

WARRIOR

WINTER 2020



MERRY CHRISTMAS

PEACE & HOPE TO ALL

The Poppy



I am not a badge of honour,
I am not a racist smear,
I am not a fashion statement,
To be worn but once a year,
I am not glorification
Of conflict or of war.



I am not a paper ornament
A token,
I am more.



I am a loving memory,
Of a father or a son,
A permanent reminder
Of each and every one.



I'm paper or enamel
I'm old or shining new,
I'm a way of saying thank you,
To every one of you.

I am a simple poppy
A Reminder to you all,
That courage faith and honour,
Will stand where heroes fall.

PRESIDENTS MESSAGEPAGE 5 & 6

BATTLE OF BRITAIN.....PAGE 17

LT R. H. GRAY MEMORIAL.....PAGE 18

Submissions:

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

We will format the text for you. No need to centre headings, indent paragraphs etc. Graphics are best submitted electronically, they should be 300 dpi and a .tif file. A jpg file at 300 dpi is acceptable if no compression is used.

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

NOTE WELL:

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

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

Deadlines for receiving submissions are:

Spring 1 March
Summer 15 June
Winter 15 October

To contact us:

Administrator: Karen Collacutt - McHarg
samf@samfoundation.ca

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: Karen Collacutt - McHarg

samf@samfoundation.ca



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COVER PHOTO:

Inside Front Cover Photo.

Canadian Warships decorated for Christmas. (photo unknown)

Back cover:

Courtesy of Peter Robichaud with thanks.



423 Sqn Commander Lt. Col Bill Thomey receiving the original painting by Peter J. Robichaud

WE NEED YOUR SUBMISSIONS.

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

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



From the Curator's Desk

By Christine Hines

As this reaches you, my hope is that you and yours are faring well under the new normal imposed by Covid-19.

This piece likely will not be the most riveting article I have ever written, as the SAM remains closed to the public and updated museum news a bit thin these days. Happily, our roof project was completed in late August, so we are now in the process of cleaning up after the water damage, and trying to improve the cosmetics of the art gallery and temporary exhibit area of the museum.

On 7 October 2020, we marked the centennial of the first Trans-Canada flight, which departed from Canadian Air Board Station Dartmouth on this date in 1920. Volunteer researcher John Orr led the campaign to mark this event, and we noted the day with a Covid-sized group unveiling the commemorative postcard, first day cover and a stamp created especially for the event. Atmosphere was created by the display of an original piece of art by the late Geoff Bennett, noted Nova Scotian aviation artist, of a Fairey III C "Atlantic", the type aircraft that started the journey west. Additional coverage of this project can be found elsewhere in this issue of "The Warrior". Special thanks to John Orr and the entire team of enthusiasts and partners whose contributions were invaluable to the success of this project.

We are planning a small but meaningful exhibit to honour the crew of the CH148 Cyclone helicopter lost this past April, using some contributed artwork from within the Maritime Helicopter (MH) community and items recovered from the impromptu memorial that appeared at the garden at the bottom of the Tracker wing installed at the entrance to Shearwater. This project will be completed at the end of October, in time for Remembrance Week. Related to this project, local artist Peter

Robichaud, a friend to our museum, has painted a commemorative work honouring the crew of Stalker 22, and has offered prints for sale in our gift shop. Proceeds from the sale of the prints will support the Memorial Fund.

I would like to take some time to recognize the work of Duncan Mason, our Exhibit Technician, who joined our team in the mid-2000's as an employee and later as a contractor. His exacting, diligent work resulted in our exhibit installations being efficient and well-received. The standard of exhibits has steadily improved over the years, and Duncan has been a large part of the success of the program. All at SAM thank Duncan for his efforts on our behalf, and for the many years of professionalism and excellent teamwork. All the best Duncan, as you enjoy your newfound time off!

Photo caption:

Stalker 22 print, ©Peter Robichaud, available in two sizes (unframed). Prints are going fast since we launched them last week. Get yours today! Call 902-720-1083 or email: giftshop@shearwateraviationmuseum.ns.ca for assistance with orders.





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

WE HAVE SO MUCH TO BE THANKFUL FOR HERE IN NOVA SCOTIA

Remembrance Day 2020 will soon be but a memory. It will be quite similar to how we have all been doing business in the last few months: limited attendance only.

Thanksgiving has come and gone and we are now deep in preparations for Christmas. And, there is the small matter of this COVID business, which has every appearance of wanting to stick around as long as it possibly can.

Much closer to home we see the results of political lack of will which is resulting in what could become one of the truly decisive events to taken place in Canada for years. I speak of the fishing rights dispute much closer to home. That one isn't going to be over until she's over, which may take a few weeks, if not months, or dare I say, possibly 21 years again, and again, and again. It is simply not the fault of the indigenous fishers that the Governments of Canada for the last 21 years have done *NOTHING* to define the issue of what is, exactly, a modest livelihood, as defined in the Marshall Case 21 years ago. More wait and see I personally believe.



COVID 19

You all know by now that the path that Nova Scotia has taken in fighting the COVID 19 virus has proven to be a correct one. We wish everyone across the rest of this great Nation would settle down, sit back and let the medical folks do what they do best. It doesn't hurt a bit, except of course, for those who seem to be caught by more ineptitude.

While we, the great unwashed in Nova Scotia, are smart enough not to protest against something that actually works. Time will tell on this as well, as we continue here *not* to protest against one of the things that is keeping our Atlantic Bubble safe: the wearing of masks, frequent hand washings and awareness of our surroundings.

SAM HAPPENINGS

Things at "SAM" are finally beginning to perk up a bit. As I write this, many folks in uniform are not yet back to full time at Shearwater or in the fleet. The SAM remains closed but the SAMF is officially "Open", but not for full business as it was before. I think the number 10 is all that we are authorized to have in the buildings at any one time. Maddening sometimes, but they are doing their best to ensure we all stay safe. We accept these inconveniences to keep ourselves unharmed.

Karen and her team have been busily organizing the same raffles and draws, etc. to keep a bit of a cash flow coming in to SAMF. We can't operate without funds. Thanks to you all for your support in keeping this modest income flowing in addition to your annual dues of course.

Just to remind: Karen has things all set up now for electronic money transfers direct to our accounts, which will allow us never to have mail directed to the Dead Letter file as was done to us last year.

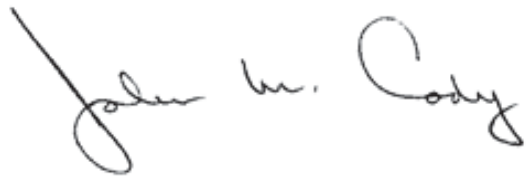
re-roofing the building. They did it all, not just the ½ that actually departed in the big windstorm in March. In the first part of October, we had another tail end of a hurricane. It was one of the big ones that blows up the east coast and then hits the Maritimes. I have not heard any yelling, yet about this one and I believe we actually escaped without any further damage at all this time. So good job to the good folks in CFB Halifax CE. When the chips are down, they took an immediate and proactive stance in getting our home all fixed up.

Have heard from the West Coast Crew that the statue to memorialize our Hammy Gray in Victoria is about ready to be erected sometime in the spring of 2021. It is almost finished and I am told it is a wonderful tribute to one of our finest. When we get the final details, I will put them in our spring edition so that all on the other side of the country might be able to participate. It will be erected in Victoria.

The big event here, in the making for many years, and after so much anticipation, was the loss of our first Cyclone and its crew and passengers, 6 in total. All the ceremonies were carried out with as much dignity as 12 Wing could muster. They did an absolutely exceptional job, and in the eyes of the Air Force and the Navy, on behalf of their two members who were also killed in this horrible crash, there were no dry eyes anywhere.

BRAVO ZULU 12 WING.

Until next time,



John M. Cody

President

SAM Foundation

FROM THE EDITOR:

Well, this has certainly been a year like no other. Personal loss for some of us and then the Pandemic. The tragic loss of one of our Cyclones and its crew was almost too unbearable. This year has been one roller coaster ride after another. I pray that you are all keeping safe and well and continue to do so in our “new normal” world.

As most of you know, I have not been at the museum for almost two years now. As much as it was difficult in the beginning to leave, it was the right time for me. I am now working with Assist 2 Sell Homeworks Realty. Many years ago, when my kids were younger, I was in Real Estate, but moving to another Province and starting over were not in the cards at the time. This is a new adventure for me and it is quite enjoyable. I am currently office administrator and assistant to the owner, working on attaining my license. However, I will continue to support the museum when I can.

Now to the hard part. I am unable to continue on as Editor. I think Karen will be fine doing the job, she knows what to do. How mom did it all is beyond me, because this is a lot of work. But she absolutely loved every minute of it, and for me it is extremely difficult as I do not know the people that she did nor do I have the time to dedicate myself to it as she did. Please keep your stories coming they are vital to this magazine.

Thank you for your support with this endeavor and if you are ever in need of a Real Estate Professional, give me a call.

Please Please Please, continue to support the Museum, especially this year when times have been so tough and continue to send in your stories. I look forward to reading them.

Take Care and Merry Christmas

Patti Collacutt – Gemmell



NO Dinner NO Auction

email or call us at the SAMF with your bid before Dec 1st for the Quilt Auction. That's when we announce the winner.

Karen Collacutt- McHarg
Office Administrator / Fundraising

Page (Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation). A copy of the draw schedule will be sent out once all tickets have been sold. The cut off will be April 30th 2021.

Our annual Dinner Auction was to be held Sept 26th 2020 at the Shearwater Sea King Club with a wonderful dinner, fantastic auction and great prizes as announced on our SAMF web page, Facebook page and in letters to the members. Were not able to hold it this year due to Covid.

If you have any items you would like to donate to the 2021 auction please bring them to the SAMF office (a tax receipt will be issued) or call and I will pick them up. This auction is one of our biggest fundraisers of the year, so we decided to have a **No Dinner NO Auction**. Please help us out by bidding by email or phone on our quilt, which has a retail value of \$1000. You can send a donation for the SAM, and we will send you a tax receipt for the full amount of your donation if you decide not to bid. The bidding is at \$450 as of Oct 31st.

Our **500-Club** ticket for 2021 are now available for \$100 each, (we hope to sell 500). Your name stays in for all the draws so you can win multiple times. You can watch us draw every Friday at the museum or on our Facebook



50/50 tickets are on sale for our draw \$10 a book of 6

Dec 10th 2020

May 14th 2021

Dec 10th 2021

Pick a draw or why not

CELEBRATING THE FIRST TRANS-CANADA FLIGHT IN SHEARWATER



Pic #1: Kim McLean, Store Supervisor, Shearwater Express Mart/Canada Post Outlet ; Christine Hines, SAM Manager; Col John Orr (ret), Volunteer Researcher(background)

Pic #2: LCol Bill Thomey, CO 423 MH sqn, Col John Orr (ret), Mayor Mike Savage, HRM

Pic #3: CWO Jason Dunfield, SCWO 423 MH Sqn, LCol Bill Thomey, CO 423 MH Sqn

Pic #4: LCol Bill Thomey, Co 423 MH Sqn; Col John Orr (ret), Mayor Mike Savage, HRM in front of a painting by the late Geoff Bennett of Bridgewater NS, of the Fairey III "Atlantic".

The First trans-Canada Flight

(A history by John Orr)

Halifax-Vancouver

7-17 October 1920

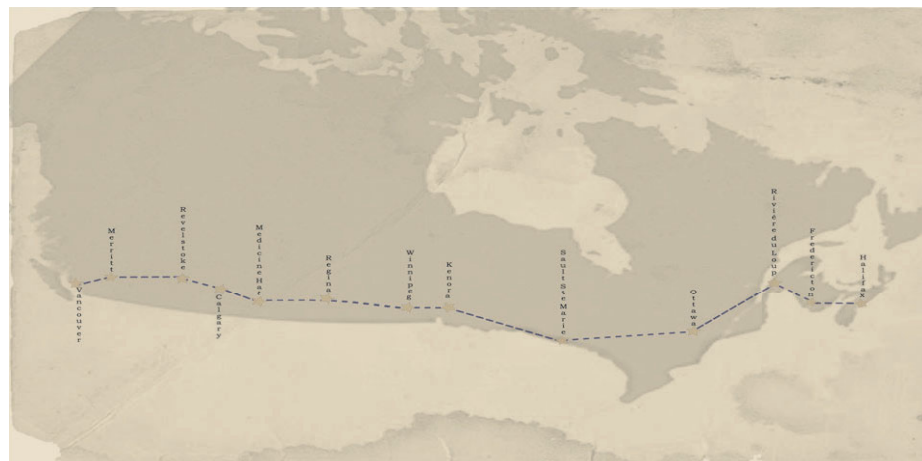
On 7 October 1920, a Fairey III C seaplane of the Flying Operations Branch of the Canadian Air Board took off from Shearwater, Nova Scotia, and headed for Rivière-du-Loup, Quebec. This was the first leg of the ultimately successful attempt to cross the country - by air - using relays of aircraft.



