

THE NEWSLETTER OF CANADIAN NAVAL AVIATORS AND ASSOCIATES

Canada

Toronto, Ontario,

June 2010

Last year I once again tried sending the newsletter by email. To my surprise, the trial was successful, so many of you were happy to receive electronic copies in 2009. This year I hope to expand the number I'll be sending, and I solicit your help. If you are happy with receiving the letter by email, please let me know, but only if you have not done so already. If you cannot print the emailed letter or download the attachment in Word, I'll be happy to send you a hard copy. A small number of readers have asked so far. I hope be able to use other computer formats this year or next.

Using email, I can reduce the printing and stationery costs, as well as the postage costs, which will be going up by more than ten per cent in Ontario this year once the change to a new Harmonized Sales Tax is in force. More important to me, I won't have to physically handle so many outgoing letters, a task that is becoming more and more painful because of my arthritic hands. As an aside, last June one of my nieces emailed me asking what Deborah and I had done on my birthday. I replied truthfully: We had gone to a seminar on 'arthritis of the hand'. Such is the fast lane for seniors.

Our travels in the past year included a trip by car to Denver, Colorado, for Deb's biennial family reunion, including stops in various states to visit other family members who could not attend the reunion, or to see old friends along the way. In the latter case, we visited a friend in Atlantic. Iowa, who showed as a lovely souvenir from a visit to Ottawa. The souvenir was a print of a prize-winning pastel of tulips, used in the Ottawa tulip festival, and painted by Lori Ogle, who many readers would know from her Ottawa paintings. She is also the wife of **Dan Ogle**, an education officer who served in the RCN and CF, including a stint with **Laurie Farrington, Jim Williams, Larry Zbitnew, Jack Moss**, and me at the Staff School. Lori and Dan now live near Victoria BC.

Deb made a brief trip to the deep south: 65 south latitude, the Antarctica peninsula, which combined with a trip to John o’Groat in Scotland meant that she had covered 120 degrees of latitude this year. FYI, Via Rail honoured our free veterans’ rail tickets that we were planning to use on a trip to Montreal just when the Via Rail strike occurred. They allowed us to use our free tickets until the end of 2009.

Many of you have friends or family who have suffered losses in Afghanistan. We, too, have lost a relative, Deb’s cousin Major Randell Voas, USAF, who died in April when the CV 22 ‘Osprey’ he was piloting crashed during combat operations near Kandahar. Randell was an ‘ankle biter’, born in a US Army hospital in Okinawa in 1967. If any readers wish to mention a ‘hero’ of their own, please let me know.

Our addresses remain the same:

E. Cruddas and D.L.Davis
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Tel. 416 224 5477
Email – cruddasedwardnmi@hotmail.com.

The deadline for the next newsletter is 31 May 2011. In the next several months I plan to reconsider this newsletter, based on a significant problem with arthritis. My typing ability has deteriorated so much that it now takes me about twice the previous time to do the typing needed - and thank goodness for spell checkers!

NEWS FROM THE READERS

John ‘Stretch’ Arnold’s UK visit in March 2009 included a trip to the RNAS Yeovilton Museum, travelling with **Glenn Cook**. Stretch wrote,

‘Cost from London Waterloo return for bargain advance was 22 pounds to the Yeovil South Station. From there to the town was a 1.5

pound bus ride. To the north, the museum is a 17 pound fare from city centre – no buses. Entry to the museum is 8.50 pounds for seniors; and a very good cafeteria is located in a separate building out front. First step is an interactive section, lift, drag, thrust, etc., then a great selection of all the old naval aircraft including some experimental ones. Some WWI to pre-WWII aircraft were still in a preparation stage for the 100th anniversary celebrations...The serno 002 Concorde was there: full of instrumentation and a small passenger cabin mock-up. Their “ground” emergency exit equipment was a neatly stacked “Jacob’s” ladder adjacent an emergency door. Being a tight squeeze, probably the cockpit was limited to only those pilots of minimum size [not someone like yours truly.] A large building supported a simulated helicopter ride out to a carrier’s flight deck, was well done. There, one could visually follow the path of an aircraft’s approach; and the kids sitting on the “ground” dived for cover on run-out, as we were positioned just in front of the arresting wires! Next we followed instructions which took you to most of the compartments you would see in an actual island. Very well done! Took three hours to go through it, and we later managed to bum a lift back to town. A worthwhile visit for older naval aviators, and younger wannabes.’

Thanks for the write up, Stretch.

Mel Babcooke has had three open-heart operations to correct a malfunction, but has recovered enough to be able to play a whole round of golf. He and Marg live in Florence, Alabama, in the northwest corner of the state, about equidistant from Memphis and Nashville, both in Tennessee. His two daughters are nearby. Mel sends an invitation for any old friends to drop in if they’re in the area. He can be reached by phone at 256 760 7030, or by email at melmarg@comcast.net.

Mel and I were in JAOBTC 7 together, along with another current Alabama residence, **Ross Riddell**. Ross ceased training mid way through the course, but later joined the RCAF Reserves in Toronto. A life-long bachelor, he drives north from time to time to visit two of his three sons in Niagara and Windsor, Ontario, and to sample the local beer. Ross, too, has undergone three surgeries, with two new shoulders and one new knee.

Actual Exchange between pilots and control towers [Courtesy **Fred Follow.**]

Tower: 'Delta 351, you have traffic at 10 O'clock, 6 miles'.
Delta 351: 'Give us another hint. We have digital watches.'

In June 2009, **Rob Bissell** wrote,

*'Yes, after 16 years of being first mate, Joyce agreed to be my wife and so we did the deed on Easter Monday [2009]. Now that MEANDER II is gone, but not forgotten as we still get emails from her very happy new Scottish owner, we have settled into a routine of summers, South Africa from Oct to May, and UK the remainder of the year, except next year we aim to spend at least the first couple weeks of July in slackers to remember the RCN!! The weather is terrific in SA, but the UK has the attraction of salt air, and sailing still and now radio-controlled model yacht racing. In SA I joined a virtual flying club and enjoy the return to IFR flying between Durban and Joburg, but there still is the temptation to do touch and goes at Shearwater. Microsoft still has 16l/34r open! for ADR approaches. George [Pumple] tells me he has found a virtual site where he can practise traps on the USS Nimitz' ... I have been following the events planned for the celebration of 100 years of Naval Aviation... we went to RNAS Yeovilton, HMS Heron, for their Air Day... the weather turned that day and I thought I was back in Shearwater. The crowds huge, so the RN gets great support. But really no formation flying... Obviously great for the Royal Marines and all the helo demos... A bonus was meeting up again with an old RN mate on the Observer course, **Cdr Mick Holmes**... Unfortunately he is the only RN survivor of that course, and he like me swapped to pilot along the way... [later] Joyce and I [toured the] latest RN destroyer HMS Daring, a type 45. This ship is huge and displaces over 7000 tonnes, and the flight deck could easily handle 2 Merlin although the hangar is only big enough for one... The day ended with the band of the Royal Marines beating the retreat and conducting a ceremonial sunset salute.'*

Thanks for the insights, Bob.

He supplied his new addresses, commenting that both properties had guest accommodation, so visitors were welcome. His addresses are in the annex.

Ken Brown was planning a JAOBTC 6 reunion in Halifax in June of this year. We hope that it goes/went well, as they seemed to have found many of the classmates. **Roger ‘Gunner’ Campbell** was expected to attend from BC, but may not have been able to come because his wife is in ill health. Others likely to attend were **Fred Hawrysh, Jim Stegen, Glen [Pappy] Weise Andy Anderson, Nick Garapick**. Other members of the course who may or may not attend are **Hank Bannister, Harry Beutel, Barry Mills, Ed Smith, and Don Ramage**. For details, see the Annex.

