

**the**  
**OBSERVAIR**  
**Ottawa Chapter Newsletter**  
**Canadian Aviation Historical Society**



Volume 52, Number 4

April 2015

## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

As many of our members may have heard, Avro *Lancaster* Mk. 10AR KB882 that has been languishing outside the Edmundston, New Brunswick airport will be going to the Alberta Aviation Museum (AAM) in Edmonton, Alberta. According to AAM, KB882 will be restored to taxiing condition and kept in the colours she currently wears, the colours she wore when she was retired from service with the RCAF in 1964.

This is welcome news for those of us interested in Canada's post-war aviation heritage. KB882 is soon to be the sole Canadian *Lancaster* left in post-war colours (Greenwood Aviation Museum is repainting their *Lancaster* and shortening the AR nose).



RCAF *Lancaster* KB882 in Edmundston, NB

KB882 was built by Victory Aircraft and flew 12 operational sorties with No. 428 Squadron during the Second World War. After the war, she was one of three *Lancasters* to be taken out of storage and converted into the long-nose *Lancaster* Mk. 10AR or Arctic Reconnaissance variant. The Mk. 10AR was equipped with the latest equipment for aerial photography, navigation, and electronic intelligence (ELINT).

KB882 epitomises the unsung rolls performed by the post-war RCAF. She was used in testing, tactical and aerial photography, mapping, ice reconnaissance of the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the Arctic, ELINT and other intelligence gathering missions, training, maritime patrol, and in one instance, long range escort for a DHC-4 *Caribou*. KB882 operated out of bases across Canada (with the exception of the West Coast), including flying out of her future home, Edmonton, Alta. Ottawa was her home twice in her life; once when she flew with the Central Experimental and Proving Establishment and later with No. 408 Squadron. Having had the chance to see KB882 in Edmundston several years ago, I look forward to seeing her again in Edmonton; this time restored to her former glory.

Kyle Huth, Chairman

*The Observair* is the newsletter of the Ottawa Chapter, Canadian Aviation Historical Society and is available with membership. Membership fees are payable in September. Any material for *The Observair* Newsletter should be directed to the Editor, Colin Hine. All matters relating to membership should be directed to the Secretary/Treasurer: Mat Joost.

Kyle Huth  
Mathias Joost  
Colin Hine  
Don MacNeil  
Hugh Halliday  
George Skinner  
Erin Gregory  
Bill Clark

Chairman  
Secretary/Treasurer  
Newsletter Editor  
Program convener  
Official Greeter  
Museum Liaison  
Research Group  
Refreshments

## PAST MEETING

### Erin Gregory and Cédric St-Amour – *What's happening at the Museum? Exciting events and opportunities upcoming at CASM*

Thirty seven people attended the 26 March meeting in CASM's Bush Theatre to hear CASM Assistant Curator Erin Gregory and Coordinator, Volunteer Services, Cédric St-Amour, provide details of plans and exciting events upcoming at the Canada Aviation and Space Museum. While attendance was not as high as we have seen at some meetings this year, there was no lack of interest and enthusiasm from the audience; likely in part due to the friendly and relaxed manner of the two speakers at the podium.

Cédric St-Amour noted that there is a great relationship between CASM and the Ottawa Chapter of CAHS. He encourages chapter members to consider volunteering opportunities at the museum. Volunteers with the Canada Aviation and Space Museum help bring the artefacts to life for museum visitors by sharing stories, personal experiences and historical facts related to the collection. CASM is also happy to welcome volunteers for island hosting on the exhibition floor.

The minimum volunteer time commitment is only 3 hours per month (approx. 40 hours per year). Individuals can determine their own schedules during museum business hours and in exchange, CASM offers many "perks" including free admission and parking as well as discounts at the boutique and special invitation to museums events.

Currently the Volunteer program has some 160 volunteers who contribute over 20,000 hours per year to CASM operations. CAHS Ottawa Chapter members are invited to join a productive team and to help make a difference in the visitors' experience! For further information or to sign-up, members can contact Cédric St-Amour Volunteer Coordinator at: 613-998-0357 [cst-amour@technomuses.ca](mailto:cst-amour@technomuses.ca)



Cédric St-Amour © Rod Digney

Erin Gregory's presentation outlined recent events at the museum, some interesting upcoming events, developments under way, and future plans for the museum that are targeted at enhancing the visitors' experience.