G-CYCF, a Fairey III C, taxiing for take-off. Credit: CASM-08274.

The Canadian Air Board was established in 1919 to oversee the development of aviation in Canada in the post-First World War era. The Board not only had to implement a regulatory framework for aviation but also had to accommodate two competing visions (civil and military) for the future of aviation in Canada.

The Flight



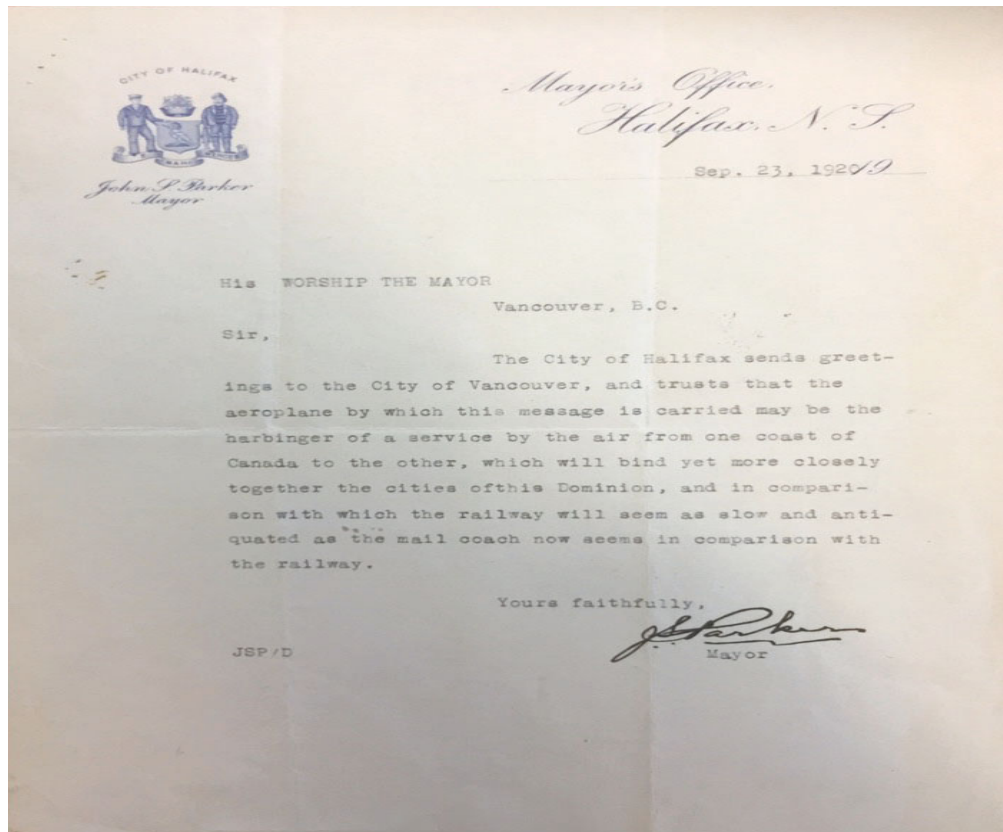
The Board quickly realized that in order to survive, it would have to demonstrate the utility of aircraft to the Canadian public and, perhaps more importantly, to Canadian politicians. The idea of a trans-Canada flight was seized on in order to achieve this objective.

Originally planned to take 48 hours, the flight eventually took 10 ½ days. Given the state of aviation and the perils involved with flying open-cockpit aircraft in Canada in October, this was not an unreasonable amount of time. It became an account of guts and determination as a small group of airmen battled the elements in war-surplus aircraft and blazed a path across the land.

Among the several achievements of the flight was the transport of letters from mayors across the country to the Mayor of Vancouver. Below, is a letter from Mayor J. S. Parker of Halifax to Mayor R. H. Gale of Vancouver.

The upshot of the flight was that although the path was neither straight nor smooth, the Air Board established aviation, both civil and military, in the Canadian psyche.

More importantly, it bore out the truth of the words of former Governor-General Vincent Massey who stated, "The aircraft came to Canada as a godsend. It probably has meant more to us than it has to any other country."



Credit: City of Vancouver Archives

**Warrant Officer Sandra Leaman
Supply Technician
12 Air Maintenance Squadron**

By 2Lt Leo Zhou, 12 Wing Public Affairs



Warrant Officer Sandra Leaman, a supply technician of 12 Air Maintenance Squadron, at 12 Wing Shearwater on August 10, 2020. Photo: Aviator Jaclyn Buell, 12 Wing Imaging Services.

“In the field, giving troops an extra box of glow sticks or baby wipes can really make their day better,” says Warrant Officer (WO) Sandra Leaman. “It’s very rewarding to be able to provide support to other members.” WO Leaman is a Supply Technician (Supply Tech) and the Deputy Maritime Helicopter Logistics Officer at 12 Air Maintenance Squadron. In this role she primarily supports the Helicopter Air Detachments (HELAIREDTS). “We ensure the HELAIREDTS get things like spare parts since COVID-19 started we’ve also been busy purchasing hand sanitizer, signs, and other items for 12 Wing.”



On July 10, 2020, WO Leaman won the 12 Wing Shearwater Air Person of the Year Award for her dedication and work ethic. Her chain of command describes her as, “A team player who always volunteers time for her unit.” From volunteering for deployments and Flag Parties to coordinating unit morale events, WO Leaman’s expertise and willingness to do more was recognized at the wing’s annual Honours and Awards ceremony at the Sea King Club.

Warrant Officer Sandra Leaman, with the 12 Wing Shearwater Air Person of the Year Award on August 31, 2020. Photo: Leading Seaman Laurance Clarke, 12 Wing Imaging Services.

Originally from Cow Bay, Nova Scotia, WO Leaman joined the Canadian Army in 2002 at the age of 17. “I had no family in the military and actually went to the recruiting centre because of a friend from high school,” she says. “Her parents wanted her to join and she agreed to speak to a recruiter if I came with her, we both ended up joining.”



Warrant Officer Sandra Leaman in front of a United States Army Black Hawk helicopter during her deployment to Afghanistan in February 2007. Photo: Submitted

After trade training at CFB Borden, WO Leaman was posted to CFB Gagetown in July 2003 where she handled kit receipts and issues at Base Supply. In January 2004 she was deployed to Bosnia for three months. “Canada was pulling out at the time and when I went over, we were starting to tear stuff down,” she says. “When going out we didn’t need to be fully kitted out because most of the fighting had ended, though being a small town girl it was a big culture shock seeing all the damage. Things like holes in the roofs of homes and burnt out cars in the ditch, it was eye opening.”

In 2006, WO Leaman was promoted to Corporal and began working at the Quarter Master shop for 2 Royal Canadian Regiment, responsible for issuing and receiving weapons, ammunition and field equipment. She went to Afghanistan from February to August 2007 with the National Support Element, where she was responsible for high-priority orders. “I spent a lot of time at the Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) and it was nice to be the main Supply Tech at the FOBs,” she says. “Close to 70 percent of my deployment was in the FOBs.”



Getting from place to place was especially challenging in Afghanistan. “When riding in the convoys our senses were always heightened, we did a year of work up training so we pretty much knew what to expect, I rode in the right seat of a supply truck to the first FOB, a UH-60 Black Hawk to the second FOB, and a Light Armoured Vehicle (LAV) to the third; riding in the Black Hawk was definitely cool.” The FOBs had facilities such as modular tents, a field kitchen, and showers. “We would only shower every couple of days because we never knew when or if the next supply convoy would arrive with water, so having baby wipes was great,” she says. “As for food, we had cooks but out on convoys we would eat rations.”

Warrant Officer Leaman as a member of the Colour Party at the Wing Change of Command Ceremony at 12 Wing Shearwater on July 18, 2019.
Photo: Aviator Olivia Mainville, 12 Wing Imaging Services.

WO Leaman got married and had her first son in 2008. In 2010 she was a part of Operation PODIUM, the CAF’s contribution to security at the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver. “I was very fortunate to be able to go down to Vancouver quite often, I got to see the rings in the harbour turn gold when Canada got a gold medal,” she says. “It was my first time in British Columbia and I was in awe at how beautiful it was.”

“My husband and I were posted to 14 Wing Greenwood in 2011, it was my first introduction to the Air Force,” she says. It was also the year WO Leaman’s daughter was born. In 2012 WO Leaman was promoted to Master Corporal and in 2015 she was deployed to North Sinai, Egypt as part of the Multinational Force and Observers on Operation CALUMET for three months. “During my time there, the posture changed and things became more hostile,” she says, “our camp was hit with mortars, IEDs were being placed, and we had several stand-tos, and more insurgents were moving into the area.” The following year she was promoted to Sergeant and returned to the Sinai from October 2017 to April 2018. “The second time things were much more relaxed, we were in South Sinai this time around.”

In July 2018, WO Leaman was posted to 12 Wing and deployed to CFS Alert for a month in the spring of 2019. “It was always on my bucket list so I saw everything I could while up there,” she says. Later that year, WO Leaman assisted with Exercise CUTLASS FURY and immediately after was off to France on a C-17 to hand deliver high-priority materials to the deployed Cyclone HELAIRDET on HMCS Halifax. “During CUTLASS FURY my boss asked if I was interested and not being one to shy away from trying new things, I took the tasking.”

When asked how she gets to do so many cool things at work, she says: “The first thing I tell people is to look for the positives of every opportunity, when they’re looking for volunteers always put your hand up and see the world. Whether it’s a parade, or a tasking, you never know what it will be like until you go, so always volunteer.”

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IN THE DELTA

BAUDAINS, JOHN, LCdr ret'd
(RN/RCN)

BEERNSTON, EDWARD NORMAN
"Bud" (LCol., Ret'd, OMM, CD3)

BRITTEN, JAMES ERIC

BRUCE, MAUREEN "PADDY"

COOLEN, DOUGLAS CRAYDEN
"DOUG"

GROUT, FREDERICK ERNEST
"FRED"

HENDERSON, JOHN

LANDRY, JOSEPH "Arnold"

MACMILLIAN, GEORGE RONALD

MCQUINN, EVERETT CLIFFORD

SAMPSON, TREMAINE

SIMPSON, RALPH JAMES

TRENHOLM, HELGA "Mamie"

A HERO'S WELCOME (By Robert Longley)

Time to come home dear brother

Your tour of duty through

You've given as much as anyone

Could be expected to do

Just a few steps further

The smoke will start to clear

Others here will guide you

You have no need of fear

You have not failed your brothers

You clearly gave it all

And through your selfless actions

Others will hear the call

So take your place of honor

Among those who have gone before

And know you will be remembered

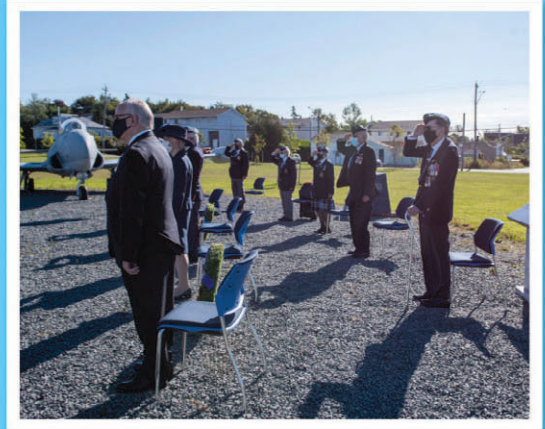
For now and evermore.

May you all rest in peace.

BATTLE OF BRITAIN CEREMONY



His Honour laying a wreath.



Their Honours Standing.