In ‘Starshell’, the magazine of the Naval Officers Association of Canada, Spring 2010 edition, **Stan Brygadyr** wrote a full page article entitled ‘Naval Aviation’ for the ‘Canadian naval heritage’ section. Across the page, **Peter Milson** wrote an even longer article, ‘Canadian Naval Aviation and the Navy’s Centennial’. Peter’s article is partly historical, but mostly a thorough and welcome compilation and description of the Centennial events. Earlier in Starshell, the editor wrote that, *‘we also have a couple of articles on Canadian Naval Air, a subject I readily plead guilty of neglecting in the pages of Starshell, though not with any sinister purpose in mind’*. Thanks to editor **George Moore**, and to Stan and Peter for bringing naval air back into mainstream of the Canadian Centennial.

Recently I had the opportunity to have a chat with one of Canada’s foremost stage and screen actors, **Kenneth Welsh**. In our discussion, I learned that he was the nephew of the late **Hal Welsh**, who would be remembered by many of us. Kenneth was happy to know that Hal has not been forgotten.

Jackie and John Cody sent their welcome Christmas letter by email.

‘Jackie has taken some time off since the summer and is still trying to decide whether or not she likes this retirement stuff. Verdict will be in soon, but the “permanently off” mode seems to be pulling ahead...John is still working but has negotiated his exit strategy for General Dynamics...He’s moving to three days a week starting in the

New Year [2010] and exiting GDC after the arrival of the first helicopter...John departs 31 Dec 2010.

‘John’s pipe band surprised even them this year. They got a real boost when Paul McCartney came to town for a concert on 11th of July. The lads volunteered to play “Mull of Kintyre” ... before 60,000 people. Go to YouTube and search for the following: “Paul McCartney 78th Highlanders Halifax Concert”. Select a choice of which one you want to see and enjoy!

‘After a so-so start to the season they came on like gang busters at the end of it, tying for first place at the North American Championship. It will be more of the same this summer ... with a trip to Nevada to a huge invitational contest in 2011, and another trip to Scotland in 2011 as well.’

Bruce Cormack has had a bad year with the loss of his wife, Jean, and some nasty health problems. He has retained his good humour through all. A Supply Officer, he served in all three carriers. He recalled an incident in ‘Maggie’ in the Med, where **Lord Louis Mountbatten**, probably C in C Med at that time, observed carrier landings were taking place. The year was probably 1951 or 52. One Avenger had lost its undercarriage and tail hook after a near barrier, but was able to come on board eventually, suffering little more damage. Lord Louis characterized the pilot as a ‘human tennis ball’. Does anyone remember the incident? Bruce was uncertain of the pilot’s name.

‘Mister Spock’ on the streetcar. Some time ago we were travelling on a streetcar here in Toronto, when we noticed that there were people aboard in strange costumes: The Star Trek convention was in town. One young ‘Vulcan’ offered me a seat, for which I thanked him. He said that it was ‘the logical thing to do’. Actor Leonard Nimoy, the original Spock, paid a visit to Vulcan, Alberta, this April while attending a Sci-Fi conference in nearby Calgary.

Bob Darlington has four aces, or at least has aced all four of the Royal Colwood par threes. He gave me the correct link [mea culpa] to his book ‘The Three Princes Armed’: It can be ordered through – **robadar@telus.net**.

Ted Davis and a hard core of others, myself included as a favour, meet occasionally for the FAA First Of The Month Meetings, with Ted driving into Toronto on the Queen Elizabeth Way [QEW], which can be daunting for someone many years his junior. He wrote,

‘... I have to totter around these days with a cane to shore up my undercarriage which occasionally gives way when one of the locking pins on a knee fails to engage.

‘So this slows me down more than somewhat and any thoughts of long-distance travel are pretty well out of the question. Furthermore, I have had to retire after 33 years of voluntary service as a Red Cross driver because my arthritic conditions renders me incapable of looking after the clients with any degree of efficiency or safety.

‘I know that I’m getting old, but do enjoy this more leisurely way of life. I should have taken it up a long time ago!’

Last year Ted took the salute at the annual Battle-of-the-Atlantic parade in Oakville, Ontario, but he was only a spectator this year.

Metropolis, Illinois. We passed near this town on our way to Colorado last summer. It has Superman connexions, including a street called Lois Lane.

Sheila Davis sent some newspaper articles from her early days as a WREN officer and aircraft controller, when the *‘highest rank in the gender was a Lieutenant-Commander.* She also wrote,

*‘Among others, I was delighted to read about **Russ Spiller** – my daughter looked him up in NZ a few years ago. He shared the same building the WREN Officers were in down by Fairy Aviation and he went everywhere with his daschund in his great-coat pocket. Those from that era are, sadly, diminishing’.*

Eric and Mary Elizabeth Edgar cruised in the Baltic in May last year on the GTS Celebrity ‘Constellation’. He wrote,

‘Thoroughly enjoyed visiting Amsterdam, Tallinn, Rostock, Helsinki, Copenhagen, and especially St Petersburg, since it had been 21 years since we last visited. Mary Elizabeth was particularly impressed with Copenhagen, no high rises and very ecologically advanced, i.e. lots of windmills generating power and clean air and water. Power lines underground etc. We could learn a lot from the Scandinavian countries!! [In Nova Scotia] we had a good day...for the sail past of the tall ships.

After the cruise, Eric and Mary Elizabeth enjoyed a week in the Cotswolds. Eric also wrote a letter to the editor of the Mail Star. His subject was the Monarchy as it applies to Canada.

Since returning to Halifax a few years ago, **Gord Edwards** has become very much involved in naval and naval aviation matters: Chairman and a life member of SAMF, a life member of HMCS Sackville, Chair of the committee to organize the 2010 NOAC AGM.

‘Halifax [is] simply a great city, with everything nice and close. It was nice to get back to things naval... I never miss the incredible tattoo, tall ships, always a marvellous sight along the Halifax waterfront. I build models, now on my 5th Bluenose, did one of HMCS Sackville, and of course continue with my hobby of photography. Right on the water I have three kayaks. And on a humorous note, I can recall back in 1959 when as an ordinary seaman I was turned away from the dance at the Jubilee Boat Club, as uniforms were NOT allowed. It took me 57 years to get my revenge, as now I live exactly where the club was. Who could ever have thought.’

Commenting on a near-contemporary who will only be referred as ‘a hockey stick with hair’, Gord said that, ‘*He came to parties already drunker than anyone else was when they went home.*’

Gord's daughter Alisson is the Executive Director of the Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation.

George Hotham has settled in London now. He sent along a brochure from the Jet Aircraft Museum in London. See more about the Museum, plus George's addresses in the annex.

Ed Hallett, Captain [USN] is a frequent emailer. He has the knack of finding on the Net some of the very best aviation and other photographs that I've ever seen. Thanks Ed. He was cruising [again] last August from Seattle to Vancouver, Fairbanks, Anchorage, and Seward Alaska, partly on a land tour. *'Retired and having a ball!.. Keeping up with seven of our kids and 15 grandchildren is some fun!*

In the Spring Issue of Starshell, Ed is cited for arranging for the 'Grey Ghosts', the RCN's Banshee acrobatic team, to join with the USAF 'Thunderbirds' in the opening of the new [1959 – Ed] Miami Airport. The USN's Blue Angels had not been able to perform at that event.