During the 2015 March Break CASM hosted some interesting events including a gaming workshop, *Minecraft: Building a Space Shuttle* and a Lego contest, *Build your own Space Station*. Both events were sellouts and the Lego contest was the largest ever. There is clearly a lot of interest being shown toward space related activities and some of CASM's ongoing developments are focussed on space.

The 14<sup>th</sup> annual Doors Open Ottawa event June 6 and 7, 2015, pays homage to Ottawa's history, culture, and architecture. This year the Canada Aviation and Space Museum is on the list. It will feature tours of the Museum floor as well as the Reserve Hangar and it's free. On top of this of course is the annual Canada Day Open House with free admission including hangar tours.



Erin Gregory © Rod Digney

There are several musical fixtures on the calendar this season. Further details are available on the CASM web site <http://casmuseum.techno-science.ca/en/>.

Dutch Air Force Band – Sun. 24 May 2015

Centraires Concert Band — Here Comes the Sun 31 May 2015

Central Band of the Canadian Armed Forces — Up, Up, and Away, Father's Day, 21 June 2015

The Museum is working on development of a new interpretive approach to presentation of exhibits in order to enhance the visitor experience and reach new audiences. In particular it is hoped to attract more young people. This will include an interpretive plan that is family-friendly, accessible, and visually striking; an approachable experience that puts individual aircraft in context.



## Chris Hadfield's Sokol Suit



Chris Hadfield's space Suit © CASM

Erin outlined some of the ongoing work on some of the Museum's exhibition space. Work and planning is ongoing in several areas including:

- The Early Aviation and First World War Islands;
- A new space for Space exhibits including;
- Chris Hadfield's *Sokol Suit* and
- A new exhibition of the *International Space Station (ISS)*.

She pointed out some of the challenges in moving and displaying some of the aircraft artifacts; highlighting the high risk of damage. One First World War aircraft, the Sopwith *Snipe*, was damaged recently when being moved from its suspended location above the island. Suspension had weakened the structure over time; there was structural damage to the aircraft and to the skin fabric that has to be replaced. This repair and restoration project is now well advanced.

Also positioning or relocation of artifacts is often constrained by a number of factors, one of them being the difficulty in moving some of the larger aircraft artifacts, the Avro *Lancaster* for example.

CASM is undertaking new digital and gaming initiatives including *Ace Academy II*: "Coming soon to an App Store near you!"



First World War Island showing the damaged Sopwith Snipe © CASM

The museum is developing an audio guide. Some of the challenges here include:

- Determining the best/most accessible technology;
- Setting the product apart from others; and
- Telling aviation stories including first-hand accounts and experiences effectively.

Colin Hine  
Editor



## RAMBLING THROUGH RECORDS – F/L OWEN CATHCART-JONES

In 2011, Vintage Wings acquired a 1941 board game, *Be an Airman*, invented by Flight Lieutenant Owen Cathcart-Jones (1900-1986). The game, based on the stages of training used in the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, can be found at <http://www.vintagewings.ca/VintageNews/Stories/tabid/116/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/306/Be-an-Airman.aspx>, on the Vintage Wings of Canada web site. Who was airman Owen Cathcart-Jones, and what is his history?

A 2011 search revealed relatively little information, but there is much more available today on other websites. Notably, an especially good source is <http://www.afleetingpeace.org/index.php/aviators/c>. This site provides details of his adventurous career as a Fleet Air Arm pilot, air route pioneer and commercial pilot. In March of this year, having confirmed that he had been dead for more than 20 years, I was able to draw his RCAF service file. His RCAF career is brief but fascinating.

In April 1940 when he applied to the RCAF he was living in Mexico City. He was duly commissioned on 16 May 1940 (Pilot Officer, with a simultaneous promotion to Flight Lieutenant) and was assigned to the Air Member for Operations and Training, AFHQ. He performed well and was promoted to Squadron Leader, 1 June 1941. However, the timing of his promotion suggests that his rapid advance in rank was made to give him more credibility with American authorities.

In April 1941 he was posted to California on temporary duty as Special Advisor to Warner Brothers for the film *Captains of the Clouds*, in which he appears briefly as himself. Cathcart-Jones claimed that California was a “hardship posting” because of high costs and a depreciated Canadian dollar even after the RCAF paid him a special allowance of \$10 per diem over and above his normal pay during the period of his posting. At one point he wrote a letter to AFHQ (Ottawa) on Warner Brothers stationery, urging that he not be forgotten when operational postings were distributed. As of 20 February 1942, Hal Wallis (Director of the film) was effusive in his praise of Cathcart-Jones both in production and publicity preparation. His services with Warner Brothers apparently ended that day.

