

March/April 2018

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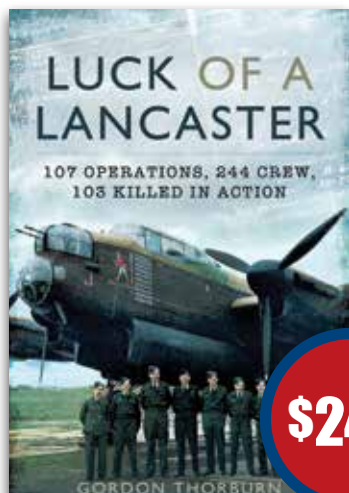


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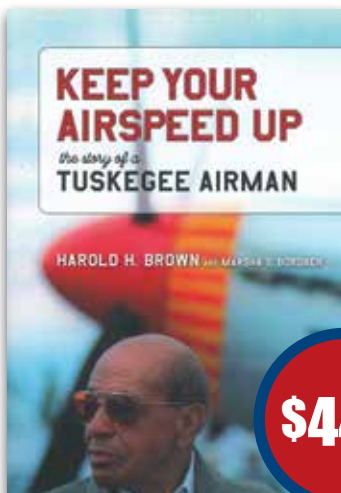
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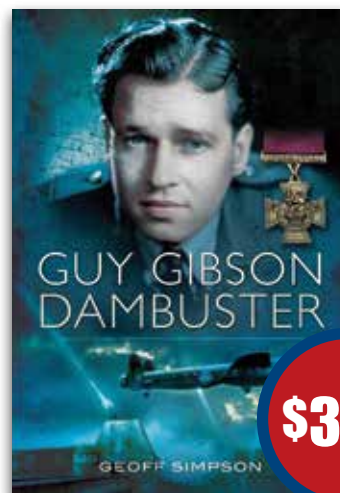
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CANADIAN WARPLANE HERITAGE MUSEUM

MARCH/APRIL 2018

FLIGHTLINES

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Canadian Warplane
Heritage Museum
9280 Airport Road
Mount Hope, Ontario
L0R 1W0

Phone 905-679-4183
Toll free 1-877-347-3359 (FIREFLY)
Fax 905-679-4186
Email museum@warplane.com
Web warplane.com



Cover:

Keith Houston at the controls of
Firefly BD-G over Lake Ontario
taken from the tail of the B-25 Mitchell.
RICK RADELL



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Volunteer Editor: Bill Cumming

Flightlines is the official publication of the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum. It is a benefit of membership and is published six times per year (Jan/Feb, Mar/Apr, May/June, July/Aug, Sept/Oct, Nov/Dec).

Readers are encouraged to submit articles and photos. All contributions published with the author's name is the opinion of the author and does not necessarily reflect the opinions and policies of the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum. Responsibility for accuracy rests solely with the author.

Printed in Canada by



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EXHIBITION

Great Posters from the Great War;

Recruitment in Canada 1914-1918

Exhibit ends
June 17, 2018



News

Welcome

In 1971, the four founding fathers of Canadian Warplane Heritage set out to acquire an aircraft that was flown by Canadians during and just after World War II. Although they looked for a Spitfire, none were readily available but a Fairey Firefly was located in Georgia. A deal was made and the aircraft was flown to Toronto. The Firefly became the aircraft which the Canadian Warplane Heritage was built around and is the flagship of the CWH fleet. Its image is emblazoned on CWH logos, badges and letterhead, as well as the early crest of the Hamilton International Air Show. In this issue of *Flightlines*, we feature a brief history of the Fairey Firefly with the Royal Canadian Navy, a significant aircraft during the formation of the RCN Air Service, as well as the history of the current CWH Firefly.

Elsewhere in this issue, we tell the story of the only woman to fly on a RAF operational bombing mission during WWII. Women served in many non-operational roles during World War II with the Royal Air Force (and the RCAF), including a group of 168 female pilots who were employed by the RAF Air Transport Auxiliary, whose duties included ferrying planes from factories to military airfields and piloting air ambulances. But women never participated (officially) in operational roles during the war. For fear of reprisals from the RAF, this story was untold until 1996. Although not recorded in the official history of the RAF during World War II, there is sufficient evidence to prove the operational mission with a WAAF member on board the Lancaster did actually happen.