Al Hawthorne has sent out his change-of-address cards, and apparently will be staying with his daughter in Calgary for the foreseeable future. His Calgary address was in last year's newsletter, and is repeated this year.

Gil Hutton from Hamilton has moved to a new address in Burlington. His wife, **Eileen Church Hutton**, died early this year. Gil's new address is in the annex.

Peter Holmes wrote last summer that he was considering moving that year or in 2010. He said,

'Last year [2008] I had my fifth hip operation. This was on my right hip, which had been replaced in 1990 in Halifax. My mobility is slowly coming back, and I still use a cane from time to time. Guess my cycling, rugby, and soccer refereeing days have caught up with me.

' The HMCS ESQUIMALT, HMCS SARNIA, U-190 in Halifax went very well. The Naval Ensign that flew from SARNIA during the recovery of ESQUIMALT survivors and casualties was flown from HMCS SACKVILLE and permanently presented to the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic. SACKVILLE members were great hosts. The navy provided a Glen Tug to take us to the vicinity of where ESQUIMALT was sunk. There we had short service, and wreaths were cast onto the waters. Prior to the commencement of a performance of the 2008 Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo, our group was recognized by the MC. We had tea with the mayor of the

Regional Municipality of Halifax, who issued a Proclamation regarding our visit. There was a great deal of interest on our visit by the media, and coverage went across Canada... When able I continue to research the fate of the vessels involved. Photos of this event are available should anyone be interested.'

Peter can be reached by email at – petcan@ca.inter.net, or by telephone at 613 836 5457 in Stittsville Ontario.

Bill Kavanagh trained as an Observer in Shearwater in 1955-56, the last course to train officers from the RN and RNVR. From his home in Connecticut, he sent several photographs of Eugene Ely flying a Curtiss Pusher taking off from the USS Birmingham on 14 November 1910. This is considered to be the first time an aircraft had flown off a warship. If you wish to see the whole set, send me an email or look it up using google.

Peter Lawson from Halifax has sent me a CD containing his book 'Royal Canadian Naval Air Service Flight Cadets', and has allowed me to make a few free copies, with some restrictions. If you wish a copy, please contact me. Peter said, *'I am pleased to provide this book at no cost to you. It is my way of promoting naval aviation during my retirement'*. Many thanks to Peter for his fine offer.

Rolfe Monteith had booked to attend the formal dinner at Greenwich for Fly Navy 100, along with **Geoff Johnson, Bob Stevens, and Bruce Vibert. Ross McBean** flew to London from Edmonton to attend the party at Buckingham Palace, and reported that he had been looked after well; however, he saw none of his old comrades in arms. Alas!

After reading my advertisement in Legion Magazine, a few former Fleet Air Arm called or emailed me asking for information, which I was glad to supply. **Thanks to Legion Magazine for providing that service.** [I send copies of this newsletter to the Legion branch to which I belong, North York 66.]

Mike McCall occasionally views the Military Obituaries of the London Daily Telegraph. One such obituaries with a Shearwater connexion was for **John Fairy**. Mike said,

‘Many naval aviators of my vintage [Shearwater Gunroom 1954-55] will recall that John was one of our social chums. He toiled at Fairey Aviation by the water doing the kind of donkey work that scions of British Industrial Families are assigned to before going back to “the ‘omeland” to run the company. He joined us in many of our runs and was an asset to the gunroom. And to Shearwater. The obit mentions that he learned to fly floatplanes while in Canada and then goes on to tell a lot about his aircraft restoration activities, his career an air transport pilot an as a highly regarded aviator. It seems that he didn’t go back into the family firm for any length of time. Maybe he just took the lolly and beat it. Some of your readers may recall this interesting guy. He seemed to do more interesting things the older he got. Which, come to think of it, seems to be the case [up to a point] with most of us.’

Roger McEachern, a former OM and member of JOATC #7, missed his regular visit to Toronto for the Blue Jay’s home opener, and is unlikely to be in Halifax for the final CNAG get-together: His travelling days outside Sudbury and Sault St Marie are becoming fewer and fewer. Roger never lost interest in the navy in particular or the armed forces in general. During the Cold War, he was working in Flin Flon, Manitoba, where there was an RCAF ‘Special Weather Station’ that was very hush hush. While dining in a restaurant with friends, one expounded a theory of what the Station really did. He figured that it was using some of the deep mine shafts in order to gather information about underground nuclear explosions from the USSR. After the meal, a gentleman approached them and said that they would be wise not to speculate on such matters in public. There was a large RCMP detachment in Flin Flon, so mum was the word.

Val McIntosh went to South Africa for several weeks. As well, she is trying to wind up McIntosh Interiors, but she is still receiving telephone calls. Quality sells itself, and lasts.

On a sad note, **Gord Moyer** spoke about his illness.

‘As you may have observed lately my speech has been slurred, my drinking hand shaky and my walk unsteady. You might well have been thinking old Gord is “one-over-the-eight” again! Not so! I have a valid excuse – a diagnosis of ALS {Lou Gehrig Disease} was

confirmed in November... I am now on the one-way course heading and as SOA varies with each individual, time to home port is unknown. I plan to attend...other functions as long as I can. Gord.

“Usque ad mortem bibendum”. [“Drink till you drop” – editor.]

Weldy Paton wrote about,

‘... some interesting events [that] happened. I think that I had mentioned that I had been invited to join the Dadelian Society as an associate member. It is an association of retired US military pilots, and they meet once a month at Luke AFB in the Phoenix area for dinner and a guest speaker, usually somebody that has just returned from the Gulf or Afghanistan. We have several USN naval aviators in our community including a 3 star admiral, “Dutch” Schultz who drives us to the meetings. [Great to have a 3 star drive when you go through the security gates!!]The last one I attended was a briefing by Lockheed on the new F-35 “Lightning II” joint strike fighter.

‘An amazing aircraft which is being built in 3 versions, the marines get the first production and theirs has vertical TO capability similar to the Harrier, the naval version has larger wings for carrier operation and there is an air force version. The good news is that Canada has ordered them. Third in line behind Israel and the Turks. The aircraft has stealth capability and with 43,000 lbs of thrust can carry 84,000 lbs of ordnance ... compare that to a WWII Lancaster or B-17. They had a cockpit simulator and one of the “heads up” helmets. It’s a whole different world out there.’

George Plawski’s Annual West Coast Mess Dinner.

Details of the mess dinner are available from George Plawski at:

George Plawski
401 – 2025 West 2nd Avenue
Vancouver BC V6J 1J6

Roger and Margaret Rioux wrote from BC that they had lost touch with many naval airmen, though they had organized two of the BC mainland reunions. Roger noted that,

'It is every easy to lose track of ex-members who leave the forces and disappears into Canada's wide spaces. I have been lucky to enough to be able to keep in contact to keep in contact with many of our old cronies through belonging to CNAG.'

Stephen Porrior is

'...researching an event that occurred in February 1959 for an article in the Shearwater Air Museum's "Warrior" magazine ...looking for Geoff Craven,... as well as any former VF 870 Squadron members who might be able to supply me with anecdotal information regarding the 'Ghosts. Please email me at – seafury1_flynavy@hotmail.com'. See also the comments under Ed Hallett earlier.

'That's life. When I did it well, I never heard of it, and when I did it ill, I never heard the end of it'. [From Ross Spiller and his father.]

