

**the**

# OBSERVAIR

**Ottawa Chapter Newsletter  
Canadian Aviation Historical Society**



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## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

I would like to begin my message this month by thanking Bernie Runstedler for getting involved and volunteering to assist Don with programming and audio/visual set up. Many of you will remember Bernie from his presentation last November about the Canadair Sabre Mk 3 and the Orenda 3 engine. Bernie is a retired neurosurgeon, and an experienced pilot who holds one world flying record. He also wrote a book about his love of flying entitled *Breezes Against My Brow*. I am very pleased to welcome him to the team! If any other members out there would like to get involved, we are still looking for someone to handle refreshments, I know we all enjoy that part of the evening, and I'd hate to see it disappear.

Did you ever miss out on picking up one of our speakers books? Well in the January issue of *the Observair*, we will be posting a list of the various titles we still have in storage. The prices will remain the same reduced CAHS member prices as previously offered at the meetings. I do not know about anyone else out there, but I have a hard time saying no to books.

In numismatic news the Royal Canadian Mint has released the final coin in the *Aircraft of the First World War* series. The third coin in the series, it features a Curtiss H-12 flying boat. Like the previous designs, the H-12 is coloured, while the background image is left silver. The Mint has also released a fine silver coin to commemorate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Dr. Roberta Bondar's space flight as part of the crew of shuttle mission STS-42. Dr. Bondar was the first Canadian woman in space, the second Canadian overall. The coin is a convex glow-in-the-dark design that shows Canada as seen from space in both day and night. These coins are both very interesting designs that are well worth the look! They can be seen here: <http://www.mint.ca/store/template/home.jsp>



*Kyle Huth,  
Chairman*

*The Observair* is the newsletter of the Ottawa Chapter, Canadian Aviation Historical Society (CAHS), 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

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## PAST MEETING

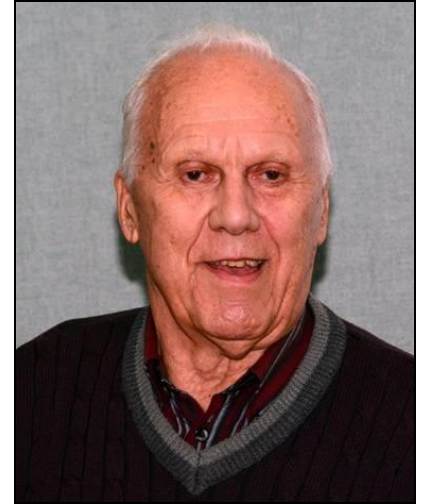
# WHEN THINGS GO BUMP IN THE NIGHT – NORM HULL

There were 44 members and guests at the 27 October 2016 meeting to hear Squadron Leader (Ret'd) Norm Hull talk about this April 1969 incident. This all happened after Norm "volunteered" to fly a T-33 aircraft to Gore Bay, ON; a trip that turned out to be to Torbay, NL.

The following text is largely from Norm's presentation so as not to take away from its fascination and humour. I appreciate the assistance provided to me by Barrie Crampton whom also assisted Norm with his presentation.

**Genesis** – Glenn Cook and Norm Hull, two ex-military jet pilots, would often exchange stories of life-threatening events experienced during their military careers while lounging in the Smiths Falls Flying Club. About 4 years ago, after relating his "Torbay" event to Glenn, a member of the CAHS, suggested that Norm should document the event. Norm responded that he had done so some 45 years earlier, that the document had been lost during his military moves and that he was not about to do so again. Besides, Norm said, he had forgotten much of the detail.

Moving ahead to the Fall of 2015, Norm's spouse told him to tidy up his "Man Cave" and get rid of old stuff. Included in this "stuff" was a portable typewriter, and, when dropping it off at the Salvation Army depot, Norm removed the lid to show that it was in pristine condition. Inside the lid, behind a spring-loaded paper retainer was the original typed Torbay event. Thus this CAHS presentation was born!



