WARRIOR

Summer 2017

Supermarine Spitfire (foreground) and Hawker Hurricane

Supermarine Spitfire

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

Submissions:

Text submissions can be either paper, email or electronically produced - Word Perfect (preferred) or Word.

We will format the text for you. No need to centre headings, indent paras etc. Graphics are best submitted electronically, they should be 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
PO Box 5000 Stn Main
Shearwater, NS B0J 3A0

Deadlines for receiving submissions are:
Spring 1 March
Summer 15 June
Winter 15 October

To contact us:
samf@samfoundation.ca

kcollacutt@bellaliant.net

1-888-497-7779 (toll free)
(902) 461-0062
(902) 461-1610 (fax) or
(902) 720-2037 (fax)

SAMF website:
www.samfoundation.ca

Newsletter
Editor: Kay Collacutt
Assistant: Patti Gemmell
Photo Coordinator: Ron Beard
Website Staff: Dave and Rose Slaunwhite

Special thanks to Margaret Ferguson, Carol Shadbolt, Jim and Elaine Elliott, Lisa Bullen, Leo Pettipas, Ernie Cable, Dave and Rose Slaunwhite of Rodew Web Services and staff of Halcraft Printers for their assistance.

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

Front Cover Photo. ***The Supermarine Spitfire in the foreground and the Hawker Hurricane were renowned for their narrow margin of victory in the Battle of Britain. Canadians flew both types of aircraft in the epic decisive air battle that changed the course of the Second World War.***

Back Cover Photo ***Although the Spitfire captured much of the acclaim for its role in the Battle Britain, the Hawker Hurricane was the workhorse, scoring 55 percent of the victories over the Luftwaffe raiders. The Hurricane also equipped most of RCAF's Home War Establishment fighter squadrons defending Canada during the Second World War.***

John Knudsen
President's Report

Fundraising
The first event of the season Dinner/Auction was held 10 June 2017 at the lions Club Eastern Passage, by most reports it was a outstanding success, good food, good service and cleared over 12k dollars. Congratulations to the fundraising chair (Patti Gemmell) and all her helpers. Hopefully a more detailed report will be included elsewhere in this issue.

Golf tournament
The annual golf tournament will be held 14th Sept , details to follow. Please support in any way you can.

I normally don't get into politics, but I am concerned for the future of the Shearwater Aviation Museum, as I write there is no funding available for some employees past 1 Sep 2017, except for the Curator and Archivist. The following are also critical positions Gift Shop/Marketing, Maintenance, and Engineer and require a dedicated person. Other jobs can be handled by Volunteers and although the current volunteers are doing a commendable job, more willing hands are needed.

The Government has money for all kinds of events all over the whole world and big celebrations for CANADA 150, sure we have to celebrate CANADA's big birthday but it is mainly a one shot deal and when it's over it's over. As for funding spread all over the world, let's help, but perhaps not on such a large scale. The museum is our heritage and it has been recognized as one of the best military museums in Canada, if it disappears it will never come back. It is like someone throwing away the family photo albums and the next generation is looking in wain for their history

AGM
The Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation (SAMF) Annua General Meeting (AGM) will be held at the museum 7 September at 1000 . As a paid up member you are entitled and encouraged to attend. This is the time to elect the Board of Directors for the following year and if you are unhappy with the people being nominated, you can nominate someone from the floor, it is your Foundation please help to shape it's future

*****

FROM THE CURATOR's DESK
By Christine Hines

I am happy to report that our spring season was very brisk, due to the station stop at Shearwater of the Vimy Flight, in the early stages of their cross- Canada tour, following their successful mission to fly over the Vimy Memorial in April. Look for them and their replica Nieuport XIs at an airstrip near you! For scheduling information, please see their website: http://www.vimyflight.ca/. Also this spring, 423 Maritime Helicopter Squadron kindly included the Shearwater Aviation Museum in their 75th Anniversary commemorations in May, by hosting their Family Day events at the museum, as well as "guest-curating" a temporary exhibit which is on view until the end of the calendar year. Special thanks to Capt Stephen Brosha, Capt Jason Miller, MCpl Emil Edwards and MCpl Kris Longphee, as well as the entire Squadron for their efforts on organizing a first-rate event.

The students in Nova Scotia have just completed their school year today, which marks our summer visit season at the Shearwater Aviation Museum. Given that so many local activities are ongoing in the Halifax Regional Municipality this summer as a result of Canada 150 celebrations, we expect a very busy season.

You'll read elsewhere in this issue of the "Warrior" comments about lack of funding for the SAM. As is usually the case with heritage organizations, grant funding is our bread and butter, and due to recent departmental cutbacks, the CF Museum Development Fund has been suspended for this fiscal year. This impacts exhibit projects and education and outreach projects, which provides for improvements to the museum programs and exhibit development. Fewer resources, both human and financial will slow our progress down, but we are still planning for steady improvements. We expect this situation to ease in future, but donations of volunteer time would certainly be welcomed to help augment our team. If you or any of your friends are looking for a volunteer opportunity, consider your community aviation museum! Call me at 902-720-1083 to discuss the opportunities available.

Plans for Shearwater 100 projects in 2018 are well in hand. We're planning a revamp of our core theme historical exhibit in a new location, new temporary exhibit rooms, as well as the development of new programs and audio-visual programming for our Bonaventure Briefing Room. In combination with activities being planned by 12 Wing to commemorate Shearwater's Centennial, we expect to have a busy, fun season. Stay tuned to this space for updates on Shearwater 100 activities. Enjoy your summer, and I look forward to seeing you at SAM soon!
All the best, Christine

*****

P.J. McCabe
Chairman SAMF Board

Welcome to the summer issue of the Warrior. With the warm weather upon us it is time to consider summer vacation and plans for spending quality time with friends and family in "Canada's Ocean Playground". Keep in mind that the museum is a treasure trove of history and learning. It certainly should be on your bucket list to bring your family and guests for a visit. I hope that you had the opportunity to enjoy some of the Canada Day festivities and found your own special way to commemorate Canada's 150th birthday.

The SAMF Board members have been very busy working towards our fundraising objective to assist the SAM with making a new home for the planned Sea King exhibit. The retirement of our venerable fleet of Sea Kings is drawing near and we all want to ensure we have prepared a fitting home for this special exhibit. To that end we are working towards raising approximately $2M to assist the SAM with the Sea King exhibit expansion.

The recent annual SAMF Dinner and Auction did very well and despite telephone and communications problems, the 50/50 draw is progressing and the 500 club is above the break even point. Patti Gemmell her team of fundraising volunteers are to be commended for their tenacious and persistent efforts.

The Board members continue to work energetically on managing the business of the Board by reducing our costs and seeking out new means of raising funds for the museum. We are well on our way with planning for our annual September golf tournament with high expectations for sponsorship and corporate participation to assist with the revenues.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our volunteers at the museum. They are the lifeblood of the museum. It is through their generosity and selfless donation of their time and talents that the museum is able to offer a variety of displays and activities.

The Federal funding for the museum has been reduced this year resulting in a tightening of the belt when it comes to funding the museum activities. Given these constraints on the operating budget, all donations and volunteer assistance would be welcomed. We are seeking those with energy and a passion for preserving our Naval Air history to commit to helping out at the museum. Anything you can do to assist us at this time will go a long way towards our goal of supporting the ongoing operation of the museum.

In closing, I would like to thank you for your support of the SAMF and the museum. Please mark your calendars for our upcoming Annual General Meeting scheduled to take place at the museum for 10:00 AM on 7 September. Wishing you all the best for an enjoyable summer.

*****

***From the Editor - Kay Collacutt*:**

Hello everyone. Happy Canada Day. I thought I'd wish you all the best of times ever. Happiest times for me are when I am with family and friends or at work - yes at work especially at Shearwater.

No doubt you have read over the past while about the changes happening to our military, no funding etc. Well, now it is affecting the Museum. The majority of us here know the ramifications of 'no money'. I'm certain the military is feeling, really feeling, the pinch. (But not those we voted into Government.) I too am worried about what will happen to the Museum in the next while.

The Museum comes under the control of 12 Wing and so far, they have not asked for assistance from SAMF; although, we were advised by the Museum that there is no funding for their staff who are noted in the President's report. It is not the mandate of the SAM Foundation to pay wages. So what do we do about this to help the Museum get through the next year and a half? I'm more than certain it can't be run by one paid person and a shortage of volunteers.

The present Museum staff and the volunteers they have are keeping the Museum the way it is - one of the best in Canada. Until September they will be ok after that - who knows. We need them to keep our history alive. You can't have a future without a past. If you have any ideas, it would be great to hear them.

Take care, remember Naval Air, the good and bad days and best of all, keep in touch with your buddies.

*****

HAPPY 150TH CANADA

The Battle of Britain

Ernest Cable - SAM Historian

This year Canadians commemorate the 77th anniversary of the Battle of Britain and pay tribute to the men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice. The Battle of Britain was the first major campaign to be fought entirely by air forces and was the largest and most sustained aerial bombing campaign to that date. The Royal Air Force's (RAF) victory in the Battle of Britain marked Nazi Germany's first major defeat and became a crucial turning point in the Second World War. The German Luftwaffe's (air force) failure to destroy Britain's air defences and gain air superiority over England forced Hitler, Germany's Fuehrer, to abandon his planned invasion of Britain. Canadians played an important role in the Battle of Britain; in June 1940, the RCAF's No.1 (Fighter) Squadron was hastily sent from Dartmouth, Nova Scotia to England to provide badly needed reinforcements to the RAF and was the only Canadian squadron to fight in the Battle of Britain. Additionally, another 84 Canadian pilots served in RAF Fighter Command squadrons during the epic battle.

On 3 September 1939, the official beginning of the Second World War, Germany's army and Luftwaffe, in a stunning campaign of Blitzkrieg attacks, conquered Poland, Denmark, Norway, Holland and Belgium and concluded with the surrender of France in June 1940. While attempting to stem the Nazi invasion RAF fighters were overwhelmed in the skies over Europe; losing more than 430 aircraft to vastly superior numbers of more modern Luftwaffe fighters. In their final action in the Battle of France RAF fighters provided desperately needed air cover over the beaches at Dunkirk to keep the advancing Luftwaffe fighters at bay. This gallant defence of the beaches allowed more than 360,000 British Expeditionary and French troops to miraculously escape across the Chanel to England in makeshift naval and civilian flotillas. The Nazi sweep of continental Europe was complete. British Prime Minister Winston Churchill proclaimed that the Battle of France was lost and the Battle of Britain was about to begin.

To achieve their final objective of occupying all of Europe the Nazis planned to invade Britain. German military staffs mapped out Operation Sea Lion, a

mammoth cross Channel invasion of Britain scheduled for mid-September. For Sea Lion to succeed the Luftwaffe had to win air superiority over the English Channel and southern Britain by defeating RAF Fighter Command; a feat the Luftwaffe was convinced could be achieved in four days. The Luftwaffe planned to attack radar sites and airfields near the coast and gradually move inland to attack the fighter airfields defending London; then to wreck the British aircraft industry to starve the RAF of replacement fighters. To achieve this goal the Luftwaffe had to destroy Fighter Command either in the air or on the ground; yet preserve its own strength to support the invasion.

Pilots Scramble to their Hurricanes to Intercept Luftwaffe Bombers.

Starting 10 July 1940, waves of hundreds of Luftwaffe Heinkel and Dornier bombers, protected by squadrons of Messerschmitt fighters, attacked Britain daily. Against a fleet of 3,358 German fighters and bombers the RAF could muster only 666 fighters to defend Britain. Despite being greatly outnumbered by as much as ten to one, RAF Hurricane and Spitfire pilots fought gallantly through the Luftwaffe fighter protection in an attempt to attack the bombers before they could bomb RAF airfields and aircraft. With the advantages of a coastal radar warning network and a superb system of fighter sector controllers the Hurricane and Spitfire pilots inflicted heavy losses on the Luftwaffe attackers. Although able to keep the upper hand by only a very narrow margin, Fighter Command suffered aircraft losses in the air and on their airfields that were unsustainable. RAF ground crews and the British aircraft industry had great difficulty keeping up with the Hurricane and Spitfire losses; but more critically, there were few experienced fighter pilots to replace the many pilots killed or injured in action.

During late August and early September 1940, Fighter Command's position became grim in the extreme; 295 fighters had been totally destroyed and 171 badly damaged against an output of 269 new and repaired Hurricanes and Spitfires. Worst of all 103 pilots were killed or missing and 128 were wounded. Experienced pilots were like gold dust, and each one lost had to be replaced by an untried pilot whose life on squadron was often measured in weeks. During the entire month of August, the operational training units produced no more than 260 fighter pilots while casualties for the month were just over 300. Fighter Command was withering away defending southern England.

However, Hitler became impatient with the Luftwaffe's inability to decisively destroy RAF Fighter Command and shifted tactics to bombing the city of London in an attempt to destroy British morale and force the British government to capitulate. On 7 September, 400 bombers escorted by more than 600 fighters targeted docks in the East end of London. The Luftwaffe fighter escorts had limited fuel capacity and could spend only 10 minutes over London before heading for home. This left many bomber raids undefended by fighters. More importantly, the shift in tactics away from Fighter Command airfields gave the British time to recover from their earlier aircraft and airfield losses.

On 15 September 1940, the RAF decisively repulsed two massive waves of German attacks, with every available Fighter Command aircraft in southern England airborne that day. The total casualties on this critical day were 60 German and 26 RAF aircraft

shot down. The Luftwaffe had already lost close to 1,700 aircraft and could no longer sustain such heavy losses. The air battles on 15 September became known as the Battle of Britain Day**.**

Two days later, German Admiral Raeder conceded, "The enemy air force is by no means defeated. On the contrary it shows increasing activity." Without air superiority Hitler had to postpone Operation Sea Lion indefinitely and Britain survived as the last bastion of freedom in Europe.

On 20 September 1940, Winston Churchill paid tribute to the 2,927 airmen who undaunted by odds turned the tide of the World War; especially, the 544 airmen, including 19 Canadians who paid the ultimate sacrifice. In Churchill's immortal words, "Never in the history of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few."

Canadian Squadron in Battle of Britain

On 10 September 1939, the day Canada declared war against Germany, No.1 Squadron was mobilized at St. Hubert, QC under the command of Squadron Leader E.G. Fullerton. Since No. 1 Squadron was the only RCAF
squadron equipped with a modern fighter it was immediately moved to RCAF Station Dartmouth, NS to protect Halifax's strategic harbour from air attack. The first six Mark 1 Hawker Hurricanes to arrive at Dartmouth on 3 and 4 November 1939 were the very first aircraft to land on the station's newly constructed runways. (Prior to this, RCAF Dartmouth was a seaplane station only.)

By May 1940, continental Europe had been overrun by Nazi Germany and Britain's survival was severely threatened. To re-enforce the RAF, which had suffered heavy loses in the battle for France, No. 1 Squadron was brought up to its established strength by absorbing No.115 Squadron from Montreal before sailing to Britain on the Duchess of Atholl in June 1940. While No. 1 Squadron's Hurricanes were en route across the Atlantic the RAF learned that the squadron's aircraft lacked armour plating and the latest propellers and would be quickly overpowered by the Luftwaffe's superior Messerschmitt Bf 109 fighters. Upon arrival in England the squadron was quickly re-equipped with the updated version of the Mark 1 Hurricane with a more powerful Merlin III engine, better armour protection and a three-bladed propeller. The pilots trained at an RAF Operational Training Unit to take advantage of the improved flying capabilities of their new Hurricanes and the lessons learned from the air fighting over France.

On 18 August 1940, No. 1 Squadron was thrown into one of history's most decisive air battles, the Battle of Britain. However, it was not until 26 August that No. 1 Squadron had its first encounter with Luftwaffe aircraft. Ten Hurricanes based at Northolt, but operating from North Weald for the day, scrambled and intercepted an enemy bomber force of 25-30 Dornier bombers. Flight Lieutenant (F/L) G.R. McGregor and Flying Officer (F/O) T.B. Little each shot down one aircraft. The squadron was credited with two Dornier's destroyed and two damaged. One Hurricane was destroyed and two were damaged; one pilot, F/O R.L. Edwards, was killed in action and two were wounded, but not seriously. No. 1 Squadron was the first RCAF squadron to engage the enemy, to score victories, to suffer casualties, and to win gallantry awards.

Similar to the RAF squadrons in the Battle of Britain, No. 1 Squadron had its "finest hour" on 15 September 1940. Eleven of the squadron's Hurricanes swooped down on a formation of 20 Heinkel bombers and cut them to ribbons. F/O P. Lockman was shot down but belly landed his Hurricane beside one of the crashed Heinkels and personally escorted the crew from the aircraft; one of the few fighter pilots ever to take a prisoner.

No. 1 Squadron's existence came to an end on 31 March 1941 when it was renumbered No. 401 Squadron as part of the RCAF's overseas reorganization. During the nine months No. 1 Squadron served in England, including the Battle of Britain, it flew 1694 sorties accumulating 1,569 operational hours and 1,201 non-operational hours. The squadron was credited with 30 enemy aircraft destroyed (28 ½ in the Battle of Britain), 8 probably destroyed and 34 damaged. Operationally, the squadron lost 15 Hurricanes, 13 pilots of whom three were killed and ten wounded or injured; two personnel were killed in non-operational (training) accidents. Three pilots were awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

The names of the three No. 1 Sqn members awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) are Squadron Leader (S/L) Ernie McNab (Commanding Officer), Flight Lieutenant (F/L) Gordon McGregor (Second in Command) and Flying Officer (F/O) Dal Russell. McGregor became the President of Trans Canada Air Lines (Air Canada) after the war.