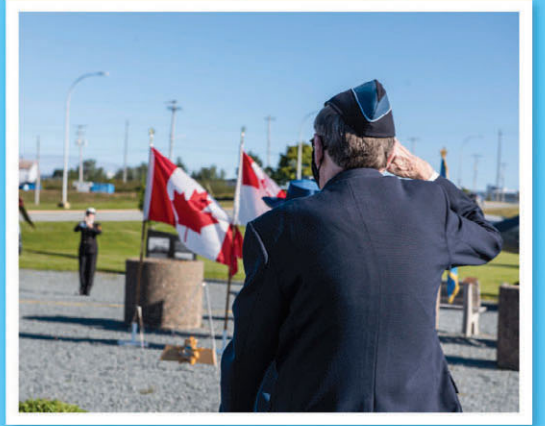
The Padre addressing the attendees.



Ch-148 Cyclone flypast.



Commander 12 Wing Shearwater
Colonel James Hawthorne.



Veteran saluting.



Following the wreath laying.



Col. Hawthorne and CWO Poirier

LT ROBERT HAMPTON GRAY MEMORIAL

Latest update on the Lt Robert Hampton Gray Memorial at the BC Aviation Museum. The finances are in good shape but Covid19 destroyed the hoped-for schedule of unveiling on 9 Aug. The Site preparation should now be completed in Oct and Monument installation is expected in late Nov. Also, due Provincial Gov't restrictions on "mass" gatherings we do not expect to dedicate the Memorial until Spring 2021. Of note, the Site is being prepared by Illarion Gallant, a noted Landscape Designer, who was also able to coerce a colleague to donate funds for the installation of 42 stainless steel Maple Leaves on the back-side of the monument which is representative of the 42 Canadian Aviation Personnel (of 260) who were killed while serving with the British Fleet Air Arm. This project has been financed mostly by individual donations and with much assistance from Veterans' Affairs Cda, and of course with a healthy start from the NAC Endowment Fund whose treasurer continues to provide financial accounting services!

(From Stan Brygadyr, Project Secretary, 250-727-2243)



THE FINAL BATTLE
August 9 1945

Lt. Gray's leadership and daring earned him many awards; a Mention in Dispatches, the Distinguished Service Cross, and the Victoria Cross for sinking the Japanese destroyer Amakusa in Onagawa Bay, Japan, where his Corsair aircraft was hit by anti-aircraft fire and crashed into the sea. He was the last Canadian to fall in combat in the war.

LE DERNIER COMBAT
Le 9 août 1945

Le leadership et l'audace du lieutenant Gray lui ont valu de nombreuses décorations: une citation à l'ordre du jour, la Croix du service distingué et la Croix de Victoria pour avoir coulé le destroyer japonais Amakusa dans la baie d'Onagawa, au Japon. Son avion Corsair, frappé par des tirs antiaériens, s'écrasa en mer. Il fut le dernier Canadien à tomber au combat durant la guerre.



LT. ROBERT HAMPTON GRAY V.C., D.S.C., RCNVR
1917 - 1945

In honour of the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve Pilots who served on loan to the Royal Navy's Fleet Air Arm during the Second World War. Esteemed in their number was Lt. Gray who was awarded the Victoria Cross, which was also a symbolic recognition of the accomplishments of all Canadians killed while serving in the RN carrier fleet.

Dedicated in the 75th year after the end of the war.

They flew, died, and like the summer breeze that fades at dusk, they became memories.



En l'honneur des pilotes de la Réserve de volontaires de la Marine royale du Canada qui ont été prêtés à l'aéronavale de la Marine britannique pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale. Parmi ses rangs se trouvait le lieutenant Gray, lequel reçut la Croix de Victoria, symbolique des réalisations de tous les Canadiens tués pendant leur service sur les porte-avions de la Marine britannique. Dedicacé 75 ans après la fin de la guerre.

Ils s'envolèrent, sont tombés, et comme la brise d'été qui s'estompe au crépuscule, sont devenus des souvenirs.



Lt. Gray

In 1940 aged 22, "Hammy" Gray, from Nelson, BC, left the University of BC to join the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve. He was sent to Britain with 150 other young Canadians for naval training. He qualified as a pilot in Canada, and flying from the carrier HMS Formidable he attacked the German battleship Tirpitz. He later sank enemy ships off Japan before being shot down in the last days of the war.

En 1940, à l'âge de 22 ans, "Hammy" Gray, de Nelson, en Colombie-Britannique, quitta l'Université de la Colombie-Britannique pour s'enrôler dans la Réserve de volontaires de la Marine royale du Canada. Avec 150 jeunes Canadiens, il fut envoyé en Grande-Bretagne pour suivre une formation navale. Il devint ensuite pilote d'avion au Canada et, aux commandes du porte-avions HMS Formidable, attaqua le cuirassé allemand Tirpitz. Dans les derniers jours de la guerre, il coula des navires ennemis au large du Japon avant d'être finalement abattu.



CANADA REMEMBERS CEREMONY BILLINGS BRIDGE, OTTAWA NOVEMBER 2010 (A presentation by Paul Baiden)

As part of today's Canada Remembers Ceremonies, it is important to reflect on the freedom we all hold so dear and in particular the many sacrifices that were made to enable us to enjoy that freedom. Given that this is the "Canadian Naval Centennial Year" I have been asked to provide a brief presentation about an individual that made the "ultimate sacrifice" on our behalf. The man I have chosen to recognize is often referred to as a Formidable Hero, as it was HMS Formidable, a British Aircraft Carrier, that Lt. Robert Hampton Gray, Victoria Cross, Distinguished Service Cross, and a member of the Royal Canadian Navy Volunteer Reserve was flying from when this epitaph took place.

Nick-named Hammy, this 28 year old from Nelson, BC was revered among his peers as an outstanding pilot, with equally impressive natural leadership abilities. Unfortunately, as you will see momentarily these enviable skills were to be short lived.

Now let's turn our clocks back to 0835hrs on August 9th, 1945, one of the last operational flying days during the War on the Pacific. It was on this ill-fated day that Lt. Robert Hampton Gray climbed into his aircraft and prepared to lead his flight of seven Corsairs in the attack on Matsushima airfield. Just prior to take off he received an urgent message informing him that Matsushima Military Airfield had been heavily bombed and was thought to be out of commission, and if so, he was to seek other targets of opportunity. Hammy led his flight to Matsushima Airfield, confirmed the damage and decided to proceed to Onagawa Bay and attack the Japanese ships he had previously seen sitting at anchor.

To avoid anti-aircraft fire, Hammy decided to have the Corsairs approach Onagawa Bay from the mainland at approximately 10,000 feet. Once this position had been established, he and his accompanying aircraft entered into a rapid descent in order to get down to sea level prior to commencing their final bombing run at the chosen targets. All of the Japanese ships in the bay were heavily armed and prepared for an air attack. Additional anti-aircraft guns dotted the surrounding hills creating a formidable killing zone for the Japanese to defend the harbor against attacking enemy aircraft. As I'm certain you can visualize this was not an enviable position for Hammy and his wingmen!

Hammy had chosen the largest ship in the harbor, the ocean escort vessel Amakusa that was about the size of a small destroyer. As he leveled out for his bombing run, one of his two five-hundred pound bombs was shot away by a hail of cannon and machine gun fire coming from Amakusa, and the other ships in the harbor. Hammy continued to press home his attack even though his aircraft was on fire and released his other bomb, which scored a direct hit on Amakusa. His bomb penetrated her engine room triggering a massive explosion in the after ammunition magazine which resulted in the almost instantaneous sinking of Amakusa. The remaining members of Hammy's flight recounted seeing his aircraft completely engulfed in smoke and flame, at an altitude of only fifty feet, it rolled hard right and plunged into the sea in a violent explosion of water and debris. His aircraft was never seen again.

On August 31st, 1945, Hammy was officially awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his "determined attacks on targets in Japan", followed in November 1945 with the Commonwealths highest award for Valor, the Victoria Cross, bestowed upon him posthumously. Hampton Gray is not only the last Canadian to be awarded the Victoria Cross" he is the only person in the Canadian Naval History to be awarded this supreme honor.

WE WILL REMEMBER HIM!

**PAUL BAIDEN
NATIONAL CHAIRMAN
CANADIAN NAVAL AIR GROUP**

Memories from my Log Book by: Paul Baiden

Perhaps Warrior readers will find these particular events, taken from my Log Book, interesting!

Looking back, I wonder how I could ever forget that memorable month of February 1972, as it included a pilot training mission (Feb 10th) during which we were practicing single engine, running approaches, to Protector. During one of these maneuvers we got a little too low and clipped the lip of the flight deck which caused considerable damage to the Sea King's tail section. The end resolve was to jettison fuel, return to Shearwater, and perform a rarely conducted procedure called a cradle landing.

Then on Feb 16th, a crew consisting of Pilots, Rees and Pratt, Navigator, Doucette and I were tasked at 0200 hrs. to conduct a search for survivors from the Gulf Gull, a seafood trawler that had run aground off Cape Breton. This eventually became a rescue mission for which I was later awarded the Star of Courage.

Perhaps it's time to tell a more compassionate episode from that month Feb, 28th, 1972. Some may find this event not only humorous but also consoling as far too often stories of this nature are never told. It was another stormy, foggy night, when we were tasked to perform an extraction of a diabetic, chronically ill, senior woman from the lighthouse on Devils Island. When we arrived on scene with the base Flight Surgeon and his assistant in tow, it was immediately concluded that she would require hospitalization. This quite large, elderly lady had already lost both of her legs below the knee and was extremely unhappy to find us in her bedroom while she was dressed only in her nightie! After a little convincing by her husband, we managed to get her onto a stretcher. Now came the awkward transit through the snow back to the Sea King that was precariously sitting on the small jetty off the lighthouse beach.

However, en-route the Doctor mentioned that she would be going to the Victoria General Hospital which immediately set off another fire storm of verbal abuse as apparently her sister had died in the VG and she didn't want to become a victim of the same fate. All of this to say that we did get her to the VG after a transfer to a civilian ambulance in the Stadacona Dockyard.

Thank goodness there was only one more day left in this February, Leap Year!

The next episode from my Log Book commences on January 19, 1973, when our Sea King crew was tasked on a fruitless weeklong attempt to salvage the Cape Brule, a brand new, three-million-dollar trawler, belonging to Atlantic Seafood Products. She had run aground on Seal Rocks during her maiden voyage, just thirty days after being commissioned. Our crew was staged out of Saint Pierre and Miquelon and initially given the task of transporting a team of civilian divers from Atlantic Salvage along with their equipment to and from the rescue site. On the second day we took the head of the company, and his son, with us to Marystown,

Newfoundland to pick up a load of shoring material and steel plating. As you can well imagine, the weather in this part of the country is far from favorable at that time of the year and that day was no exception. We landed in a field behind a mall and commenced loading the materials which turned out to be considerably heavier than anticipated. In-order to get forward airspeed on takeoff both myself and the two civilians had to virtually instill ourselves into the pilot's comfort zone.

As if this wasn't traumatic enough, we now got fire warning sensor indications. To top the day off the fog had settled in at St. Pierre. However, given that we were now quite low on fuel it was decided that it was better to suffer the consequences of being violated for landing below acceptable limits than the potential alternative.

Unfortunately, all of our efforts to re-float the Cape Brule would be for not as she slipped off the rocks, into a watery grave, two days later during another winter gale. In reality our mission was not a total failure as several new friends were made and a better understanding of how the military and our civilian counter parts can come together in a time of need!

A MEMORY OF BONAVENTURE

(by Chuck O'Neill)

Not all of the great memories have to do with excess drinking (although most seem to, we were young and invincible), or tragedies, which are not the great ones. This story has a wonderful warm theme. I joined the Bonnie late Feb 1968 in Puerto Rico as a replacement for someone who had to return to AW for whatever reason. I was teamed up with Lt. Robinson as skipper. Part of this trip was a cruise up the Mississippi to New Orleans where it was the week after Mardi Gras, but had been designated Canada Week by the city. Along with us were about 3 destroyers. There's an aerial photo of us all tied up along the jetty at the foot of Canal Street. We had to wear uniform while ashore, there were a lot of us yet the city seemed to swallow us up, lots to see and do. Due to Canada week, the attached photo is of Jim Cope and myself, the camera shop wanted to take it and place a large one in his shops window, in turn we were given copies.