Norm Hull © Rod Digney

It has been said that every aircraft accident involves a series of events that ultimately lead up to the accident; the "*Domino Effect*," so to speak. When he had 23 years' of piloting experience behind him, Norm experienced one life threatening military flying event that epitomises the "*Domino Effect*." It began on 15 April 1969, early morning, in the 414 Squadron crew-room in Ottawa. Norm had been posted-in a week earlier to the CF-100-equipped 414 Electronic Warfare Squadron, after a two-year desk job at CFHQ.

**Domino # 1** It was early on a sunny morning when the Ops Officer called out, "*Who would like to take T-33 trip to Gore Bay?*" Heck, with two thousand hours of T-33 time and a 3-year T-33 instructional tour under his belt, Norm was the first (*and only one*) to volunteer for the flight. He had just completed a 3-month T-33 refresher course and was gung-ho to go. How far could it be to Gore Bay? Just a hop, skip and a jump from Ottawa. Now comes the rub; the Ops Officer had said "*Torbay*", not Gore Bay. Norm should have chickened out right then, but he didn't.

**Domino # 2** Canada had sold several de Havilland Caribou aircraft to Malaysia and there was to be a ceremonial send-off from Trenton with brass bands, press, dignitaries and associated hoopla that day. Canadian flight crews were to ferry the aircraft to their ultimate destination. But the diplomatic passports for the crews had not arrived from Foreign Affairs as planned. The departure ceremony was conducted as planned. The aircraft would be flown as far east as possible in Canada. The passports would be delivered to Ottawa-based 414 Squadron which would then transport them to Torbay, Newfoundland, the furthest suitable airport to the east.

**Domino # 3** All of a sudden, Norm's short junket to Gore Bay was a thousand mile flight to "*Nowhere, Newfoundland*."

**Domino # 4** Norm started his flight planning immediately; East Coast weather was good, predominantly VFR conditions, forecast to remain that way. Argentia, just 55 miles away, would be a suitable alternate. Everything looked favorable. But the passports arrived some 5 hours later than expected and Norm would lose an hour of daylight East Coast time. A check of pertinent NOTAMS and weather still looked good so he departed for Torbay much later than expected in T-33 # 190.

**Domino # 5** The flight out at 37,000 feet was uneventful until heading out to sea just east of Sydney, NS. Norm began having difficulty with UHF radio communications. Also the weather below didn't appear to be nearly as good as forecast. Furthermore, he just couldn't seem to contact any ground stations even on the Emergency frequency. By this time there was no turning back.

**Domino # 6** Getting close to Torbay, Norm managed to get the latest weather conditions through the Low Frequency Non-Directional Beacon (NDB). To his horror, the weather was terrible. Torbay ceiling and visibility were well below visual limits for a Runway 17 Automatic Direction Finder (ADF) approach. A typical ADF Published Approach Profile to Runway 17 would expect the pilot to establish an inbound track of 170 degrees towards the NDB at about 1,000 feet above the airport elevation. Upon station passage,

the pilot would know he was now 3 miles from the Runway 17 for a Straight-in Approach. Required minimums for this were a 620 foot ceiling and 2 miles visibility. Also, a higher ceiling for a Circling Approach made this out of the question. The only option was to devise an *ad-hoc* approach using only the navigation equipment available; the Torbay NDB and his on-board radio compass.

The T-33 cockpit instruments include an Artificial Horizon and the Radio Compass Control Head; the location of these instruments play a significant role in this presentation. There is insufficient space to detail the situation here, but as we would learn, it presented significant challenges to the pilot.

**Domino # 7** At Torbay heavy snow and northerly surface winds of 40 knots were reported. Even if an ADF approach was possible, landing on the short snow-covered runway was next to impossible and stopping with a 40 knot tailwind had to be considered. A high speed overrun would be catastrophic. One option was to intentionally land wheels-up, increasing drag from the fuselage; a certain aircraft accident; Norm's first. No one would believe it was an intentional wheels-up landing!

**Domino # 8** Norm elected to proceed to Argentia, his alternate destination, but was unable to contact anyone even on the emergency frequency. Setting up a high level holding pattern over Torbay with the IFF transponder set to Emergency mode, Norm expected to be inundated with emergency response calls, but heard nothing. He continued trying to raise anyone on the UHF emergency band. Had his UHF radio failed?