Hawker Hurricane Returns to Dartmouth

Ernest Cable Shearwater Aviation Museum Historian

The first Hurricanes arrived at RCAF Station Dartmouth (now 12 Wing Shearwater) in November 1939 where they played an embryonic role in the air defence of Canada's Atlantic sea approaches during the Second World War. In February 2016, a full-scale replica of Hawker Hurricane, serial number P3670, resplendent in its Second World War paint scheme and markings of the RCAF's No.1 Squadron was added to the aircraft on display at the Shearwater Aviation Museum. The replica represents the role Hurricanes played in the base's history starting with the arrival of No.1 Squadron's Hurricanes in 1939 and followed by the formation of Nos. 126, 127 and 129 Hurricane Squadrons in 1942 to defend Atlantic Canada. The museum had long wished for a Hurricane to add to its aircraft collection, but the more than $100,000 cost to purchase even a derelict Hurricane and refurbish it was beyond the museum's financial means. The museum was, therefore, delighted when an aviation enthusiast who wishes to remain anonymous donated $10,000 to build a remarkably detailed full-scale Hurricane replica. The museum's good fortune continued in finding Warrant Officer Dave Rowe, an Airborne Electronic Sensor Operator (AESOP) and a very talented scale-aircraft modeler from 12 Wing, who volunteered to take on the demanding challenge of building the full-scale replica.

Birth of the Hurricane

With the threat of war on the horizon, a number of very successful Hurricane test flights in 1935 spurred the British Air Ministry to order accelerated production of the Hurricane, the RAF's first monoplane fighter. To meet increased demand for the Hurricane, the British government sanctioned limited licensed production or export to several foreign countries. The most far-reaching foreign production occurred in 1938 when Canadian Car and Foundry at Fort William, ON. (now Thunder Bay) was granted licensed production. Canadian Hurricane production, although endorsed by the Air Ministry, was almost an entirely commercially sponsored project. The Canadian enterprise was motivated by Hawker's need to increase production and concern that Hurricane factories were well within range of German bombers. Initially, microfilmed drawings and a number of Hurricanes were shipped to Canada to provide a pattern for production facilities; later, 22 Hurricanes were sent as initial development aircraft to launch production training schedules. The plans were so well laid that 160 Canadian-built Hurricanes arrived in England in time to participate in the Battle of Britain. By war's end more than 14,583 Hurricanes were produced including 1,451 built by Canadian Car and Foundry where Chief Engineer, Elsie MacGill, became known as "Queen of the Hurricanes".

Baptism in Battle

During the opening weeks of the Second World War in early September 1939, four RAF Hurricane squadrons were sent to France where the Hurricane had its baptism of fire providing air support to the British Expeditionary Force and defending against the onslaught of Luftwaffe (German air force) fighters and bombers during the German Blitzkrieg invasion of the Low Countries. On 10 May 1940, the Blitzkrieg gained momentum and four more Hurricane squadrons were committed to France. Because of the Luftwaffe's vast superiority in numbers the Hurricane squadrons suffered heavy losses, but the Hurricanes managed to destroy nearly double the number of German aircraft. During the eleven days of fighting in France Hurricane pilots claimed 499 aircraft destroyed and 123 aircraft probably destroyed. The defeat of France was not long in doubt and British forces had to withdraw to the sea, which culminated in the historic evacuation from the beaches at Dunkirk. On 20 May, the Hurricane squadrons in France were ordered to return to Great Britain. The last 66 Hurricanes of the 452 engaged during the Battle of France left France on 21 June, leaving 178 Hurricanes abandoned on several French airfields. However, the pilots brought back air-fighting experience that proved to be the strength of RAF Fighter Command during the Battle of Britain in which Hurricanes equipped 26 RAF squadrons plus one RCAF squadron.

During the Battle of Britain both the Supermarine Spitfire and the Hurricane were renowned for their part in defending Britain against the Luftwaffe; generally, the more agile Spitfires intercepted the German escort fighters, leaving the Hurricanes to concentrate on the bombers. Despite the proven performance of the "thoroughbred" Spitfire, it was the "workhorse" Hurricane that scored the higher number of victories, accounting for 55 percent of the 1,733 German losses in the Battles of Britain compared with 42 percent by Spitfires. The narrow margin of victory over the Luftwaffe in the skies over the English Channel and England forced the Germans to indefinitely postpone the invasion of Britain, leaving the island nation as the last bastion of freedom in Europe. The victory came at a cost of 526 Hurricanes and 389 Spitfires.

First Canadian Hurricanes

In 1937, the RCAF's No.1 Squadron formed at Trenton, ON. equipped with 11 Armstrong-Whitworth Siskin biplane fighters. The Siskins were Canada's front line fighter but were hopelessly obsolete with a top speed of 156 mph that barely exceeded the performance of the best First World War fighters. Under worsening world tensions and looming war clouds on the horizon, the Canadian government acknowledged that all of the RCAF's aircraft were entirely inadequate for air defence. In early 1938, the government implemented a rearmament program, allocating funds for modern aircraft for the RCAF. Defence against a naval attack was the highest priority. It was also decided to acquire a small

number of modern fighter aircraft. With its ancestral link to the RAF, the RCAF considered only British aircraft and purchased its first 20 Hurricanes from the initial production block of 600 aircraft. To expedite delivery the British Air Ministry diverted 20 Hurricanes in full production for the RAF to the RCAF. The Hurricanes were assigned RCAF serial numbers 310 to 329, which were delivered from February to August 1939 when the outbreak of war put an end to deliveries. These initial production Mark I Hurricanes featured 1,030 horsepower Rolls-Royce Merlin II engines, two-blade fixed-pitch wooden propellers and fabric covered wings housing eight .303 in (7.7 mm) Browning machine guns.

No.1 Squadron and their Siskins moved to Calgary in August 1938 to support the army at Currie Barracks and to provide a greater RCAF presence in Western Canada. On 16 February 1939, the CO, Squadron Leader (S/L) Elmer Fullerton, led a cadre of 20 air and ground crews to Vancouver to accept the first Hurricanes that had been shipped from England. The Hurricanes, serial numbers 311 and 312, were uncrated and assembled at Sea Island airport on 18 February. S/L Fullerton became the first Canadian to fly a Hurricane on 25 February when he flew 312 on its maiden test flight.

Three more Hurricanes, 310, 313 and 314 arrived in crates on 2 March and were assembled and test flown by Fullerton within a week. Also, on this date the squadron suffered its first set back when Sergeant R.L. Davis on his first solo flight crashed 312 on take off. The aircraft swerved off the runway and clipped the wing of a Ford Trimotor transport. The Hurricane burned and was totally destroyed but Davis managed to escape uninjured. The Board of Inquiry concluded that the crash was not caused by pilot error, but was attributed to the fact nobody on No.1 Squadron was experienced on high performance fighters; the jump from the Siskin's 450 to the Hurricane's 1,030 horsepower engine plus other monoplane handling characteristics required transition training. Unlike the Siskin there were no dual control Hurricanes for training. Therefore, to bridge the performance gap between the Siskin and the Hurricane, a Northrop Delta, serial number 675, a photographic survey aircraft from No.8 (General Purpose) Squadron in Ottawa was hastily flown to Sea Island. The 775 horsepower all-metal Delta was a low-wing monoplane similar to the Hurricane; although, larger and slower than the Hurricane its dual controls made it an acceptable transition trainer. Pilots received dual training and soloed on the Delta before being cleared to fly the Hurricane. The first of the NCO pilots made his first successful Hurricane flight on 28 March.

In April and early May new pilots started to arrive, including S/L Ernie McNab who had accumulated a mere but vital five hours experience on Hurricanes while attached to the RAF. He brought with him the latest RAF training syllabi for fighter squadrons and all possible information on Hurricane maintenance. New Hurricanes were also arriving, presenting S/L Fullerton with the difficult task of introducing new pilots and new aircraft into the squadron at the same time.

In early June 1939, the Vancouver detachment was disbanded and No.1 Squadron personnel returned to Calgary. S/L Fullerton delivered the first Hurricane (316) to Calgary on 1 June; followed by 311, 313 and 315 over the next ten days. The imminence of war energized the squadron; on 30 August 1939 the squadron was ordered to pre-position immediately to St. Hubert, QC. The next day S/L Fullerton and Sgt. Briese, the only pilots available, departed in 316 and 311 for their new Quebec base. Canada declared war against Germany on 10 September. On 11 September, No.1 Squadron was mobilized and placed on a war basis; machine guns and oxygen equipment were installed and tested; training in formation and instrument flying intensified and gunnery practice against air and ground targets commenced at the nearest gunnery range at Trenton, ON. By 28 Sep the squadron consisted of five officers, 72 airmen and seven Hurricanes.

Dartmouth Bound

In late October the squadron was informed that it was to move to its war station at Dartmouth, NS. to provide air defence for the approaches to Halifax's strategic harbour. On 1 November, S/L Fullerton relinquished command of the squadron to S/L McNab. Two days later the seven Hurricanes (311, 315, 316, 324, 327, 328 and 329) departed for the East Coast via Rimouski and Moncton, arriving at Dartmouth in two sections on 3 and 4 November. The Hurricanes were the very first aircraft to land on the recently constructed airfield's new runways; previously Dartmouth was solely a seaplane station where flying boats operated from the water at Eastern Passage. Although, No.1 Squadron was declared operational on 9 November, it took some time for the squadron to settle in. It wasn't until 20 November that F/O Reyno (later an Air Marshal) flew the squadron's first operational mission in Hurricane 324; a naval cooperation sortie – dive-bombing in Halifax's Bedford Basin for naval vessels' anti-aircraft practice.

Abominable weather in December 1939 and January 1940 severely limited the amount of flying. By February there were now eight Hurricanes on squadron strength and the weather improved. Much more flying was carried out; practice offensive attacks, interceptions, fighter tactics and air firing reached a new peak. Pilots practiced formation flying and had a go at reaching the Hurricane's maximum altitude of 25,000 feet (8,000 meters) with full fuel and armament. The Hurricanes also conducted convoy patrols and were occasionally armed with depth charges in case of a chance encounter with a German U-boat.

RCAF Delta (left) Trained Pilots For Hurricane (right)

On 22 May 1940, No.1 Squadron received the exciting news that it was moving to England immediately. Flying ceased, with the last mission from Dartmouth having been flown on 20 May when two Hurricanes flew reconnaissance sorties over the sea approaches within a 50-mile radius from Halifax. On 28 May, No.1 Squadron absorbed eight officers and 86 men from No.115 Squadron in Montreal to bring it up to wartime strength. On 11 June, the squadron boarded the passenger steamship *Duchess of Athol* and departed Halifax at 1000 hours for England under the escort of three destroyers and a battleship. Stranraer flying boats from Dartmouth's No.5 Squadron provided anti-submarine patrols for the convoy until dusk.

Replacement Hurricanes

The squadron disembarked in Liverpool, England on 20 June and arrived at their first station, RAF Middle Wallop in Hampshire the next day. By this time France had capitulated and England was being readied for certain attack and invasion. No.1 Squadron was hurriedly being primed to join the RAF's Fighter Command in what would be one of the world's epic air battles, the Battle of Britain. On 25 June, Air Chief Marshal Sir Hugh Dowding, Air Officer Commander in Chief of Fighter Command visited the squadron to review his latest reinforcements. Both he and subsequent inspecting officers found the squadron keen and well equipped, particularly with vehicles. However, none of the RCAF's Hurricanes had been upgraded with the latest improvements developed over the past year and would have been easily overwhelmed by the Luftwaffe's vastly superior Messerschmitt Bf 109 fighters. Of particular concern, the aircraft still had fixed-pitch wooden propellers, no self-sealing fuel tanks and lacked armour protection. Dowding arranged for their immediate replacement with later production Mark I Hurricanes. The replacement aircraft started to arrive within days and the original RCAF Hurricanes returned to the RAF.

The replacement Mark I's featured an improved Rolls Royce Merlin III engine driving a Rotol constant speed three-blade metal propeller, ejector exhaust stacks were fitted for added thrust, and the fabric-covered wings were replaced by stressed metal-covered wings. The "ring and bead" gun sight was replaced by a standard "reflector gun sight". An armour-glass panel replaced the front windscreen and armour plate provided head and back protection for the pilot. An Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) system and a new VHF radio improved communications with Air Defence Sector ground intercept controllers. The Hurricane's unprotected gravity-feed fuel tank in front of the cockpit easily ruptured when hit, allowing flame to penetrate the cockpit causing serious burn injuries to the pilot. Air Chief Marshal Dowding had Hawker retrofit the fuselage tanks with a fire-resistant material called "Linatex" on a priority basis. The fuel tanks in the new metal wing had already been fitted with a covering of the "Linatex" sealant.

Despite the arrival of the replacement Hurricanes, the Squadron personnel were far from ready for battle. The former No.115 Squadron pilots had never flown Hurricanes and the original No.1 Squadron pilots were unfamiliar with modern fighter tactics and the lessons learned from the air fighting over France, especially the command and control complexities of flying and fighting in the skies over wartime England.

During the last days of June the squadron settled in. The first replacement Hurricanes were assembled and test flown. After the first flights the senior pilots declared the new Hurricanes a considerable improvement over their previous aircraft.

On 4 July, No.1 Squadron moved to Croydon near London. Most of the pilots participated in wireless radio courses to learn RAF procedures and terminology. On 11 July, the squadron was grounded; the replacement RCAF Hurricanes retained their half black and half white undersides, which caused a great deal of confusion and had to re-painted in the new RAF standard "sky" (light green) colour. Also, No.1 Squadron had not been allotted squadron identification letters. On 16 July, the RAF assigned the letters "YO" which were immediately painted on the aircraft and flying resumed the next day, During the next four weeks the flying training focused on air firing, camera gun practice, formation flying, interception and attack tactics. The ground crews rapidly increased their skill and familiarity with the replacement Hurricanes. The squadron was poised to be thrown into one of history's most decisive air battles, the Battle of Britain.

Museum's Hurricane

The full scale Hurricane replicates serial number P3670. The museum chose this serial number for several reasons: it was one of the first updated Mark I Hurricanes to replace the original early production

Hurricanes that accompanied No.1 Squadron from Canada. Also, P3670 was one of the ten Hurricanes known to have participated in No.1 Squadron's first encounter with the Luftwaffe in the Battle of Britain on 26 August 1940, and became one of the few No.1 Squadron Hurricanes to survive the epic Battle. Lastly, P3670 had one of the longest tenures on No.1 Squadron, remaining on strength until May 1941 when upgraded Mark II Hurricanes replaced the Mark I Hurricanes.

Full Scale Hurricane "YO-E" Replica Being Placed in Museum

The replica is built from Hurricane technical drawings in a construction process akin to the real Hurricane; similar to the actual Hurricane the fuselage frame is constructed of wooden bulkheads and stringers, while wooden spars and ribs provide the frame for the centre wing section and outer wings. The replica was then "skinned" with ceconite, a synthetic aircraft grade fabric, and sheets of thin gauge plywood molded to conform to curves of the fuselage and wing frame structures. The three-blade propeller, spinner and tail empennage are similarly crafted out of wood. The transparent panels of the canopy and windscreen are made of Lexan. The upper surfaces of the fuselage and wings are painted in a mottled earth brown and dark green camouflage, while all under surfaces are painted a sky colour.

The No.1 Squadron identification letters "YO" are painted on each side of the rear fuselage to the left of the roundel. To the right of the roundel, the single letter "E" identifies P3670 within No.1 Squadron. The "P3670" serial number is painted on each side of the aft fuselage slightly forward of the tail planes.

The addition of Hurricane P3670, more widely referred to as YO*E, to the museum's aircraft collection will fill a void in the types of aircraft representing Shearwater's history. Visitors to the museum are now able to view a full-scale Hurricane to gain an appreciation for the shape and size of the very first aircraft to land on RCAF Station Dartmouth's newly constructed runways and continued to equip the three Hurricane squadrons that served at Dartmouth (Shearwater) during the Second World War. The replica also gives life-size form to the model Hurricane in the museum's Catapult Aircraft Merchant ship diorama. Similarly, the life size YO*E Hurricane compliments the museum's Battle of Britain exhibit featuring No.1 Squadron's Hurricanes.

******

All at Sea

You know you`re all at sea
when your stomach rocks and rolls.
You know you're all at sea
when the road is full of holes.

You know you're off to sea
when you stare at all the ropes.
And the shore gets small behind you,
and so do all your hopes.

You know that you've been shanghaied,
when you dodge the seagull crap,
when you try to eat your dinner,
and it ends up in your lap.

You know that you`ve been rescued
from your lovely desert isle,
from all those dusky maidens,
who made an old man smile.

So now I'm heading out to sea,
back to the beaten track.
As for my rescue, thanks a lot,
but kindly put me back.

by John Thompson

Q. *How long does it take an average person to become a sailor?*

A. An average person will never become a sailor.

******

Alpha Whiskey For Shearwater

Ernie Cable – SAM Historian

ICAO

After the Second World War civilian aviation grew exponentially with countries around the world developing their own aviation regulations. The plethora of divergent regulations and terminology made air travel, particularly for airlines flying international routes, complex and confusing. Clearly, national air regulations had to be harmonized into a worldwide standard. Consequently, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) was formed in 1947 under the auspices of the United Nations. ICAO established Flight Information Regions for controlling air traffic and coordinated unique four letter identification codes for airports around the world. The comprehensive ICAO codes generally have a regional structure and are not duplicated. In general, the first letter is allocated by continent and represents a country or group of countries within that continent. The second letter generally represents a country within that region, and the remaining two are used to identify each airport. Within ICAO guidelines each country developed ICAO airport codes by modifying or expanding existing national codes for their airports.