The winter weather for the past few months has been colder than usual, but it has not curtailed any activity inside the museum. Maintenance continues on many of the aircraft, preparing them for the coming flying season and planning for the many activities and events scheduled for 2018 is proceeding. Looking ahead, the activity level at CWH will be just as busy in 2018 as it was in 2017. Plan to attend the Annual General Meeting on March 17 (11 am) to hear more about what is happening in 2018.

Enjoy this issue of *Flightlines*, and of course, your comments are always welcome.

Bill Cumming, Volunteer Editor
museum@warplane.com

B-25 Nose Job

The Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum's B-25 Mitchell is displayed in the markings of a RAF No. 98 Squadron Mitchell, which fought over North West Europe during 1944-45. It is dedicated to the Canadians who flew with that squadron. In an effort to improve the authenticity of our B-25 Mitchell, our glass nose has been taken out of storage and has been shipped to a US shop that specializes in B-25 rebuilds. Once completely restored by them, it will be returned to us and we will swap out the current nose for the glass nose for "Hot Gen".





Mynarski Memorial Lancaster

For the 2018 season, the Victoria Cross emblem on the nose of the Lancaster has been updated from the old round graphic to the one featured in the photo. The museum's Lancaster is dedicated to the memory of P/O Andrew Mynarski and is painted in the colours of his aircraft KB726 – VR-A, that flew with RCAF No. 419 "Moose" Squadron. Andrew Mynarski was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross, the Commonwealth's highest award for gallantry, on 13 June 1944, when his Lancaster was shot down in flames, by a German night fighter. As the bomber fell, he attempted to free the tail gunner trapped in the rear turret of the blazing and out of control aircraft. The tail gunner miraculously survived the crash and lived to tell the story, but sadly Andrew Mynarski died from his severe burns.

Dakota FZ692

While many of the aircraft in the Canadian Warplane Heritage's collection are historic and survive today as they were built late in the war or did not see service, there is truly only one that can be considered a World War II veteran – Dakota FZ692. After participating in 16 ops with the RAF including D-Day, FZ692 then flew an additional 208 ops with 437 Squadron RCAF during World War II. She carried 298 casualties to medical aid and repatriated 456 prisoners of war, carried over 5,100 passengers to destinations around Europe and carried over two hundred tons of freight (414,368 lbs). Hundreds of other Dakotas would have had similar careers.

This year, Dakota FZ692 will return to a military configuration and will be painted in the Canadian markings of 437 Squadron with ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE emblazoned along the fuselage, similar to the photo except as Z2-R/OR on nose. A newly refurbished Pratt & Whitney engine has recently been installed on the Dakota.



AL MICKELLOFF



DND

Aircraft Updates

Tracker Tidbits by Bob Freeman

We are happy to report visible progress on the Tracker. Work inside the nose wheel well was completed recently with the installation of blanking plugs made up for the cockpit heating ducts as these will not be required for CWH operation. Replacement of a defective micro-switch was carried out as well as other minor repairs. Where possible, the wheel well has been painted, mostly by brush, which has been a slow, messy, tedious job.



Tracker restoration progress to date, showing the installation of the nose gear. AL MICKELLOFF

The nose wheel strut has been installed along with its drag link and retraction cylinder, plus the two new wheels & tires. The volunteer crew assisted CWH technicians to inflate the front and main landing gear struts with nitrogen and adjust tire pressures. Carefully, each of the 4 aircraft supports on which the aircraft has been resting for a long time have been removed. The aircraft now sits on its wheels for the first time in many years. Work can now focus to preparing the nose wheel doors and linkages for installation. It will feel great to be able to move the aircraft around the hangar as we help arrange each set up for the shows planned inside the hanger for early 2018.

We can also start to re-install the arrestor hook, tailwheel and associated parts, once we have the go ahead to put weight in the rear of the aircraft (we may need a rear support to be put in place if we are crawling around inside the aft fuselage to prevent the aircraft tipping). It would be nice to get the MAD boom primed, painted and installed again, but first there are many smaller jobs that need to be completed in that cramped aft fuselage region. We'll also focus on repairs to the control surfaces that were removed some time ago and get them re-installed. Parallel to these activities, CWH are trying to buy the specialist jig required to drill and ream the replacement wing lock fittings. Then the machine shop folks can start to machine the new blanks that were bought to replace the unserviceable parts removed from the wings.

Talking Turkey by Don Coit

We are now at the restoration stage of the Avenger where we are inspecting the aircraft to look at any place where we need to make improvements or minor modifications and start system checks, in preparation of its test flight.