Lionel Scovill saw Mike Langman's death notice in the Daily Telegraph. He remarked that Mike,

'...had not been well for some time, and gave up going to the Sussex 2 First Of The Month Meetings several years ago...My eldest grandson [son of my daughter Nicola] Lt. Joseph Verrecchia, RN, is currently the navigator of HMS Somerset, and has recently returned from "Operation Taurus", the large 2009 RN deployment to the Far East.' Thanks, Lionel.

Last year, **Alan Snowie** wrote,

'This year[2009] marks the 100th Anniversary of flight in Canada, and 2010 will be the centennial of the RCN. In order to promote my forthcoming book on Canadians in the RNAS 1914-1918, yours truly is putting together a flight across the country in a Nieuport replica aircraft.

'Also, after thirty plus years of viewing Canada from 30,000' I have long desired to see the land below 3,000'. ...The Nieuport has a cruise speed of 60 and a fuel range of 4 hours. She being a very weather-

dependent machine will mean that the dates on the flight schedule are not hard targets and will vary as we doddle from sea to sea.

'...The eastbound departure will take place from the Nanaimo Collishaw airport in BC during mid June [2009]. The title of the upcoming book is "Collishaw & Company", referring to our best-known First World War naval aviator, Raymond Collishaw. The Vancouver Island Military Museum in Nanaimo is helping with the launch. The cross-Canada will be completed at the former Shearwater Naval Air Station in Nova Scotia. Along the route it is hoped to visit as many aviation museums as time and travel permit. The Great War Flying Museum in Brampton is also a planned maintenance stop.

'The aircraft is a Nieuport 118PS, one of fourteen built by the Experimental Aircraft Association of Independence Oregon between 1999 and 2003. The 7/8 scale First World War machine was designed by Graham Lee of Alberta in 1984 and is the most popular of the 1914-1918 era reproduction airplanes. We now have three of these Oregon-built Viewports based in Bellingham, Washington, and our "mini Escadrille" is part of the local Heritage Flight Museum. Our pilots are members of EAA Chapter 404.

*'For Canada, the roots of the Nieuport go back to the Great War. **Redford "Red" Medlock** of Winnipeg was one of 936 Canadians who flew with the British RNAS during that conflict. On 21st May 1916, flying a Nieuport, he drove down two German aircraft. These were his fourth and fifth victories and established Medlock as not only Canada's first ace, but also the world's first naval ace. The Nieuport 118PS is flown in honour of this unheralded Canadian flyer. An en-route landing is planned at Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame at Wetaskiwin [AB] airfield to deliver a nomination for Medlock's possible induction in 2010. The Shearwater Aviation Museum and the Great War Flying Museum are both seconding this nomination.*

'Many First World War pilots christened their aircraft with the name of their lady friends [Some names were painted over and changed several times, I understand!] Nieuport 118PS will carry the nickname "ABBEY" as a subtle means of promoting the international non-profit organization Abbeyfield. There are over thirty Abbeyfield Societies in Canada and

nearly 900 worldwide. All are operated by volunteers and provide housing for our elders in non-institutional environments.

‘And, on the subject of sweethearts, my bride, Cynthia [she said I should add the adjective “long-suffering”] is very kindly driving the chase vehicle with tools, spare parts and towing an empty trailer. On reaching Shearwater we will dismount the wings and load up the airplane for a relaxing trip home.’

Thanks to **Tom Stauffer** for sending me the information. Allan’s trip was successful, though not without troubles, as would be normal in an endeavour of this magnitude. In a Christmas postscript, Allen mentioned a ‘*2014 Flying Circus of First World War aircraft across the continent, and April 2017 flights over Vimy Ridge in France.*’ I have no further information. FYI, Allan is the Chairman of Abbeyfield International. Thanks Allan, and well done.

Russ Spiller has been doing some travelling ‘down under’, including a trip to Cairns, Australia, done partly in a wheel chair, to attend his youngest son’s wedding. Unfortunately, he was unable to attend the RNZN naval air reunion. Russ has a request for,

‘A disc or tape or both of the USN carriers USS Admiral Nimitz, 80,000 tons -7,000 crew and 75+ aircraft], and sister ship the USS Ronald Regan. The Nimitz is in the Atlantic and Ronald Regan in Pacific. The latter, I think, has been mothballed.

Anyone knowing a source for these DVDs or VHS tapes can contact Russ at
5 Kennedy Place, Napier, North Island 4110, New Zealand, tel. 06 83555 48. Russ is not a computer user, but some of his family members probably have Internet access.

Geoff Stephenson graduated from the Observers School along with **Jeff Cowie, Fred Sherwood, Jerry Maloney, and Jack Walter**; and he keeps in touch with them all! From the UK he wrote,

‘I thought the parody of John Magee’s “High Flight” very clever [for a colonial whether US or Canuck!] and interestingly enough it came at a time when I was re-reading some aviation

*poetry...Incidentally, I flew my first familiarisation flight with **Russ Spiller** at Shearwater, so news of him is always welcome... I exchange the odd message from [**John**] **Hewer** from time to time.'*

Joe Sosnkowski received an email about women drivers, flashing red lights, and unmarked cars. A young woman driving somewhere in the USA was followed by an apparently unmarked police car with red flashing lights. Using her mobile phone, she called *77 and spoke to an agent about her dilemma: She was uncertain about pulling over. The agent ascertained that there were no unmarked cars in the area, told the women to keep driving, and sent other cars to intercept. The driver of the car was in fact a repeat offender, and now is probably 'doing time.' This system was said to be available in all of the US states, and will also work using 911.

The auto of **Buck Taylor** of Milton Ontario has the Veteran's plate '19 CAG', and 'bookends' of the White Ensign and Royal Canadian Legion.

Bruce Vibert, in a letter written some time ago, said,

There remain a fair number of former Swordfish aircrew in Britain: pilot, observer, and TAG. [In 1997] the RN asked us to help save the RN Historic Flight [RNHF] to survive. Many did so, in one form or another. A handful of us took to the road and spread the word by giving talks about the Swordfish. Today, I remain the only pilot, willing and able, to go wherever asked. That is what I am told by the RNHF. Needless to say, Dartmouth NS features in my talks, given its part in the history of the MAC-ships.'

Dave Walker is one of the RCAF officers who came to naval aviation in the 1960s, along with the late **Stu Smith** and others who flew in HS 50. Dave finished his aviation career with the Coast Guard in Newfoundland and Ottawa. There he ran in several marathons, placing first in the 10 k of the National Capital Marathon more than once. He recently moved to Brockville, but continues to visit his wife, Vi, who is permanently hospitalized in Kingston. Dave remembered the late **Jim Mills** as a good friend.