Canada

Airport identification codes in North America were based on code letters used to identify nearby non-directional radio beacons, weather stations or commercial broadcast radio stations. For Canada, the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), also an United Nations Organization, had previously assigned the prefixes CF-CK, CY, and CZ to indentify Canadian radio stations (i.e. CJCH-Halifax, CHUM-Toronto, and CKWX-Vancouver) with CY and CZ being reserved for transportation. Since the letter “C” had already been reserved internationally for the first letter for Canadian radio stations, it was logical for continuity purposes to reserve “C” as the leading letter for Canadian airport ICAO identifiers, i.e. Cxxx.

To provide further continuity to the CY identity for its radio stations, Canada lobbied ICAO to reserve the letter “Y” as the second letter for Canadian ICAO airport codes, i.e. CYxx. This allowed Canada to create unique three-letter national airport identity codes commencing with the letter “Y”, i.e. Yxx. This had the advantage of Canadian national codes being identical to the last three letters of the four-letter international ICAO codes. Therefore, the ICAO, CYxx code, abbreviates to Yxx for domestic flights within Canada, i.e. Halifax’s CYHZ abbreviates to YHZ. Although, the majority of Canadian airport codes begin with the letter "Y", not all "Y" codes are Canadian and not all Canadian airports start with the letter "Y" (for example, ZBF for Bathurst, NB). Some Canadian airports simply append a combination of letters in the city's name to the "Y": YOW for Ottawa, YYC for Calgary, and YVR for Vancouver, whereas other Canadian airports append the two-letter code of the radio beacons that were the closest to the actual airport, such as YQX in Gander, NL and YXS in Prince George, BC. While certain codes are not obvious to the airports’ identity, some codes have become popular in daily usage, particularly two of Canada's largest airports, YYZ for Toronto-Pearson (YZ is the original radio transmitter code for the village of Malton, which is where Toronto Pearson International Airport is now located) and YUL for Montreal-Trudeau (UL was the identification code for radio beacon in the town of Kirkland, QC now the location of Montreal-Trudeau). Calgary International, Canada's fourth busiest airport, has begun using its airport code YYC as a marketing brand and name for the airport authority. YVR is also used for marketing in Vancouver, and is sometimes used by city residents to refer to the airport.

Shearwater

The airfield operated by the RCAF at 12 Wing Shearwater and it former incarnations, RCAF Station Dartmouth, Royal Canadian Naval Air Station Dartmouth and Canadian Forces Base Shearwater, is assigned ICAO identification code CYAW. The first two letters ”C” and “Y” follow the ICAO conventions described above. The last two letters AW are derived from the non-directional radio beacon installed years ago during the RCAF Station Dartmouth era. Following the convention of incorporating the identification letters of the nearest radio station or beacon into airport identity codes, Dartmouth was given the ICAO designation CYAW or YAW in the Canadian domestic context. In colloquial aviation parlance CYAW is often contracted to AW. For voice communications, ICAO acrophonically assigned code words to the 26 letters of the alphabet so that a letter's code name begins with the letter itself. The English language code words are pronounceable by most nationalities whose mother tongue is not English, i.e. Alpha=A, Bravo=B, Charlie=C…. Whiskey=W, X-ray=X, Yankee =Y, Zulu=Z. Hence, using the ICAO phonetic alphabet AW becomes “Alpha Whiskey” in voice conversations. The ICAO phonetic alphabet facilitates the understanding of critical combinations of letters and numbers in radio or telephone voice communications regardless of language barriers or the quality of communications. The curious might well ask why the letters AW were chosen to represent the Shearwater beacon and why wasn’t some mnemonic selected that was more closely aligned with the spelling of Shearwater or Dartmouth, such as SW, DT? The likely answer is that the identification letters in Morse code (A=dot dash, W=dot dash dash) would not conflict or be confused with the Morse code identity of other radio beacons used by aircraft returning from seaward to their home bases along the North American eastern seaboard.

United States

In the embryonic days of commercial aviation, airport codes were developed by the airlines as a convenient means to identify locations. Initially, pilots in the United States used the two-letter codes from the National Weather Service (NWS) reporting stations for identifying city airports. As airline service exploded in the 1930s, airports near towns without weather station codes required identification, leading

the government to develop the three-letter system, giving a seemingly endless 17,576 (26x26x26) different combinations. To ease the transition from two letters to three letters, some existing airports such as Los Angels placed an “X” after the LA weather station code. Therefore, airports such as Los Angeles became LAX and Portland, OR became PDX. Many station codes were simply the first three letters of the city name: ATL for Atlanta, BOS for Boston Logan International, and MIA for Miami. The letters for airports serving paired cities form other codes: DFW for Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas, MSP for Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota, and GSP for Greenville/Spartanburg, South Carolina. Sometimes the city name lends itself to one letter for each word, such as Salt Lake City, SLC. The International Air Transport Association (IATA) eventually implemented three-letter airport codes worldwide. The IATA codes were in use long before the advent of ICAO and formed the basis for developing the ICAO airport codes in 1947.

The identification letters for Chicago’s O’Hare airport are one of the few codes in the United States that do not reflect the name of the city it serves. In 1950, Chicago chose to name its newly expanded airport “O’Hare Field” in honour of Lieutenant Commander Edward "Butch" O'Hare, the United States Navy‘s first “Ace” and Medal of Honour recipient in the Second World War. Since the original quiet little airstrip was formerly called, **Or**chard Field, O’Hare was given the airport code ORD. Some groups successfully lobbied the government to obtain their own special letters. The U.S. Navy, for example, commandeered all the new “N” codes. The identity of the Naval Air Station at Pensacola, FL where Naval aviators learned to fly became NPA and those who went on to the famous "Top Gun" fighter school attended Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, CA identified as NKX.

With the United States having already established IATA mnemonic codes for many of its airports, existing American broadcast radio station codes provided the rationale to give American airports their international identity. The Federal Communications Commission had previously reserved “W” and “K” as the leading letters for commercial radio station codes east and west of the Mississippi River respectively (i.e. WFEZ-Miami FL, WJBQ-Portland ME, KSDS-San Diego CA, KOMO-Seattle WA). Since more than half of the radio station codes in the United States began with “K” the ICAO codes were formed by simply prepending a “K” to the existing IATA airport codes. Thus, the ICAO airport codes typically became: KLAX at Los Angles, KORD at Chicago O’Hare, KNPA at Pensacola and KBOS at Boston, etc.

Europe

Most ICAO codes outside the United States and Canada have a stronger top down geographical structure. The first letter in the ICAO identifier represents a region or country, for example, “U” refers to Russia with the last three letters denoting the specific regions within it, i.e. Moscow’s Domodedova airport being UUDD. Europe had too many locations for only one starting letter, so it was split into two regions “E” for northern Europe and “L” for southern Europe. The second letter was more specific such as, “G” denoting the United Kingdom (G for Great Britain) with London Heathrow airport being EGLL, “D” denotes West Germany (D for Deutschland), with Frankfurt airport being EDDF, ETxx was assigned to East Germany but the ETxx code was re-designated for military airfields in Germany after the reunification), “E” denotes Spain (E for España), with Madrid airport being LEMD, and France is designated “F” with Paris Charles de Gaulle airport being LFPG and so on.

IATA

ICAO codes are separate and different from IATA codes. In the contiguous United States and Canada most, but not all, airports are identified by three-letter IATA codes. These are generally the same as their ICAO codes, but without the leading C or K; e.g., YHZ and CYHZ both refer to Halifax’s Stanfield International Airport, IAD and KIAD are used for Washington Dulles International Airport. ICAO codes are commonly seen in aircraft flight plans and on airport or airline flight tracking websites, whereas IATA codes appear on airline timetables, reservations, and baggage tags. In general, IATA codes are derived from the name of the airport or the city it serves, while ICAO codes are distributed by region and country. For example, the IATA code for London's Heathrow Airport is LHR and its ICAO code is EGLL and Paris’ Charles de Gaulle IATA code is CDG but its ICAO code is LFPG. Globally, ICAO codes are more widely used than IATA codes, and to add to the confusion IATA codes are sometimes assigned to railway stations.

******

SAMF/SAM CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2017

EVERYONE WELCOME

SAM Foundation - Membership Year
1 January/31 December

500 Club - Final date for this current draw is 5 July 2017

For info call: 902-461-0062 OR
TOLL FREE 1-888-497-7779

Golf Tournament 14 September Open to Everyone

The tournament is at Hartlen Point, September 14 at 1pm.
Shot gun start.
Reception/pre registration at the museum at 11am

50/50 Draw -
To be held January 2018 Get your tickets now!!!!
For Info call: 902-461-0062 or
toll free 1-888-497-7779

***The Bonnie* Book See Bonnie Book Info in pull out section of Warrior Magazine. ($40 each tax included.)**
To order call 902-461-0062 or call toll free 1-888-497-7779.

"HMCS DEBERT" … So To Speak

Leo Pettipas, Winnipeg

As far as Canadian Naval Aviation goes, it bids fair to suggest that HMCS Shearwater (originally RCAF Station Dartmouth) was "Action Central." Then there were the off-site establishments – the Reserve squadrons and their bases at various cities across the country; the air-to-ground weapons ranges at Grand Desert NS and Camp Shilo in MB; RCAF Scoudouc NB that accommodated the 31st SAG for several months in 1953 and RCAF Station Summerside PEI after that; and finally, RCAF Station Debert NS, the topic of this article.

Naval Aviation's post-war build-up, by definition, led to the acquisition of more and more airplanes as time went on. This created a need to store newly-obtained machines that weren't needed right away. As the years passed, new aircraft supplanted their predecessors, and the retirees needed a home pending final disposal.

Pursuant to an agreement signed by the RCAF and the Navy during the war, the Air Force was committed to support Naval Air in its shore-based requirements. The country was dotted with ex-BCATP aerodromes which could be repurposed as holding facilities for short-term and extended periods of aircraft storage, and in 1950 the Air Force, as part of its logistic support programme of the Navy, made hangar space available at Station Debert for long-term storage of surplus aircraft. The key expression here, as far as Debert was concerned, is "long-term."

This action was contemporaneous with the Navy's acquisition of 75 TBM-3E Avengers from the American government, also in 1950, and the retirement of the Firefly FR Is and Firefly trainers hitherto flown by 826 Squadron and the Training Air Group, respectively. The obsolete Fireflies officially remained on strength, but were flown to Debert for storage for the next four years.

Along with the aircraft, a crew of mechanics and a PO were sent to live on the base to conduct daily storage duties such as maintaining tire pressures and oleo leg inflation and attending to other minor details. Periodically, the innards of every engine were activated by manually turning the propellers. Oil that had settled in the bottom of the cylinders was pumped out and the cylinders themselves were lubricated. The entire set of procedures wasn't terribly demanding and so leisure time was fairly abundant.

Meanwhile, the Avengers began arriving at Shearwater, and all 75 had been received by the end of October 1950. Two went forthwith to Fairey Aviation of Canada Ltd for modification as anti-submarine AS 3 prototypes; 826 Squadron re-equipped with twelve of them, still in their USN TBM-3E configuration; and others, until it was their own turn to undergo modification to AS 3s, joined their predecessor Fireflies at Debert.

In the meantime, 880 Squadron had re-equipped with Firefly AS 5s and operated the type until November 1951 when they were replaced by twelve now-modified Avenger AS 3s. At least one of these surviving Firefly 5s went to Debert until all thirteen of them were sold off to the British and Netherlands governments in 1952 and 1953. Also in 1952, the RCN received a second batch of 50 ex-USN Avengers, and the storage cycle was repeated: some went to Faireys for conversion and many of them were transferred to Debert before undergoing ASW modification. Among them were most of a batch of eight Guppy TBM-3W2s, none of which required conversion work before going operational.

To add to the storage demands at Shearwater, Fairey Aviation had a contract to modify fifteen Lancasters, still in their wartime rig, for the RCAF's Maritime Group. Until the company was ready to take them in hand, at least some of these machines had to be placed in short-term storage at Shearwater.

One retired aircraft type that surely did not get sent to Debert was the Seafire. All of my references to their "final storage" specify the precincts of the nearby Fairey Aviation plant. I have two photos of retired Seafires: one dated 14 July 1952 showing seventeen of them parked at Faireys, and the other, dated 30 July 1953, depicting at least fifteen of these survivors, sans engines, lined up at the Shearwater Lower Base. The smart money says that no Seafires ever graced the real estate at Remote Storage Facility Debert.

In the summer of 1955 the Navy was on the look-out for alternate storage property, and May and June of 1956 witnessed the relocation of the Debert-"based" aircraft to RCAF Station Scoudouc in New Brunswick. The reason for this transfer is unclear, but the machines involved may have been some or all of the Sea Furies that had been placed in reserve following the temporary disbandment of VF 870 two years previous. In any event, the 1956 move to Scoudouc definitely included Sea Furies. Aircraft that were not involved in the movement to Scoudouc were the old Firefly FR Is and trainers, as these had all been sold off to Ethiopia in March of 1954. It would appear that 1956 saw the final closure of Debert as a remote storage facility for Naval Aviation.

Firefly FR I PP 462 was one of those held at Debert before being sold to Ethiopia in 1954. It was returned to Canada in 1989 and restored at the Shearwater Aviation Museum, as shown here.

Firefly trainers that spent time at Debert until sold to Ethiopia.

The Sea Fury in the centre -- TG 129 AA-D -- was ferried from Debert to Scoudouc on 8 May 1956. This photo was taken in May of 1952.

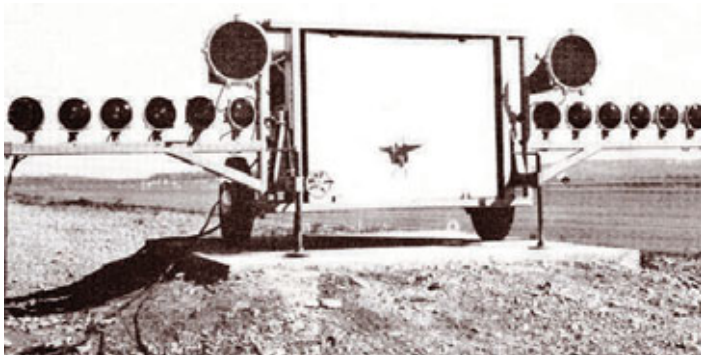
This is not to say that the Debert military aerodrome had seen the last of the Navy: from its earliest days when the Naval set-up at RCAF Station Dartmouth was still a lodger unit, that airfield was the venue for aerodrome dummy deck landings, or ADDLs.

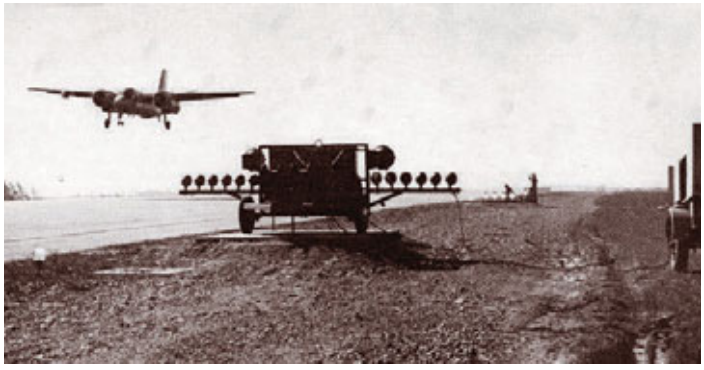
ADDLs were a form of landing practice in which the aircraft touched down on a shore-based landing strip and promptly took to the air again without stopping. The synonym "touch-and-go" perhaps better describes the technique, also known as "bounce." The evolution was a time-saver because the aircraft didn't actually land and move down the runway; it took off again immediately after touch-down.

Toward the end of the 1950s, tall-building construction was under way adjacent to Shearwater. Accordingly, it had become necessary to find an alternative location for the safe conduct of ADDLs, now called FCLPs (field carrier landing practice), that routinely required aircraft to fly at low altitudes while in the circuit. So in 1960, the RCAF relinquished the Debert aerodrome to the Navy and arrangements were made with the Army, then the main user of "Camp Debert," to accommodate the Navy's FCLP activity and its personnel. The runway infrastructure received improved drainage and levelling, and new lighting was installed (clearly implying that night-time use was part of the flying agenda). Markings were painted on the runway to simulate a carrier deck.

Back in 1957, a mobile landing-aid was imported from England where it had been developed, and was set up at the side of a Shearwater runway. In due course this asset was installed both at Debert and on HMCS Bonaventure, and from September 1961 onwards, Tracker-equipped Heavier than Air Anti-Submarine Squadron 880 used Debert for FCLPs.

The mobile mirror landing aid comprised a concave mirror, that was flanked to either side by a horizontal row of green-coloured datum lights. A bright orange source light was shone into the mirror, creating a ball-shaped image that could be seen by the approaching pilot. The position of the ball relative to the datum lights indicated the aircraft's position in relation to the desired guide path: if the ball was above the datum line, the a/c was too high; if below the datum line, too low. If the plane was right between the datum lines, it was on the correct glide path. The system was under the control of a landing signals officer who could communicate with the pilot via radio. The full kit and attendant operating procedures were an integral part of the FCLP programme at Debert that ran from September 1961 onwards.