**Domino # 9** With a fuel level below 40 gallons, Norm had about 10 minutes before engine flame out. He considered ejecting as a last resort, but survival on a rocky surface or open sea with 40 knot winds was minimal, at best. He was alone, above cloud. It was getting dark and he was unable to communicate with anybody. An into the wind landing on Runway 35 was the only option, so Norm decided on an *ad-hoc* instrument approach, going against every reasonable IFR recovery procedure. His plan: to cross the Torbay beacon at 20,000 feet on a 200 degree heading. He had one shot, so he had to be precise. He would carry out a standard NDB descent profile, commencing with a left penetrating turn and maneuvering at low level to intercept an inbound track of 350 degrees, using his radio compass. In the holding pattern he turned his windscreen defrost to maximum and turned up the cockpit instrument lights. He transmitted blind on the Mayday frequency just in case!

**Domino # 10** When things go wrong, they can *really* go wrong. Descending into darkness there was a black hole in the instrument panel where the Artificial Horizon was supposed to be. Norm's T-33 had not been installed with a mandated internal lighting upgrade. However, it fell under a directive to disconnect external lighting of the Artificial Horizon. Just what he needed during a night-time emergency!

**Domino # 11** Norm remembered he had back-up lighting for such an event. Opposite his right shoulder and attached to the canopy rail should be an adjustable mini spotlight. Norm went to reach for it, but it was not there – *gone!* The best he could do was to turn up the side console lighting and hope the ambient lighting of the instrument panel would suffice, even though it might compromise external vision.

Norm employed the Radio Compass in the Loop position and off-tuned the frequency just enough to get a suitable high pitched tone. In the Loop position, received volume level is a function of how close you are to the beacon and the rate at which you must constantly reduce the volume level to keep it at a constant audio level indicates how close you are to the beacon. Norm needed to be accurate; his life depended on it. When he deemed he was getting close to the runway he selected landing gear Down and normal approach partial flap, not increasing drag too early to conserve fuel. He had to hand-fly the aircraft maintaining heading and using the altimeter to guide descent. Occasionally turning on the landing lights, all Norm ever saw were snowflakes rushing towards the windscreen. The landing lights were then left off!

With the audio increasing rapidly, and taking into account that the ADF beacon was 3 miles past the runway, Norm judged he was very close to the runway. He initiated a shallow descent to field elevation plus 200 feet. If he did not see the airport or runway, he would retract the landing gear and continue the descent to ground contact. Just as he was preparing to retract the gear, directly ahead of the aircraft two lines of white lights suddenly emerged through the cloud and snow. He had bottomed out below cloud at 200 feet, about  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile short of the runway. Trusting that there were no obstructions, he extended full flap and continued descent to the runway. The landing was uneventful and Norm was able to stop well before the end of the runway!

**Domino # 12** The airport building was locked and, after much door rattling, an angry chap bellowed "*The airport is closed!*" After some further words, Norm learned that the Torbay UHF had been unserviceable for some time. The individual had not heard or seen Norm's aircraft on the ramp; he did not hear, nor was he notified of Norm's UHF Mayday calls; he had not issued a NOTAM pertaining to the failed Torbay UHF; and he was not even aware of Norm's inbound flight.

The passports were delivered!

Colin Hine, Editor



## **Pubs & Mags**

**Airports of the World** (Sept/Oct 2016) - 6pp. on aircraft, operations, and facilities at Pangnirtung, Baffin Island (YXP)

**Aeroplane Monthly** (Oct 2016) - 8pp. on Coulson Flying Tankers Martin Mars aircraft, *Hawaii Mars* and *Philippine Mars*, and their futures

*Bill Clark*

## **OLD MEMORIES**

As a young boy, I grew up on a small hill farm on the circuit to Glasgow, Scotland's Prestwick Airport. Lying in bed at night, I listened to aircraft on their finals to PIX. I could tell if an aeroplane was a Lockheed Super Constellation, a Boeing Stratocruiser, a Douglas DC-4, or a DC-6. During the late 1940s and early 1950s, Prestwick was always busy refuelling for every airline with piston engine aircraft that crossed the Atlantic. So, I became aeroplane crazy, and being called up by the Royal Air Force for my National Service, I wanted to be a pilot!