Jack Walters mentioned his old looker's deteriorating eyeballs, which I hope that I am accommodating by using a new and larger font this year. I'll keep trying until I get it right. He also said that he and **Venetia**,

*'...see the **Cravens** and the **Hewers** fairly frequently and run into the **Sherwoods** every so often. We and the **Hewers** and **Sherwoods** were at **Betty Cairney's** funeral [in 2009]. I attended **Dick Niven's** services [in the spring of 2009] He was a director/navigation officer in **Magnificent** and I think, in **Bonaventure**. Knew him better after the **RCN**. He was associated with the **Ancient Naval Aviators** hereabouts. He still had the dagger in his back that [a certain admiral] had thrust there many long years ago.*

*'Vanetia and I have gone to the "Shearwater bash" aka the "Storr's frolic" for the past several years. **Jake Kennedy** shows up regularly from California as well as a few out-of-towners. Took **Kam Maxwell** to play golf at my club last year. He seemed to enjoy himself. **Norm Bridge** is also a member.'*

Sir Graham Wilkinson, son of the late **LCdr D L Wilkinson**, a former CO of 803 squadron, [later VF 870], wrote to me about the trophy that his father had donated for '*annual competition between RCN air squadrons and ships equipped with surface to surface missiles.*' He had been trying to find out where the trophy was and what was being done about it. Unfortunately, he had been unable to contact the museum, having been given an incorrect address. I was able to re-direct him, and he and the curator, **Christine Dunphy**, are now in touch. Later he wrote back saying,

*'It seems a shame that the Canadian Air forces were not able to find a means of continuing to award the trophy. It is a beautiful replica of a **Seafire** designed and made by **Mappin & Webb** of London as far as I recall. I have photographs from the presentation in the early 1960s!*

*'I have a case-full of my father's papers which have a number of photographs and other mementoes from his **Fleet Air Arm** service- it would be interesting for somebody who was with him at the*

formation of 803 in 1946 to have a look. [Emphasis mine – Ed.]
Sadly my father died in 1972 at the age of 52.'

Anyone interested in viewing the mementoes could contact Sir Graham by email at – dgbw.ubf@btinternet.com, or by telephone at 01428 683858 [home] or 07788 595074 [mobile].

William ‘Bill’ ‘Steve’ Stephenson lives in Toronto where he wrote,

*‘I’ve just unearthed my RNAS pilot log books. Startled to find what an odd variety of the old Fleet Air Arm planes I flew: from Stringbags to Sea Furies, and in between, Hurricanes, Seafires, Hellcats, Blenheim IVs and oddities like machines adapted to tow gliders as targets for battleship gunners. I was a kid when I went in, and I was a kid when I came out, to the extent that I failed the motor-vehicle driving test four times – intimidated by having “an old man” sitting beside me and watching my every move. I loved the loneliness of single seaters where nobody looked over my shoulder. Cannot imagine how I had the nerve to fly the Blenheims with crews uneasily watching me – I was then with a Fleet Requirements Unit [FRU] at Scapa Flo and would simply read the pilots handbooks before take off, without further instruction. I lost a Seafire landing on a “baby” carrier and a Hellcat on being catapulted from another. I refused a permanent RN commission after our chief pilot in my last squadron, **Nigel Fisher**, son of the great **Admiral Fisher**, [who was pretty old when he had Nigel] dived into the drink. I felt I’d stretched the elastic far enough, and saw no long term future – a wise decision, because those who opted to continue were dead pilots during the ensuing few years.’*

Cal Withers wrote from London, Ontario,

‘I was formerly an LSRD3 on VS 881 Guppies...after my discharge in 1956 I worked for Philco, making the radar sets for Trackers. [Later] I moved over to De-Havilland and installed the sets in the Trackers. I even got to test one of the sets in flight over Toronto. In another earlier occasion flew off the Maggie, sitting in the observer mate’s position, again doing a flight test. I got to see Maggie down below through the little window in the door. Lots of fun!

Cards, emails, notes, telephone calls and brief letters etc were received from literally scores of readers, mostly asking to have the newsletter sent electronically. Many thanks to you all.

MARITIME AVIATION, SHEARWATER, FAA AND OTHER NAVAL OR AVIATION NEWS

CELEBRATING 65 YEARS OF CANADIAN NAVAL AVIATION – CNAG ATLANTIC 41ST REUNION.

The 2010 reunion will be held in the Marriot Halifax Harbourfront Hotel from Friday 8th October to Sunday 10th October, hosted by Atlantic Chapter. Registration forms are available at individual chapters, and on the CNAG website: www.ncf.ca/cnag. The registration fee is \$130.00 for the full three days, but lower fees are available for parts of the reunion. The hotel telephone numbers are, toll free 800 943 676, local calls 902 421 1700. Quote Canadian Naval Air Group when reserving. You can also use the hotel's website for reservations. It is: www.marriot.com/reservations/availability. Our GROUP code is 'cngcnga'.

NB. In early May, the Marriott's telephone reservation service told me that there were no more rooms available at the reunion rate; however, there are several nearby hotels, including two Deltas, the Citadel Halifax, and a Radisson, as well as an inexpensive Super 8 in Dartmouth only a short walk from the ferry dock.

2010 THE CANADIAN NAVAL CENTENARY.

Many of the events in this celebration occurred earlier in the year, so the below does not cover them. It is a list of those that are ongoing or still to come. A more current list of events being held in your own community is available on line at www.navy.forces.gc.ca/centennial.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
April to October. Various	Sailors and song	

June 9-14 Victoria	International Fleet Review	
June 13-14 Hamilton	Canadian International Military Tattoo	
June 28- July 2	International Fleet Review	Halifax
June 30 – July 8	Royal Nova Scotia International Navy Tattoo	Halifax
July 3	Pacific Coast Terminal Open House and Navy Ship Viewing	Port
Moody		
September 2-7 Toronto	Toronto Fleet Week and International Air Show	
June to September Various	Centennial air shows	

[Details of the Canadian Naval Air Group participation are shown later.]

Canadian Geographic magazine has a programme to connect Canadian naval vessels with communities across the country. More information can be found at - www.canadiangeographic.ca/navy.

Among other memorabilia availability are **Wm Hall VC** stamps, other stamps showing various naval activities and ships, and a coin showing the RCN Memorial, HMCS Sackville. Possibly the most unusual event was the production of Gilbert and Sullivan's '**HMCS**' Pinafore, set in HMCS NIOBE in 1910 in Halifax, and starring VADM [ret'd] Duncan Miller as 'the ruler of the King's navy.' Pinafore was presented in Halifax, Wolfville, Truro, Pictou, and Annapolis Royal in May this year.

'Executive curl' reinstated, and Sea Service Insignia. On 2 May 2010, the Minister of National Defence announced the return of the former curl on the top stripe of naval officers' rank stripes. [When RCN Chaplains were first given naval ranks in order to conform to the practices of the army and the air force, some of them wore stripes without the curl, on the grounds that they were not 'executives'. **Bill Howie** was one of them.]

In addition, the new Sea Service Insignia [SSI] will be given to sailors, airmen, and soldiers who spend long times at sea. Four levels have been designated, the first after having spent 365 days at sea.

These changes were made to honour the Centennial, [Thanks to **Cliff Chaulk** for that update.]

CNAG Participation in the Navy Centennial. In December, **Peter Milson**, whose has achieved wonders for us, sent an update by email,

‘We have seven CNAG 2010 projects in place and an eighth is well under way – a collaboration between Vintage Wings of Canada, the Canada Aviation Museum and CNAG to sponsor cross country flight of the VWC Corsair in Hampton Grey’s markings, along with medals [and possibly a Swordfish on occasion] to punctuate key Navy 2010 events as the fleet review, the Battle of Atlantic ceremonies at the national Cenotaph, and the special Hampton Gray ceremony we are planning for 16 May [2010]. It is going to be quite a year.’

NS International Air Show. It will be held at Shearwater over the weekend of 11-12 September, with an expected attendance of 30,000 or more. I understand that there might be both a Sea Fury and a Corsair in the flying display. The organizers expect that about 17 aircraft will perform in the air, and about 24 more aircraft will be on display on the ground.