On 4 March 1942 he reported back to the RCAF on a posting to Western Air Command Headquarters (Victoria, British Columbia). About a month later he was advised that he was to be posted as Operations Officer to Station Alliford Bay. This was a remote station in the Queen Charlotte Islands, but might nevertheless have been deemed to be in a zone of potentially intense operations, given the panic that had engulfed the West Coast following the opening of the Pacific War. Cathcart-Jones would have nothing to do with it. Pleading personal difficulties – privately he stated that he regarded Alliford Bay as a backwater – he argued for assignment to Seattle as a Liaison Officer. On 27 April 1942, Group Captain A.D. Hull (WAC Headquarters), having interviewed him, wrote, “Squadron Leader Cathcart-Jones has undoubted ability. However, he appears to put his personal affairs before the Service. He should be closely supervised in his new posting and given an opportunity to prove his initiative and worth.”

The same day (27 April 1942) he was issued a travel warrant to travel from Victoria to Vancouver and thence to Alliford Bay. By this time he had cleared out his Victoria apartment and disposed of his books. He took the boat to Vancouver and on 28 April 1942 he crossed the border into the United States, in uniform, stating that he was on RCAF duty to the Fourth Interception Command, and that he was awaiting orders from Ottawa. He then hastened on to Hollywood.

On 29 April 1942 he wrote to Western Air Command Headquarters, submitting his resignation from the RCAF. Since he was already a deserter, the “resignation” was not accepted and in June 1942 he was arrested by American authorities, charged with having made false and misleading statements on entering the United States. He sent a message to WAC, asking that confirmation be sent that he was in California on RCAF Liaison Duty. This, of course, could not be provided (one is struck by the man’s sheer cheek) and he was returned under arrest to Canada, reporting back to WAC Headquarters.



F/L Owen Cathcart-Jones (© Hugh Halliday Collection)

His case was reviewed in detail on 9 July 1942. Among the issues disputed were his debts (\$884.09) and whether he should be “retired” or be allowed to resign his commission (his [preference]). It was deemed that a General Court Martial for an AWOL case was “over the top,” he just was not worth it and he was retired. He had not been paid since the day he went AWOL. He subsequently acquired another screen credit as “RAF technical advisor” to *Desperate Journey* (1942, starring Errol Flynn and Ronald Reagan).

Another website ([http://www.flyingmarines.com/Biographies/1921-1930/Cathcart\\_Jones.htm](http://www.flyingmarines.com/Biographies/1921-1930/Cathcart_Jones.htm)) states that, “In World War II he served as, Lieut. Cdr. in the U.S.N.R and commanded his own ship in the Seventh Fleet in the New Guinea and Leyte campaigns. He also worked with the Fifth Air Force and after Leyte served on the staff of General McArthur at Lake Sentana above Hollandia;” a statement that reeks of horse-poop.

Hugh Halliday

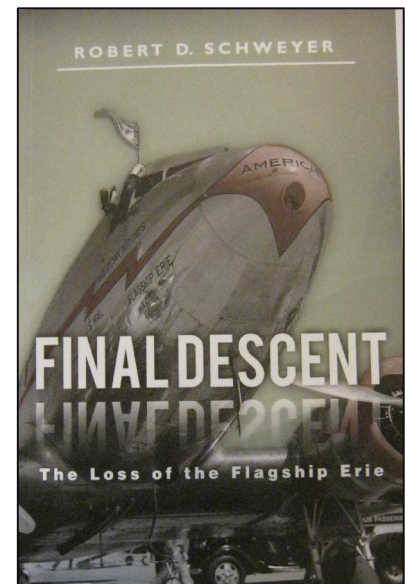
**Notes:**

The web site referenced above identifies Lake Sentana; the correct spelling is Lake Sentani. Hollandia in western New Guinea is now called Jayapura, Republic of Indonesia.

