and how many to squeeze into your newsletter. He is also concerned that his own fascination with what Canadians in the Royal Naval Air Service did in Sopwith Camels over the Somme and what Canadians in Corsairs, Skuas, Hellcats and Stringbags did in a later war may not be of the same level of interest to you readers. You'll have to tell him if this is to your own taste (or lack thereof).

If you don't say 'no' to this then you'd better get ready for such droll accounts as that of the launching of a Sopwith Camel from a barge towed behind a destroyer (for takeoff speed) in the North Sea, just off

an coast (just an everyday obvious solution to the problem of

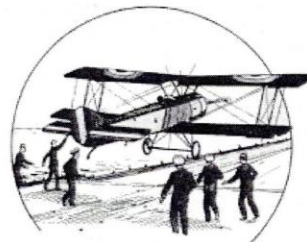
getting close enough to a Zeppelin base to destroy a large dirigible). If that doesn't tickle your fancy then there will also be a few words about Raymond Collishaw, a Canadian who all but matched Billy Bishop's score.

It won't be all pilots and daring-do. We have in the works a story of an engine-change to one of Labrador's helicopters on an island in the Arctic - a story of seamanship (sheer legs), engineering and demanding flying. And, we're looking for more from the unsung-hero gang. As an ex-Magnificent I can say that we were all one Magnificent Team (pun intended) - from the boiler room to the compass platform. We need stories from the flight deck and from below : And we need a story on how we led the navies of the world with our Beartrap.

ALLAN SNOWIE (author of The Bonnie Book) presses on with his research for his next work, one dealing with our Great War aviators. Were it not for want of space and of preparation time we would have advance teasers from this work-in-progress for you in this issue. The mention of Allan's

project in the previous number has already dug up leads of connections to the past, leads that had escaped Allan's attention. Hey, do you know something Allan should know ? Tell us.

ATTENTION RCAF ! The foregoing does not mean that we are slighting the boys in light blue - we are, in fact, hungry for material dealing with your history from the early days. And I have just learned of the connection between the light-blue colour and the Russian Revolution. How many of you know that connection ? P.S. I will personally underwrite a Contract on anyone who says 'no' to this 'roots' direction. Ed.



CHAT ROOM

Art Liley writes:

Dear Bill & Kay:

I checked my log book and found two flights in Firefly PP462 while in Warrior.

This moved me to action on the financial front and enclosed you will find a donation to use in the restoration of that gallant old bird.

Thanks Bill for informing me that NOD XONK was the fourth man in our docked takeoff.

All the best.

Art

Kay,

Received my copy of the Newsletter today and just wanted to pass on a Bravo Zulu to all concerned. A quality publication.

With reference to the First Peacekeepers on Page 7, I don't recognize the body in the foreground or the one on the left. However, there is no doubt about young Bill Gillespie and the other is a chap named Synuck, I think. Also, the one thing in common among those listed on the bottom of page 19 is that they were all members of The Gut Bucket Five at one time or another. I have their record. Take care and all the best.

Jack Moss

Hi Kay:

With regard to the 50th Anniversary First Mail Crossing of Canada by Air 1920-1970 (p. 15, Spring 2000 SAM Newsletter): I can't tell you who flew the leg from North Bay to Winnipeg, but I know that VU-32 had pre-positioned a T-33 there to meet the aircraft from Shearwater. I was OpsO at VU-33 at the time, and we had an aircraft waiting in Winnipeg which did the 3rd leg to Calgary. I think Al Jasper might have been one of the pilots, but I can't swear to that. I was waiting in Calgary with T-33 421 and flew the final leg to Victoria; one of our NAs, Dick Nimmo, was with me. The flights all took place on June 25, 1970. On my desk I have a paperweight presented by Royal Trust commemorating the occasion.