Two views of the pre-Debert mirror landing-aid installation at Shearwater. The two large circular attachments that look like audio speakers are in fact wave-off lights that were activated if the pilot was required to abort a touch-down attempt.

Common sense tells us that Debert was never a home away from home for the Navy's McDonnell Banshees, either upon their arrival in Canada or after they were retired in 1962. The type was taken on strength in November 1955, less than a year before the Debert station was closed once and for all as a storage depot; and by the time the jets were struck off strength in 1962, the facility had long been decommissioned as a Naval aircraft storage unit.

Nonetheless, Debert did bear witness to a relic of the Banshee era. Shown here are two 1979 photos, courtesy of Banshee aficionado Barrie MacLeod, of a burnt-out hulk that had reportedly been used to exercise the crash-crew detachment that was stationed locally during the 1960s. The distinctive tail configuration confirms that is/was indeed a Banshee.

The mortal remains of Debert's Banshee, 1979.

The 10,000th landing aboard a real aircraft carrier was an occasion for celebration, and the same applied at "HMCS Debert." That happy day was predicted to arrive around Easter of 1963. Three medals were struck: a large (squadron) one and two small (aircrew) ones. The large gong read "Presented to the Tracker crew on occasion of the 10,000th landing at NAF Debert, April 1963, from Air Operations Department." The small ones were to go to the successful pilot and co-pilot.

Tracker Mk 2 596 making the 10,000th "bounce" at NAF Debert, 16 April 1963.

So behold, it came to pass that the big day arrived and, appropriately enough, the recently-appointed squadron Commanding Officer was all set to do the honours. And guess what … he got a wave-off, and the two sub-lieutenants in the following aircraft made the historic bounce! As something of a consolation prize, the CO was fittingly and ceremoniously presented with the big, i.e., squadron, medal (because he was the Squadron CO), and the subs got the small ones.

By the late 1960s, the demise of conventional carrier aviation in the RCN was clearly in view. Without a carrier, FCLPs were discontinued and Naval Air Facility Debert was no longer needed. In 1969, the Navy withdrew bag and baggage for the last time.

******

Meet the Volunteers.

Over the next several issues, we will introduce the Museum volunteers.

Paul Mitcheltree

Meet one of our volunteers Nicknamed “Tree” -

“Tree” Has been an outstanding addition to the SAM volunteers, although he has no military background he immediately became a valued member of the aircraft maintenance group and a solid member of the “stand-easy” coffee group. He can usually be found in the machine shop but willingly helps in many other areas of the museum. His work history may explain why he fit in perfectly with the SAM volunteers.

Work Experience in his own words.

Air cadets Sqn 292 - private pilot lic. at CFB Greenwood Glider license in NZ .

Parachuting 10 yrs with 16mm helmet camera , wish we had GoPro's then!

After university I worked as cameraman and film editor at NFB and CBC.

Made 2 trips on HMCS Algonquin to Puerto Rico as cameraman for DND training films; was editor of " The Sea Kings " recruiting film.

In the early 80's I went outside after being in the dark too long. Was towed to sea on K171 for the movie Lifeline to Victory. . . . with Albert Hennen.

I worked in Camera dept mainly as a focus puller and operator but also as a key grip.

Worked on Titanic , K-19 , Amelia and many other local films.

Hung a 12 ton Russian MIR sub in the studio for Titanic as their rigging grip.

On K-19 we had a 35 ft camera crane on a tugboat welded to the deck , with a 5 man grip crew.

My main trade is mounting and operating cameras on helicopters for docs, commercials and movies. That has been quickly eclipsed by the new drone technology . . . which gets much better shots.

I was in film at a good time, and I hope it will recover again in NS.

I always liked working with machinery , building camera support systems in crazy locations and finding solutions to new problems. The SAM museum shop is a great place to use old skills and learn new skills the airplanes require.

******

SUPPORT YOUR

SHEARWATER AVIATION MUSEUM FOUNDATION.

Prisoner escapes in WWII.

Sent to us from Allan Browne

Starting in 1940, an increasing number of British & Canadian Airmen found themselves as the involuntary guests of the Third Reich, and the Crown was casting about for ways and means to facilitate their escape...

Now obviously, one of the most helpful aids to that end is a useful and accurate map, one showing not only where stuff was, but also showing the locations of 'safe houses' where a POW on-the-lam could go for food and shelter.

Paper maps had some real drawbacks -- they make a lot of noise when you open and fold them, they wear out rapidly, and if they get wet, they turn into mush.

Someone in MI-5 (similar to America 's OSS) got the idea of printing escape maps on silk. It's durable, can be scrunched-up into tiny wads, and unfolded as many times as needed, and makes no noise whatsoever.

At that time, there was only one manufacturer in Great Britain that had perfected the technology of printing on silk, and that was John Waddington Ltd. When approached by the government, the firm was only too happy to do its bit for the war effort.

By pure coincidence, Waddington was also the UK . Licensee for the popular American board game Monopoly. As it happened, 'games and pastimes' was a category of item qualified for insertion into 'CARE packages', dispatched by the International Red Cross to prisoners of war.

Under the strictest of secrecy, in a securely guarded and inaccessible old workshop on the grounds of Waddington's, a group of sworn-to-secrecy employees began mass-producing escape maps, keyed to each region of Germany , Italy , France or where ever Allied POW camps were located. When processed, these maps could be folded into such tiny dots that they would actually fit inside a Monopoly playing piece.

As long as they were at it, the clever workmen at Waddington's also managed to add:

1. A playing token, containing a small magnetic compass

2. A two-part metal file that could easily be screwed together

3. Useful amounts of genuine high-denomination German, Italian, and French currency, hidden within the piles of Monopoly money!

British and American air crews were advised, before taking off on their first mission, how to identify a 'rigged' Monopoly set – by means of a tiny red dot, one cleverly rigged to look like an ordinary printing glitch, located in the corner of the Free Parking square.

Of the estimated 35,000 Allied POWS who successfully escaped, an estimated one-third were aided in their flight by the rigged Monopoly sets. Everyone who did so was sworn to secrecy indefinitely, since the British Government might want to use this highly successful ruse in still another, future war.

The story wasn't declassified until 2007, when the surviving craftsmen from Waddington's, as well as the firm itself, were finally honored in a public ceremony.

It's always nice when you can play that 'Get Out of Jail' Free' card!

Many of you are (probably) too young to have any personal connection to WWII (Sep. '39 to Aug. '45), but this is still an interesting bit of history for everyone to know.

******

For those who had to use Morse code

Remember using Morse's code,
that old communication mode.
Some sent slow, and some sent fast,
the speedy senders; unsurpassed.

Those speedy chaps we're very few.
The fastest one I ever knew,
Nicknamed "Midnight;" he had the skill,
a HAM we knew as Donald Hill.

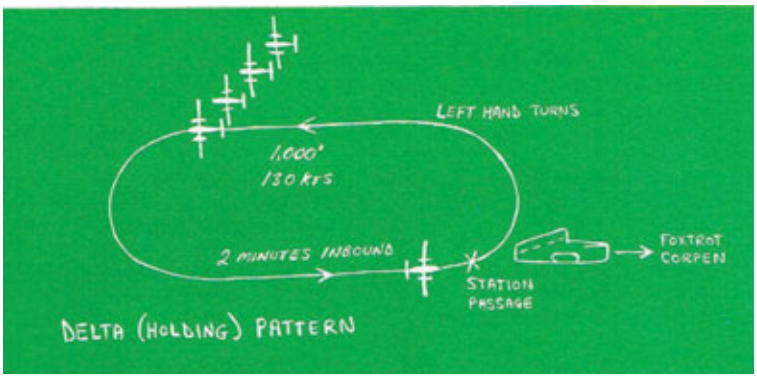
He'd tap it out at thirty plus,
record with a pencil, with no fuss.
He could read as fast as he could send.
On his accuracy you could depend.

I recall his callsign, don't know why,
Phonetically, V.E.A.A.Y.
It was Canada Flag Day; '65,
in my mind's eye, it stays alive.

Flying over Puerto Rican hills,
Don displayed more than one of his skills.
Called a HAM in Toronto for a telephone patch,
Something the pilot failed to catch.

He talked to his Mom, and me to mine,
had to be quick; there was not much time.
He's in the Delta; Don is gone now,
That guy with incredible Morse code know-how.

John Thompson



LET US NOT FORGET

In the Delta

ALAIN, *H.*

BAAK, *Jean (Hank)*

BARTLETT, *Margaret H. (Richard)*

BEAZLEY, *Richard*

BOYKO, *Harry*

CARTER, *Ron (Spewy)*

CARVER, *Dorothy Kathleen Emily*

COMEAU, *Russell T. (Russ)*

DAVIS, *Douglas*

EDEN, *Lillian (John)*

FRANK, John Fredrick

GRUNDY, *William "BILL" Albert*

ILLINGWORTH*, Fred*

JAMER*, Jeanne Marie Camille (Dick)*

LANDRY, *David*

LEADBEATER, *Alvin Currie 'Al'*

McLEAN, *Stan*

MILHOMME, *Leandre "Benny"*

PERRY, *Ted*

RENT, *Frederick Charles*

ROBINSON*, James Paul 'Jim'*

ROMANS, *Wayne*

SPICER, *Robert*

STEGEN*, James*

TATE, *Mary Francis (Dave)*

This is a photo of M. Anne George, PhD, the Grand Niece of Lt. Robert Hampton-Gray, RCN, VC.

Anne was laying a wreath to commemorate the memory of Lt Hampton-Gray who is also part of a photo tribute at the Sailors' Memorial.

In this posed photo with Anne are George Grant, RCN (Ret'd), George Plawski and Jack McGee.

hard cover
200 Photos - 336 pages

ORDER NOW!

Until further advised:

Price $40 Includes Shipping & Handling

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

You may Fax your order to 1-902-461-1610 OR
Phone it toll free to 1-888-497-7779 OR
Email: samf@samfoundation.ca

Order Form:

I would like to order ___ copies of “The bonnie” Book

My cheque is enclosed __

Mastercard OR VISA

Card # _____

Expiry ___/___ Plus 3 # security code on back of

Card _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City _____ Prov _____

Postal Code _____

Phone ( )_____

SAMF Mailing Address:

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

Phone: 902-461-0062 or
Toll Free:1-888-497-7779
Fax: 902-461-1610

Email: samf@samfoundation.ca

Pull out Section

SAMF MEMBERSHIP FORM
Note: **Membership year is 1 Jan - 31 Dec**

NAME_____

Address:_____

City _____Prov _____

Postal Code_____

Phone: _____

Email _____

Status: Life $500 (one time only) Patron $250 yr

Sustaining $100 yr Regular $50 yr

Additional donation: $ _____ for

Building Fund Artifacts In Memory

Firefly, Avenger Restoration, Building Fund,

WARRIOR, In Honour, No specific Category

Note: If “in memory” or “In Honour” please provide name and address for recipient for family to receive a letter of acknowledgement from our Secretary.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Prov _____

Postal Code _____

Payment Method: Money Order, Cash, Cheque,
VISA or MASTERCARD

#_____

Exp Date __/__ Plus 3 # security code on back of

Of card _____

When your donations total $1000 or more, your name will be added to our Donor Recognition Board. Check with our secretary to see how close you are to having your name on the Donor Recognition Board.

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.

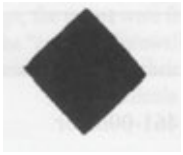
The options are:

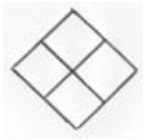
Option A: One half tile 12" X 12" x 17" and triangular in shape with up to 5 rows of 3/4" letters for a maximum of 60 letters and spaces. The longest row can accommodate up to 20 letters and spaces. The remaining 4 rows will decrease in length as the border/edge of the tile dictates. It should be noted that the upper half of the tile will 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 ½" 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.





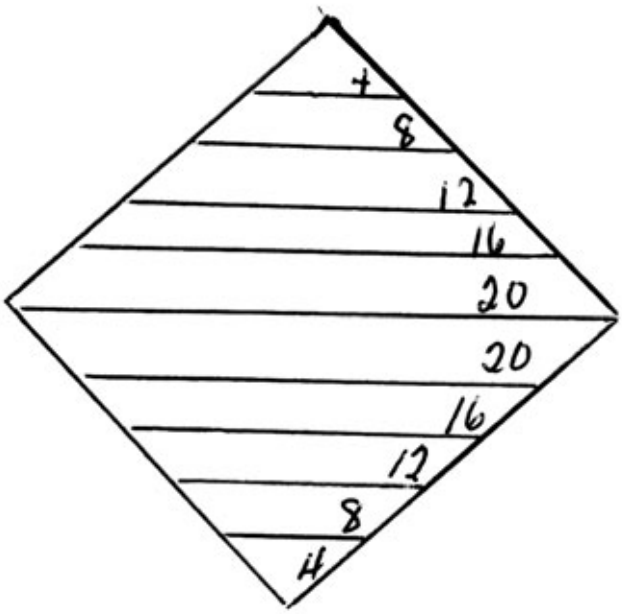
Option A	Option B & C	Option D
$300	**$600**	**$600**

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.

Continued next page

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!



From:

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____

CITY: _____

PROV: _____ **POSTAL CODE:**_____

TELEPHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

TYPICAL OPTION 'C' above

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

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

VISA/MASTERCARD Card # _____ **Exp.Date:** _____

3 # Security code on back of card _____

For further information, please call the SAMF Secretary: Toll Free: 1-888-497-7779 or (902) 461-0062

Fax (902) 461-1610 Email: samfoundation@sympatico.ca

Please check engraving details for accuracy before sending. We cannot be responsible for misspelled words on your order form.

There are two primary ways in which gifts may be made to the Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation: by giving a gift of money or securities as a Gift (Inter Vivos) or by making provision in your Will for the giving of a gift to the Foundation. Remember, a Will "speaks" for us from the date of death, since Wills are revocable and thus any Tax Benefits of a gift to the Foundation, through a Will, cannot be realized until one dies. A gift (Inter Vivos) i.e. a gift NOW does benefit from a **reduced rate of Income Tax**. So don't wait for Spring - DO IT NOW!

Requests made by Will: In your Will, you may leave a lump sum bequest or a bequest of a specified percentage of the remainder of your estate, or a bequest specified as " the rest and residue of your estate" to the Foundation. You may also make a gift of property or securities (stocks, T Bills, bonds, GIC's) to the Foundation by means of a provision in your Will.

Income Tax Benefits: A bequest made by your Will confers an important advantage to your estate when the bequest is made to a Charitable organization such as the Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation. Your lawyer or financial advisor can advise you on such advantages and the implications or limitations of such bequests.

Request of Life Insurance: The gift of a Life Insurance Policy can be an effective way of offering a benefit to the Foundation on your death. You may either give an existing policy which you may no longer need, or a new policy obtained specifically for the purpose of making a donation to the Foundation. In both cases, the Income Tax benefits of such gifts can be very important to the foundation and to you. Consult with your Insurance Agent re the specifics of such benefits.

Or **BY MEANS OF A SIMPLE CODICIL TO YOUR CURRENT WILL.** (The following is a simple Codicil which can be added to your present Will.)

"Codicil to the Last Will and Testament of _____

Which Last Will and Testament is dated this ____ Day of _____20__. I hereby add to that said Will as follows:

I give, devise and bequeath to the Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation the sum of $ _____

to be paid out of my general estate.

Signed and dated this _____ Day of _____20__

In the City of _____ Province of _____ Postal Code _____

Witness: _____ Witness:_____ _____

Signature of Testator

Address: _____ Address: _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

Support
the
Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation

The Grumman Avenger

Ernest Cable – SAM Historian

U.S. Navy Heritage

In April 1940, the US Navy selected the TBF-1 Avenger to replace its obsolescent TBD Devastator torpedo bomber. After the prototype's first flight on 1 August 1941, the Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corporation at Bethpage, NY manufactured more than half of the of the 9,839 Avengers produced. The aircraft became an outstanding torpedo bomber in both the Pacific and Atlantic theatres during the Second World War. The Avenger was the largest carrier borne aircraft of the war and the first naval aircraft to feature a "compound angle" wing fold mechanism to maximize storage space on an aircraft carrier. The Avenger was the heaviest single-engine aircraft in the war with a large bomb bay capable of carrying a heavy weapon load; one 1,005 kg (2,216 lb.) Mark 13 torpedo with a 270 kg (600 lb.) warhead, a single 907 kg (2,000 pound) bomb, or four 227 kg (500 pound) bombs. The Avenger's massive but reliable radio equipment and long range made it popular with Air Group Commanders to co-ordinate massed attacks against enemy targets. In 1943, the Avenger was the first naval aircraft to have radar installed; its roomy fuselage and payload capacity made it one of the few aircraft capable of accommodating the early bulky, heavy radars. The Avenger was rugged, very stable and reportedly flew like a truck. Because of its size and lack of maneuverability compared to contemporary fighters, the Avenger was affectionately dubbed the "Turkey".

During the Second World War, US Navy and US Marine TBF-1 Avengers played vital roles in the major naval battles at Midway Island, the Eastern Solomon Islands, Guadalcanal and the Mariana Islands in the Pacific. The Avengers also played a significant part sinking a number of capital ships of the Japanese Navy. As one of the most effective submarine hunters in the Pacific, Avengers sank approximately 30 Japanese submarines including the cargo submarine, I-52, en route to the German U-boat headquarters at Lorient, France on a secret mission.