## FINAL DESCENT by Robert D. Schweyer

The late Bob Schweyer was fascinated with aviation history, which took him to a position at the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum (Hamilton). He was steeped in regional stories, including that of the crash of American Airlines DC-3 Flagship, Erie, on 30 October 1941 near St. Thomas, Ontario, killing all 20 aboard. The cause of the crash was never satisfactorily determined, but Bob undertook his own investigations. Although he could reach no final conclusion himself, he turned up a fascinating array of material. Included were the warnings given to (neutral) American passengers as they overflow (wartime) Canada, and stories of those aboard which prove that every life is a biography. It is an excellent read and a model of inquiring research.

The book is published by the Schweyer family (Box 454, Jarvis, Ontario, N0A 1J0). The cover price is \$ 18.95; mailing costs \$ 4.00.



© Schweyer family



**PUBS  
&  
MAGS**

**Airliner World (Mar 2015)**

-9 pp. on Air Canada's budget brand, *rouge*.

**Combat Aircraft (Mar 2015)**

-8 pp. on the NATO Flying Training in Canada program at 15 Wing CFB Moose Jaw [visited as part of the 2014 CAHS Convention in Regina].

**Random Thoughts ("RT" – IPMS Canada; Vol.36, Nos.2&3, June & Fall 2014)**

-2 part series on Lockheed *Ventura* GR.V's in RCAF service; colour profiles and capsule aircraft histories by Terry Higgins and Carl Vincent.



# STORY OF A SECOND WORLD WAR RAF FERRY PILOT (1941 – 1942)

This is a tale of Capt. Robert Hugh Malcolm Sandeman, a pilot of the Air Transport Auxiliary. Sandeman was born in Britain in June 1908. He is listed with a home address of 47 Rossmore Court, Regents Park, London. He was employed with RAF Ferry Command, Dorval, Montréal. The following table records his 1941 – 1942 flying history.

Aircraft Type & Number	Date(s)	Point of Origin	Destination	Notes & Details
<i>Catalina</i> , AH567	28/29 May, 1941	Bermuda	United Kingdom (UK)	Returned UK to Montréal, passenger in <i>Liberator</i> , AM258 of the Return Ferry Service (RFS) 3 - 4 June 1941, then to New York and on to Bermuda 6 – 9 June 1941. The RFS began operations 28 March 1941 with five <i>Liberators</i> AM258, AM262, AM263, AM918 and AM920. RFS was tasked with returning air crews from the UK Montréal. RFS crews included BOAC pilots & radio officers who were assigned to Ferry Command. Additional <i>Liberators</i> were added to the RFS in 1942.
<i>Catalina</i> , Z2135	12-13 June, 1941	Bermuda	UK	Returned UK to Montréal, passenger in <i>Liberator</i> , AM918, then on to Bermuda, via Halifax 23 - 29 June 1941.
<i>Catalina</i> , Z2151	17 Aug, 1941	Bermuda	Montréal	
<i>Hudson</i> , AE560	17 Aug-15 Sep, 1941	Montréal	UK-v-Gander, NF.	Returned UK to Montréal, via Baltimore in Boeing 314A <i>Clipper</i> G-AGCA, C/N 2082, ex NC18608, 7 – 9 Oct. 1941.
Ex-RCAF <i>Canso</i> , VA713	3 Nov, 1941	Rockcliffe, Ottawa	Elizabeth City, NC.	Travelled to Ottawa by rail 3 Nov, 1941. Flew as passenger in PBY (no number recorded) Elizabeth City to Bermuda 10 Nov, 1941.
<i>Catalina</i> AJ158	21-22 Nov, 1941	Bermuda	UK	Returned UK to Halifax, NS by ship 30 Nov to 17 Dec, 1941. Departed Halifax to Bermuda 18 to 20 Dec, 1941 (means of travel not listed).
<i>Catalina</i> , W8430	27 Jan, 1942	Bermuda	Elizabeth City, NC.	
Ex-RCAF <i>Canso</i> , VA715	30 Jan, 1942	Elizabeth City	Bermuda	Like some of the other ex-RCAF <i>Cansos</i> that Sandeman ferried, VA751 was transferred to the RAF prior to completion as repayment for a loan of RAF <i>Catalinas</i> to the RCAF in early 1941. It never carried an RCAF serial number and it was never operated by RCAF. Paper ownership passed to No. 3 Training Command on 15 November 1941, but there is no record that the aircraft was ever in RCAF hands. Assigned RAF serial VA715.
Ex-RCAF <i>Canso</i> VA714	20-21 Mar, 1942	Bermuda	UK	Returned to Montréal by sea, <i>Empire Sailor</i> , 3-20 April 1942 the by rail to Toronto 14-15 May 1942.
<i>Hampden</i> , AN165 (Canadian built)	17-18 May 1942	Toronto	Dartmouth-v-Montréal	Returned to Toronto by Trans Canada Airlines 19 May 1942.
<i>Hampden</i> , AN166	20 May 1942	Toronto	Montréal	
<i>Hampden</i> , AN167	21 May 1942	Montréal	Dartmouth	
RCAF <i>Oxford I</i> , AP491	29-30 May 1942	Dartmouth	Ottawa-v-Montréal	Returned to Montréal by rail 30 May 1942. Possibly on leave for duration of June 1942.
<i>Hampden</i> , AN140	9-18 July 1942	Ottawa	No. 32 OTU Patricia Bay	Ferry flight via North Bay, Kapuskasing, Winnipeg, Lethbridge and Penticton. Returned to Montréal by rail 19-28 July 1942 then onward by rail to Dartmouth 29-30 July 1942
RCAF <i>Oxford I</i> X7119	31 July-1 August 1942	Dartmouth	Rockcliffe-v-Megantic PQ and Montréal	
RCAF <i>Grumman Goose</i> 944	3-4 August 1942	Rockcliffe	Kapuskasing, Rockcliffe	
<i>Hampden</i> AN118	4-9 August 1942	Rockcliffe	No. 32 OTU Patricia Bay	Ferry flight via North Bay, Kapuskasing, Lethbridge and Penticton. Returned to Lethbridge by rail 11-16 August 1942.