Cheers,
Gus Youngson

Don McLaren, Cdr (Retd) RAN
writes:

I felt quite honoured to receive a

copy of your Winter 1999 edition. My wife and I enjoyed our recent visit to Canada, which included attendance at the CNAG Conference in Victoria, BC. It was a great opportunity to meet up with a number of ex RCN members, some of whom had been at our 50th FAA Reunion. We enjoyed reading the newsletter which is a quality publication and wish you every success in the future. I offer the following:

Naval Aviation - Another "Approach"

It was interesting to read John Eden's article in the Winter 1999 newsletter titled "They shoulda got a Medal", which dealt with the matter of Carrier Controlled Approach. I was fortunate to fly as an aircrew member in the Navy for 22 of my 32 years of service (including four years with the Royal Navy) and during that time was often somewhat dependent on Controller assistance for a safe return to base, particularly in foul weather. However I am sure all aviators have had at least one experience in their career which have made them cautious of placing too much faith in ship or shore control systems. This was particularly relevant back in the days when naval aircraft did not have sophisticated radar/tacnav equipment installed.

Most aircrew will admit that they have experienced the "pucker up" factor when flying conditions or other circumstances (eg low fuel state) have indicated that their safety may be at risk. Some pilots consider they are "fire proof" and can do it all on their own. And, it can be argued that the often hazardous nature of day/night operations from a carrier lends to pilots having great confidence in their own ability. However, the majority believe that, to survive in the long term, their best interests are served by combining their skills with those of the Controllers but retaining a "belt and braces" approach.

For myself, having been trained and employed as an Air Traffic Controller before qualifying as an Observer, I felt I had a better appreciation than some of my fellow aviators of the work load of Controllers and how seriously they take their responsibilities.

John Eden has described the immense satisfaction his team felt when they had successfully recovered the three aircraft in the worst of weather conditions. For the aviator, the satisfaction of any mission is to plant your feet firmly on the tarmac or deck on completion and if that is

through outside help of a Controller or divine providence, so be it. I am one of many aviators grateful for the assistance provided by Controllers in getting our aircraft safely back to their final destination so many times and contributing to my being a "survivor".

Isn't it great to be able to reminisce?

"The further backward you can look, the further forward you are likely to see." Winston Churchill
Sincere regards.

Bull Mason writes:

Just to let you know I received my membership card. Thank you. I want you all to know, I am still alive and well. Someone in Shearwater told my daughter that I had passed away - not so.

Ted Fallen writes:

Dear Bill: I read with interest the article Horse Play by Alex Fox and his question as to who made the first landing on a destroyer mortar well.

I rounded up my log book and using my memory of 34 years ago, I think I had something to do with that particular exercise.

On 16 Aug 56, I was the OIC of the HU21 Det in Magnificent flying the "Fallen Angel", Sikorsky HO4S-3 #228. When an invitation from Cdr Bob Timbrell, CO HMCS St Laurent asked me to bring my helicopter over. I believe Pat Ryan was his XO at the time. As the helicopter was in Magnificent, permission was obtained from Capt Fraser-Harris and as no known landings had been made on a St Laurent Limbo hatch, before I requested that Cdr Air, one Hal Fearon, accompany me along with PO Bill Sopko, St Laurent was requested to shore up her limbo hatches, have the wind 30-35 degrees on the port bow and to lower their Ensign Staff. Hal Fearon and PO Sopko were lowered to St Laurent by my regular hoist man who would also ensure clearance around the helicopter from inside the aircraft. Hal Fearon was the person I wanted to direct me into position on the deck and PO Sopko was available if I had mechanical trouble on the destroyer. He took along securing chains. There was never any intention of shutting the helicopter down on this first trip. After Hal Fearon was on the destroyer, he checked the shoring of the hatches and the clearances on the

... and landing and take-offs took place the next 1.0 hours. All this time, Pat was busy taking pictures from the high spots of the destroyer. (Incidentally Pat, you never did give me a copy of any of the pictures for my log book.) We commenced landings and take offs and we had no problems. When I became CO of HS 50, the landing and takeoffs from a destroyer became part of the HS50 pilots training programme while at sea. That Foxie is why you had one land on Restigouche in 60-61. If the ship designated for landing practice did not have an experienced aviator, one was transferred from Maggie by the Angel. I think around that time practically every ship on the East Coast had an Aviator doing Watch keeping time or was XO. When I finished the day on St Laurent, according to my log book, I flew A.B.F.H. for a landing so he could speak to Cdr Timbrell.