The RAF had other ideas, however, and, with my being six feet three inches tall, I was posted to the RAF Provost Police stationed at Scampton, home to Bomber Command's 617 (Dambuster) Squadron, where they had six Lincolns and twelve Canberras. On demobilization from the RAF, I joined the Scottish Flying Club and got my VFR Private Pilots Licence on a Miles Magister aircraft.

In Scotland at that time there were giant billboards "*Come to Canada*" with an RCMP member wearing a red serge jacket, mounted on a horse with the Rocky Mountains in the background! I managed to talk my best friend into sailing to Canada with me so that I could join the RCMP. We sailed from Liverpool to Montreal on the Cunard liner *Saxonia*. Arriving in the Port of Montreal at 6 a.m., we rose early to witness our arrival in the "*New Country*." With tears in our eyes, we viewed the Montreal harbour. It looked just like Glasgow Docks. Where was the RCMP member on his horse and the Rockies in the background?

I decided not to join the RCMP and got a great job as Head Driver for the Canadian National Railway at Jasper Park Lodge in Alberta. We had a fleet of 10 tour buses and 20 limo cars. I worked there for the Summers of 1955 to 1959, and the rest of the year I attended school in Los Angeles, California, living with an aunt and uncle.

In July 1956, there was a convention of some 500 Quebec doctors, all arriving at Jasper by rail. At around 9 p.m. as it was getting dark, with low clouds and rain, we shuttled the guests to the lodge by bus. We had to travel 7 miles east on the main highway to cross the Athabasca River bridge and then travel 7 miles back west to get to the Jasper Park Lodge. Still being aeroplane crazy, when I was crossing the bridge I thought I saw a flashing light in the sky; was it from an aeroplane? Our buses were MCI Courier Skyview Motor Coaches; perhaps what I thought I had seen were marker lights from one of our buses.



After unloading my passengers at the Lodge, I decided to rush back to the bridge. I sat there flashing my marker lights on and off and saw two strobe lights approaching me! So I drove at full speed 8 miles east on the highway to an unlit landing strip, still flashing my marker lights, and setting my headlights facing down the grass runway.

Two Cessna 172s landed! San Diego couples (husbands and wives) in each aircraft were returning from their holidays in Alaska. They had flown down the Yellowhead Pass to Jasper, but the weather had closed in. They told me they were running short of fuel and had flown around Jasper revving their engines hoping to attract attention and get some help. Luckily I had spotted them!

The next morning they took me for breakfast and were amazed by the mountains that encircled the town of Jasper. They refuelled, thanked me again and left, flying down the Athabasca Valley south to Banff. So my mania for flying had likely helped save four lives. I kept my pilot's licence when I went to Los Angeles and flew a Luscombe out of the Douglas Airport at San Monica.

*Bill White*



## RAMBLING THROUGH RECORDS

The Canada Aviation and Space Museum's (CASM) program of copying logbooks – *ably administered by CAHS members George Skinner and Bob Smith* – keeps paying dividends. In fact, in October, it actually gave me a birthday present. While reviewing lists of people whose logbooks had been copied (*well over 800*), I chanced upon one kept by Joseph Albert Paull (1895-1919). From previous research, I knew that he had been awarded the Air Force Cross (3 June 1919), apparently for duties as an instructor in Britain. I had no details, but hoped the logbook might tell me more. As an aside, I also knew that he had been killed in a flying accident (12 June 1919). Later, the delivery of his AFC to his next-of-kin in Vancouver turned into a dust-up between his mother and his widow – the mother claiming that there was no proof of the marriage and therefore parental entitlement should prevail. I still do not know how this matter was resolved.

Enter our museum friends, Rénaud Fortier and Marc Ducharme. From them, I learned that not only does the museum have a copy of J.A. Paull's logbook, but they have the document itself, transferred from the Vancouver Public Library in 1967. So I asked, "*Did anything else come with the logbook?*" It turned out that there were some photos and other documents as well; so lo and behold I was looking at them the next day. The photos were of marginal interest – *a group portrait of an unidentified unit with nobody named, a shot of a tented training camp in Ottawa* – but two letters and a telegram proved to be a treasure beyond expectations.