Aircraft Type & Number	Date(s)	Point of Origin	Destination	Notes & Details
RCAF <i>Anson I</i> 6741	17-19 August 1942	Lethbridge	Rockcliffe-v-Regina and North Bay	
RCAF <i>Avro Anson I</i> 6104	23 August 1942	Rockcliffe	Quebec City	
RCAF <i>Oxford II</i> BG125	26-29 August 1942	Quebec City	Ottawa -v- Montréal	
RCAF <i>Fleet Finch II</i> 4777	29-30 August 1942	Ottawa	St Jean, PQ -v- Montréal	Returned to Montréal by rail 30 August 1942.
PBY-5B FP222	11-15 September	Elizabeth City, NC	UK-v-Gander Bermuda	Returned to Montréal, passenger in RFS <i>Liberator</i> AL627-v-Gander 30 September to 1 October 1942, then by rail to Elizabeth City 3-4 October 1942.
PBY-5B FP242	13 October 1942	Elizabeth City, NC	Montréal	Returned to Elizabeth City by rail 15-16 October 1942
PBY-5B FP247	21 October 1942	Elizabeth City, NC	Montréal	Returned to Elizabeth City by rail 25-26 October 1942
PBY-5B FP180	3 November 1942	Elizabeth City, NC	Montréal	Returned to Elizabeth City by rail 5-6 November 1942
PBY-5B FP209	7 November 1942	Elizabeth City, NC	Bermuda	See text below.

On 11 November 1942 Capt. Sandeman departed Bermuda aboard PBY-5B FP209, enroute to the UK. The flight was diverted to Halifax NS because of bad weather (snow storms) and the aeroplane crashed into the Strait of Canso close to the Canadian National Railway wharf at the small village of Mulgrave NS. Only two of six crew members aboard survived.

	Capt. R.H.M. Sandeman	Pilot	ATA	Killed
1550770	F/L J.S. Mowat	Pilot	RAF	Injured
J11639	P/O S.F. Fairbairn	Navigator	RCAF	Killed
	Sgt. N.J. Cheney	WAG	RNZAF	Killed
	Mr. D.L.J. DeBrettgny	RO	RAFFC	Killed
569399	Sgt. G.H. Salt	FE	RAF	Injured

Sergeant G.H. Salt received extensive injuries and he spent a lengthy period in hospital recuperating at Sydney NS. After his recovery he travelled by rail from Sydney NS to Montréal, PQ (7-9 February 1943). He continued to ferry PBY and *Liberator* aircraft for RAF Ferry Command.

From 14 May 1944 to 26 November 1944, F/L J.S. Mowat ferried four Canadian Built *Lancaster X* bombers (KB759, KB766, KB848 and KB851) from Dorval to the UK.