No. 6 JAOBTC Reunion. The reunion will be held in Dartmouth, NS, 29 June to 4 July 2010 at the Super 8 Hotel, 65 King Street, Dartmouth, NS, tel. 902 463 9520. Included in the programme are the Fleet Review on 29-30 June, Shearwater Air Museum tour and BarBQ at the Officers Mess on 2 July, attendance at the Royal Nova Scotian International Tattoo and dinner at Dofskys on 3 July, and a church service at the Shearwater Chapel, at which a JAOBTC 7 course tile will be dedicated to the SAM Wall of Honour, followed by a reception in the museum, all on 4 July. For further information contact,

Ken Brown
104 – 30 Brookdale Cr
Dartmouth, NS B3A 4T7
Tel. 902 463 2832
Email – nsfsna@eastlink.ca.

Latest developments in Shearwater. In a column in the Mail Star on 30 January 2010, entitled 'Public input sought on Shearwater Use', reporter Amy Pugsley Fraser noted that the public had had very little input on the fate of the base. Those who were involved in the community were hoping to see more high school and recreational facilities for the community. Critics say that the space involved, along the farthest runway, is too close to the current heliport and the Imperial Refinery. It could also interfere with a proposed connecting road between Cole Harbour Road and the new Russell Lake West interchange.

With respect to the flying activities at the base, the Cormorants are arriving; however, the Cormorant's detractors are saying that the aircraft will have LESS endurance and need MORE maintenance than the Sea Kings.

In August the Shearwater Community hosted a carnival at the Shearwater Fitness and Sports Centre to coincide with the community's receipt of the **2009 Lieutenant-Governor's Community Spirit Award**. Shearwater is considered to be one of the top communities in Nova Scotia, despite '*some of the challenges associated with the military lifestyle.*' [From the Dartmouth-HRM East Community Herald, 31 August 2009.]

Former HMCS Cormorant. The ship has been sold to a Texas business man. He is believed to be planning to use the ship on a research contract. [From Beverley Ware, the Chronicle Herald 22 September 2009.]

CNAG 'Quinte Quest' Reunion. The fortieth Reunion of the Canadian Naval Air Group was hosted by the Sea King Chapter in Trenton Ontario last September. More than 200 members attended. The CNAGer of the year award was given to **O K [Bud] Maclean** for his work with the Canadian Aviation Hall of Fame in Alberta. The Hall awards its 'Belt of Orion' to honour organization, groups, societies or associations that have made outstanding contributions to the advancement of aviation in Canada. Bud' was able to convince the Hall to include Canadian Naval Aviation as a belt holder in 2009.

Toronto Aerospace Museum. The former Toronto Aerospace Museum has been re-named as the *Canadian Air & Space Museum*. Despite recent problems, the Museum is back in good managerial and financial hands.

Their website is available at www.casmuseum.org, and they can be reached by phone at 416 638 6078.

Sydney NS Airport. The airport has been renamed the J.A.D. McCurdy Sydney airport after the pilot who was the first person to fly a plane in the British Empire, 23 February 1909, in the Silver Dart.

It's SUX! Sioux Gateway Airport for Sioux City Iowa carries the designator SUX. But where are SAX, SEX!,SIX, and SOX? Has any reader seen other strange designators?

News of special interest to FLEET AIR ARM readers in Canada

[Mainly from the FAA Officers' Association 'News Sheet' edited by John Shears, September 2009 and January 2010 editions. **NB**, the listing of deaths does not contain all FAA personnel who died during the period, but is mainly those with some connexion to Canada.]

Fly Navy 100 [FN 100] and Afterwards. The activities in the UK were very successful, and a number of former FAA members living in the UK or Canada took part in some of them. Among them was **Ross McBain** from Edmonton, who called me with information after he returned. In answer to my offer of information in The Legion and Warrior, a few others contacted me in person, or by telephone and email, and later received promotional material. Others, such as **John Arnold** and **Glenn Cook**, visited some of the sites while in the UK. There were only a few activities in Canada, notably **Al Snowie's** flight across Canada in a WW I aircraft, and CNAG's letter of congratulations to the Fly Navy 100 group.

The Fly Navy organization has not completely disbanded, but is still alive and well, working to ensure that the Fleet Air Arm's legacy not be forgotten. In future newsletters, I'll continue to include information on their progress.

Fly Navy Heritage Trust. [From their January 2010 brochure.] ‘The Fleet Air Arm’s Heritage Trust is working on an ambitious Development programme to create a vibrant Shop Window of Naval Aviation bringing together all aspects of our Naval Aviation heritage, past, present and future, to promote the importance of air power from the sea to a maritime nation. **The project**, which will build on the success of the Fleet Air Arm Museum at Yeovilton as a national attraction, also aims to inspire, excite and educate young people particularly students of engineering and technology... **The plan**, which includes augmenting the Royal Navy Historic Flight with a mix of additional iconic aircraft to more fully represent naval aviation through the decades, is almost entirely dependent on income generated by the Fly Navy Heritage Trust. Commodore Bill Covington and his fundraising team are planning to make “new” aircraft available to the Flight over the coming years taking the Flight from the early Swordfish through to jets and helicopters... The Fly Navy Heritage Trust relies on a body of members, supporters and volunteers to keep our heritage alive. A standing order of [GBP20] a year means a significant amount to the trust and will help assure the future of YOUR heritage...With many Naval aviation anniversaries in the years ahead it is an exciting time to join. For a supporter’s joining form, please contact the Fly Navy Heritage Trust email office@fnht.co.uk.

Remaining Events in 2010 are

10 July Supporters’ Marquee at RNAS Yeovilton 70th Anniversary Air Day.

18 September Charity Flying Day RNAS Yeovilton

11 November 70th Anniversary of the Battle of Taranto

Date tbc – FTHT Grand Raffle and Supporters’ Party

Mike Morgan, recently retired from Agusta Westland, visited the Falkland Islands, and reported that,

‘..veterans of ’82 [can] take a an Indulgence Flight to the Falklands [GBP 75 each way] on a space available basis on the Air Bridge and organized through the SAMA ’82 office. And one can stay in the newly constructed self-catering facility in Stanley called “Liberty Lodge”. Also booked through SAMA 82. It is free, and you

don't need to be a member to stay there. [Italics mine – Ed.]... As well as visiting the memorial to the Sheffield on Sea Island, I had quiet moments at all the battle memorials and cemeteries.'

The **Navy List** is now available online, though it is still incomplete. Data for years earlier than 1978 are still being added. You can find the website at – **NavyListResearch.co.uk**. **NB**. There is a modest charge for the service.

Ben Reese, recently deceased, was noted for landing a Swordfish ON FLOATS on HMS Ark Royal, and for his participation in the sinking of the French Fleet. A former shipmate of his, **Al Burgham**, a New Zealander now living in Kingston, Ontario, was mentioned with respect to his shooting down of a Junkers 290 bomber over the Bay of Biscay, while he flew a Sea Hurricane from HMS Nairana. His 'kill' was one of the last by a Sea Hurricane of 835 Squadron, which re-equipped with Grumman Wildcats shortly afterwards.

After the late **Mike Langman** returned to the UK from service in the RCN, he was seconded to manage the Sultan of Brunei's new airport. When he left, the airport named a new fire engine after him.

Swordfish restoration. BAE Systems is restoring a Swordfish, first flown in 1934, at their 'Military IR Solutions' facility at Brough as part of the heritage programme to help preserve the UK's military history.

Royal Marine Takes Charge of RNAS Yeovilton. HMS Heron, for the first time in more than 70 years, is now commanded by Brigadier **Mark Noble, RM**. He is charged with,

'... providing aircraft from both Commando and Lynx Helicopter Forces to all the major operational theatres around the world, including Afghanistan and the Arabian Gulf... Brigadier Logan said "I have served in Yeovilton 3 times and feel privileged and enthusiastic to return as Commanding Officer."'