Joseph Albert Paull was born in Vancouver. In 1915 and 1916, he tried to join a flying service, but was unaware of the limited recruiting by the Royal Flying Corps and Royal Naval Air Service in Canada at that time. However, he had learned about and contacted a Canadian living in New York, Ernest Lloyd Janney, who knew something about the subject. A telegraphed reply came on 8 February 1916, followed by letters dated 9 March and 9 April 1916. The latter were on the stationary of the National Guard of New Jersey (Naval Reserve).

It turns out that Janney was a con man. In 1914, he had conned no less a person than Canada's Minister of Militia and Defence, Sam Hughes, into authorising formation of a Canadian Aviation Corps – which came to nothing. In 1915, Janney formed a flying school in Toronto, took money from at least ten pupils, and never graduated any. He posed as an officer in a uniform of his own design. Ahead lay at least 15 years of scams and failures (*including a bigamous marriage*). In 1916, he was trying to entrap poor J.A. Paull.

The telegram set the tone: "*Special course in flying opening on the twentieth. Best aeroplane and ground in New York. Fees only two hundred and fifty dollars. Holding a place for you subject to your decision return wire. This is a real opportunity. Take advantage of it if within your power. Forming nucleus for Canadian Corps.*"

Paull was short of money and could not leave a job on short notice. He cabled, then wrote a negative reply, but Janney persisted. His letters in March and April were almost delusional. He claimed he was going to "*spring a surprise on the Canadian Militia Department in a couple of months in the way of showing them what I can do in this line.*" He planned to form his own Canadian Air Corps and needed Paull to be part of it. How he intended to do it was an outright lie:

*"In order to bring about a Canadian Flying Corps without further delay I am going to fly from Vancouver to Halifax in June. The machine for this trip is now under way here in New York and I have already been promised \$30,000 from press rights etc. and will be able to raise another \$100,000 from towns and cities I will fly over on this trip." Paull was going to be an important part of the project – "I desire you to learn to fly in order to assist me in other work this summer in Canada."*

From notes that Paull scribbled on Janney's letters, the young man was apparently on the verge of signing up for the flying lessons and anything else that might be asked of him. All the same, he was evidently curious about what those extra duties might be. He also appears to have asked about the feasibility of a private flying corps and sent the man a news article. Janney's response, part of his second letter, was, "*The more undiplomatic methods as adopted in the article you enclosed places the chances of our own Corps further away.*"

Janney's latest sally was mendacious and contradictory – the proposed transcontinental flight had been "*sanctioned*" by Sam Hughes, and yet the Minister still needed convincing "*that a Canadian Flying Corps is still the right thing.*" He became more desperate to enlist Paull – "*Don't delay the matter any longer. Jump the first train to New York.*" J.A. Paull did not take the bait. He enlisted in the army that September, transferred to the Royal Flying Corps in November 1916, and was *enroute* to England in December. The fly had evaded the spider.

*Hugh Halliday*

# YOWza – Images of recent sightings at Ottawa’s Macdonald-Cartier International Airport (MCIA) (YOW)

*This page is contributed and coordinated by CAHS Ottawa Chapter member Rod Digney.*



French Armée de l’Air Airbus A310-304 (c/n 421), F-RADA, was one of a three-aircraft contingent accompanying French Prime Minister Manuel Valls on his official visit to Ottawa, 13 October 2016. © Will Clermont



This Dassault Falcon 7X (c/n 68), F-RAFA, seen on 13 October 2016, from the French Armée de l’Air presidential flight is a civil registered military aircraft but carries no identification marks other than the République Française titles. © Dean Hoisak



This ageing French Armée de l’Air Transall C-160NG (c/n 215), 64-LG, was one of the three French air force aircraft seen in Ottawa during Prime Minister Manuel Vall’s visit on 13 October 2016. © Dean Hoisak