A few days after arriving my "winger" Jimmy Cope and I were window shopping and went into a very high-end collectible and jewelry store named Coleman E. Adler & Sons on Canal Street. The store's card even had their family coat of arms on it. Very high class! After looking at things with our hands in our pockets lest we knock something over we couldn't afford to replace, we made our way to the third floor where we met the most wonderful lady named Mrs. Iris Gaumer Doyle. She was an employee, and had been married to a Canadian some time prior and we all hit it off. As we were leaving, we asked her if she's like to go out to a movie with a couple of sailors. "No" was the answer and we understandably left the shop. We weren't very far from the exit when she ran out behind us calling "Jim, Chuck, I've changed my mind, meet me at "my" bar, Laffite's in Exile". We found it eventually, a little farther away from "down town", very quaint, the owner used to be a partner in the famous Laffite's bar, left for some reason and opened up "In Exile". He was a riot, had a loaded 38 caliber under the till. We'd buy two rounds always with a tip, he'd buy the third and being away from the "party area" of the city we were a bit of a "cause celebre".

There was a two-sided fireplace, which was gas, and the coals were iron ingots, fascinating. Iris joined us, lots of laughs, she had to go but not before we asked here if she'd want to go to the movie with us the next night. "Absolutely", she replied "see you here tomorrow about 6:00".

The next day we were there, drinks the same (we were Rye and water) and it was dropping a torrential rain outside. Time to go to the movie, Camelot was the choice and we'd have to drive. Well, she had a mid 50's little two-seat MG convertible, she drove, Jimmy in the co-pilot's seat and me scrunched over sideways on his knees. We got to the theater which was on a corner, very strict tow away area, kitty corner to us is a VW Bug which has taken up two spaces, Iris turns and pulls up right behind the VW, puts it in 1'st and pushes the offending VW ahead into the proper space, backs up into ours and shuts it down. I'm beside myself laughing, Jimmy opens the door, I sort of roll out backwards onto the side walk which is almost the same height and look up into the eyes of US and Can Shore Patrol. They had seen the whole thing, just shook their heads and strolled away.

We watched the movie, Iris brought us back to the ship, same seating setup, and we bid goodnight. We saw her almost every day after that, either just to drop in to say "Hi" at her work or go for a drink. She even showed us from the outside where she lived, a great big place behind walls etc. Close to leaving the city, we felt we had to get Iris something, I have "Neg" blood, Jimmy "Pos", \$25.00 for mine, \$5.00 for his, we go and get the largest bouquet of roses we can buy for \$30.00, show up at her work, present the roses, she cried and we bid our farewells. We were sailing the next day around noon, and Jimmy and I were "piped" to the brow, there was a lady to see us, down we go, there's Iris with gifts for us, a sterling silver liquor bottle identifier with "Camelot" engraved on the top row, RYE on the middle then 3-2-68 on the bottom row. As well she had a small gold owl, which would be used for a nametag for a table setting, the owl of course being Merlin's from the movie. I've still got both of those terrific mementos and will cherish the memories they instill.

So, there you have it from sixty years ago,
Yours Aye, Chuck O'Neill.

WALL OF HONOUR

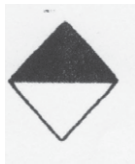
Guidelines for designing your “Wall of Honour” Tile.

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

The options are:

- Option A:** One half tile 12" X 12" x 17" and triangular in shape with up to 5 rows of 3/4" letters for a maximum of 60 letters and spaces. The longest row can accommodate up to 20 letters and spaces. The remaining 4 rows will decrease in length as the border/edge of the tile dictates. It should be noted that the upper half of the tile 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 1/2" letters for a maximum of 48 letters and spaces. The two centre rows can accommodate up to 12 letters and spaces with the remaining rows decreasing as the tile edge dictates.

Option A



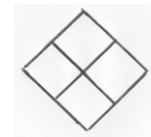
\$300

Option B & C



\$600

Option D



\$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



(Wall Tiles (continued))

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

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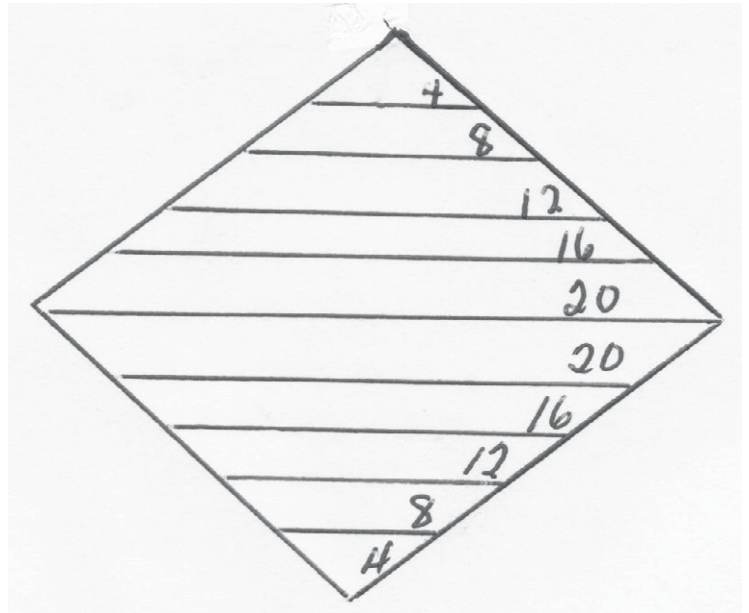
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Catapult Aircraft Merchant Ships and Condors

Ernest Cable – Shearwater Aviation Museum Historian

The Battle of the Atlantic was the longest campaign of the Second World War in which German surface raiders (battleships and cruisers) and U-boats came perilously close to severing Britain's oceanic lifeline. After the fall of France in June 1940 and the capture of the Bay of Biscay ports at Lorient, St. Nazaire and La Rochelle the U-boats' route to the Atlantic was much shorter enabling longer sea patrols to attack Allied convoys carrying food, troops and war materials to England. The capitulation of France also allowed the Luftwaffe to occupy French airfields and it was from one of these airfields at Bordeaux-Merignac that the Germans unleashed a new threat to Britain's lifeline with the Focke-Wulf 200 Condor described by Prime Minister Winston Churchill as the "Scourge of the Atlantic". In response to the convoys' urgent need for protection against the Condors the British hurriedly developed the Catapult Aircraft Merchant (CAM) ship as a stopgap defence.

The Condor

The Condor had its genesis as a four-engine peacetime airliner, which was hurriedly converted to a bomber with dimensions roughly equivalent to the later British Lancaster bomber. The Condors were capable of reaching more than a thousand miles into the Atlantic, far beyond the range where Britain's shore-based fighters could protect the merchant convoys. The Condors began attacking Allied convoys in August 1940 and in two and a half months sank nearly 90,000 tons of Allied shipping and by the end of 1940 enemy bombers had sunk over half a million tons of shipping.



Focke Wulf Condor Scourge of the Atlantic

As early as the summer of 1939 the German Luftwaffe realized that it lacked a long-range aircraft and turned to the Condor to fill the gap. The Luftwaffe also found that its aircrews lacked experience flying over water. A Condor air wing, I Gruppe / Kampfgeschwader 40 (I. /KG 40), was formed as a long-range unit for attacking targets in the Atlantic. Pilots with expertise in instrument flying and navigators with specialized knowledge in celestial navigation were selected for the squadron, which soon developed the discipline and charisma of an élite corps. The I. /KG 40 Condors were fitted with defensive armament and bomb racks, and auxiliary fuel tanks built into the fuselage increased the maximum range to over 2,000 miles (3,200 km). Later improvements included a lengthened ventral (belly) gondola, allowing a 20-millimeter canon to be fitted to the front section firing forward and down to silence the guns of target vessels. Also, a 7.9-millimeter machine gun was mounted in the rear of the gondola for rearward defence. Dorsal armament consisted of a 7.9-millimeter machine gun in a forward turret with an all-round field of fire and a similar weapon in the rear. The four BMW engines developed 850 hp capable of lifting six 250 kg (551 lb.) bombs and a crew of five: pilot, co-pilot, navigator (who also served as radio-operator, bomb aimer and gunner), engineer-gunner, and rear dorsal gunner.

The Condor cruised at 180 knots and the radius of action with full bomb-load was 1,100 miles. Cooperating with the Kriegsmarine's (German navy) *Marine Gruppe West* headquarters at Lorient, the Condors took off from Bordeaux and flew out across the Bay of Biscay as far as 24 degrees West longitude (approximately 1,000 nautical miles) before turning north in a semi-circular route that took them north of Scotland en route to landing in Norway, then returning by the reverse route two days later. Later, Condors found it more profitable to head out into the Atlantic to about 25 degrees West longitude and carry out a two-hour search and return to Bordeaux rather than continue on to Norway. Their tactics paid off so well

that the Condors were able to attack 43 ships in the first two months of 1941, of which 26 were sunk. In March 1941, the Luftwaffe established a new anti-shipping command under *Fliegerfuhrer Atlantik* with headquarters near the U-boat base at Lorient. Its task was to direct air operations against Allied shipping in close cooperation with C-in-C Submarine Fleet. Prior to this Condors rarely had any association with U-boats, but new Condor tactics of shadowing convoys and passing updated positions to U-boats on patrol all but guaranteed the convoys would be attacked by the ubiquitous U-boats.

Expendable Fighters

The survival of the convoys was crucial to Britain's supply line. Defensively Equipped Merchant Ships (DEMS) were introduced into the convoys with anti-aircraft guns manned by Royal Navy, Royal Marine and Army Royal Artillery gunners; this proved to be a palliative defence. The Royal Air Force (RAF) and the Admiralty agreed there was an obvious need for high performance fighters capable of intercepting Condors out to the limit of their range. But, the only way of achieving this was by providing fighter aircraft as an integral part of convoy escorts, which meant aircraft carriers. However, there were only few large aircraft carriers in the Fleet and these were urgently required for naval fleet operations, not for convoy defence.

RAF air marshals and the Admiralty considered other defensive arrangements to reduce the shipping losses such as re-routing convoys to the northwest approaches to the UK where Condors from France and Norway were at the limit of their range; and routing convoys from Gibraltar farther to the west beyond the range of the Condors, but this had the disadvantage of widening the gap in shore-based fighter coverage; and greater use of signal intercepts to warn the convoys, but this ran the risk of compromising the existence of the ultra secret intelligence. The concept with the most promise was the expendable high performance fighter mounted on a merchant ship equipped with a catapult and radar, which could accompany each convoy. At first thought, tankers with their lengthy foredeck could easily be fitted with a catapult rail, but tankers would have difficulty turning quickly into wind and lacked the 10-12 knot speed for catapult launching. The Fleet Air Arm's Fairey Fulmar single engine, twin seat fighter (Firefly predecessor) was the most likely to be available. But the Fulmar, having only a ten-knot speed advantage over the Condor, was too slow and could only be considered as a stopgap. Further investigation revealed that modifying the Hawker Hurricane, which was being superseded by the Spitfire in RAF fighter squadrons, would likely be the ideal choice.

The catapult normally used to launch aircraft from ships was hydraulically operated, but it was too cumbersome, too sophisticated and too expensive for general use in merchant ships, while the lighter naval type could not launch the weight of a Hurricane at the velocity required. The alternative was the simple rocket catapult, propelled by banks of three-inch rockets that were readily available.

Although, the RAF wanted to pursue the expendable fighter concept the Admiralty was not enthusiastic and preferred to strengthen RAF Coastal Command fighter strength. Churchill sided with the air marshals resulting in the Admiralty ordering *HMS Pegasus*, a former seaplane carrier that was being used as a catapult training ship, to sail with the next outbound convoy on 9 December 1940, carrying two Fulmars. The Fulmars had little chance of success because of their speed limitations but it was the best that could be done at short notice.

CAM Ships

At Churchill's insistence to expedite implementation of catapulting expendable fighters from ships, the Admiralty decided on 30 December 1940 to fit out an unspecified number of merchant vessels for catapulting one or more unspecified types of aircraft. They were to be known as Catapult Aircraft Merchant ships or CAM ships. The CAM ships were to sail as an integral part of convoys; they would fly the Merchant Marine Red Ensign, and carry their usual cargo. Since they would be in the Condor danger zone, the gap between the limited range of shore-based fighters and the maximum range of the Condors, for no more than a few days at a time (once during the outbound journey and once on the return), the watch-keeping duties were unlikely to be onerous so that only one pilot would be required. But where were the vessels to come from? To withdraw merchant ships from convoys for installing catapults and radars and for training would impose an unacceptable reduction in tonnage to Britain's critically important lifeline. So, only merchant ships under construction, large enough to accommodate a 75-foot (25 meter) catapult rail mounted on the port side over the forecastle, were to be fitted. This meant a delay of several months before the CAM ships could start joining the convoys.