HMS Ocean [was]

‘deployed on TAURUS 09 the Amphibious Task Group deployed to the Mediterranean and Far East ...Sailing for a Five Powers Defence Arrangement Exercise in the South China Seas we had the opportunity to hold a memorial service in the vicinity of the wrecks of HMSs Repulse and Prince of Wales.’

Recently deceased FAA members and associates

W.L. Armstrong [veteran of the attack on the Bismarck], Stanley Theyer Brand, J E Ben Breese, Alan ‘Doc’ Halladay, Alan ‘Al’ Heckling, Mike Langman, Edgar Lee [a member of the ‘Channel Dash’ heroes], Stephen ‘Sammy’ Mearns, and R M ‘Mac’ Samples [another of the ‘Channel Dash’ heroes].

For other passings, please see the RCN/CF/Canadian list of ‘Gone but not forgotten’ near the end of this newsletter.

Books of Interest.

ALLISON David. *Flying Navy. New Zealanders who flew in the Fleet Air Arm.* Available from: Flying Navy, PO Box 31-240, Milford, North Shore, Auckland 0714, New Zealand. Cost is approximately NZ\$50, and proceeds will go to the New Zealand Fleet Air Arm Museum. Recommended by **Russ Spiller.**

BROWN J David, HOBBS David, [Editor] *Carrier Operations in WWII.* Seaforth Publishing 2009. ISBN 978 1 84832 042. Price GBP 40. ‘This one book is a must for any researcher studying the development of carrier operations’.

CHILDS Nick. *The Age of Invincible. The ship that defined the modern day Royal Navy.* Pen and Sword Maritime 2009. ISBN 978 1 84415 8755. ‘A concise account of the RN since the demise of CVO-1, and the part the INVINCIBLE played in it and in shaping the future navy’.

CLIFFORD Alan. *Rating Pilot RN.* Third edition. ISBN 978 0 9562524 0 1. Approximate price GBP 10. ‘Fascinating and easy to read.’

GARDINER Ian. *The Flatpack Bombers. The Royal Navy and the Zeppelin Menace*. Pen and Sword Aviation 2009. Price GBP 19.99. ISBN 978 1 84884 071 3. 'The story of our forbearers is a ripping, gripping, rollercoaster of a yarn.'

PAYNE Donald, *Swordfish – from the Cockpit*. Tenth edition, Ad hoc Publications 2008. Price GBP 19.99. ISBN 978 0 946958 68 9. 'This book is thoroughly recommended'.

RALPH, Wayne, "*Aces, Warriors, and Wingmen*". No further details, but highly recommended by Rodger McEachern.

SMITH Peter C. *Eagles War, HMS Eagle 1939 – 1942*. Price GBP 7.99. ISBN 978 0 90757 753 3. '...an immaculately researched book telling the story of the Eagle's frantic participation in the first three years of World War II... This is a very fine account of a very fine ship...'

News for Former CNAG Tracker Members

Bob Campbell passed away in April after a long fight with complications associated with renal failure. His family were all near his bedside. June, among all her other woes, was in a leg cast; and she and Bob had been in separate hospitals during the last week of his life. She was released from hospital only hours before his death. Deb and I attended the visitation at a funeral home in Ancaster, leaving a sympathy card on behalf of CNAG.

Ray Kneebone also died, but I have no further information.

Robert Cornish is a frequent contributor to local papers. In January he wrote about litigation against the police, and his experience as a motor cycle police officer in Toronto. The letter ran under the heading of 'Litigious era discourages Good Samaritans'.

'... fifty years ago...I recall being hailed at Yonge and Dundas streets by a motorist whose wife was in an advanced stage of childbirth.. Without further thought, I told him to follow me, and took him through several red lights, stopping traffic by hand signals, and got the couple there in time...'

In those day, nobody would have thought of suing the police or hospital because we didn't wait for an ambulance... Our emergency services have been hampered by rules that have replaced the natural sense of human compassion that is the hallmark of a civilized society.'

I reached **Fred Rol and Joe Mazmanian** in April, and both were battling with cancer. **June and Paul Fleming** had just come back from an extended trip south. Paul is still having dermatological problems.

We met **Marion Marsden** in the Toronto subway this spring. She seemed to be happy and healthy, and is now once again a new grandmother. Her email address is in the annex.

George Hotham has settled down to a new place in London. He as also joined the local Naval Club, and planned to march in the 2010 Battle of the Atlantic parade. He is still undecided about joining the computer and email world, but we discussed some options. His current address is in the annex.

Several members of Sea King chapter attended get-togethers from Etobicoke to Oshawa. Further get-togethers after the close-out of CNAG are quite likely.

George West and Ed Janusas attended the Dutch-Canadian celebration in Hamilton in May. George is on the Board of Directors of the Canadian Air & Space Museum, listed as 'Representing for the Canadian Armed Forces.'

John and Mary Bailey, along with George West, are active in the Canadian Air and Aerospace Museum [formerly the Toronto Aviation Museum], as well as the Fleet Air Arm Association.

Terminology corner.

Unless otherwise noted, aviation terms are from 'Words on the Wing' by **Tom Langeste**, and naval terms are from 'Origins of Sea Terms' by **John G Rogers**.

NATO Standard. Coffee with cream and sugar.

Navigators' union. These so-called unions sprang up within RAF Bomber Command. Eric Partridge, [well known by graduates of Staff Schools and Colleges] said, 'Mindful of the image they had as "second string" airmen, Bomber Command navigators made it their duty to remind the pilots that they were not the font of all flying knowledge, nor the sources of all skill', etc.

Newzies. During WW1 in the RAF, an occasional nickname for New Zealanders.

Neaped. Said of a vessel that runs aground on a spring tide, and must wait through the neap tides, which have little variation.

Norwegian piano. The nickname for the foghorn of a sailing ship.

Questions for 2010.

1. What Canadian seaman was once a USN seaman, and later earned one of the British Empire's highest decorations for valour?
2. What fuel did Rudolf Diesel use to power the engine that won him top honours at the 1900 World Fair?
3. How can **Ross Riddell**, a life-long bachelor, have three sons?
4. In both the original and the most recent version of the movie King Kong, the ship taking the hunters to Skull Island has a name with an RCN connexion. What is the name of the ship?
5. What Scottish officer joined the RCN from the Canadian Army after qualifying as a pilot?

CONGRATULATIONS AND BEST WISHES TO -

James 'Rocky' Campbell and Jane Campbell on their 55th Wedding Anniversary. Rocky will be remembered as a DC 3 pilot in the RCAF's 101 Communications Flight at Shearwater, and a member of VU 32 when the aircraft was transferred to the Maritime Commander. Also Bob and Marion Deluca on their 50th Wedding Anniversary. And to **Marilyn Gurney** on her retirement as Director of Marcom Museum. She was very helpful to SAM when it started up.

Following **Rod Bays'** suggestion that we thank each other often, my personnel thanks go to reader **Dan Ogle** for helping me through some rough times in 1977.

Thanks to the those who helped with the newsletter, especially my proofreaders. Any errors that you find are mine. To all of you I send my best wishes, and my thanks for your support. May the next twelve months be happy, healthy, and prosperous; and may you live long.

Yours aye,

ANNEX

For the most up-to-date and accurate information, especially prices, dates and times, you should check direct with the persons or organizations shown. I have no financial interest in any of the organizations mentioned, but I do support organizations that are friendly to our naval air community.