RCAF CC-150 Polaris, 15003, took on an unusual appearance on 27 October 2016 as Ottawa’s first slushy snowfall of the season began to melt and slide off the aircraft. The Polaris was positioned at MCIA for several days while Prime Minister Trudeau’s trip to Brussels to sign the CETA trade accord remained up in the air. The PM and his delegation eventually left on October 29 after a short mechanical snag with a flap caused the aircraft to return to Ottawa for resolution. © Will Clermont



A busy day on the Canada Reception Centre ramp, 28 October 2016. On the left, RCAF CC-150 Polaris 15001 is being readied for Governor General David Johnston’s departure on a two-week trip to the Middle East, while 15003 remained on standby to take Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to Brussels to sign the CETA trade agreement (eventually departing October 29). © Rod Digney



## K. C. “CHAD” HANNA – Typhoon Pilot

Long-time CAHS Ottawa Chapter member Ken “Chad” Hanna passed away on 5 October 2016 at the Civic Hospital. (See more at: <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/ottawa/citizen/obituary.aspx?n=kenneth-hanna&pid=181809422&fnid=5973>) K.C. “Chad” Hanna had spoken to the Chapter in May 2006. Below is Carl Wimmi’s summary of that meeting.

The last meeting for the 2005 – 2006 season of the Ottawa Chapter of the Canadian Aviation Historical Society on 25 May 2006 was – *like most during that year* – ‘Standing Room Only,’ with more than 80 members and guests present in the Bush Theatre of the Canada Aviation Museum. That evening members and guests heard K.C. ‘Chad’ Hanna recount some of his wartime experiences flying the rocket-armed Hawker Typhoon Mk. IB with the RAF’s 181 Squadron from 1943 to 1945.

Born in Prescott, Ontario, Chad enlisted in October 1941 because, he said, *“the Allies needed all the help they could get.”* He trained at No. 10 EFTS Mount Hope and No. 14 SFTS Aylmer, receiving his wings in December 1942. Further training followed in England before he was posted to the RAF’s 181 Squadron in November 1943. *“When I joined 181 Squadron as a Sergeant Pilot,”* Chad said, *“the squadron was a mixed bag of 12 British, four Australian, one Ceylonese, and myself, the only Canadian.”*

Equipped with the Hawker Typhoon Mk. IB, No. 181 Squadron was then employed on defensive operations against German low level raiders. On 2 December 1943, Chad was on runway readiness, when he was scrambled after a bogey. *“It was a murky day, the cloud cover was down to about a thousand feet, and I lost my leader climbing through the clouds.”* Coming out on top, Chad spotted what he thought looked like a Junkers 88. *“They were about a mile ahead, and they must have spotted me at the same time that I spotted them. They were diving for the cloud when I snapped off a two-second burst at about 600 yards, which set their starboard engine smoking.”* And that was the last Chad saw of them. Years later, Chad heard from a researcher, who had identified his quarry and credited Chad with 181 Squadron’s only air-to-air kill of the war; a Dornier 217.

In January 1944, 181 Squadron’s Typhoons, armed with 500-lb or 1,000-lb bombs under the wings, began fighter-bomber attacks against flying-bomb launching sites in northern France. In February 1944, the squadron adopted rockets in preparation for the Invasion. Eight 60-lb rocket projectiles (RPs), four under each wing, could be fired in pairs or in a salvo. Although RPs were inaccurate and took some skill to aim properly, they would prove highly effective against ground installations, vehicles, and even shipping.

On D-Day, Chad was over the beaches *“attacking with RPs and cannons any areas of resistance to our landing.”* Two weeks later, 181 Squadron began operating from fields in Normandy. During the German retreat, 181’s Typhoons engaged numerous enemy tanks and transport trying to escape the battle area. Chad recounted one vivid memory from Normandy. *“On 4 July 1944, we attacked Carpiquet Aerodrome. We were attacking tanks that were dug into the floors of the hangars; all that was showing were the turrets. On my fourth attack, I was at treetop level and, as I banked around the corner of a hangar, I saw this British Tommy throwing his helmet into the air in appreciation of our efforts. Total time logged for that sortie – from take-off, form-up, four attacks and landing – was 15 minutes.”* It was activities like these that earned Typhoon pilots the admiration of the ground troops and the aircraft the title *“A Soldier’s Best Friend.”*