We thought the landing on the destroyer would be a good safety feature having a deck landing area between us and the carrier. As HS50 pilots of the Horse days can tell you, we use to operate far ahead of the carrier and destroyers and stayed until our P.L.E. (Percent Limit of Endurance). This was the Red fuel light came on which indicated anywhere between 20-30 minutes fuel left. With the age of some of the H04S, the instruments did not all read the same.

I was not the one you gave a Restigouche lighter to as I already had one from when I Commissioned Restigouche and was her first Navigation Officer under Jake McDowall. All in all I had some 40 landings on the DDEs with the Horse. From my log book some of the DDEs were St Laurent, Columbia, Chaudiere, St Croix and Restigouche. Thanks for your article Horse Play. It brought back some pleasant memories of times and personnel. It seems so long ago.

Mick Rooney writes:

To Jack Shapka
Membership Chairman

Thank you for sending me the Foundation Newsletter. I really enjoy reading and reliving the memories of my years with Naval Air. Enclosed is my cheque for my membership.
Truly
Mick

R.J. Wilson writes:

Not to be out flown by Pop Fotheringham, I scanned my flying log book and noted an entry for 5 Jul 46 from HMCS Warrior to RCNAS Dartmouth, NS in Firefly PP462. At that time, I was a Royal Navy Pilot on Loan to 825 RCN Air Squadron which we formed up with Fairey Barracudas July 1945 at RNAS Rattray, Scotland.

For this honour of flying PP462, I enclose a contribution to the Firefly Restoration.

Spent a day at the local casino with Bill and Mary Cody (they both look great). However, we had problems lining up the "three cherries" on the slot machines.
Regards.

C.F. Kite emails:

I noted with great interest in the Winter '99 edition, that the history of 825 Squadron was slated for a future edition. Since it didn't appear in Spring 2000, can you please give any idea of when we can expect it? Thank you in anticipation.
Ches

Editor's Note: We are still preparing this - not ready for this issue.

John Gourlie emails:

Hi Kay,
Handlers on Pg 29 of Spring edition of Newsletter. Back Row left side: 1st is Rusty Reeleader, 4th from the left is Reynard and then next is Ron Berube. Front Row, first was from Lindsay, ON and last in front row may be Bob Carl. Looks like photo was taken on the Maggie. The newsletter is great and BZ to the people involved. See you at the CNAG reunion.
John

Barry Keeler emails:

Just read the latest newsletter and it is a great piece of work. Super layout, interesting articles and truly professional in all respects. Bravo Zulu for the superb production.

Russell Falshaw writes:

Hi Bill and Kay. Although I was stationed at Shearwater in the '50s, I was not, however, an Air type. I was a Medical Assistant (P2MA). I served during the

time of Cdr "Chick" Oliver, LCdr Eric Kierstead and Lt Roy Hindle (all pilots) were at RCNH. My worst times were when the crash alarm sounded and we had to make a quick dash for the meat wagon or the hospital ward to get ready for survivors.

I have a good friend who served in 825 Sqdn who very much enjoys getting the newsletter after I read it. We sit in the Legion over a couple of ales and remember some of the air types we knew. Keep up the good work.

One comment about the article by Rem Walker. Canada had five carriers not three. Nabob and Puncher were RN ships that were crewed by RCN personnel and I believe Adm Bidwell commanded Puncher. She was sunk and Nabob was damaged and stripped and used to ferry soldiers back home in '45. There is reference to this in two books I have, named "Hands to Flying Stations" by Stu Soward. Good books by an expert who gives the complete history of Naval Aviation and, in my opinion, how the Air Force screwed us. Keep the newsletters coming, they're great.