Jet Aircraft Museum [JAM]. This museum, located in London Ontario, is about two years old, and is 'a not-for-profit foundation that has as its primary purposes the acquisition, [and] display of jet aircraft, focusing primarily but not exclusively on aircraft operated by the Canadian Air Force.' ...The Museum owns a fleet of six ex-Canadian Forces Canadair CT-133 Silver Stars. They have teamed with the **International Test Pilots School [ITPS]** 'to bring basic and advanced jet training to its members.'

The Director of Flight can be reached by phone at 519 457 3625, by email at –www.jetaircraftmuseum.ca, or by regular mail at 2465 Aviation Lane, London, ON, N5V 3Z9 Canada. [Thanks to **George Hotham** for the info.]

Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia [FAAAA]. In a letter to the Fleet Air Arm Officers' Association in the UK, **Theo Bushe-Jones** of the FAAAA Welfare Office wrote,

'[We] would appreciate any information that the FAAOA members could provide with reference to disability claims specifically related to lower back injuries/complaints from any air-crew who undertook carrier based launches and recovery...the FAAAA is endeavouring to collate as

much information as we can on individual claims to establish a position on them. Many of our colleagues are struggling to have such disabilities recognized, and accepted, by DVA. Anything we can do help would be greatly appreciated by all and be of invaluable guidance in the future.'

They include a list of criteria, which is too lengthy to reproduce here; however, you could get more information by emailing Commodore **M D R Winston**, at – winstonj@bigpond.net, or write to **Keith Taylor, Hon. Secretary, FAAAA WA Division, 26 Hefron Street, Mount Helena, Western Australia, 6082**. You can also contact me direct, and I can read the entire extract. I recall that the late **Fred Goodfellow** was involved in similar matters.

VIP and RCNBTF. Any reader in need of help should consider Veterans Affairs Canada's programme called VIP. It is intended to make it easier for frail veterans to stay in their homes. It is NOT means tested, but you must be a client of VAC to apply. Also, the RCN Benevolent has funds in small amounts that can help former RCN members and their families who need assistance. It can be reached by phone at 1 888 557 9777 or by email at - rcnbtf@sympatico.ca.

Answers to the 2010 questions.

1. **William N Hall., VC.** See *The Canadian Encyclopaedia* Year 2000 Edition, page 1037 column 1.
2. **Peanut oil.** See *Climate Change*, 2008 edition, Charles Henson Rough Guides, London, England.
3. According to Ross, he was able to adopt three school-age brothers whom no one else was prepared to adopt.
4. The name of the ship to Skull Island was '**Venture.**' [I saw both the original and the most recent versions recently to confirm this.]
5. **Sheila [Scott] Davis.** [Yes, it was a trick question.]

Generous financial assistance or assistance in kind was received from

—
anonymous, Ted Davis, Ian Hamilton, George Hotham, and Ken Power. For any one I missed acknowledging, please accept my apologies. So far this year, contributions are down markedly; however, before the end of the year I should know the impacts of the

new Harmonized Sales Tax and the offsetting use of electronic mailings. Funding is not an issue for me.

GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN.

Anne Allen [spouse of Jock], ‘Lance’ Appleford MD, GC ‘Shan’ Baudoux DSO DSC RCAF [an important figure in the early days of Maritime Air Operations], Ross Campbell [former RCN and Ambassador, and lecturer at the Command and Staff College], Jacques Caron, Brian Cartwright, John Clarkson [in San Diego, as reported by Don Crowe], Mike Considine, Paul Collins, Jean Cormack [wife of Bruce], Frank Down, Admiral Bob Falls, John Fairy, Roger Fink, Peter Fortier, Peter Gardner, Bob ‘Windy’ Geale, BGen K R Greenaway RCAF/CF [pioneer in Arctic air navigation], Clement Gumbrill, Commodore W Hayes, Clarence Hewens, Gerry Hill, Eileen Church Hutton, Jack W Jackson, Ray Kneebone, Dave Leaves, Lou Leblanc, ‘Darky’ Lowe, Paul ‘Moose’ McCulloch, John Windsor McIntosh, Gerry McMillen, Rob’t W Munday, C J ‘Paddy’ ‘O’Connell, Bruce Oland, Rob’t ‘Pee-wee’ Rees, Doug Robinson, Colin Shaw, Beryl Sheedy, R M Steele, LCol John Toye, Major R Voas USAF [killed in action - Deb’s cousin], Mike Wasteneys [in Mexico in 2008], Gerry Watson, RAdm Rob’t Welland and Kenneth Wiltshire.

The losses this year have been many. For some luminaries the reporting was extensive and international e.g. Bob Falls, Bruce Oland and Bob Geale. One passing that was less noted outside Alberta, but is equally note worthy is that of Commander Roger Fink, GM. The following is from the Red Deer Advocate’s article ‘Local war hero succumbs to cancer’, by Matthew Gauk.

‘Red Deer has lost a quite, unassuming hero. Roger Fink, died on Friday [February 12, 2010] at age 88, after a battle with cancer. He leaves behind a wife, five daughters, and a son.

Fink, one of only 77 Canadians to receive the Commonwealth’s George Medal for exceptional bravery, co-piloted a helicopter in daring rescue of 21 crewmen off a shipwreck below 900-foot Cape Breton cliffs in 1955.

“The only way they could get on the ship, was that they had to do a three-point landing, where you kind of put a couple wheels on the deck and the other wheels aren’t,” said Michael Dawe, a long-time family friend and curator of history at the Red Deer Museum and Art Gallery.

“At some point the rotor blades of the helicopter were only about two feet away from the cliff in the high wind, How they didn’t smash against the cliff, I don’t know.”

Fink never really spoke of the incident with Dawe, even when questioned, other than joking that they even got the ship’s dog and cat out of the wreck of the SS Kismet II, and saying he was just ‘doing my job.’

“ I guess that’s what happened” said Dawe. “If you’re a true hero, generally you don’t need to brag about it.”

After the international media publicized the rescue Fink and were given the [LCdr J H Beeman] were given the non-wartime George Medal by Queen Elizabeth II when she visited Canada in 1967.

...Dawe said it’s important for Red Deer residents to recognize individuals like Fink. “I think fortunately in the last few years, we’ve become more and more aware of people who have served their country and did really remarkable things. Here’s an unassuming person from our community who did something of historical significance, and I would hate to think that their passing would go without comment.”

Mary Fink, his widow, wrote to say that the naval museum in Calgary phoned her for some information about artefacts. Although they are currently in the Red Deer Museum, the artefacts may go to Calgary

In his Ottawa days, Roger was involved in the selection of the Sea King helicopter and in marrying it to the DDHs. According to someone who knew him well, he was stung when the large Sea King was called ‘Fink’s folly’, but persisted, saying, ‘It’s big, but it will do

the job.' And forty years later it is still doing the many jobs that it has been given.

As for his reticence about discussing earlier days, it was close to sixty-five years after it happened that Mary first heard of his mid-air collision in a Seafire! As a final note, Roger's professional and college associates always remarked on his skill as a writer and speaker.

Address changes or corrections, including emails* and new readers**.

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Tel.

+44795 282 5960. [Oct to May, otherwise see next]

OR

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NB. I plan to send the newsletter by electronic mail means to those who have provided email addresses unless I hear or have heard from you otherwise. If you haven't sent your email address, please do so: It will save me both funds [a small problem] and pain [an increasing problem].

Nevertheless, anyone who would prefer a paper copy rather than an email one can let me know, and I'll gladly send one.