In 1943, Grumman phased out production of the Avenger TBF-1 and the Eastern Aircraft Division of General Motors at Tarrytown, NY took over production; the General Motors manufactured Avengers were designated TBM-1. In mid-1944, production started on the TBM-3, which had a more powerful engine and hard points under the wing for auxiliary fuel tanks and rockets. The TBM-3 was the most numerous Avenger with 4,657 produced.

The Royal Navy's Fleet Air Arm (FAA) was equipped with over 1,000 Avengers as part of the wartime American-British lend-lease agreement. The FAA Avengers were involved in the Norwegian Campaign including attacks on the German battleship, Tirpitz. Similar to US Navy Avengers, FAA Avengers also embarked in "Escort Carriers" as they became available to protect allied convoys from German U-boats in the latter stages of the Battle of the Atlantic. FAA Avengers were also assigned to the British Pacific Fleet in the war against Japan. In the postwar period the US Navy supplied the FAA with 100 TBM-3 Avengers as an anti-submarine aircraft while the British awaited delivery of their new Fairey Gannet anti-submarine aircraft. The other significant postwar operator was the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN), which purchased 125 Avengers.

Avengers in the RCN

In the early 1950's, Canada committed to NATO to specialize in anti-submarine warfare (ASW). When the Fairey Firefly, flown by 825 and 826 Squadrons, proved unsuitable for Canadian carrier operations the RCN decided to replace the British-built aircraft with the American-made Avenger as its primary ASW aircraft. The rugged Avenger had a longer range and could carry a heavier weapons load. Just as importantly, the Avenger was easier to maintain because of closer proximity to American parts manufacturers. The Avenger acquisition was the first to break with the buy-British policy and allowed the RCN to operate the same aircraft as the US Navy with which they shared the sea defences to North American. Operating a common aircraft also facilitated participation in joint training exercises involving Canadian and American squadrons and aircraft carriers.

The RCN took delivery of the first of 125 former US Navy TBM-3E Avengers on 13 May 1950. The aircraft were delivered to Canada in two batches: 75 between May and November 1950, and the remainder between May and October 1952. 826 Squadron ferried the first Avengers to HMCS Shearwater naval air station in early 1950 and by late summer the squadron had received its full complement of aircraft. In February 1951, 826 became the first squadron to embark with Avengers in the aircraft carrier, HMCS Magnificent. In June 1951, 825 Squadron started conversion to the Avenger.

Mid-Night Blue Avenger delivered To 826 Sqn With Ball Turret

When the TBM-3E Avengers arrived at Shearwater they were configured as torpedo bombers painted US Navy mid-night blue with white identification letters. Within six months of the Avenger's arrival the Fairey Aviation Company of Canada completed the conversion of the first two torpedo bombers to the anti-submarine version designated the Avenger AS 3 in the RCN. At the completion of the modification program 101 Avengers had been converted to the AS 3 version. Most of the modifications included internal equipment changes; the most visible change was the replacement of the rear gunner's ball turret with a rearward extension of the Perspex canopy to accommodate the Observer (navigator) position. The AS 3 version retained the US Navy's recent ASH-4 radar to detect targets in low visibility; the main radar components were housed in a pod under the starboard wing.

Avenger AS 3M

In 1954, some AS 3 Avengers were modified with an UPD-501 Electronic Counter Measure (ECM) antenna mounted under the engine cowling to detect submarine radars. Seventeen AS 3 Avengers were later modified to the AS 3M version, which added a second ECM antenna aft of the tail and installed an ASQ-8 Magnetic Anomaly Detection boom in a casing on the port side of the fuselage. The boom could be extended rearward beyond the tail to detect submerged submarines. In 1957, two AS 3M Avengers were modified to the AS 3M2 variant which incorporated extensive changes to the canopy to improve visual search of the ocean surface.

Avenger Target Tugs

Two AS 3 Avengers were later modified as target tugs with the addition of a propeller-driven winch to stream a cloth sleeve target hundreds of meters behind the aircraft. Convex windows replaced the flat windows in the lower fuselage to observe the towed target. To make the target tugs more visible yellow and black stripes were painted on the engine cowling, the upper and lower surfaces of the outer wings and the tail surfaces.

Avenger AS 3W2 (AEW)
In October 1952, eight AS 3W2 Airborne Early Warning (AEW) Avengers were purchased directly from the US Navy. The AEW Avengers featured a large bulbous radome under the fuselage that gave rise to its "Guppy" nickname. The radome housed a large APS-20 air search radar antenna that was designed primarily to detect aircraft but was also effective in detecting surface ships and submarine periscopes. The AEW Avengers provided warning of approaching aircraft to ships and were used to direct fighters to intercept unknown aircraft.

RCN Markings
Upon arrival at Shearwater in May 1950, all Avengers were finished in US Navy glossy mid-night blue. Fairey Aviation Company of Canada Ltd. painted over the US markings and added the three 826 Squadron white identification letters forward of the side fuselage roundel. The ICAO identification letters for the RCN, "VG", were painted in white under the starboard wing and the three squadron identification letters were painted under the port wing. As part of their conversion to AS 3s in March 1951, the Avengers were painted in their new RCN livery of dark gray upper surfaces and light gray lower surfaces. The 826 Squadron black identification letters "AB" appeared left of the side fuselage roundel and a single letter identifying the individual aircraft within the squadron appeared right of the roundel. Again, the RCN ICAO identification letters "VG" appeared in black under the starboard wing and the squadron three identification letters appeared in black under the port wing. When 826 Squadron was re-designated 881 Squadron in May 1951, 881 Squadron retained the "AB" squadron identifying letters.

In the summer of 1952, the RCN adopted a new marking scheme. The fuselage identification letters were removed and replaced by the word "NAVY" to the left of the roundel followed by a three-digit number right of the roundel. The RCN followed the British Fleet Air Arm practice of assigning three-seat aircraft numbers in the 300 series block (300–399). Similarly, "NAVY" appeared under the starboard wing and the three-digit number under the port wing.

826 Sqn Avenger Over HMCS Magnificent

Museum's Avenger 85861 (TF-D)
Grumman Avenger 85861 is one of 4,657 Avenger TBM-3's built by the Eastern Aircraft Division of General Motors Corporation for the U.S. Navy during the Second World War. Avenger 85861 was built as a TBM-3E, which is distinguished, from the basic TBM-3 by the addition of an AN/APS-4 radar pod fitted to the underside of the starboard wing. The TBM-3E was the last Avenger model to be produced in quantity during the Second World War.

RCN Avengers in Final Paint and Marking Scheme

Avenger 85861 was among the initial batch of 74 Avengers purchased from the U.S. Navy and taken on strength by the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) in July 1950. Nine months later it was bailed to Fairey Aviation Company of Canada Ltd in Eastern Passage, Nova Scotia where it was converted to the AS 3 version for the RCN's anti-submarine role. The modification to the AS 3 included the installation of sonobuoy equipment and reconfiguring the center cockpit and gunner's position to accommodate an Observer and an Observer's Mate. In early May 1952, 85861 was taken on strength by Fleet Requirements Unit 743 (FRU 743) as part of No. 1 Training Air Group based at HMCS Shearwater. The aircraft was among the first Avengers to be allocated to the unit and was assigned identification letters "TF-D"; the "TF" identifying the unit (TF for Training Air Group/FRU) and the "D", the individual aircraft within the unit. ?Six months after 85861 was allocated to FRU 743, the unit was elevated to squadron status and re-designated VU 32. One of the squadron's many tasks was training Observer's Mates (OMs), who were responsible for communications, photographing targets of interest and some of the anti-submarine duties (dropping sonobuoys, smoke floats or marine markers as directed by the Observer, and operating the radar).

Avenger 85861 had a short career in the RCN. On 6 August 1953, while climbing shortly after takeoff to rendezvous with the other aircraft for a practice fly past, 85861 suffered a throttle linkage failure and was forced to ditch in Bedford Basin. It was officially struck off charge on 16 September 1953 and lay submerged on the Basin floor until June 1972, when it was raised by the Fleet Diving Unit (Atlantic) as a training exercise. It was subsequently restored by a team of technicians from 406 Squadron at Shearwater, and in October 1975 was presented to the base for display as a gate guardian along Bonaventure Boulevard. ?

Being displayed outdoors, Avenger 85861 was exposed to the corrosive maritime weather and suffered severe deterioration. To preserve the aircraft permission was granted in 1999 to move 85861 to unused space in one of the 12 Wing hangars where it could be protected from the elements. In March 2005, when hangar space was no longer available Avenger 85861 was moved to the museum where it was refurbished and displayed as a static exhibit.

Museum's Avenger 53610 (NAVY 303)
Avenger 53610 was built under license as a TBM-3 by Grumman (Eastern), a division of General Motors and taken on US Navy strength on 9 June 1945. Avenger 53610 was originally destined for the Pacific theatre to reinforce US Navy Carrier Air Groups, but before 53610 could take up its wartime assignment the war in the Pacific ended, The aircraft was placed in storage in San Diego in 1946. At the outbreak of the Cold War, in 1947, 53610 was returned to the East Coast and placed in storage in Norfolk, VA in readiness for the US Navy's expanding NATO commitments to the Cold War.

In the early 1950s, the US Navy declared Avenger 53610 surplus to its needs; allowing Canada to purchase anti-submarine (ASW) aircraft for the RCN's increased Cold War commitment to NATO. The aircraft was taken on RCN strength in July 1950 as one of the first group of Avengers to replace the Fairey Firefly in the ASW role. 53610 arrived in Shearwater painted in the standard US Navy colour scheme of overall glossy midnight blue. On 23 September 1950, the aircraft was sent to Fairey Aviation for conversion from a TBM-3E torpedo-bomber to an AS 3, the ASW version for the RCN. After conversion in March 1951, 53610 was assigned to 826 Squadron in the new RCN livery of dark grey upper surfaces over light grey lower surfaces. On each side of the aft fuselage the 826 Squadron identification letters "AB" appeared to the left of the roundel followed by individual aircraft identification letter "C" to the right. The RCN's ICAO identification letters "VG" were painted under the port wing and the 826 identification letters "ABC" under the starboard wing.

In May 1951, 826 Squadron was renumbered to 881 Squadron, while sister 825 Squadron became 880 Squadron. Therefore, Avenger 53610 became an 881 Sqn aircraft which assumed the 826 Sqn marking scheme, i.e. the letters "AB" now identified 881 Squadron aircraft. In late 1952, the RCN changed the aircraft marking scheme. The previous identification letters were replaced by the word; "NAVY" which appeared to the left of the fuselage roundel and a three-digit number to the right of the roundel. Under the starboard wing "NAVY" appeared immediately inboard of the roundel and the three-digit number appeared in the corresponding position under the port wing. The RCN followed the Royal Navy numbering scheme where three-crew aircraft were assigned three hundred series numbers and Avenger 53610 became "NAVY 303". 53610 was transferred to 880 Squadron in June 1955 where it retained these markings until 20 August 1957 when it was assigned to the Naval Air Reserve Squadron, VC 920, in Toronto. Avenger 53610 was struck off RCN strength in Jan 1958.

In February 1958, Avenger 53610 was sold to Wheeler Airlines as a budworm spraying aircraft and registered as C-FIMR with the Canadian government. In 1976 C-FIMR was sold to Forest Protection Ltd of Fredericton NB as a budworm spraying aircraft, but it was modified to a forest-fire water bomber in 1991. In July 2012, C-FMIR was purchased by the Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation and turned over to the museum to be restored as the original Avenger 53610 in RCN colours and retaining its "NAVY 303" identification.

Avenger Statistics

- Crew: 3 Pilot, Observer, Observer's Mate (RCN)
- Length: 12.48 m (40 ft. 11.5 in)
- Wingspan: 16.51 m (54 ft. 2 in)
- Height: 4.70 m (15 ft. 5 in)
- Wing area: 45.52 m² (490.02 ft²)
- Empty weight: 4,783 kg (10,545 lb.)
- Loaded weight: 8,115 kg (17,893 lb.)
- Power plant: 1 × Wright R-2600
* radial engine, 1,900 hp (1,420 kW)
- Maximum speed: 442 km/h (275 mph)
- Range: 1,610 km (1,000 mi)
- Service ceiling: 9,170 m (30,100 ft.)
- Rate of climb: 10.5 m/s (2,060 ft./min)
- Wing loading: 178 kg/m² (36.5 ft·lbf²)
- Power/mass: 0.17 kW/kg (0.11 hp/lb.)

*****

Torchy's Tricks.

I'm sitting in seat number three, the seat reserved for "MAD".

Our target's HMS "Alderny, the practice sub we usually had.

Shortly after leaving ship, we found we had a radar blip.

Pilot's yelling "buster" for all the speed that we can muster.

Number four he does the homing, me in three; the ocean combing,

watching how the "mad pen" kicks, don't think at all of Torchy's tricks.

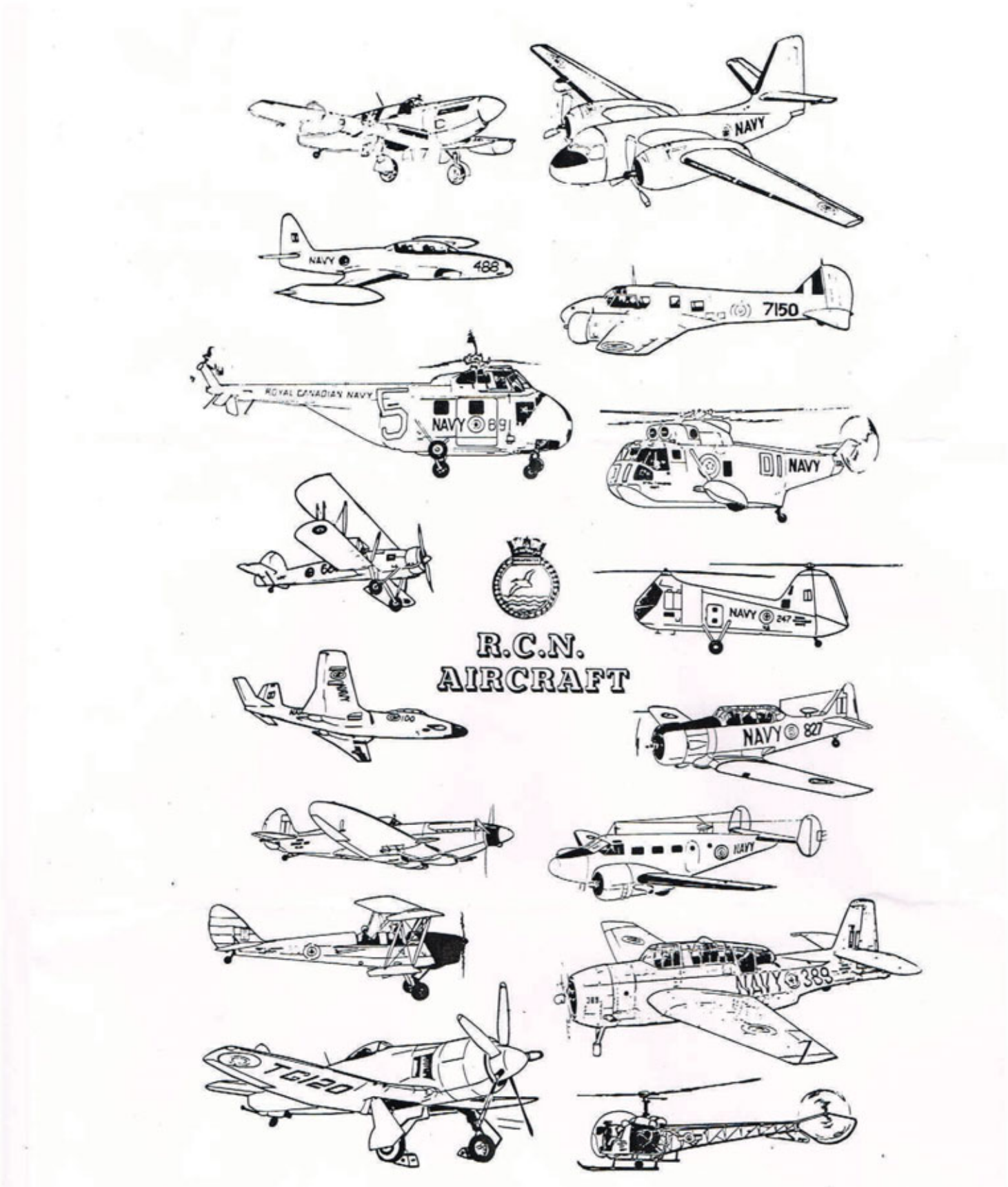
And on the graph to my surprise, a message appears before my eyes.

The print in bold starts to unfold, "I'm a prisoner in here" 'swhat I behold.

Torchy always was 880's joker, always dreaming up a brand new caper.

If a dull moment there ever was, Torchy used to start a buzz.

from John Thompson



HOW MANY DO YOU RECOGNIZE?

Sent to us from Harry Cuffe

FLIGHT DECK CERTIFICATION TRIALS HMCS IROQUOIS/HMCS HALIFAX

In the fall/early winter of 1992, as part of Sea Training Staff, I was tasked to put an 11 man Helicopter Air Detachment (HELAIRDET) together to support the Flight Deck Certification trials on HMCS Iroquois and HMCS Halifax. The objective was to determine the flight envelope limits for the Sea King during different sea state and wind speed/direction during takeoffs and landings for these two different classes of ships. The Iroquois had just come out of its TRUMP (Tribal class update and modernization program) refit and because of changes to its funnels (from 2 angled funnels to a single funnel) the wind and sea state envelope of the flight deck had to be redeveloped and the Halifax was the first ship of the City class Canadian Patrol Frigates (CPF) so the envelope for that class of ship had to be developed from scratch.