Tom Pollard writes:

Your Spring 2000 issue was its usual excellent product and as always thoroughly enjoyed. It also has resulted in goading me into writing you in response to some of the content.

It hardly seems fair that I should be one of those that responds to your question on pg 19 regarding the common bond between the rather shaky group of individuals listed there as I am one of them.

I enclose a story I wrote some time ago about the Gut Bucket 5. As with all things past, some liberty has been taken with the facts however that has never bothered sailors when they have a good story. I enclose a cheque for my membership. Please do not construe this as a bribe to entice you to print the story, it is only that I am finally getting my act together and also saving a stamp by enclosing everything in one envelope.

Regarding note 2, I do in fact have the record and if there is interest, I can have it transferred to CD, but I have no idea what it would cost.

Thanks to all involved in SAM for such a great job in preserving our heritage.
Sincerely, Tom.

W.C. (Bill) Fraser writes:

Dear Kay:

This is an addendum to Ted Gibbon's letter "Frozen Feet But Never Cold Feet" in the Spring 2000 Newsletter.

I remember that trip well, especially the part about Walter Brown taking all our pencils. Walter never wore gloves so maybe he was using them to start a fire in the back of the aircraft to keep his hands warm.

The other part I remember, besides the cold, was that after reading the IFR clearance back to the Air Traffic Controller, we were cleared for take-off and were asked to "Call When Airborne". I wondered why he couldn't just look out the tower window and watch us take-off. So I looked toward the tower and could see nothing. The weather had closed in.

As soon as we called airborne, the controller issued a NOTAM closing the airport. It seems to me the airport was closed for about a week (it was probably only a day or two). In any case, I am glad we did get airborne that December 24th because the prospect of spending Christmas at the Torbay Airport was not appealing.

Regards, *Bill Fraser*

Jake Birks writes:

What does Jim MacIntosh, Jack Ford, Jim Murwin, Mike Elrington, Terry Wolfe-Milner, Ron King, Bill Caton, Al Horner, Ted Kieser and Tom Pollard have in common? "They're all Krazy" says Jake.

Jeremy McGreevy writes:

Once again I forgot to send in my annual dues. And after you published such a nice picture of me in the Spring Issue. **Was I ever that young??** Enclosed is a check.

Thanks for producing a great publication. Re the photo of the "Red Herring". I believe it was 1967 not 1965. I was part of VU 32 Jet Flight during that period. In the Centennial year (1967) we got away with doing a lot of things that we might not have at other times.

Mahalo & Aloha, Jeremy

(Yes, you were that young - and cute too. K.)

John Dawson wrote:

Well done; another good Newsletter. However, there is one item that I may be reading wrongly. In the article about No.5 Squadron at Dartmouth (on an un-numbered page), in the second column, it is noted, truly I believe, that Flight Lieutenant Price (my Brother-in Law) flew "Canada's first operational mission" on 10

Sep 39. Fifteen lines later Len Birchall states that he "had been out on patrol on 9 September 1939". Who did what when? I believe that Lieutenant Price did the "first operational mission".

John

From: Ernest Cable
Shearwater Aviation Museum Historian

The facts as stated are all correct. Indeed, Squadron Leader Birchall was flying a patrol on 9 Sep as stated in the article. It is highly probable that Flight Lieutenant Price was also airborne on 9 Sep as war was imminent and as many of No.5 (BR)'s Stranraers as possible were likely on patrol. However, war was not declared until 10 Sep and on that day Price and crew were indeed the first to take off from RCAF Station Dartmouth (Eastern Passage) in Stranraer # 908. They flew a parallel track search off the Halifax approaches and sighted five vessels but no enemy activity. Subsequent to Price, Birchall took off and flew a patrol up the northeast coast of Nova Scotia and out over one of the shipping lanes into Halifax harbour as stated in the article.