Hurricane mounted on CAM Ship Catapult

To provide an interim capability the Admiralty selected four peacetime banana boats, being converted to naval auxiliary vessels, to be adapted as catapult ships. The new naval auxiliaries: *Ariguami*, *Maplin*, *Patia* and *Springbank* were to become Fighter Catapult Ships. Each ship carried two expendable Fulmar fighters, one mounted in readiness on the catapult and the second stored in reserve, with the necessary gantries to hoist it into position on the catapult. As naval auxiliaries, the Fighter Catapult Ships flew the naval White Ensign and formed part of the convoy escort; they did not carry cargo. Commencing in May 1941, the Fighter Catapult Ships were employed in the Condor danger zone only, accompanying westbound convoys to the limit of the Condors' range then returning with eastbound convoys to the UK. With approximately 17 days of concentrated watch keeping and two aircraft, the Fighter Catapult Ships required three pilots. After Hurricanes were later approved for catapult launch *HMS Maplin* traded her Fulmars for two Hurricanes. While escorting a Halifax bound convoy in July 1941 one of *Malpin's* Hurricanes scored the first victory over a Condor by a catapult launched aircraft.

When the CAM ships became available it was intended to employ them between Halifax, with its superb port facilities and nearby Dartmouth air station, and the west coast ports of Britain; thus ensuring the quickest turn around while maximizing their time in the Condor danger zone. The CAM ships were assigned to the outer columns of the convoy to give them greater freedom to turn into wind before launching their aircraft. Since the CAM ships had to have a minimum distance of 85 feet (28 meters) between bow and foremast the ships selected consisted almost entirely of cargo ships of up to 9,000 tons. The cargo-carrying capacity would remain of equal importance, and the fitting of catapults was arranged to minimize interference with cargo handling. Although, CAM ships would spend only 30 days a year in the Condor danger zone, the combination of Hurricane fighter protection and retention of cargo importing capacity justified the allocation of pilots and crews. After trials of launching Hurricanes with a rocket-propelled catapult were successfully completed on land, 60 RAF Hurricane Mark Is were



Hurricane Being Mounted on Catapult – Note Wheels Still Down

converted to Sea Hurricanes and assigned to the new CAM ship role. Meanwhile, orders were given to fit ships with rocket catapults and to modify the Hurricanes for catapult launch. The modified Hurricanes soon became colloquially known as Hurricats.

Merchant Ship Fighter Unit

The Hurricanes remained under control of RAF Fighter Command, which formed No. 9 Fighter Group near Liverpool close to the Royal Navy's C-in-C Western Approaches where all convoys to and from the UK were organized. The role of 9 Group was to study the requirements for the Hurricanes, advise on tactics, and train and administer personnel. Since Liverpool would be the main embarkation port for the Hurricanes the RAF established a new Merchant Ship Fighter Unit (MSFU) at the Liverpool civil airport at Speke on the Mersey River. The Unit's *role was to provide merchant shipborne fighter aircraft for the protection of shipping against air attack.* The MSFU consisted of a practice flying flight, two mobile loading parties and personnel for 35 CAM ship detachments.

Although, the Fleet Air Arm had manned the air component on the Fighter Catapult Ships it did not have the resources to provide pilots and maintenance crews for the CAM ships so this responsibility fell to the RAF. In May 1941, Fighter Command advertised for CAM ship pilot volunteers who had to be fully operational. The job description explained, "Once released, the fighter cannot return to the ship and the pilot must land (ditch) in the sea unless he is within range of land". Pilots would have to be rotated out of CAM ship detachments after two round-trip voyages to avoid the deterioration of flying skills from the lack of flying time during the detachments. There was no shortage of volunteers; at least six of the volunteers were RCAF pilots serving in the RAF. The ground detachments known as the sea crews, consisted of a fitter, a rigger (aero engine and airframe mechanics respectively), a radio operator and an armourer. The Navy did agree to provide the Fighter Direction Officers (FDOs) to direct the pilots to their targets and home them back to the convoy after engaging enemy aircraft, as well as the radar operators and the seamen-torpedo men to service the catapults.

Pilots and FDOs were cautioned not to crew up too casually, but to get to know each other in a relaxed atmosphere over a few drinks at the mess. Being thrown together in close proximity for weeks or months at a time, and depending on each other for much more than a few minutes of highly charged excitement, they needed to find a basis of compatibility.



Hurricane Forward on Catapult To Allow Loading of Cargo

The training syllabus at Speke covered the armament and capabilities of the Condor so that pilots could anticipate evasive tactics likely to be used by Condor crews. In a surprise attack the Hurricane's speed gave it a decided advantage, but if the Hurricane was detected the Condor could be expected seek cover in the clouds or on a clear day dive down to sea level. At low level the primary tactic was to kill the pilot on the assumption that the Condor would crash into the sea before the co-pilot could take over. This meant a head-on attack, but if this was not possible a beam attack was recommended. A stern attack was to be avoided at all costs.

With the high probability of ditching or baling out into the sea, pilots received intensive instruction in sea survival. Previous experience with fighters ditching at sea had shown that the aircraft go straight to the bottom. The Hurricane with its large air scoop under the fuselage had the worst reputation; as soon as the air scoop churned into the sea the aircraft flipped over on its back.

The recommended drill was to bail out of the aircraft at about 2,000 feet (1,250 meters) by inverting it and falling out, after trimming the aircraft slightly tail heavy and pointing away from the convoy and judging the bail out so as to land in the sea as close as possible ahead of one of the escort vessels. While the vessel was steaming toward him the pilot would climb into his one-man dinghy, which was attached to his parachute. If for some reason the pilot was forced to ditch, it was recommended to land on the sea, with seat straps tight and cockpit canopy open, as slowly as possible but with the engine running to make the tail touch first.

The FDOs were trained in radar plotting and fighter control at Fighter Command Controllers' School at Stanmore and the Naval Air Station at Yeovilton. The curriculum included Fighter Command radio procedures including everything from "Bandit" to "Tally-ho". An experienced broadcaster was even brought in to teach microphone technique. Since the Hurricanes were going to be exposed to gale force winds and soaked in sea water the riggers and fitters were trained to maintain aircraft at sea with special attention to preventative and remedial measures against corrosion. (No aircraft were provided to CAM ships during January and February 1942 after it proved impossible to maintain the catapult-mounted aircraft in flying condition during the North Atlantic winter.) Naval ratings trained on catapult maintenance. On completion of training, ships' teams were dispatched to ports of embarkation, generally Liverpool or Glasgow where they assisted in reassembling their Hurricanes at dockside and lifting by crane onto the catapult trolley.

The Catapult Launch

Whereas the hydraulic catapult launched pilots at a modest force of 2.5 G, the rocket catapult produced a much more physical 3.5 G. Upon firing the rockets produced a deafening whoosh and a brilliant blinding flash of light requiring the area behind the rockets to be protected against fire and blast. For most pilots their first launching was a novel and slightly alarming experience. The acceleration was such that he had to force his head back against a heavily padded headrest to absorb the jerk that might otherwise injure the neck and there was a slight impairment of vision and other faculties. To correct the Hurricane's directional swing to the left and its longitudinal instability at slow speeds the pilot applied one-third starboard rudder and one-third flap, kept elevator and trim tabs central, and jammed his right elbow into his hip so that the hand on the stick didn't pull back as the aircraft shot forward. The Hurricane had a tendency to sink on leaving the catapult rail, but fortunately there was a 40-foot clearance to the sea beyond the ship's bow. However, because of the narrow margin between the Hurricane's air speed after departing the catapult and its stall speed the pilot had to resist the temptation to haul back on the stick, which would have resulted in the loss of flying speed and stalling into the sea. Immediately after the initial drop the Hurricane gained sufficient speed to easily climb away.



Hurricane launched From Catapult

The breakdown of responsibilities on board ship was complex. The MSFU crews signed ship's articles either as supernumerary officers or deck hands, according to rank, thereby coming under the jurisdiction of the ship's master. The chief engineer was responsible for the serviceability of the catapult, and the first mate, as Catapult Duty Officer, did the actual firing from a blast shelter or firing hut forward. When it came to the launch four men had to signify their agreement: 1. The decision to launch was made by the master. 2. The decision whether conditions were suitable for flying was the responsibility of the pilot. 3. The approximate timing of the launch was the responsibility of the FDO. 4. The launching of the aircraft on an upward pitch of the bow was the responsibility of the Catapult Duty Officer. The CAM ship Hurricane was

a one shot effort; the decision to launch had to be taken very carefully to ensure the threat of attack was imminent and the Hurricane was not being seduced into the air by enemy aircraft not posing an immediate threat to the convoy. Once the aircraft was catapulted it could not be recovered and masters often delayed launching until the very last minute considering the possibility the Hurricane may be more urgently required later. The senior officer of the convoy escort or the convoy commodore, with their superior overall picture of the convoy's dangers, often felt they ought to have some say in the matter; but the chain of command did not always work smoothly.

The first CAM ship, *Empire Rainbow*, sailed for Halifax on 8 June 1941, with the second CAM ship, *Empire Moon*, sailing soon afterward to the same destination. By the end of the month there were six CAM ships at sea. While in the Condor danger zone the Hurricanes were warmed up at dawn each day and pilot, in full flying clothing, stood by from dawn to dusk with the FDO on the bridge. The senior officer, pilot or FDO, was granted powers of an officer commanding a detachment and was directly responsible to master for the discipline of the detachment. Initially, misunderstandings on the status and duties created tension between the masters and the MSFU crews. But when the senior MSFU officer led a sincere effort to observe the ship's customs and orders relationships became very cordial and affable.

RCAF Dartmouth

By 9 September 1941, three months after the sailing of the first CAM ship, 39 pilots and 164 men had been trained at Speke for ships' detachments. There had been 37 CAM ship sailings and 15 CAM ships had completed one round trip. Three of the pilots were sent to Canada to set up a pool at RCAF Station Dartmouth, NS to provide replacement pilots for the CAM ships and to flight test and ferry the Hurricanes manufactured by Canadian Car and Foundry at Fort William, ON (now Thunder Bay) that were destined for Dartmouth as MSFU aircraft replacements. The Dartmouth pool consisted of three Hurricanes and three fully trained pilots with RCAF ground crew support.

Initially, the Hurricanes were craned off the CAM ships in Halifax Harbour, loaded onto a barge, which was towed to the seaplane jetty at RCAF Station Dartmouth. Then the aircraft were lifted off and towed up the road to the RCAF hangars where they were checked, de-salted and air tested. This procedure proved tedious and cumbersome and was soon replaced by the more practical delivery of launching the Hurricanes off the CAM ships prior to entering harbor then landing at Dartmouth for servicing. Since operational launchings were infrequent these launchings also gave valuable practice to the pilots and sea crews.

Similar to the earlier tensions between MSFU crews and ships' masters, there were similar initial strains between MSFU pilots and the RCAF maintenance organization at Dartmouth. There was a shortage of Hurricane parts and equipment at Dartmouth that were in good supply in England and could have been put on the next CAM ship, but the RCAF maintainers insisted on waiting for the parts from Canadian Car and Foundry; however, all these parts were being consumed by new Hurricane production. With there being no RCAF Hurricane squadrons based at Dartmouth until the formation of 126 Squadron in July 1942 there were no locally available Hurricane spares and equipment. Eventually, RCAF headquarters in Ottawa intervened to divert some spares to Dartmouth.

Also, the high cost of living at Dartmouth was an irritant because pay in the RCAF was twice as much as the RAF. The MSFU pool personnel were being charged RCAF rates for rations and quarters and running up unaffordable mess bills. An enterprising Sergeant in Accounts finally resolved the problem by paying allowances as though MSFU personnel were transients, which made all the difference. A grievance on the Canadian side was the manner in which the exuberant MSFU pilots indulged in low flying down the streets of Halifax while air testing their Hurricanes. The deluge of complaints resulted in many restrictions, which the MSFU pilots opined precluded any sort of satisfactory air-test.