The fate of RAF *Oxford I* AP491 (29-30 May 1942 in the table above): the aircraft was later taken-on-strength at No. 34 SFTS, Medicine Hat, Alberta and then at No. 32 SFTS, Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, where the pilot experienced an engine failure and belly landed (28 June 1943). The aeroplane experienced extensive damage and was reduced to spares and struck-off-charge on 5 November 1943.

R. H. (Bob) Smith



Preserved *Oxford I* similar to AP491 wearing wartime colour scheme. This aircraft is on display at the Imperial War Museum at RAF Duxford (© Imperial War Museum)



Consolidated Canso A (11084) Mfr. Canadian Vickers, Montréal 1944 (© CWHM)

## OUR VETERANS - WALLY KASPER PART ONE

This is the first of a three part series written by Second World War RCAF veteran Wally Kasper. Much of this story will likely be familiar if you attended Wally's inspiring talk at the 26 February 2015 Ottawa Chapter CAHS meeting at the Canada Aviation and Space Museum. Many thanks to Garry Fancy for helping make this text available to *the Observair*.

Colin Hine, Editor

Growing up in the small town of Leader, Saskatchewan, we were privileged to see the occasional Trans Canada Airlines plane flying overhead on its way to some western metropolis. I was awe struck at the idea of someone being able to get into a machine and do that. What else could they do? When the war clouds in Europe began to darken a lot of the local people who were descendants of German immigrants (like my family) were a bit uncertain as to just who was going to be fighting whom and why. One of my uncles had been badly gassed in World War One, and suffered greatly for the rest of his life. His experience colored the perspective of most of my relatives and there was a general feeling that our family did not need a repetition.

However when the war broke out my brother was soon off into the Army and then, some months later when an Air Force Recruiting team came to town they told me that as soon as I had my high school leaving certificate they would be happy to send me on my way to pilot's training school. That was all the motivation I could use.

Then came the fateful day when I said goodbye to my family and got on board the train which would take me to Edmonton and the Manning Depot. It was place of wonders, to my surprise a great number of Americans, and very clever drill corporals who managed somehow, over time, to persuade everyone in the flight that they had a left and a right foot and that they could be made to respond to various commands. Then, I and a number of my fellow boys in blue were sent off to Claresholm, Alberta to do a bit of guard duty prior to the beginning of the flying training.

John Gillespie McGee's poem "*High Flight*" had not yet crossed our radar screens but many of the things he spoke of were in our hearts and minds. Eight flying hours later I was off on my first solo and how I "danced the skies on laughter silvered wings". Years later when first I flew a *Spitfire* all of this came back to me like an incandescent memory of a first true love. The years between had me flying twin and four engine aircraft where none of the "love story" with flying could liberate your mind and heart and turn you into one of the few truly privileged creatures in the long history of the human race that were those men who had the opportunity to fly the *Spitfire*. But in the trusty *Tiger Moth* "I slipped the surly bonds of earth" but not until the *Spitfire* lady enchanted me did I do "the hundred things you have nor dreamed of!"

But back to the pedestrian plodding which was pilot training. The system was superb and demanding, not always fine-tuned, as it is now-a-days. It took me and so many others to a twin-engine Service Flying Training School at Claresholm, flying Cessna *Cranes*. At the Elementary Flying Training School every pilot trainee was holding his breath hoping to go to single engine Service Flying School for these were the pilots destined for the *Spitfire* squadrons overseas, the rest of us were to fly coastal, transport or bomber or training aircraft. I did get a rather rude shock when we got our wings. I had always enjoyed aerial navigation, it was fun like an algebraic formula so my good marks were rewarded with a posting to the General Reconnaissance School at Charlottetown, P.E.I., where we pilots received specialized training as navigators, and then would go on to work in Coastal Command. I had three cousins in Coastal Command who had told me that their trips were mostly long and boring.

After a rather stormy crossing of the Atlantic we arrived at the Bournemouth, (England), holding base for new arrivals from the colonies. Since our file with our life story was months behind us the Royal Air Force administrative staff at Bournemouth had each new arrival fill out a sheet with some sketchy details after the name, rank and number bit. Up in the top left hand corner of the sheet they had a little box for the individual to fill out in a 1, 2 and 3 order their preferences for postings. So with tongue in cheek, my old buddy, Don McCrae (who had been with me during wings training and the Special nav. thing), put down as our first second and third choices, Bomber Command, Bomber Command and Bomber Command." Perhaps Don and I were the only two fellows in Jolly Olde England who had not heard about the fearsome casualties that Bomber Command was taking in those dark days.