John writes:

Thank you for your message 1813/09 May. There are still two points that bother me:
1. Canada certainly did declare war on September 10th, so how can Len Birchall remember his first day of the war when he was out on patrol on September 9th?

2. Regarding the escort of the QUEEN MARY "in Nov '39". I doubt the accuracy of this statement. As far as I can remember this Royal visit took place earlier in the summer. I am sure that the King and Queen would not, and did not, leave Britain in wartime.

Please excuse the above observations but I was the first Canadian on the Directing Staff of the Royal Naval Staff College at Greenwich for two years where we laboured to preserve accuracy!

Kind regards,

John

From Ernie Cable:

Thank you for your two observations. Regarding the first, Len Birchall was indeed on patrol on 9 Sep but as the article indicates he landed that evening and was on standby at his aircraft's mooring the next day, the 10th, when war was declared. His aircraft was subsequently ordered to take off some time after Price's aircraft. It is this second flight on the 10th that Birchall refers to as, "His first day of the War".

Your second observation is absolutely

correct. I am guilty of relying on a secondary reference that quotes a more authoritative primary reference. As fate would have it the secondary reference misquoted the primary reference and I erroneously followed suite. No. 5 (BR) Squadron took delivery of their first Stranraers in October 1938 and the squadron had completed conversion training just in time to escort King George VI and the Queen during their visit to Canada in May 1939, not in November 1939.

Thank you for bringing the erroneous data to our attention. As the museum's volunteer historian I too strive for accuracy and appreciate any comments that contribute to that goal.

Kind regards with thanks,

Ernie

Don Grant has given us an account of his service, mainly in Maggie and tells us of fond memories of happy times. He'd like to hear from old shipmates. Don became a lawyer (one of the good ones).

Don Grant
226 MacLaren Street
Ottawa, ON K2P 0L6

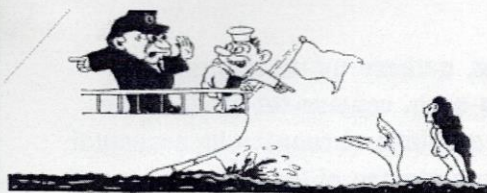
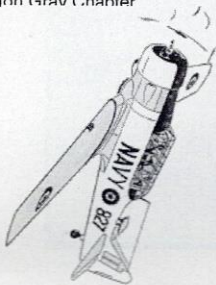


REMINDER CNAG REUNION

Just a reminder to those of you who may have forgotten, the CNAG reunion is rapidly approaching. A list of those already signed up can be found on the CNAG Web site <http://www.ncf.ca/cnag/> and the list will be updated weekly. There is also information there for those of you who were overlooked in the registration mailout and want a registration form to register.

Looking forward to seeing as many of us as can possibly make it.

Y. Aye
 Mackinnon
 President
 Hampton Grav Chanter



Canst follow the track of the dolphin, or tell where the sea-swallows roam?
 Where Leviathan taketh his pastime, what ocean he calleth his home?
 Even so, with the words of thy rulers, and the order whose words shall convey
 Every Law is as naught beside this one, "Thou shalt NOT criticise, but OBEY."
 Saith the wise, "How may I know their purpose?" then acts without wherefore or why;
 Stays the fool but one moment to question, and the chance of his life passeth by.

From Owen Walton

A couple drove several miles down a country road, not saying a word. An earlier discussion had led to an argument, and neither wanted to concede their position. As they passed a barnyard of mules and pigs, the wife sarcastically asked,

"Relatives of yours?"

"Yep," the husband replied, "In-laws."

Talk about a typo...

A new monk arrives at the monastery. He is assigned to help the other monks in copying the old texts by hand. He notices, however, that they are copying from copies, not the original manuscripts. So, the new monk goes to the head monk to ask him about this. He points out that if there were an error in the first copy, that error would be continued in all of the other copies.