First Operation

The first MSFU operational launch from a CAM ship occurred on 1 November 1941. *Empire Foam* was one of six vessels led by the destroyer *HMS Broke*, escorting convoy HX 156 from Halifax to the UK. When the convoy was just 550 miles west of the Irish coast, well into the Condor danger zone, an unidentified aircraft was detected by radar in the afternoon. The pilot, Flying Officer Varley rushed down the companionway from the bridge to his Hurricane and the sea crew was alerted to start the engine and

ready the aircraft for launch. During these preparations the radar contact, now positively identified as a Condor, continued to approach the convoy at low level; the decision was made to launch. The Catapult Duty Officer signaled all clear to launch. Varley opened the throttle and motioned the "ready to launch" hand signal, which was followed by the shock from the catapult as the Hurricane shot forward. Varley spotted the Condor on the port beam of the convoy and turned towards it. The Condor's bomb bay doors were open as it headed for a straggler astern. Varley had scarcely positioned himself for the attack when the Condor pilot spotted him, abandoned the attack and dived for the water. Varley momentarily lost sight of the Condor as its dark camouflage merged with the sea background. After regaining contact Varley could not get close enough to open fire as the Condor turned away from the convoy and climbed for cover in the clouds. Following radar vectors from the FDO, Varley sighted the Condor briefly, stalked it for a few minutes then saw nothing more. Realizing that he was wasting time and fuel, Varley considered that he might be chasing a decoy allowing a second Condor to creep in to bomb the convoy. Varley returned to orbit the convoy, maintaining a standing patrol overhead for the next 90 minutes. While orbiting, Varley was passed two separate radar contacts five miles astern the convoy. He investigated both contacts but found nothing. The FDO on *Empire Foam* confirmed the contacts; so it would appear that Varley kept the two aircraft at a distance from which they could not attack or observe the convoy.

After nearly two hours in the air the Hurricane was reaching its limit of endurance. Varley flew around *Blake* in an anti-clockwise direction, rocked his wings to signal that he was about to bale out. After receiving an acknowledgement, he climbed to 3,000 feet (1,000 meters), slid back the cockpit canopy and with difficulty jettisoned the corroded emergency side panel. After two failed attempts to extricate himself from the cockpit and forgetting the technique of inverting the Hurricane, Varley resorted to climbing out of the cockpit and running along the wing until blown off by the slipstream. His parachute opened successfully and he inflated his lifejacket before hitting the frigid sea. The shock of the icy water anaesthetized his muscles and Varley had to struggle to disentangle himself from the parachute canopy and shroud lines, inflate his dinghy and pull himself into his dinghy. *HMS Broke* appeared in a few minutes and hoisted him in with a boat hook. They had already drawn a hot bath and threw him in clothes and all. As he sat there they fed him hot coffee laced with rum. Varley's two-hour vigil thwarted one Condor attack and likely drove off two shadowers, depriving U-boats of aerial reconnaissance at a critical time.

CAM Ships Disbanded

A total of 35 CAM ships provided a stopgap air defence for merchant convoys until escort aircraft carriers could fill the role; in a period of two years CAM ships had completed 175 voyages, averaging 3,000 miles (4,800 km) per voyage. Eight CAM ships were requisitioned from private shipping companies, two of which were sunk; and the Ministry of War Transport owned 27 CAM ships of which 10 were sunk. Once the CAM ships joined the convoys merchant ship losses from enemy aircraft were greatly reduced. There were eight Hurricane combat launches resulting in eight German aircraft destroyed and three chased away; at a cost of one Hurricane shot down and the loss of one pilot. Each launch of a Hurricane resulted in an enemy bomber being destroyed, or driven off. The success of the CAM ships was measured by the inestimable number of merchant ships NOT sunk. Also, the mere presence of CAM ships diverted innumerable enemy aircraft away from the convoys, allowing merchant ships and CAM ships alike to deliver their invaluable cargos to UK ports.

By mid 1942, as escort aircraft carriers became available, CAM ship sailings with North Atlantic convoys were discontinued. Consequently, the MSFU pool at RCAF Dartmouth was closed in July 1942. Similarly, CAM ship convoy sailings to Murmansk, Russia ceased in September 1942 and the RAF maintenance pool in Archangel was disbanded. Catapults were removed from ten of the 26 surviving CAM ships while the remaining 16 continued to sail with the Mediterranean and Freetown convoys. By the spring of 1943 there were sufficient escort carriers in operation to give air cover to all convoys and on the 8 June 1943 the MSFU was disbanded.

Plaque Presentation Speech, July 02, 2008
at the National Air Force Museum of Canada, CFB Trenton
by CAPT(N) Steven Luce, U.S. Naval Attaché to Canada

Good morning, and thank you all for attending this great event on such a great day for aviation – not a cloud in the sky. I never realized when I reported as the U.S. Naval Attaché to Canada that I would one day be the guest speaker at the National Air Force Museum of Canada to help present a memorial plaque to recognize Canada for training some of the early U.S. Naval Aviators, but this job is full of surprises. I am flattered and honored as the senior active duty U.S. Naval Aviator in Canada to be a part of today's event. There are two great stories to tell today. One is the history of 24 U.S. Naval Aviators who received their flight training in Canada, and we'll talk about that shortly.

The other story, which I will share first, is how we got here, today, to celebrate the aforementioned history. It is a story of persistence and imagination. Actually, they both are.

The journey to this day is pretty interesting, and there are two gentlemen in particular who I must recognize as key to making this happen.

Before that, though, I would like to acknowledge two distinguished groups represented today who have expressed much interest in this project, the Naval Officers Association of Canada, particularly Executive Director Bob Nixon who first suggested this fine museum as the venue for this display, and the Canadian Naval Air Group National Chairman Paul Baiden. Welcome one and all. Additionally, I would like to express my thanks to Dr. Georgianna Stanciu, Curator of the museum, who graciously agreed to provide a home for this project. Thank you one and all.

When I assumed my duties in Ottawa 16 months ago, I inherited a file that had not made much progress. It was initiated by a gentleman in Deseronto who knew about this Canadian/U.S. aviation history, and wanted very much to establish a memorial, but didn't have the funds. He had persistently contacted the U.S. Embassy since July 1st, 2004 for assistance to no avail. He even wrote a letter to the former U.S. Ambassador. I am sure this was very frustrating for him, but he never gave up. I received the file in October 2006, and once I contacted him in November, I commenced my own journey to try and help. I was lucky, and found the second gentleman who has dedicated himself to this project for the past eight months. The road has been long, with many challenges, but here we are, to honor the history, to thank Canada for collaboration and assistance in 1917, and to emphasize appreciation for the long and positive relationship between the Canadian and U.S. Armed Forces.

The first gentleman is Ken Brown of the Deseronto Public Library Archives who brought

this history to light and conceived this project.

Ken, please stand up and take a bow. The second gentleman is "Navy Dave" Woods as the man who realized the dream. Dave, please take your bow as well. Thank you, gentlemen. This would not have happened without either one of you.

Now, briefly, the historic tale of 24 American college boys who became U.S. Naval Aviators at Royal Canadian Air Force training bases in Ontario, Canada.

In 1917, Canada had already been involved in WWI for three years, but the United States had only just committed in April of that year. There was an aviation training program in the states that had graduated out some hundred and forty or so Naval Aviators. These early aviators received various assignments, but the three main categories were: fighter pilots with the Marines, who flew air cover for bombers; bomber pilot or co-pilot with the Royal Air Force (A unique, early joint international program that we need to learn more about); and seaplane patrol craft (most likely the U.S. Navy's main mission). Many of us today associate Naval Aviation with aircraft carriers, but they did not come into operation until the early 1920's. They made their mark later, in WWII.

Back to 1917 when 24 new USN enlistees were sent to Canada for flight training. They came from many universities in the northeast US. Eleven were from Princeton, in New Jersey; five were from Harvard in Massachusetts; there was one Yale graduate who had entered Harvard Law School; one was from Dartmouth, and the college affiliation for the other six is unknown to me. Most had enlisted in response to advertisements published in April 1917 after America's declaration of war.

They had expected to go to the newly established Naval Air Station Squantum in Massachusetts, but were ordered to active duty under a new program with the Royal Flying Corps in Toronto. Most had never seen an airplane.

Their first two weeks while berthed in the dorms of the University of Toronto, much to their surprise, consisted entirely of military drill, four to six hours per day. Of note, your Canadian Forces, including the Navy, march and drill much more than their counterparts in the U.S. Forces. The rest of the days in July and August were filled with ground school lectures in theory of flight, rigging, engines, machine gunnery, bombing, aerial photography, meteorology, instruments and astronomy. After a week camping in tents on the shore of Lake Ontario awaiting their turn in flight training school, the Ensigns were on a train to Deseronto, where Ken Brown brought this story

to light. The flying school was at Camp Rathburn, long since turned to farmers' fields, but a busy aviation hub in 1917.

One of the officers, J. Sterling Halstead wrote an article for the U.S. Naval Institute magazine Proceedings, in 1965, and described one of his classmates, probably the most famous of this initial cadre, James V. Forrestal, who went on to become the Secretary of the Navy and first Secretary of Defense, for President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Halstead says of Forrestal, "...who was both capable and careful, at first found it exceedingly difficult to make landings. He broke the back of one plane, demolished the undercarriage of another, and spoiled a third, fortunately without any injury to himself. After that, he had no further difficulty."

You must understand that there were no standardized operating procedures, designated emergency procedures, no simulators. They all learned by watching and mimicking their instructors, and by the "seat of their pants". They soloed after periods of dual instruction that ran from to a maximum of six hours to as little as 45 minutes, compared to ten hours dual instruction required by the flying schools of the U.S. Army and Navy. They crashed many planes; however, take-off and landing speeds were so slow that rarely was anyone hurt.

After 50 landings and ten hours of solo time, they were ready for advanced flying school at Camp Borden near Barrie in the Georgian Bay and Lake Simcoe country. The course there comprised 40 hours of flying.

They finished in October 1917 and were told they would be assigned as instructors in the U.S. Navy's flying schools. Towards the end of November, they received commissions and orders. They proceeded to two Naval Air Stations to qualify on seaplanes and flying boats, and from there were scattered throughout the states. A large contingent proceeded to Pensacola, the birthplace of Naval Aviation, to develop an advanced flying and aerial gunnery school. One received a command in Miami where he remained throughout the war. Several were assigned to stations in England and France – two of whom were killed in action and posthumously received the Navy Cross Medal and one pilot, and one, Richard H. McCann who received the Distinguished Service Medal, the nation's fourth highest personal decoration, for a seaplane rescue at sea.

Two of the young aviators were assigned to San Diego to assist in founding Naval Air Station North Island. This is particularly interesting to me, as I spent almost 22 years of my Naval Aviation career at that station. When I was a young Lieutenant, I purchased the book, "Jackrabbits to

Jets", the history of NAS North Island, and, lo and behold, there are pictures and words about the two Naval Aviators in the book!

James Forrestal and one other transferred to the Navy Department in Washington, D.C. to help in the task of spreading the lessons learned and the material brought back from Canada. Forrestal worked under the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Franklin Roosevelt, who years later, as President, would appoint Forrestal his Secretary of the Navy, and later Secretary of Defense.

This story is but one small chapter in our cooperative military relationship, which has only grown larger and stronger over the decades – particularly in the years since WWII. NORAD patrols the skies over both our countries and keeps us safe from air and space threats. Our navies train, exercise and deploy together around the globe. Our land forces train and fight together in international missions.

I am proud to be a part of our military partnership, and delighted to be here for today's event. Thank you.



FLIGHT OF ANGELS

(BY Bill Babbitt)

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



Flight of Angels

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

"Hands to flying stations!"
Aircrew on the run.
Leap aboard your aircraft,
The fun has just begun.
Fire up the starter, prime once more.
The engine coughs, then gives a roar.
Roar on you mighty Griffin
You'll fly the skies once more.

That fellow there in yellow
Guides you forward with great care.

The ship is rolling heavily,
You'd better both beware.
You've reached the spot you're launching from,
Now do your checks and show a thumb,
Adrenalin is rising
For the challenge soon to come.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Leader diving slightly
As you rise up side by side.
He's calling for a roll,
So, you're in for quite a ride!
Ease up the nose,
The bank stays steep.
But you must hang in cheek-to-cheek.
The fuselage beside you is all your eyes must
seek.

Rolling round the barrel
By yourself, is lots of fun,
But now you're in formation
And it's one son-of-a-gun!
Cling to your spot and do your best,
Don't get confused,
You'll pass the test.
So back to straight and level, and give your
nerves a rest.

Let the distance widen,
You've been working hard and long.
Cast your eyes about you. Enjoy the Griffin's
song.