One week before sailing on the Iroquois, we were formed up and given 2 a/c to prepare for sea. It was a challenge for an 11 man det to get both aircraft (a/c) prepared for deployment, liaise with the ship's company personnel to ensure everything on the ship was serviceable ie the hauldown system (Bear Trap), JP5 fuelling systems, Ground Support Equip, POL's {oil, grease hydraulic fluid etc), tools, spares, etc, etc. In addition personnel from Aerospace Engineering and Test Establishment (AETE) from Cold Lake had to add strain gauges and other sensors to the flight controls and fuselage of the a/c to collect data for the trials. Thursday of that week we had prepped both aircraft for Non Destructive testing (NDT) checks of the pylon lugs and then the det was required at Stadacona for training on the new Ships Internal Communication system (SHINCOM). Part way through the course, we received a phone call from Shearwater to tell us both pylons were unserviceable with cracked lugs. We withdrew from the course and returned to Shearwater and started stripping the pylons of panels, intermediate and tail gear boxes, tail Rotor blades, etc. As that weekend was the Shearwater International Air Show, no one else was available to help us, so the whole maintenance det, regardless of trade, pitched in to help. We worked throughout the weekend to install 2 new pylons, and come Monday morning we had both the aircraft serviceable and we sailed to begin the trials.

The plan was to fly for 12 hours per day starting with light and calm seas and as the trials progressed, then we would look for high winds and heavy seas. At the end of each day AETE would analyze the data collected and then develop the plan for the next day in regards to wind and sea state requirements. We started flying just the 1 a/c and then when it was due for supplementary checks,(every 25 flying hours) we would park it for maintenance and fly the other a/c. With the additional 3 techs who were posted as ships' company, we were able to maintain this schedule while flying both day and night flights. As we progressed into heavier seas, however, we ran into problems. As the duration of all flights were in a continuous hover over the flight deck, the a/c was continuously exposed to salt spray which was ingested into the engines resulting in salt build-up on the compressor blades and ultimately resulting in compressor stalls. We started a routine of spraying fresh water in the intakes every time the a/c touched down on the flight deck. This procedure worked well for us until the last night when we were in very heavy seas with high winds and we lost an engine due to a compressor stall and the a/c landed with the port undercarriage in the bear trap. Fortunately AETE had collected enough data to enable them to compile the operating limits for this class of ship.

We secured the a/c with high and low lashings and installed the blade boots on the spread rotor head. We maintained a watch on the a/c throughout the night to ensure rotor brake pressure was holding pressure and the high and low lashings were properly tensioned.

The following morning, we sailed into Halifax and prepared both a/c for a crane-off. We docked at the north end of the dockyard, which presented us with a problem as to how to tow the aircraft to the south end of dockyard where the barge to transport the unserviceable (U/S) a/c to Shearwater would be and it was also where the Halifax was tied up. We requested assistance from Shearwater and all they could offer was a crew to man the barge to take the u/s aircraft to Shearwater. We craned the first a/c off, and then pushed it by hand through the dockyard to the jetty where the barge was tied up. We craned it onto the barge then returned to the Iroquois and craned the Serviceable a/c off and pushed it by hand as well to the jetty where the Halifax was and craned it onboard. To add to my frustration, a LCDR came up to me as we were pushing the a/c, and gave me a blast because my guys didn't have hats on their heads. I told him how difficult it was to keep a wedge cap on your head as you were bent over double while pushing a 20,000 lb helicopter. We all had been up for over 30 hours at this point so I was a little grouchy in my response but no charges were laid after my Det Commander intervened on my behalf.

As the a/c would be staying onboard the Halifax over the weekend, we set up a rotational duty watch for personnel to remain on-board and the rest of us headed home for a well-deserved weekend off. On Monday, we returned to the Halifax and began trials on the traversing system, fuelling system, communication systems, etc. The communication system between the a/c and the Landing Safety Officer (LSO) wouldn't work and the problem was diagnosed to the Intercom connector located on the outside of the LSO's compartment was full of water. The connector was rotated 180 degrees so that the cannon plug was facing downward, rather than upward, where it would fill up with water. One example of many small issues that would continue to dog us during the trials but had to be expected with a brand new ship. Everything had to be tested and fixed prior to us heading to sea. Once all this was done, we proceeded to sea with a similar program that we did on the Iroquois –12 hour flying days starting off with light seas and winds and work our way up to high sea states. We continued to do our fresh water washes of the engine intakes to remove the salt from the compressors and didn't encounter anymore issues with the compressor stalls. As Shipborne Helicopter Operating Procedures (SHOPS) had to be written for this class of ship, additional scenarios had to be completed as well, such as FOC' SLE transfers where it had to be determined where fire hoses would be rigged, and how many personnel were required at different hydrants and nozzles. We had a port visit scheduled for Boston which everyone was looking forward to but as luck would have it we developed a blade fold problem with the fold lock valve which took us all weekend to troubleshoot and rectify the problem. We saw very little of Boston as we sailed again on Monday morning. We were now looking for high seas and we were fortunate(!) to head right in to a storm.

After a few rough days AETE was satisfied with the data that we were collecting from the a/c so once all the data points were completed the ship altered course to better weather and we headed for home. During the transit home we were also able to complete all the firefighting and damage control scenarios required to compile all the information for the writing of the draft SHOPS manual.

Upon return to Shearwater the Detachment was disbanded and dispersed to different organizations within Base Aircraft Maintenance Engineering Office (BAMEO). The NAVY now had the certification required to allow the Sea King helicopter fleet to operate from the Tribal class destroyers and also from their new City class frigates. We all left the detachment with a great sense of accomplishment after having completed a very difficult and unique set of trials that were both mentally and physically exhausting.

******

READERS' COMMENTS

Larry Ashley writes:

Hi Kay,

I thoroughly enjoyed our chat last week and commend you and all the SAMF folks for the superb job you continue to do in support of the Foundation and in publishing the Warrior. Now that we have returned to Nova Scotia and living just across the harbour, I look forward to more frequent visits.

I was thinking about our conversation and our shared observation that the rate of colleagues and their spouses entering the delta is accelerating. I agree that the list of names to be read at the forthcoming Memorial Service will attest to that reality. A friend of mine said to me the other day, "but have we not as a Naval Air community had a good run, done a lot of things and held the torch high for others?". That's certainly true and what legacies are all about.

Shortly after we chatted, I talked with my friend LCdr(O)(P) Cal Smith in Ottawa who not only passes his warm regards but advised me of the passing of Seth Walter Grossmith. Cal knew him well and had visited him often in the Perley Rideau Veteran's Home in Ottawa prior to his death. Cal shared some stories of their days together here at Shearwater and in VX10 in particular during the 50s and 60s and how truly professional and visionary he was. Seth graduated in Electrical Engineering from McGill under the VA programme after the war. He joined the RCN and was a 1954 graduate of the Empire Test Pilot School in Farnborough specializing in the development of techniques for the flight evaluation of new aircraft. Cal recalls Seth's dedication to the ultimate selection of both the F2H Banshee and Sea King helicopters for the RCN but one of his favourite remembrances of Seth's was his dogged determination to make Redifon, the CS2F Tracker simulator manufacturer, make the simulator actually fly like a Tracker!

As I mentioned to you, I knew Seth but not like Cal but I do recall the day that I met him. I was serving in HS 50 under the command of Cdr(P) Hal Fearon. I was the squadron electrical officer and maintenance test pilot in those days and had just received my appointment to VX10. Cdr Fearon was himself an Empire Test Pilot grad and former CO of VX10. He called the Senior Technical Officer Jim Mackenzie into his office in B Hanger and said, " get your hat and your team, we are going over to VX10 to attend a briefing from Seth Grossmith". Seth Grossmith was LCdr(L)(P) Grossmith who was the Government's acceptance test pilot for the Sea King production program at the United Aircraft facility in St. Hubert. He was coming to update Shearwater after the acceptance of the 20th helicopter and was accompanied by Mr. Ross Lennox who was the UACL test pilot. Many of your readers will recall that Ross attended the Sea King's 50th anniversary having among many distinctions including membership in the Canadian Aviation Hall of Fame, the singular honour to have test flown every one of the 41 Sea Kings produced for Canada.

I cannot recall everyone who attended the briefing that May morning in 1966 but recall that the CO of VX10 Cdr Shel Rowell was there as well as Gerry Moore, Frank Stephchuck Anderson, Norm Haslett, Ted Foreman, Craig Balsom, Peter Charlton, Ron Heath, Joe Sosnkowski and Jim Mackenzie with Milton Droeske, Gerry Brooker and me in tow. As I look back on that incredibly talented VX 10 team, I realize that in many respects they, along with many other flight test and development colleagues and a Fairey Aviation team were the nucleus, the brain trust, of putting heavy helicopters on small ships. They innovated and pioneered the concept, developed the haul down system and rapid securing device as we know it today and were stewards over its ultimate production and fitment on the 205/265/280 class ships and , indeed, its acceptance globally. And in a complementary achievement, they were the team that convinced the Navy and DND that the Sea King was the right choice for Canada to combat the growing Soviet submarine threat as the Cold War accelerated into the Sixty's decade.

Seth retired from the RCN later that year and during the next 20 years had a distinguished career in flight test and development in both the US and Canada. He worked extensively on augmentor wing technology which led to the development of the De Havilland STOL family of aircraft. He won the Trans-Canada (McKee) Trophy in 1987 for "outstanding achievement in the field of air operations in recognition of his significant contribution to aeronautics in Canada and the US as an Engineering Test Pilot". He was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1990.

Seth Grossmith

Seth Grossmith's name will be one of those read at this year's Memorial Service. Thanks to the SAM and its team supported by the SAMF the richness of our shared history is being preserved and told. I know that as the years pass, the challenge to continue this will increase but please know how very much all of your collective efforts are appreciated across our community.

Thanks Kay for sharing some time with me. I recall that you were one tough lady to deal with back when I was the Base Commander and you were running the Base figure skating program. I am delighted to observe that you have not changed one little bit and continue that same determination and dedication to the SAMF. Out of both fear and respect, I say BZ.

Personal regards,
Larry Ashley

(*You smooth talker you - Kay)*

*****

From ***Sherry Richardson*** : There was a letter from John Thompson entitled "A Pioneer of Women's Liberation". That young lady was me !

I was an WARA3A on VU32 Squadron from 1955 to 1960, and my name was Sherry Daws-Knowles; got married to Vic Goodridge in December 1957; widowed 8 Jan 1973,by which time I was a Major in the Intelligence Corps. Remember? when a Wren got married, she finished her hitch or got pregnant, whichever happened first, she was out of the Navy. In 1961 I Commissioned as an Intelligence Officer.

When Vic died; I 'ran away to sea' actually seconded to Bedford Institute of Oceanography. Came in from sea with a Master's Ticket in 1980 and married Major Norm Richardson in August. I was transferred to Training Systems HQ in CFB Trenton Ontario as SSO Ops & Tasking ; also Reverted to former service – RCN (as a LCdr); posted in Aug of 1982 to NDHQ and ran the Reserve desk in DGRC until September 05 1985 when I was posted back to Halifax and MARCOMHQ. Went from South St to the new HQ in Dockyard as SO Training Coordinator Did some time as a member of Regional Operations Reserve and then was 1st Lt of HMCS SACKVILLE from 1991` to 1994 and CO from 1994 to 1999 when I retired (on my birthday!)

My brothers – Joe (Stuart) Daws-Knowles was a pay writer and retired as a C2; Kit (Chris) was either an Aero engine tech or a Fitter on VS 880. He left the Navy when Hellyer put us all in green uniforms. He joined the USN and retired after 20 years. Joe lives in Ottawa and Kit in San Diego.

We ran into John on November 11th, a number of years ago when my 3 cousins and their families; Joe and Lynn; Kit and I were all in Lakefield Ontario laying wreaths for our Grandfather – KIA 3 Oct 1916 at the Somme; and our uncle Harding; KIA 2 Oct 1942 over Holland.

We were all in Shearwater together – must have really freaked out the powers that be – to have 3 D-Ks in the same base!!!

Anyhow – that's my reply to John's letter and I thank him very much for his observation.

Sherry Richardson/Goodridge – nee Daws-Knowles

*****

Ted **Gibbon** writes: Hi Kay, Benny's passing prompted George Plawski to prevail upon me to write down a story about Benny that I had recounted on several occasions. I did so and sent it to Benny's family. It was very well received so George suggested I forward it to you for inclusion in the Warrior if you see fit. It can be both a prelude to or a sequel to the Bunker Hill Cannon story. Over to you. I'll send you a copy of Benny's son Greg's comments on behalf of the family under separate cover. He has given permission for further dissemination should you wish to use it at some point.

Trust you are following Vimy Flight with great interest.
Cheers, Ted

BENNY'S BEARD (Part 1)

This part is hearsay as I was not in attendance but no participant has ever challenged the veracity of the account.

In late June 1962 Bonaventure was at sea participating in a major anti-submarine exercise in Bermuda waters. Benny was in a flight of 4 Trackers that were airborne when the ship experienced problems with the arrester gear. It was determined that the problem could not be repaired in time for the next scheduled recovery so the flight was diverted to Bermuda. A few hours later it became apparent that the fix would take much longer and flying was cancelled.

The 4 crews ashore consisting of 8 pilots and 8 observers dressed in grimy flight suits were informed and went about making arrangements to spend the night. The USN who ran the air station at the time were very hospitable and soon opened an abandoned barrack block for the travelers and made rations available in the combined mess. The USN was not as lavish with their creature comforts as the

USAF which later operated the base as Kindley Field, so facilities were fairly rudimentary.

Flight suits were not considered suitable attire for the various social clubs so the Canadians were left to their own devices for entertainment. There was some US cash amongst the 16 so it wasn't long before someone was dispatched to the Class VI store (liquor store) and a quantity of Ron Rico Purple Label rum was obtained. The variety of rum is important to the story as "Purple Label" is one of the most potent (and lethal) of rums. It was hot and humid in Bermuda and there was no air conditioning so soon all were stripped down to their shorts. Following a round or two of social drinks and conversation someone decided to demonstrate a party trick he had learned on a previous trip to Puerto Rico. It had to do with drinking a glass of rum that has been ignited and the high alcohol content produced a beautiful blue flame on the surface. The aim was to knock the rum back in one gulp without touching the rim leaving the fire clinging to the sides of the glass which soon extinguished due to fuel starvation.

The trick was successfully demonstrated and others began to attempt it. Benny watched with interest and eventually was motivated to qualify. He prepared the concoction but as he raised it to his lips the unexpected heat of the glass caused his hand to twitch and he spilled, the rum over his chin as well as both shoulders and his torso. Freed from the container and supplied with ample oxygen the fire burned rapidly through the fuel supply and extinguished itself before anybody could respond. Benny received what appeared to be superficial wounds and the socializing continued. However, the party tricks were terminated.

Early the next morning word was received by the Bermuda contingent that the ship was ready to recover aircraft and the four crews returned to Bonaventure. By then Benny had discovered that his wounds were a little more severe than superficial and suffered much discomfort from contact with his flight suit, Mae West, and shoulder harness on landing. He reported to sick bay and was promptly grounded.

Part 2

From here on I can continue the narrative from personal experience.

Now things became a bit tense as the CO was unhappy about losing a crew commander for a week over a stupid party trick as his absence messed up the flying rotation. The CO at the time was Pappy MacLeod who had a reputation for novel and sometimes severe punishment, for misdemeanors depending on the mood he was in. Since Benny hadn't shaved for a couple of days he was sporting a pretty dense, black stubble so he was ordered to grow a beard and keep it for a year for his indiscretion. The boss then awarded him some extra Squadron duties, a few mundane but tedious administrative chores and a period of temperance. The extra duties were an inconvenience but the requirement to grow a beard stunned Benny. Apparently, Hilda had once told him if he ever came home with a beard she would leave him and he sincerely believed she would. The prospect of her reaction when we arrived back in Halifax began to prey on his mind and he became despondent. The rest of us felt the whole issue was a bit of a joke but as the day of arrival at the Shearwater jetty approached Benny was morose.

On this return to home port most of the aircraft remained on board as we were only back for a weekend before proceeding to Quebec City for a port visit and the execution of the plan to liberate the Bunker Hill cannon from the Citadel. This situation invariably led to a Squadron party the night before arrival and so it did.

In the navy growing a beard was defined as "ceasing the use of a razor". Beards were not to be trimmed (although most were). Benny had a very dark and dense beard and it grew out to be quite menacing. Today he would have been on several watch lists. We could understand Hilda's position on beards and had hoped that the CO would provide a last minute reprieve. Not to be. My cabin mate Larry Washbrook and I were convinced that Benny's concern for the future of his marriage was genuine and noting how much he was drinking to dull the sense of impending doom, decided to take remedial action. We quietly intercepted Benny and escorted him to our cabin where we placed him on Larry's bunk. He came with little resistance. Larry was a very large man and had no trouble holding Benny steady as I prepared to shave off half his beard and moustache. We chose to remove the right side. As we were in formal attire I carefully removed Benny's mess kit jacket, placed a towel over his white dress shirt and bow tie and began the operation. I finished and we were all pleased with the result: Benny was clean shaven without a nick on the right and bushy faced on the left. He looked like an apparition and since he knew the other side would have to come off as well smiled for the first time in many days. Proud of our work Larry and I returned him to the wardroom to receive plaudits for our outstanding initiative. Benny's arrival provoked much laughter and comment but alas our CO was not amused. In fact he went ballistic and on re-entry told me my bar was stopped and I was to leave the wardroom immediately. Benny was told to get out of his sight and not to reappear until he was presentable so Benny went to his cabin to shave the port side of his face.