The head monk says, "We have been copying from the copies for centuries, but you make a good point, my son." So, he goes down into the cellar with one of the copies to check it against the original. Hours go by and nobody sees him. So, one of the monks goes downstairs to look for him. He hears sobbing coming from the back of the cellar, and finds the old monk leaning over one of the original books crying. He asks the old monk what's wrong, and in a choked voice came the reply..."The word is celebrate."

SECRETARY'S CORNER

Hi! Thank you for the cards, email messages etc sent to me while I was in hospital. Your thoughtfulness was appreciated.

Bob Featherstone, Stu Russell, Marsh Dempster, Bob Bissell, John Eden, George Fleming and Mike Fasevich, to name a few, were visitors to the museum recently. Great seeing you again. You



look wonderful.

I was dismayed when several ex naval air people were asked if they were still interested in receiving the newsletter and they said they didn't want it nor did they have any interest in the Museum. Ye gads! It's the same people helping over and over again. I'd hate to think the \$30 per year membership was the problem - although the majority of the 'powers that be' think it is. I'd like to think you just never got around to joining yet. Please prove me right.

Names of members in arrears and non members are still being culled from our newsletter dist list and there's not a damn thing I can do about it. I tried. It costs money to print and mail out the newsletter (and, to put up the addition to the Museum).

How about helping us save on costs. If you're not interested in supporting the museum and newsletter, just send us your name, address and two words "not interested" in the return envelope and you won't be bothered again. (It won't cost you anything to do so.) If you are interested in joining, use the return envelop to send your application.

(It would be nice to hear that you want to help.)

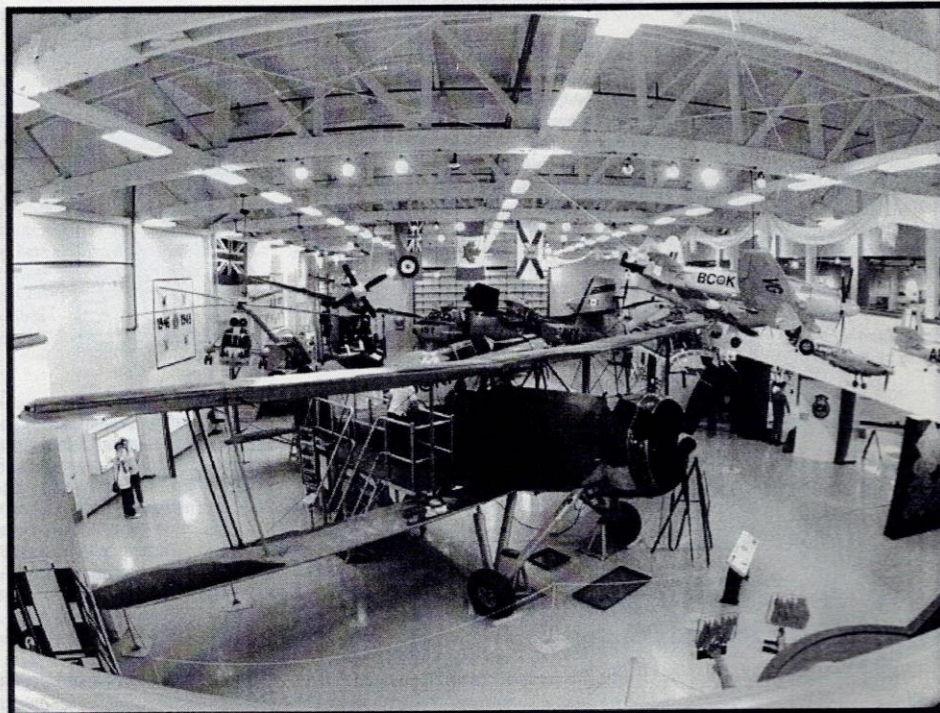
Thanks.

Kay

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

- Joseph Howe, 31 August 1871