The sky above an azure tone,
The sea below as grey as stone
Survey the vast Atlantic from old King Neptune's
throne.

Aircraft over water have changed our history
Extending from the Bismarck to the distant Coral
Sea

That's why you fly so far from shore
Extend our sting in time of war
"Ready boys. Aye ready!"
That's what you're training for.

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

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

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

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

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

Grinding round the corner,
Hanging on the prop!
Try to keep that Roger
Till he lets you drop.
Here comes the cut, you hit the deck,
The landing's hard, but what the heck!

You've caught yourself a three wire,
The best you can expect.

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



**“Never was so much owed,
by so many to so few”**





**Photos sent to us
from his time on
The Bonaventure
By Dave Banfield**

Sea Hornets and Furies over Dartmouth

Ernest Cable
SAM Historian



In the annals of Canadian naval aviation history 7 April 1948 marks the commissioning of *HMCS Magnificent* in Belfast Ireland with Commodore DeWolf in command. The Executive Officer was Cdr. D.W. “Debbie” Piers and Cdr. “Cocky” Reed was Commander Flying. After completing flying trials *Magnificent* returned to Belfast where she embarked the RCN’s first batch of 27 Hawker Sea Fury F.B. Mk 11’s, four Fairey Firefly T 1 pilot trainers and 12 Firefly F.R. IV’s. The Sea Furies were a replacement for 803 Squadron’s obsolescent Seafires; the Firefly T 1’s (DK 445, DT 975, MB 433, MB 443) were required to provide a dual pilot training capability, and the Firefly FR IV’s were loaned from the Fleet Air Arm (FAA) to give RCN pilots the required higher performance aircraft experience prior to transitioning to the more powerful Firefly AS 5.

The embarkation on *Magnificent* of the 27 Sea Furies destined for 803 Squadron marked the end of a debate over whether to replace the Seafire with ex-U.S. Navy Grumman Hellcats or British Sea Furies. In June 1946, the Naval Board considered a recommendation to acquire 50 F6F Hellcats at a cost of \$3,500 each. This recommendation was made as a result of the delay in the production of the British Hawker Sea Furies to replace the Seafires. The Board noted that although the Hellcat would provide an inexpensive alternative to the Sea Fury, it was no longer a first-line aircraft and its acquisition would be a reversal to the present then “buy British” policy. One of the most ardent and persuasive proponents of the Hellcat purchase was Lt. H.J. “Dicky” Bird on the Naval Aviation Staff. He had flown Hellcats during the war and knew of their excellent carrier performance. With his large number of U.S. Navy friends and associates he was able to mount a very effective campaign to convince the Naval Staff to buy the Hellcat. In July, the Director of Naval Aviation was directed to approach the U.S. Navy to obtain details about the purchase of Hellcats. At the same time, the British Admiralty was also to be informed that the RCN was considering purchase of aircraft from the U.S. Navy. On 20 September, the Admiralty advised that the RCN would receive priority allocation of Sea Furies with the first being assigned to 803 Squadron in March 1947. The sudden change in delivery dates was no doubt prompted by disclosure to the Admiralty that the RCN was considering a U.S. Navy fighter replacement. The end result being that the RCN took delivery of its Sea Furies before the first FAA squadron (802 Squadron) received its Sea Fury FB 11’s in May 1948.

The timing of *Magnificent’s* inaugural sailing to Canada proved fortuitous for the Admiralty, as the FAA was also able to take advantage of *Magnificent’s* departure to embark five aircraft from 806 Squadron. The squadron had recently been re-formed under the command of LCdr. Dick Law DSC, RN, specifically for a North American air display tour that was to culminate with the official opening of New York’s Idlewild airport (now JFK).

806 Squadron was uniquely equipped with two de Havilland Sea Hornets F, Mk 20's (VR 851, code 453), two Sea Fury F.B. 11's (VR 932, VR 944), and the first production version of the de Havilland Sea Vampire. A third Sea Hornet (TT 209) was scheduled for the North American tour but was withdrawn at the last minute. *Magnificent* sailed on her maiden voyage to Canada on 24 May, arriving off Halifax on 1 June, but with the poor weather only two Canadian Sea Furies made it to the RCN's Naval Air Section at Dartmouth (at this time the Naval Air Section was a lodger unit at RCAF Station Dartmouth). The remainder of the planned flights ashore were cancelled resulting in the remaining aircraft having to be tediously lightered ashore to the small boat marine jetty.

The Sea Hornet and Sea Fury were the FAA's latest piston-engine fighters while the Vampire was the first-ever jet aircraft to land and take-off from an aircraft carrier on 3 December 1945. Hence these aircraft, representing the latest in British aviation technology, were selected to impress North American audiences. The Sea Hornet was a derivative the RAF's Hornet, but early in its design (1944) it was realized that the Hornet could easily be adapted for use on board aircraft carriers in the war against Japan. To improve carrier take-off and landing characteristics Rolls Royce Merlin 130 and 131 engines were installed, the latter mounted in the port nacelle rotated the propeller in the opposite direction to reduce the effects of torque. High drag flaps were installed to allow the necessary high-power settings for carrier approaches, and Lockheed hydraulic powered jacks actuated the folding wings. Other naval modifications included a forged steel flush-fitting V-frame arrestor hook; catapult bridle hooks under each wing and close to the fuselage; and mountings for the naval radar and radio equipment. Hydraulic undercarriage oleos replaced the existing rubber compression units, which would have been unable to absorb the very high rates of descent experienced in deck landings. The weight penalty of all of these modifications totalled only 550 pounds (250 kg).

The Vampire F 20, derived from the Vampire FB 5 fighter-bomber, was the first production Sea Vampire. The Sea Vampire retained the Goblin 2 jet engine and the four 20mm canons, but differed from the FB 5 with a strengthened wing and enlarged flaps and dive brakes to give it better low speed control for carrier approaches and deck landings. The Sea Vampire was equipped with a V-frame arrestor hook installed *over* the tailpipe, so that when lowering it passed through the jet exhaust. The Vampire proved the concept of operating jet engine and tricycle-undercarriage from aircraft carriers, however, the Sea Vampire never became the standard naval fighter because of concerns that deck handling techniques did not lend themselves to disruptions caused by the jet blast, and the critically short range of the early jet interceptors made them unsuitable for all but "fleet on-top cover". Honours for the first British naval jet fighter to reach operational status fell to the Supermarine Attacker.

The arrival of the remarkably small Sea Vampire led to an amusing anecdote that provided some credence to the FAA's concerns about hot jet exhausts. Like all personnel at Dartmouth, one of the Firefly pilots was fascinated by the almost toy-like little Vampire. This particular pilot had some rather odd ideas, such as believing that the heel of one's boot or shoe transmitted a shock to the brain, so he always wore crepe-soled shoes. No transmitted shock for him! The Sea Vampire had just landed and taxied to the ramp and shut down. The curious pilot walked over to look up the tail pipe, squatting down a few feet back. The ramp had become hot enough that when he tried to walk away, his soles had stuck to the tarmac!

The Dartmouth Naval Air Section wasted no time in ensuring their guests from 806 Squadron were settled in, and were ready to support them for the duration of their North American visit. Likewise, the air display team was ready to hone their skills and become familiar with the local area. On 4 June, an 806 Squadron Sea Hornet, piloted by Lt. Nigel Fisher, RN, a member of the famous Royal Navy Fisher family of both World Wars, had taxied out for take-off. Rod Bays was there and recalls, "The weather being poor that day with ceiling of about 800 feet. Cloud was forecast to be in layers from about 800 feet up to about 7,000 feet, clear above." Ken Gibbs, standing by the runway, noticed what appeared to be a considerable flow of fuel leaking from the aircraft; he immediately ran to the aircraft waving his arms, but Fisher misinterpreting the signal, merely waved back in greeting and commenced his take-off. Rod Bays further recalls, "Fisher took off in a Sea Hornet and (apparently) tried to loop up through the murk, the idea being to come out on top where he could practise his aeros. The Sea Hornet had enough power to do that! Unfortunately, cloud tops were higher, much higher, and all he managed was to complete his loop by coming straight on down to crash off Maughers Beach." The aircraft being made of wood totally disintegrated. One speculative explanation is that Fisher, while climbing steeply into the overcast, failed to break out of the top of the cloud, became disoriented and lost complete control of his aircraft. It is unknown

if the apparent fuel leak contributed to the accident. Fisher's death was a tragic loss for the close-knit group of outstanding pilots and an inauspicious start for the elite 806 Squadron's North American tour.

During the remainder of June and early July 1948, 806 Squadron continued to refine their display of individual and formation aerobatics for the Idlewild air show. On 21 July, the Dartmouth Naval Air Section held the first naval air display in Canada, which was attended by thousands of people. This was a particularly impressive show with 806 Squadron making their final dress rehearsal prior to their New York demonstration. The Sea Fury and Sea Hornet, the world's two fastest piston engined aircraft, presented Nova Scotians with a quality air show that had never been seen before in Canada. The Sea Hornet gave one of the most impressive displays, with the pilot doing a complete loop over the airfield, alternatively feathering the two engines and culminating in a loop with both engines feathered.

An almost equally impressive, but unplanned event occurred during one of the 806 Squadron solo Sea Fury events. Rod Bays reports that, "When [Lt. R.H. Reynolds's, DSC] Sea Fury was doing an upward roll, straight up about 8,000 feet, very spectacular. As he reached the apogee, there was a horrendous yowl - his APC (automatic pitch control) had bust - the Centaurus over-revved several thousand turns. With very commendable presence of mind he shut down the engine (it might well have torn itself out of the airframe) and made a dead-stick landing on the airfield immediately below him. I doubt that the crowd (a considerable one of perhaps 30,000 - the first of the Shearwater Air Shows) understood what had happened, and the near disaster!" The aircraft was replaced by a loaned RCN Sea Fury before the squadron left for Floyd Bennett Field on 25 July.

The weeklong Idlewild Golden Jubilee Air Celebration began on 1 August. After the final rehearsal. Lt Reynolds landed and reported that the engine of his Sea Fury was running roughly. They quickly pointed out that the tips of the propeller had been bent when he had touched the ground during one of his high-speed very low-level runs, a specialty of his. The tips of the propeller were trimmed back by about three inches overnight to have the aircraft ready for the next day. The amazing displays of individual and formation aerobatics by 806 Squadron completely stole the show at Idlewild, where they received enthusiastic applause from the crowds. After Idlewild, the squadron returned to Dartmouth from where they gave a further nine displays including the Canadian National Exhibition (CNE) in Toronto. In early August, RCN Lieutenants J.C. Sloan and "Smokey" Bice were attached to 806 Squadron to join in their naval flying display at the CNE Airshow. The air display was an outstanding success with brilliant performances by the 806 Squadron Sea Furies and Sea Hornet. Lt. Sloan received honourable mention with the following handwritten annotation in his logbook.

"Lieutenant J.C. Sloan, RCN, has been attached to 806 Squadron RN for the Canadian National Exhibition at Toronto. One week only was available to work up the Aerobatic Team with Lt. Clark and Lt Bice. In this short time a remarkable standard of airmanship was achieved with the result that the Canadian Fury performance was exceptional. Both as a leader and follower this pilot is outstanding."

*D. R. Law
Lt. Cdr. RN
C.O. 806 Squadron*

806 Squadron disbanded in September 1948, after what could only be considered a highly successful tour, returning to the United Kingdom on 25 September 1948.

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POOPY SUIT SAGA

Following the untimely demise of the Bonaventure, when 880 Sqn became a coastal patrol entity in support of Fisheries and Oceans and Environment surveillance my crew and I embarked on one of those 6-8 hour patrols. I believe it was in the month of March the exact date doesn't matter but the 3rd keeps cropping up in my foggy brain.

Three quarters of the way through this particular excursion I noticed that my co-pilot a fresh young Lieutenant was experiencing much discomfort. When I asked what was troubling him he informed that he was experiencing increasing pain in his abdomen. I asked him if he felt that the pain was serious enough to abort the rest of the mission and return direct to Shearwater. Shearwater was Visual (VFR) flight rules at that time and over an hour away. He didn't think he could make it that far.

Fearing that our co-pilot might be experiencing a burst appendix and in need of medical aid, I immediately contacted Greenwood (ZX) to obtain permission to land at their base. We were informed that ZX was experiencing a snow squall and visibility and ceiling were dropping rapidly. I called for a vector to ZX and requested radar Ground Controlled Approach (GCA). Along the way we were informed that the present weather was below Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) limits. AW was still VFR but over an hour away. I declared an emergency landing at ZX for medical reasons and was handed over to GCA for a priority approach. We could only hope for limits at touchdown.