By early September 1944, 181 Squadron had reached the Low Countries, where it spent the winter. The Battle of the Bulge was another occasion when tactical air power played a crucial role. The Germans had been aided from the start by overcast skies that restricted the use of aircraft. Once the skies cleared, however, the German columns were halted. On 31 December 1944, Chad was part of a formation of 181 Squadron aircraft detailed to attack enemy vehicles in the St. Vith area. *“Normally, we would attack in groups of eight. We would acquire our targets visually, being careful to never cross the ever-changing bomb line, then roll in to a steep dive, fire the RPs, then pull up to avoid ground fire.”* Two German tanks were claimed as ‘flamers’ and twelve mechanized vehicles were destroyed; one pilot and aircraft were lost.

Chad flew a total of 127 operational sorties with 181 Squadron from the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, and the Netherlands. Commissioned in 1944, he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross following the expiry of his tour in February 1945. During his time with 181 Squadron, 73 pilots had served with the squadron; 20 were known to have been killed, five were missing, and four were known PoWs. It was dangerous work.

Chad Hanna’s talk was interesting and full of insights on the Hawker Typhoon and the tactical air war.

Carl Wimmi

For details of K.C. “Chad” Hanna’s Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) award, see Hugh Halliday’s *Honours and Awards* database on the RCAF Association website: <http://rcafassociation.ca/heritage/search-awards/?search=hanna&searchfield=lastname&type=rcaf>

## CAHS OTTAWA CHAPTER MEMBER JACK DODS RECOGNIZED AT REMEMBRANCE DAY

The Ottawa *Citizen's* Andrew Duffy interviewed CAHS Ottawa Chapter member Jack Dods about his RCAF wartime service. See: <http://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/ottawas-jack-dods-second-world-war-vet-paints-his-vivid-war-memories> which includes a 2½-minute video link.

### ***Ottawa's Jack Dods, Second World War vet, paints his vivid war memories***

Late on the evening of 5 June 1944, as the world's largest armada gathered on the south coast of England, Shawville's Jack Dods was flying over the coastline of France. A wireless operator and air gunner in the Royal Air Force's 233 Squadron, he was part of Operation *Tonga* – an early, critical component of the D-Day invasion plan. Dods's Douglas C-47 Dakota was filled with paratroopers who would be dropped into occupied France to secure key bridges and destroy a German battery in advance of the Normandy beach landings. He would return to the same airspace the following night to help resupply the paratroopers. "We knew this was the big one and we had to make it right," remembers Dods, now 95, one of 14,000 Canadians who took part in D-Day. Fewer than 1,000 of those veterans are alive today.

D-Day was only one part of Dods's eventful war, which he memorializes now in paintings that decorate his wall at the Perley and Rideau Veterans' Health Centre. Dods paints on small canvases because of a serious back injury he suffered on the troop ship HMS *Letitia* that carried him to England in December 1941. He was fortunate just to survive the crossing. Near Iceland, Dods was on a side deck with other soldiers when a heavy storm started to send spray over the gunwales. As everyone retreated inside, Dods lost his hat. He went to retrieve it, but when he came back, the bulkhead door was locked and his hammering couldn't be heard over the storm. He sought cover under a tarp, but it offered little protection from the wet and cold. The last thing he remembers is a wave washing him across the deck toward the North Atlantic. He was found sometime later, unconscious and tangled in the stern anchor chains, by a crew member who had ventured into the storm to check on a piece of equipment. He had suffered compression injuries to his spine, but the ship's doctor agreed not to report the problem so that he could join the war.



*Jack Dods poses for a photo at the Perley Rideau Veterans' Health Centre in Ottawa. © Tony Caldwell / Postmedia Network*

He went on to fly 60 operational missions with the RAF's 233 Squadron. Dods hunted U-boats over the Bay of Biscay, and made relief and supply flights into battle zones in Normandy, the Falaise Pocket and Arnhem. His plane was shot up over Belgium and mortared while on the ground in Normandy. He had many strange and terrifying experiences.