Since I was going to turn in anyway leaving wasn't a problem. As I undressed I reflected on the situation and decided it was a job well done. We had saved a marriage and the rest would blow over. About then a knock came to my cabin door and the Squadron Operations Officer informed me that the CO wanted to see me in the wardroom.

So I got back into my mess kit and returned to the wardroom I had recently been told to vacate. Pappy, still in a fury, told me my bar was stopped for two weeks and my leave was jammed for a week. The last penalty now made my arrival in Shearwater in the morning as worrisome for me as it once was for Benny. I returned to my cabin and once again prepared for bed when another knock came to my cabin door. Again, it was the Squadron Operations

Officer, this time to inform me that I was to; “cease the use of the razor” and grow a beard to replace the one I had removed from Benny without authority. I thought for a moment on how I might grow half a beard but decided I had better turn in before another knock occurred. I was reasonably confident the beard would not lead to marital disintegration so I wasn’t particularly worried about that aspect however, I was concerned about how my confinement to the ship would be received when the families arrived in the morning. Not well. I was to learn.

While I was receiving visits from the Squadron Operations Officer Benny had retired to his cabin and removed the other half of his beard and eventually returned to the wardroom looking like a wounded warrior with bits of tissue on various locations on the left side of his face to staunch the flow of blood from several slips of the razor and dried blood on his white shirt. Once again told to depart, he did and turned in. The best sleep he had in days.

The ship was met the next morning by wives and sweethearts. Children were all smiles in anticipation of the goodies that invariably accompanied our return. Soon families began to depart for home and Benny & Hilda were among the first to depart. Doc Schellinck was the XO of the Squadron and had arrived on board to take over the detachment from the CO for the visit to Quebec City. My wife Anne and I were sitting with the Doc’s wife Jan when Anne inquired when we would be leaving and I was forced to address this awkward situation. The explanation of my confinement to the ship for the weekend was not well received and Jan decided to intercede. She spotted Doc passing by the wardroom door moving his gear on board and intercepted him. A few minutes later Doc re-appeared at the door and motioned for me to join him. The gist of our conversation which was a bit one sided was that I wasn’t going to ruin his weekend and my options were to go ashore in Shearwater and serve my time in Quebec City or to give up my time at home and be free in Quebec. The decision was simple and that is how I missed participating in the heist but became a major player in the repatriation of that bloody Bunker Hill Cannon.

*****

David Galbraith writes: Just to let you know my Bonnie book arrived today, and it is a wonderful book. I remember so many articles and events in it. It brings back a lot of memories.

I was on it doing a little painting in our shop just after the big refit when we heard it was going to be scrapped. Also when she came back to Canada in 1959 in the big storm I spent hours bailing water out of the hangar when the forward lift went down.

*****

From ***Gerry Dollmont:*** 444 Squadron

In 1971 a decision was made to replace the CH 112 Fairchild Hiller with the Bell Kiowa helicopter.

The squadron would be designated as 444 Sqdn. The present Army group did not have any personnel with jet engine experience. DID decided to turn to HS 50 and draw from their staff.

I was assigned to run the heavy maintenance department. Bruce Walker and Bob Lawton ran the servicing and light maintenance as it pertained to daily operations.

Fred Fischer, Gord Nichols, Glenn Hefford and Fred Mann were the AT's.

Willie Hedrick was a pilot from HS 50. He was assigned as Test Pilot, Flight Instructor and almost any other flight job that came along.

We all had been to Petawawa for a 3 wk. course. There was a two month delay in the delivery of the Kiowa so we flew the Hiller and L19.

I would be remiss if I failed to mention two other people on the squadron. Jim Longlade. He was Navy in Shearwater and transferred to Army earlier in his career.

The other fellow was Dave Guy. He was an Army pilot back in the 50'S as part of a group who came for flight training.

The Army was quite vocal of their appreciation for the skill and professionalism of the Navy people.

In August 71 a maintenance course was setup by Camp Borden and came over to give the Army people training.

Guess what....the instructor was a Navy man. Most of you reading this know him...George Delfabro.

It was a great experience and by the time I left, the Army people had learned well what we always did. Familiarize yourself with all aspects and work together.

With the exception of Bob Lawton we all rotated back in July of ‘74. The CO Lt. COL Wright thanked us individually for contribution in establishing a Squadron that had a very high standard to maintain.

*****

Bob Bissell writes: I have viewed and reviewed your SAMF web site. I can only say that it is excellent and captivating.

A certain nostalgia crept in as the pictures of years gone by brought back many happy memories. In those days we were a fighting force to be reckoned with, but we all sensed our duty and did it to the best of all our abilities. Ed Smith used to say that the cold war, in which the RCN of the day, spearheaded by BONAVENTURE, should have been recognized by the government. After all, I believe we lost some 47 lives without actually having to fire a shot.

In spite of the non recognition, I think we were all privileged

to be in the RCN at that time and we enjoyed what we were doing. So the Shearwater Museum, supported by SAMF is doing a great job.

I am sure the modern RCN is equally effective, but I remember an incident that disappointed me. I was in Athens, sailing of course, when I met a group of senior rates from HMCS Iroquois who insisted on briefing me on the new air defence capabilities the ship now had as a result of their latest refit. I knew about the changes from RN correspondence. But when I asked if they knew when the RCN last had an air defence capability they did not know. They had never heard of Bonaventure or her Banshees and their sidewinder missiles. A defence capability that even the crabs (RCAF) could not replicate.

I am concerned that my old COD partner is not faring so well. Merle tells me that his balance is not up to scratch and he puts off making any excursions. I used to do things by the book, but George, from an RCAF background, reminded me that sometimes even Admiral Nelson read his seniors instructions with his telescope to his blind eye, and made his own decisions. Similarly we got the job done.

Joyce and I are keeping well and enjoying our summer in Greece sailing Scotia Mist 'll. And guess what? Marsh is still on board and I am yelling at him, but he doesn't hear, he's 81 now! I suffer from the same affliction so Joyce often has to interpret for me. Captain Morgan continues to make himself available so we are not suffering.

We continue to debate the inability of the Canadian government to provide the RCN with the proper tools of their trade. As I am rarely in Canada, I do hear the comments made around the world and they generally are to the effect that RCN officers and men are exemplary ambassadors of their country, but couldn't a well off country like Canada (in comparison with other western society's) provide their Navy with better ships and aircraft.

To reiterate, the web site is great and please could you renew my subs. Best wishes Bob

(Most normal Canadians think the same way...
...couldn't a well off country like Canada (in comparison with other western society's) provide their Navy with better ships and aircraft? ...Ed)

*****

From ***Lorne McDonald:*** Dear Kay:

Please thank everyone at SAM and SAMF for all their hard work and effort.

The WARRIOR is always wonderful.

Sincerely Lorne McDonald.

(And, thank you, Sir for your very generous donation.)

*****

Stan Brygadyr says: Your Spring issue of WARRIOR had two articles which prompted me to contribute.

Reflections on 'Argus' Crash (and coincidence!) In the Spring issue a tribute was recorded in memory of the three crew members who died as a result of the Argus crash at Summerside on 31 Mar 77. Some of your readers may not be aware the Maj Ross Hawkes, one of the deceased, was a Navy Pilot who served in VS880 on Trackers 1963-70; the first two years as my Co-Pilot and his last two years as a Crew Commander. Much of these four years were spent onboard Bonaventure and on a few Detachments to USN ASW Carriers. The coincidence I wish to relate is that Ross also had a fleeting association with the first Argus crash near Puerto Rico on 23 Mar 65 (there were ever only two Argus crashes!). At that time Bonnie was in Puerto Rico area conducting ASW exercises with a British Submariune, and VS880 crews were conductin one-on-one Subex's with the "A" Boat.

Russ and I launched one evening for day/night serials with the Sub, and on completion we were relieved by an Argus from Greenwood but operating from Roosevelt Roads,PR; Ross did UHF voice hand-over with the Argus as we departed for Bonnie only about 15 minutes away. We were the last oland-on and as we were still on the flight-deck walking in for debrief we could feel the ship gaining

speed ("thump, thump, thump", you will all remember how Bonnie shook at high (?) speed!) We were soon advised that a FLASH msg had been received from the Sub, just prior to our recovery, about our relief Argus having plunged into the sea. It was most unpleasant and eerie news knowing our direct association with that aircraft. After his Tour in VS880, in 1967 Ross Hawkes and Sean Carrigan were the first two Navy Pilots posted to Greenwood to fly the Argus. Again, coincidently, Ross's first Argus Tour was in 405 Sqn, the Parent Unit of the crashed aircraft. His death in Summerside was during his second Argus Tour.

In the Spring Issue, the blizzard story by Ted Gibbon brought to mind one of my first (of many) blizzard experiences in NS; also as a sprog S/Lt in the winter of 1961 my Course, first Air Force trained Ventures, was completing the Tracker conversion when called upon to be Co-Pilots for our instgructors on a major deployed exercise along the NS coast. On 19 March four trackers departed Shearwater for the deployment Base of Sydney, NS. Three A/C went direct and one conducted a patrol south of Sable Island before joining us in Cape Breton. Gus Saunders and I landed in Sydney late afternoon just as storm clouds were gathering from the west. A few hours later it started to snow and the A/C that went on patrol (Norm Ogden and Peter Waddell) landed in Sydney with considerable ice on the A/C. They had encountered extreme winter wx and severe icing in-flight.

The next morning, we awoke to a howling blizzard and completge white-out conditions. We donned our immersion suits (as wet wx gear) and slogged through snow drifts to the Mess where we stayed all day and evening amusing ourselves with Bridge, Ping-Pong and Pool.,etc. This routine continued for three days before we got our A/C into a hangar to dry-out from the snow embedded in every cavity. On the civilian side, snowplows were trying to keep the roads open and managed to ram a few unseen cars buried in the roadside drifts. Our return to Shearwater on 23 March was via a round-robin IF training flight in an attempt to salvage some value from this deployment. We were away for most of five snow-bound days and not a wheel turned from our Sydney Base. That was my very memorable introduction to the East Coast of Canada.

From the Editor: Thank you to those that commented.

******

FUND RAISING REPORT

Well, so far 2017 has been somewhat productive. We have been doing our 50/50, 500 club draws and the Annual Dinner Auction.

As most of you know by now, the 500 club has not been as successful as it has been in the past, so stay tuned to changes coming to it in the late summer.

50/50 draw is holding it's own and we are hoping for a successful turnout with that.

As for the Dinner Auction, it was a success. We held our event at the Lion's Club in Eastern Passage, and it was very well received, not to mention we saved a bundle on the cost of the food. Speaking of which, the food was excellent, and the ladies serving were amazing. The Dinner Auction netted the Foundation, approximately $12, 500. That number could have been even better; we were 50 people less this year than last. To those who attended and got into the 'fund raising' spirit of the auction, thank you very much.

Our goal is to help the Museum get a new building. We cannot do that without your help. The Fund raising team will be planning more fund raising in the future so please stay tuned. If any of you have thoughts or ideas that you feel would be beneficial to our team, please let us know. Thank you. Patti Collacutt Gemmell

A few photos from the Dinner Auction follow.

Starting at the top left are the Coffen's, across from them, the CO 406, next to him the Wing Commander, then our Chair Person Paul McCabe and in the Yellow Jacket, Mrs Larry Ashley and the 'Arm' across from her belongs to LGen (Ret) Larry Ashley.

Carol Shadbolt
John Webber
John ‘Cabbage Head’ Smith
and his Guest.

Behind them:
Alma and Charles Coffen

Across from the Coffen’s:
I believe it is the CO 406

Tireless workers for
the SAM Foundation
are Scotia Bank Ladies:

Patti Adam (Jimmy
Adam's daughter - in
blue)

Next to Patti is Wanda
White and her daughter
Natasha.

Ken Brown and
some of his family
who attended.

Nice meeting you all.
Hope you had a good time.

SEA KING AT WORK

What's going on here?

Looks like they are slinging an AMMO box. Look close you can see the cable from the helo. As well, the helo may be delivering ammo to the ship and getting something else to ship back. It's a routine evolution for the helo.

We called it trash hauling - its actually called Vertrep.

From Mike Collacutt
Thank you Michael - Ed (your momma)

******

Fire Line at Aspen Cove Newfoundland

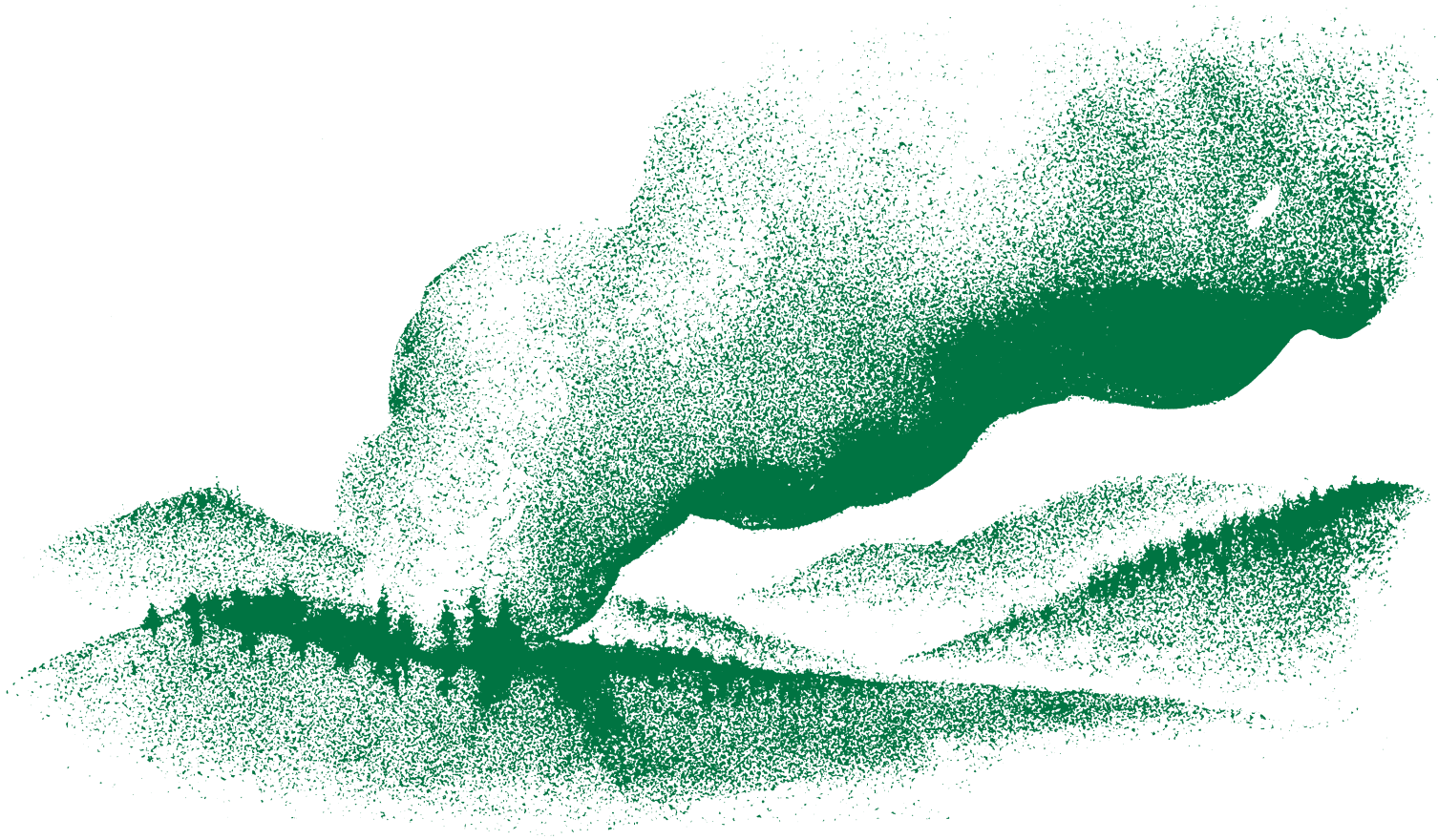
Larry Ashley Recalls the Newfoundland Forest Fire 1961:

Shortly after returning home from an ASW deployment in HMCS Bonaventure, HS50 was ordered to despatch a two-helicopter detachment to Newfoundland to assist in fighting the serious forest fires burning in the north east of the province. The detachment comprised Lt DG Cook, S/Lt's Nick Browne, Gord Gray and Larry Ashley and crew members PO Connolly, Leading Seamen Law and Day and Able Seaman Peachey. HO4S3 Sernos 55255 and 55252 were assigned to the task. The Detachment established a dispersal at Indian Bay near Trinity off Bonavista Bay on 4 August. When the Detachment arrived, the fire extended over 100 kilometres from south to north in a line burning from west to east towards the Atlantic and was a threat to several communities. Our mission was to assist: the RCMP as required and the many provincial, municipal and private agencies attempting to contain the fire.