The GCA approach went smoothly and was backed up by our own Radar observer who was familiar with the radar pattern of the infrastructure at ZX. We were getting intermittent peaks at the ground from our observers in the back and the comment "come on skipper, you can do it" made me feel confident. At limits, or was it slightly below (I'm a little blurry on that), I sighted the runway threshold and carried out a near perfect landing (at least that's what my crew said)

The station ambulance met our Tracker aircraft on roll out from the main runway following us to the tarmac and took our young co-pilot to the Base Hospital. We deplaned and prepared to wait for the medical results.

In the interim, Base Meteorology declared that at the time of our arrival the weather at ZX was actually 200 ft and 1/2mile visibility.

After filling out the necessary reports for declaring an emergency and getting something to eat from our box lunches (prepared by the excellent flight kitchen staff at AW and that we had brought along for this occasion) we were able to relax somewhat.

Meanwhile our co-pilot (whose name escapes me for obvious reasons) had been given an enema and was somewhat relieved. The young Lieutenant was reunited with the crew, in a borrowed flying suit sans "Poopy" and we returned to AW without further incident.

If memory serves me correctly, I believe I made the co-pilot do the whole leg to AW including take-off and landing.

Correct me if I am wrong, I dare you butt
..... (pun intended)

The moral of this saga is "if you are embarking on a 6 hr flight and are going to be encased in a rubberized Poopy Suit you do your #2 before you don one of those monstrosities".

Our crew was magnificent throughout for:

" We were 880 and we're on the ball

We fight the Watusi their 7 feet tall

Although they may eat us

They never will beat us

For we are 880 and we're on the ball "

"WAHUNGA"



SILVER SHACKLES

The Navy knows a ripe and heady wine
To overmaster thought and fill the veins
At every sip with racing loyalties;
A wine distilled of words antique and rich,
That sets a spell around the hearts and mind
"The Captain Galley", "Tampion", "Make-and-Mend"
And "Warrant Shipwright", "Tiller-flat",
"Belay"
Who tastes these mellow draughts upon his
tongue
And keeps his head? The words are round
and strong
With poetry rubbed into them like spice
"Lash up and Stow", and "Liberty Boat",
"Careen",
"Master at Arms", "Veer", "Reeve", "The
Forenoon Watch",
What brave, what wholly satisfying speech,
Worn smooth as shingle by the rolling sea,
And shaped by centuries to fit the tongue!
"Mate of the Upper Deck", and "Master of the
Fleet"
"Yeoman of Signals", Captain of the "Gun"
Heroic, drugging sounds! Did I say wine?
But wine, leaving a memory, is gone;
May not endure to tie you in a bond.
Rather are these links formed in a chain,
A Silver chain, that keeps you prisoner
And binds you to the Service; is become
Well-worn and loved. And as you live and
move
It's silver jangling echoes in your head.
Listen, and close your eyes. You hear the
sound?
The silver shackles stir, and you are bound.

Unkown

.....
Does anyone have names to go with
these pictures!!!



(Christmas tree from the "Maggie")

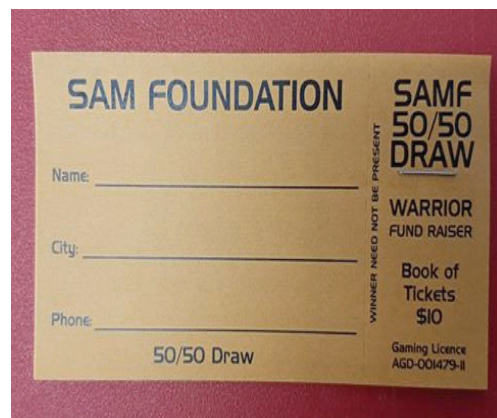
Help support our fundraisers SAM / SAMF / Stalker 22 Fund



\$10 SAMF Mask \$20 Bonnie Cap



Stalker 22 Memorial Patches \$10 each



Decembers 10th 50/50 draw

Tickets are available NOW!



We are auctioning off a quilt 84x88 in size and it was made by Nancy Hilt MacDonald of Eastern Passage, you can call us with your bid [902-461-0062](tel:902-461-0062). Today the last bid was \$450. Where we can't have a dinner auction, this will be done by calling in your bids.

The Winner will be announced will be Dec 1stth 2020

500 Club 2021 Tickets \$100 per ticket

Draws start in June 2021

Call 902-461-0062 SAMF Office or 902-720-1083 Gift Shop

Toll Free 1-888-497-7779

Our Dinner auction has been cancelled for this year due to Covid-19 restrictions. This is one of our largest fundraisers that we hold throughout the year; so, I'm asking anyone that would like to donate to our **NO Dinner NO Auction**. To do so, I will send out a tax receipt for the **full amount** of your donation. Thank you for taking part in any of the above fundraising events.

A REMARKABLE PILOT

Lcdr Bob Murray is the last Rcn pilot still standing (perhaps even the world's last) to have flown the 1950's Supermarine ATTACKER. This remarkable airplane was one of the world's earliest navy jets; it's relatively primitive features consistent with the technology of its day. Bob writes of his own early days as an RCN pilot, plus his ATTACKER experience, as follows:

After completing basic pilot training on Harvard's with the RCAF in Canada, I was appointed in late 1953 to HMCS Niobe in London, England for advanced operational training with the Royal Navy. I travelled to Europe in the Cunard liner RMS Scythia, docking in South Hampton after about a week at sea.

I travelled to London by train and checked into the Charing Cross Hotel on the Strand. I was hungry on arrival so when I saw a sign saying "hot dogs" I ordered one (big mistake). It consisted of two small sausages in a long bun covered with hot English mustard, which I couldn't eat. This brought home to this unsuspecting Canadian that wartime rationing, especially meat, was still in play, and would be throughout my otherwise enjoyable stay.

Upon returning to HMCS Niobe, I was told my piston fighter course at RNAS Yeovilton had been cancelled. I was sent instead to RNAS Gosport in Hampshire for high altitude indoctrination, meant to familiarize new pilots with the symptoms of hypoxia. We underwent decompression in a pressure chamber, which included the curious act of an instructor throwing a shoe through a thick paper barrier to simulate sudden decompression. (Whatever works!). We also took ejection seat training while there.

Then came Royal Navy Air Station (RNAS) Lossimouth in the Northeast of Scotland for Jet fighter training on the Gloster Meteor and the Supermarine ATTACKER. "Lossie" was an overnight train trip from London via Edinburgh. I arrived in late November just as winter was setting in.

Accommodations at Lossie were in WWII Quonset huts with small wood/coal stoves for heat. We were allowed just one small bucket of coal per day and couldn't light up the stoves until after dinner. In my cabin were a small chest of drawers and a pull-down washbasin. When I went to stow my clothes after unpacking, I found there was no actual drawer behind the drawer faces, the wood having been scavenged for scarce fuel. My Scottish steward (army batman equivalent) would bring me a pot of hot water each morning to wash and shave, and he often had to break the ice on my washbasin. Our baths (no showers) were in another part of the Quonset arrangement so you made an exploratory trip to see if a tub was available. If so, you returned to your room to changed and then back for your bath provided someone else had not got to the free tub ahead of you. These basic conditions naturally prompted many gripes but everyone seemed able to draw upon the famous British sense of humor to get by. An added problem with Quonset huts was that snow often blew inside through gaps in the joints.

I joined 759 Squadron at Lossimouth on 22 November 1953 for ground school and flying the Gloster Meteor MK7. The Meteor did not have an ejection seat and we were issued with WWII type leather flying helmets, fitted with oxygen masks, identical to the kit used during the Battle of Britain – they worked quite well. The Meteor flying ended after 60 – odd hours. When grounded by bad weather, we made visits to local distilleries and went on pub-crawls, often accompanied by delightful wrens to keep things civil. As the lone Canadian, I was always kidded about my "high" pay, which, in reality, were bare-bones. As I recall, flight pay was a measly \$30.00 per month. There was no NAAFI at Lossie (PX, that is) so in order to collect my alcohol allotment; I had to go to RAF Kinloss, usually by hitching a helicopter ride in exchange for a bottle. The Meteor was a twinjet trainer based upon the jet Meteor that came into service just as WWII was ending. It was a pleasure to fly.



After the Meteor we went on to the Supermarine ATTACKER, the Royal Navy's first operational jet fighter. Originally, it was fitted with a Martin-Baker MK1 ejection seat, which was virtually useless below 2,500 feet. Having ejected, the pilot would remain firmly strapped to the seat and its small stabilizing drogue. He would then have to manually separate himself from the seat, kick it away and then pull the "D" ring to activate the chute. An improved Martin-Baker MK2A seat was later installed with upgraded automatic features.

The early 1950's were also early days in jet fighter development worldwide, so the technology we enjoy today was then "iffy" or non-existent. You worked with what you had. The ATTACKER's cramped cockpit offered little clearance for the pilot's knees if he had to eject, so the worry of kneecapping yourself was always there. Readers may recall that RCN test pilot Al Woods chose to force-land an ATTACKER on two occasions during a single ferry flight, possibly in part influenced by the kneecapping risk. Because the ATTACKER had a tailwheel (yes, a tail wheel), taxiing in tight areas was always tricky. Cockpit pressurization was barely adequate, and the cockpit heating system virtually useless. When descending from high altitude, the windscreen tended to frost up. As a fix, we carried a tin containing a sponge soaked in glycol to wipe the perspax prior to letdown! Despite these shortcomings, world-famous RN test pilot Captain Eric Brown (read Wings on my Sleeve), tested the ATTACKER up to and beyond its design envelope and gave it a thumbs up for operational squadron and carrier service. The ATTACKER'S range was also limited, so we carried an external belly tank that often-suffered rough handling in the ground servicing area. Never sure how the resulting bumps and hollows would affect low landing speeds, we tended to a few extra knots on the approach. Before leaving the UK I also had the good luck to fly the Sea VAMPIRE a few times.



As I look back on my UK days, I wouldn't trade them for gold. Connected to them is my life-long belief that a good sense of humor works wonders. We would all do well to embrace the mock-latin expression NON ILLIGITIMUS CARBORENDUM, which humorously translates into "Don't let the bast@&#s grind you down!"

I look forward to reading the memories of other readers about their not so really "dark days". Cheers Bob.

Canadian Naval Air Group

Founded on January 23, at Edmonton, Alberta, Canada 1970
702 Clearcrest Crescent, Orleans, ON K4A 3E6 pbaiden@rogers.com

November 06, 2020

RE: Cold War Veteran Lapel Pins

Fellow Cold War Veterans:

I have designed the subject pins for two reasons:

- First and foremost, as an alternative means to raise the desperately needed financial support required to get our suffering **VETERANS** off the streets and back into our communities;
- And secondly, to give our fellow Canadians the opportunity to recognize, and perhaps take a moment to question those that wear them, what they signify. IE: These pins identify us as members of the far too often overlooked group of service personnel that silently put our lives on the line during the “**COLD WAR ERA**”!
- NB: I’m certain you would agree that very few Canadians actually know how many made the ultimate sacrifice and/or exactly how important our efforts were in the prevention of a potential **THIRD WORLD WAR**, the Cuban Crisis for instance!

The pins sell for **\$10 each + \$2.50 mailing costs**, however, if you wish to make an **additional donation** to help this worthy cause it would be greatly appreciated!

Unfortunately, the current COVID-19 pandemic has made it extremely difficult to promote the pins, and therefore, may I suggest the following options to acquire one in support of my initiative:

- Option A, simply mail me a cheque to the address on the header, in the amount **\$12.50 + any additional donation** you may wish to include; or
- Option B, if you know of others in your immediate area that would also like to acquire one, send me a cheque for the total number and again I will mail you that amount of pins.
- Option C, you can make an e-transfer to dbaiden@icloud.com and in the message section enter Cold War Pin and your mailing address. This method can also be used to cover the larger orders as in option B.

I look forward to your support in this endeavour!

Respectfully,

Original signed by:

Paul Baiden, *MMM, OSiJ, SC, CD, KSiG*

National Chairman

Canadian Naval Air Group

(613) 824-1561

Photo Image of the Pin





Thank you to Combat Camera 20190712SCAC0005D006