On 20 June 1944, his Dakota was leading about 20 aircraft toward the French coast on a resupply mission. As it approached a Normandy landing strip, a fighter streaked toward Dods's Dakota and tucked itself underneath the plane, between its lowered wheels. Four Spitfires came alongside; their pilots made frantic hand gestures. Dods climbed beneath the cockpit and looked out the plane's open back door: he could see the top of a German Focke-Wulf Fw.190 fighter plane. The pilot was trying to hide. Dods's plane continued to descend toward the landing strip, and at the last second, the German fighter pilot bolted. The Spitfires attacked and sent the German fighter rolling down the runway in a ball of flames. "It was really just one small incident in the many happening at that moment in time," Dods wrote in a description of the incident glued to the back of his painting of the scene.

One of his scariest flights occurred over the Falaise Pocket, where Canadian and Polish forces were trying to encircle the German 7th Army in August 1944. The troops were desperately short of ammunition, and 233 Squadron was assigned to fly into the area despite a thick blanket of fog. The supply drop had to be made from low altitude for them to hit their target. Unable to pick up a radio signal, Dods's plane flew below the treetops to establish the right height for the drop. It was shot at by both the Germans and the Allies, but succeeded in delivering its cargo on target.

Most of Dods's artwork makes flying seem more majestic than frightening. But his calm scenes can sometimes be misleading. One of his pictures, for instance, depicts a Blackburn Botha bomber flying between two trees. It's a recreation, he says, of an experience he had at a training base in Dumfries, Scotland, where his pilot always flew between the same two trees on the top of a hill so that the plane's wings brushed branches on both sides. "Every trip, it was the same thing: I did not enjoy flying with this pilot," he says.





Jack Dods recreates a scene depicting a Blackburn Botha from the Second World War. © Tony Caldwell / Postmedia Network

By the end of his war, Dods was so stressed he was down to 110 pounds. *"I was tired,"* he says. He was sent to Calgary and joined the Air Force Reserve squadron as an air traffic controller. There, he married his high school sweetheart, Joy, with whom he raised two children. *(She died last year at age 95.)*

Dods worked as an instructor at CFB Winnipeg's Canadian Forces Air Navigation School, and helped to establish the city's first radar control unit. In 1957, he moved to Ottawa to join the research and development team in Transport Canada's air traffic division. He retired in 1977 – and promptly earned his licence as a glider pilot.

Aeroplanes have always fascinated him. As a boy growing up on a farm near Shawville, Que., the walls of his bedroom were plastered with pictures of aeroplanes cut from newspapers and magazines. *"I don't know why. It just always seemed like something I wanted to do, to fly."*

Today, the walls of Dods's room are again plastered with airplanes, these painted in acrylic from his rich, clear memory. *"I avoid the grim bits,"* he says of his art. *"I tend to stay away from the sad things."*

Andrew Duffy, Ottawa Citizen  
Published on 10 November 2016

Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame



Pantheon de l'Aviation du Canada

## Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame to Induct Four New Members and Honour a *Belt of Orion* Recipient in 2017

Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame (CAHF) will induct four new members and recognize a Belt of Orion recipient at its 44th Annual Gala Dinner and Ceremony to be held Thursday, 15 June 2017, at the Vancouver International Airport.

The new members are:

- James Erroll Boyd: WWI pilot and co-founder of the Air Scouts of Canada
- Robert John Deluce: Aviation executive; Founder of Porter Airlines
- Daniel A Sitnam: Aviation executive; Founder of Helijet Airways and Pacific Heliport Services
- Rogers Eben Smith: NASA and NRC test pilot; RCAF Pilot
- Royal Canadian Air Force "Golden Hawks" aerobatic team: Belt of Orion Award for Excellence

For additional information see: <http://www.cahf.ca>



# NEXT MEETING OF THE OTTAWA CHAPTER CANADIAN AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY



***“ARE YOU GUYS MERCENARIES?”***

**KATE SPEER**

Join us when Kate Speer speaks about the trials, tribulations, risks, and rewards of working as a low-level survey pilot in some of the most inhospitable places in the world.

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

**DATE/TIME:** Thursday, 24 November 2016, 1930 Hours

**LANDING FEES:** \$1.00

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

Visitors and guests are always welcome.