Early on the morning of August 7, our detachment participated in positioning a large group of men and equipment into what was called Camp 33 on Mocassin Pond. When complete the second helicopter deployed further north to assist up in the Musgrave area. Unfortunately, the early morning initiative to contain the fire was quickly overtaken by shifting winds and suddenly the Camp and men were in serious trouble and would need to be rescued. It was reported that they had been forced to retreat towards Ten Mile Pond. At about 1600 hours, the RCMP reported that the situation was serious and that the men were without a means of escape except to back into Ten Mile Pond. We were asked to launch our helicopter, locate their position and report it and commence a rescue.

I discussed the mission with Nick Browne and Ken Connolly. It was late afternoon, fog was imminent and we would be flying west towards the fire line which was under the prevailing wind conditions burning from west to east. We agreed that with light already starting to fade, we did not have much time or much choice. The thought of up to 60 men trapped along the fire line was all the motivation we needed. We launched in HO4S3 Serno 252 at 1714 knowing full well that at the very best we could only rescue some of the men.

An account of the following approximately 80 minutes was published in the RCN's flight safety journal "Wave Off 1962".



On the Fire Line

by Sub-Lieutenant L. Ashley, RCN.

August, 1961, found Detachment No. 1 of Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron FIFTY operating in two entirely new elements - Smoke and Fire. A forest fire emergency had been declared in NEWFOUNDLAND and two HO4S-3 helicopters from our squadron were detached to assist the Newfoundland Government.

When we arrived in NEWFOUNDLAND on the 3rd of August, the fire situation was critical and becoming worse. Fires were springing up all over the Eastern shore of NEWFOUNDLAND, but the most threatening, at the time, stretched in a North-South line from the MUSGRAVE HARBOUR area south to a point just east of the WING POND area. This was a line of approximately 60 miles in length and, at times, advanced as much as 7 miles per hour.

The fire area was 40 miles from GANDER International Airport and therefore, it was necessary for us to operate from a makeshift dispersal in INDIAN BAY on BONAVISTA BAY, only 8 to 10 miles from the fire line. Here at INDIAN BAY, Bowaters had a large depot and the Department of Mines and Resources had set up a radio net. Our prime task was to carry personnel and equipment into the fire areas at first light, as the fire died considerably during the dark hours. It was necessary to place men in an area where the fire was critical, yet where it was feasible to cut it off and still maintain an absolute degree of safety for the men.

The 7th of August found us doing just that. Bowaters had several important camps situated in the path of the fire and every effort was being made to save them. Several had already gone and the situation was beginning to look desperate. At 0700 on the morning of 7th August, approximately 60 men and their equipment were taken into what was known as Camp 33 on the Western head of MOCASSIN POND through the efforts of boats, trucks and our two helicopters. It was hoped that the fire could be stopped at the head of MOCASSIN POND as it attempted to spread across the strip of timber and muskeg between MOCASSIN POND and TEN MILE POND. Tactically, this was a good plan, and the men dropped at Camp 33 could always operate with their backs to MOCASSIN POND.

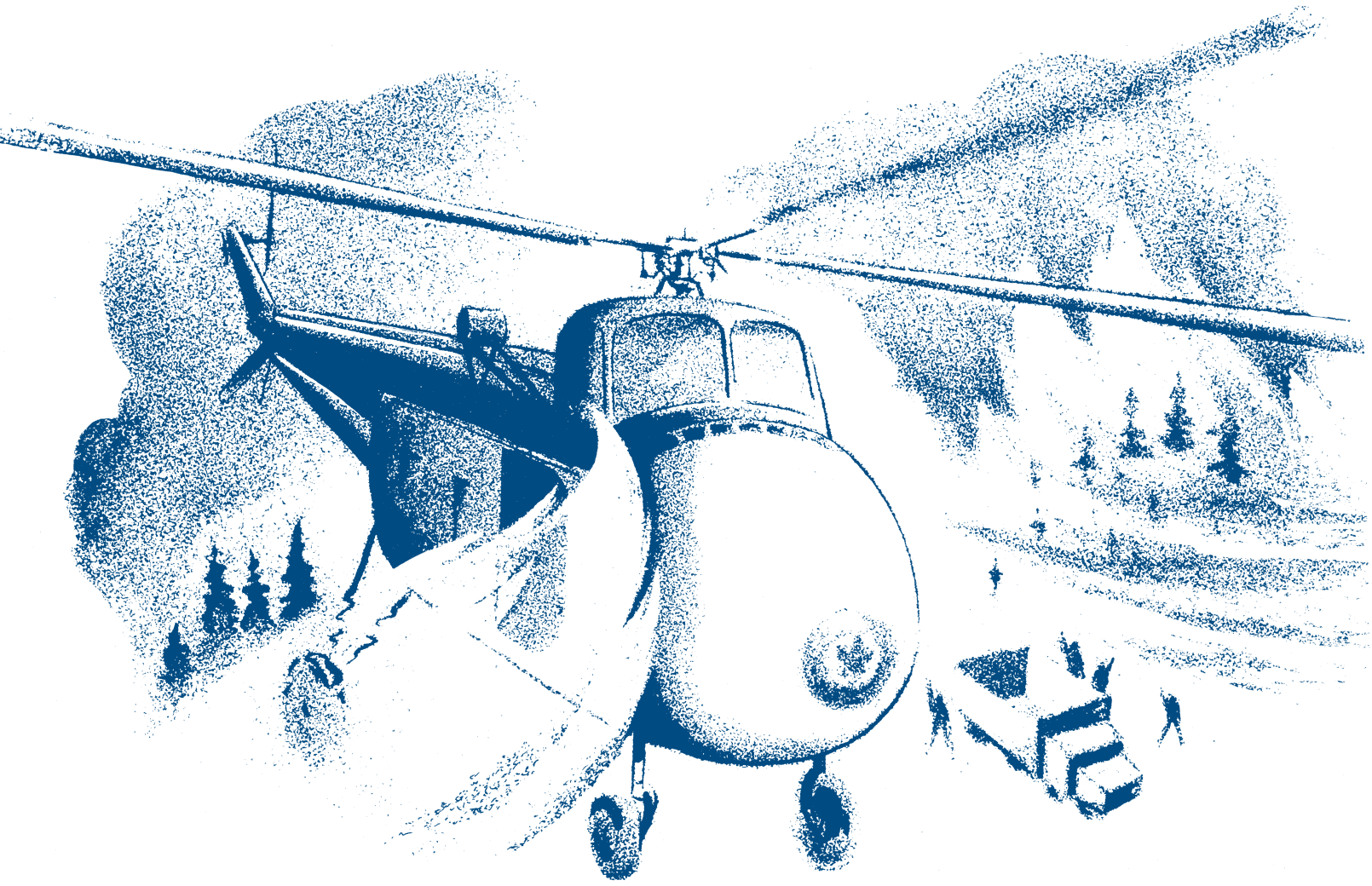
August 7th was a reasonably clear day; the temperature at INDIAN BAY was 73° F and the wind was less that 10 kts from a westerly direction. The relative humidity was 45% and the day was generally typical of the weather we had been experiencing. We took the last load of men and equipment into the area about 0930 local time and the rest of the morning and afternoon was spent on reconnaissance, local transfers and maintenance. As normal, about 1500 in the afternoon, there was a definite cumulus buildup in the area of the fire. These clouds usually developed during the late afternoon, sometimes to a height of 10,000 feet and higher. August 7th was no exception, and we could see the cumulus develop into cumulo nimbus. Then at about 1600, a fog condition began to drift in from the coast as the wind shifted and this, combining with the constant smoke condition at INDIAN BAY, began to reduce the visibility quite rapidly.

When we dropped the last load of men in the morning, the fire line was approximately one mile from Camp 33. Apparently, the fire moved through, destroyed 33 shortly after the lift in, and with the change in wind began gradually to surround the fighters and back them towards MOCASSIN POND.

A decision was made about 1700 that we would have to airlift the men out, as their only means of escape was completely cut off. As the men began to realize this, a degree of panic broke out in their ranks and what equipment was saved was utilized to keep a path to MOCCASSIN POND open in case we could not get them out.

The visibility at INDIAN BAY, when we launched, was down to 1 mile in smoke and fog. Fortunately, as I was to find out within minutes, we had decided to always carry a second pilot as a tactical navigator. The decision was based on the fact that because the smoke and fire was so unpredictable, it was actually dangerous to fly alone.

So I entered the fire line with my co-pilot as navigator and a crewman. As we approached the fire area, we realized the visibility was much less than 500 yards, so we skirted the dense smoke as best we could until we picked up the south shore of TEN MILE POND. Following this west at 50 feet and 60 knots, we hoped to be able to make our way in to Camp 33. We were lucky. The visibility in places dropped to 50 feet, making it necessary for me to remain on instruments. My co-pilot followed the lake west to the access road which, as I mentioned earlier, had been cut off. We then turned south on that road to Camp 33. About 3 miles before Camp 33, we saw movement on the road below and a stranded truck. This turned out to be the main body of men. They were completely enveloped by smoke and fire. As we broke out of the smoke above them, and as the sound of our helicopter became audible to them, many began to wave and jump for joy. Others remained still and silent as if they were saying a small prayer and still others, anticipating where we would land, began running in that direction. This filled us with mixed emotions. We could take, theoretically, only 6 or maybe 7. There were 60 fighters below. The chance of returning and finding them again was negligible. Putting hollow smiles on our faces, we landed on a heading of 040. The wind was from 150 and the temperature 95° F. This was the best we could do. The road was bordered on both sides by burning, tall timber and if we lost sight of it for a second, trying to find a better touchdown, we would probably never find it again. We landed. Twenty, maybe thirty, fighters came running. My crewman had been instructed to take 7. When 7 were aboard, he literally wrestled the rest away and closed the door. He reported that most of the men were but boys, so we took another. This took approximately 60 seconds. Takeoff was uneventful. The tedious maintenance of the past few days was paying off. We climbed to 50 feet and started to retrace our steps. Once again, I went on instruments and my co-pilot did an amazing job. He brought us out of the smoke and back to a base camp on No. 2 pond, about 4 miles from Camp 33. We dropped the men there and decided, collectively to try it again. The conditions were intolerable but the idea of leaving men in Camp 33 trapped without a last attempt to bring them out was unthinkable. Back we went. The flight visibility at its best was less than a mile and it was now down to zero in many places. We returned the way we had entered and escaped the first time; once again navigation was perfect and gave us a definite sense of confidence. We found the road again but this time at 50 feet it was just barely visible below. We could see the flame leaping above us into the sky on 2 sides and, once again, we saw the men below. We had made it back but this was our last trip. Dusk was upon us; we had 40 minutes of fuel remaining and the smoke and fog conditions were worse than intolerable. We landed. I gave my crewman instructions to take



8 men. He did. Those remaining, dirty, tired and dejected, walked away sensing that we wouldn't return. Just then, the crewman said that once again, the men were boys, physically, and so we took another, a total of nine fire fighters, one crewman and two pilots.

Takeoff again was uneventful, but that is the last thing that was. We attempted to once again leave by the same route we had used previously, but now dusk was upon us and flight visibility was never above 40-50 feet. We followed the road and picked up TEN MILE POND. Then we lost TEN MILE POND. My co-pilot figured our heading for INDIAN BAY was 150 and so it was. As soon as he lost visual sight of the ground, we climbed to 500 feet. This was a prearranged tactic that we had decided upon. We had been on a heading of 150 for approximately 1 minute when I noticed a red glow on my starboard side. Suddenly, just as a lash whip, a tower of flame struck my cockpit door and rolled right across our wind screen. Then I noticed the co-pilot pitch forward in his harness, his head almost to the wind screen and we seemed to lunge onto our starboard side. My airspeed was reading 60 knots and my VSI was indicating maximum climb. By the time my eyes hit the altimeter, a matter of seconds, we were at 1100 feet and we had completed almost 360° to starboard. I had the feeling we were upside down, as I seemed to be hanging in my harness. The next thing I realized was that the situation was reversed. We seemed to be in a dive, upside down. My VSI indicated maximum descent and my airspeed was 60 knots. My altimeter read 400 feet when I pulled slowly back on the stick, trying to maintain or regain altitude. Suddenly, the chaos was over! The instruments settled down; we were on a heading of 320. My co-pilot said only four words: "Steer 120". I had just climbed back to 500 feet and steadied on 120 when the visibility began to increase 1/4, 1/2, 1 mile, then lakes began to take shape and the sun even appeared through the smoke as a monstrous, flaming ball, and what a wondrous sight it was. My side kick half-grinned out of the corner of his mouth and took control home. The crewman reported that all was well in the back and added: "You did fine, Sir"! I gave control, lit a cigarette, and thanked God for answering the quickest prayer I ever made, not just for me, but for the twelve of us.

Post Script

When we deployed to Newfoundland the extent and ferocity of the forest fire was not understood. We were ASW trained crews flying a wonderful but woefully under powered helicopter. We were day VFR only without the means or training for instrument operations. Flying daily operations along the fire line was exciting but dangerous.

All 60 men were successfully rescued. Early on the morning of 8 August, a truck convoy with the directions we had been able to convey, made its way into Mocassin Lake and recovered the remainder of the men. The fire continued to burn long after the RCN detachment was recalled and only succumbed finally to the cold weather and winter snow.

On egress from our second rescue trip on the 7th, I set the helicopter down on what I thought was a flat field along the coast at Deadman's Bay. It turned out not to be any ordinary field but the prize strawberry patch of the local school. While I may have been in a bit of shock after the adventure, I am told that once we shut down and got out of the machine, school kids came running to see us thinking it was an impromptu show and tell. I do recall that the school master did not have a sense of humour and many years later confirmed it BUT that is another story for another day. I also recall that the 9 rescued but untethered Newfoundlanders once they extricated themselves from each other and the back of the machine, all thought that it was a normal flight for a helicopter!!

Gord Gray Recalls the Newfoundland Forest Fire Deployment of 1961:

August 1961 was certainly a year to remember as not only the year that I became a qualified ASW Crew Commander but also the year that I was part of a two aircraft detachment from HS 50 Squadron deployed to help fight the forest fires that were ravaging the eastern section of Newfoundland. I can attest to the enormity of the fire and the challenges faced by an ASW trained detachment during the deployment. The events as told by Larry in the accompanying Wave Off article written 61 years ago bring back vivid memories.

My own, somewhat harrowing experience, occurred 4 days later on 11 August. At first light, I was attempting to deliver much needed hoses and pumps to the fire line some miles from our base camp. Events in reality can be said to have begun the previous day when Nick Brown (second pilot), Leading Seaman Law and I redeployed to Mulgrave from Indian Bay to better support the firefighting in that sector. Overnight the fire was burning fiercely all around the camp. To keep the helicopter safe from burning flying ash, we covered the helicopter with a tarpaulin and kept it wetted down all night. The following day, 11 Aug, because it was considered to be a "routine" trip, we decided that a single pilot would be able to complete the mission to deliver the goods and also drop off an RCMP Constable. The trip commenced and proceeded normally until we encountered thick smoke and flames shooting quite high. I climbed in an attempt to get above the affected area but was not happy with what I encountered, so started to turn back to find another path only to find myself in an extreme downdraft situation. I attempted to stop the descent but was only able to slow the helicopter's downward motion just before hitting the ground.

All 3 aboard survived the impact and were able to exit the helicopter but were within the fire line surrounded by burning and smoldering forest. Leading Seaman Law, my crewman, suggested that we might need the compass so he returned to the wreckage and wrenched it from the bulkhead. Just about that time we heard something. A car on a logging road nearby miraculously appeared. The occupants, who were part of the ground fire team, had heard or seen us crash and started honking the horn. As I recall, we made our way about 100 yards through the ground fires to safety. As we arrived at the road we could hear a loud explosion that we attributed to a fuel tank going up and shortly after that a second explosion signalled that the second fuel tank had exploded. We all gave the car crew a big thank you and I also sent up a prayer to the Almighty for our safe extraction.

That unfortunate escapade ended my participation in the great Newfoundland forest fire deployment.
Gord Gray
Shearwater, 28 June, 2017

******

PLEASE SUPPORT

YOUR

SHEARWATER AVIATION

MUSEUM FOUNDATION.

IF YOU AREN'T A MEMBER,

JOIN TODAY.

ODE TO HMCS SACKVILLE

How proudly she lays by the old jetty's edge
Scarred by her battles, rebuilt by a pledge
Of those who had sailed and others who cared
To preserve and honour, the legend she shared.

A young tar he studied the Corvette in the book
It's just how his grandfather said it would look
And he dreams of days of sailors and war
When ships fought the U Boats far from our shore.

Bright work a gleaming and one forward gun
A brass bell reflecting the rays of the sun
"Permission to Board, Sir" salute to the Jack
Short leave is over, it's good to be back.

Study the look on the old Skipper's brow
As he praises this lady who comforts him now
Pipe the Watch on deck as the evening draws nigh
Time for a biscuit and a hot cup of Rye.

Her engine room spotless a Stokers delight
The watch on the boiler will make steam tonight
To slip on the morrow and sail with the tide
Last brush by the Buffer to patch up her side.

"Away forward Jimmy", "single up aft"
A hum of the screw and a vibrating shaft
Passing the mouth of the harbour she gains
To see the aggressor and free the sea lanes.

Time is no object, the war must go on
Till her battle is over and the U Boats are gone
In the hearts of this city the Sackville belongs
So treasure her memory in a verse or a song.

All rise and we'll toast this proud lady's name
And cold north Atlantic where she won her fame
Old sailors will say when our time has gone
"The Pride and the Legend of Sackville Lives on".

By Robert R. Fralic

Return undeliverable
Canadian copies to:
PO Box 5000 Stn M
Shearwater, NS B0J 3A0

Canada Post
Publication
Agreement #
0040026806

Hawker Hurricane