Don and I were out of there the next day, he to go to an RAF *Lancaster* squadron at Kings Lynn in East Anglia and me to go to a newly established "unarmed combat" training course on the North Sea at Whitley Bay. This course, two months in



*Comrade Wally Kasper, who beat the odds to survive a tour as a pilot with Bomber Command, then went on to fly Spitfires, and post war, F-86 Sabre jets, and T-33 aircraft. If this were not enough to make Wally's military aviation career extremely unique, read how he and his crew were the only ones to survive almost certain death in a take-off accident. Wally has recently published some of his writings, including his wartime experiences in "A Night Out With the Boys".*



length, was given by the Royal Marines. Its purpose was to equip us to deal with a German guard with rifle and bayonet in case we were required to parachute out of a bomber aircraft and then got picked up. These Royal Marine instructors were all carefully chosen as the cream of their crop, they had all spent a minimum of 12 years to get to be a corporal, were all a minimum of six feet four inches tall, huge iron-hard men to whom an obstacle course was just a morning stroll. They regarded us, who had spent thirteen months in pilot training getting our sergeant stripes, as nothing but a curious virus which had somehow crept into real soldiering.

On week-ends we were allowed to get into our blue uniforms with wings and sergeant stripes on the sleeves and of course it took no time at all before all the local tweetie-birds became aware that the Canadians got considerably more pay than the Marine corporals. We very soon became aware that there were two worlds that we inhabited - the short term one of week-ends in the town and the long and agonizingly painful one of the obstacle course and the parade ground which seemed to be without end. But the day arrived when we were posted to a training station in the Midlands and I was introduced to the *Airspeed Oxford*.

A bit of refresher flying and then down to the business of learning to fly at night in wartime England. It was nothing like the big blue sky of Alberta and more than one of the students managed to pay an unannounced social call to an unexpected base. This was a congested sky in wartime. Then we were off to the next stage of our adventure the Operational Training Unit where we would be introduced to the twin-engine *Wellington* bomber and we picked up our crew.

(To be continued next month.)

## BATTLE OF BRITAIN REMEMBRANCE



2015 CF-18 Demo Aircraft in Battle of Britain Colours © RCAF

To commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain this year, the RCAF's 2015 CF-18 Demo Hornet (188761) is painted in a glossy version of the green/earth camouflage pattern and codes worn by fighters in 1940. For more details, see: <https://www.facebook.com/CF18Demo> or <http://www.airforce.forces.gc.ca/en/article-template-standard.page?doc=this-year-s-cf-18-demonstration-hornet-pays-tribute-to-the-few/i89a1tnu>.

As well, the Royal Canadian Mint has released a 1 oz. silver coin depicting a Hawker Hurricane climbing away in the skies above Dover after firing upon a Dornier Do 17Z, which trails smoke from one of its engines. The obverse features the wartime monarch, King George VI. For details, see "New Releases" at: <http://www.mint.ca/store>.



Battle of Britain Silver Coin – Battlefront Series 1 oz. (2015) © Royal Canadian

# **NEXT MEETING OF THE OTTAWA CHAPTER, CANADIAN AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**Alan White**

## **THE DHC DASH 7; BRINGING STOL SERVICE FROM THE BACKWOODS TO DOWNTOWN**

Alan White was a Flight Test Engineer during the development of the de Havilland Canada DHC-7 (Dash 7) aircraft and Project Engineer after the Dash 7 entered service. Later, Alan was Manager of Technical Support with responsibilities for all DHC aircraft, including Dash 7 and the Dash 8. Alan feels that the Dash 7 programme has not received the recognition that it deserves and hopes his talk will take a step to rectify this. It should be a very interesting evening.



*De Havilland Canada DHC-7 Dash 7 in Toronto © Alan White collection*



*©Alan White*

**Location: Bush Theatre, Canada Aviation and Space Museum, Rockcliffe**

**Date/Time: Thursday, 30 April, 2015, 1930 Hours**

**Meetings include guest speakers, films, slide shows, coffee and donuts.**

**Visitors and guests are always welcome.**

**Landing Fees: \$1.00**