To check the fuel system, we put 20 litres of fuel in each of the 3 fuel tanks and found fuel pouring out of the bottom of the right tank. To get at the right tank, we had to first remove the centre tank and then the right tank. It was back breaking work to disconnect and then compress these very stiff rubber tanks and pull them through the holes in the fuselage and inner wing. The two fuel cell tanks were sent to Winnipeg to be tested and repaired as necessary and are now back so that they can be reinstalled. In the spring we can do the fuel check again.

Adding the civil registration to be legal for the first flight. Note that we are able to use the same registration as our first Avenger. AL MICKELLOFF



Member Profile

John Rowland by Mo McIntosh

John Rowland has been a long time friend, active volunteer and pilot of the Museum since joining in 1986. When he first arrived, he was very pleased to see a Harvard under restoration. He was introduced to the volunteer and Yale 3350 restorer, Joe Gabany, whom asked him to join the Yale team. John fondly remembers Joe, a great friend and volunteer in so many ways, every time he passes by Yale 3350.



John Rowland joined the Royal Canadian Navy in 1954 and served until 1967. He then served for an additional 12 years with the Air Reserves from 1968 to 1980. John's initial flying course, as a Naval Cadet, was done at the Pat Bay Airport, which is located north of Victoria, BC. He received his Student Pilot Permit on 24 November 1956. John completed his flight training with the US Navy at Pensacola NAS, Florida, where he flew the T-34 and SNJ, followed by training on the Tracker aircraft at Kingsville NAS, Texas. At the completion of the flight training, John had logged a total time of 326.6 hours which included eight carrier landings and take offs.

A LOT OF THE TAKE OFFS WERE DONE USING THE CATAPULT FROM THE PORT BOW POSITION BECAUSE NORMALLY THERE WERE AIRCRAFT PARKED ON THE STARBOARD SIDE. YOU GOT OFF FAST, VERY QUICKLY!

Returning to Canada in early 1958, John was posted to VS 881 Squadron which was flying the Tracker. At this time he also flew the Avenger and Harvard, just the fun side of aviation! While serving with VS 880, John did two tours on the aircraft carrier HMCS Bonaventure ('Bonnie') serving approximately two months. John relates his experiences while serving on the 'Bonnie', "A lot of the take offs were done using the catapult from the port bow position because normally there were aircraft parked on the starboard side. You got off fast, very quickly! Landings however, you stopped very quickly; one would hope! The normal daily routine was to launch and do a sector search which was covered in the morning briefing. We were given the MLA (mean line of advance) of the ship over the search time, so as we wandered around the ocean for a few hours, we had the ship's position to allow us to navigate back for recovery. Night recovery was a bit tenser than the daytime because your visibility was less. A rough sea was not very helpful either! The scariest approach was when they flew out to sea for a landing on the ship at night, in poor weather. His Crew Commander Bob was flying a Carrier Controlled Approach (CCA) to the deck and John was looking for any lights. Suddenly, they hit something VERY hard and Bob applied full power and said "I think we'll go back to Shearwater now!" John quickly concurred."

After Shearwater, he became a Clearance Diving Officer for his last six years in the Navy; three in Halifax and three in Victoria BC. After leaving the regular force Navy, John Rowland joined 401 Air Reserve Squadron in Montreal, where he logged over 780 hours in the de Havilland Otter, a great aircraft as he says, between 1971 until 1977.

John joined Air Canada in 1967 initially flying the Viscount. He then transitioned to the DC-8, the DC-9, the Boeings (727/747/767), the Lockheed-1011 Tristar and finally the Airbus 320 before retiring from the airline in 1992. Some of the other aircraft that John has flown over his aviation career include the Fleet 80, Cessna 152/172, Aztec, Apache, Auster, as well as CWH's Cornell, Stearman and Harvard. Outside of CWH, John is also a Program Director for the Ontario Track 3 Association responsible for looking after special needs children when their school comes up to ski at Glen Eden, in Milton Ontario.

In 1977 John was flying a demonstration with the Air Reserve Otters at the Canadian International Air Show in Toronto and met Peter Gutowski, a fellow Air Canada pilot. Peter said that he was riding right seat in the B-25 from the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum. As John says "The rest is history!"





The Only WAAF

To Go On A Wartime Bombing Raid

by Bill Cumming

Assembled before Lancaster B.1 "Vicious Virgin", NG500, P4-V, sometime after the 'event' and when the crew was tour expired. Back Row (L-R): Sgt "Junior" Al Hardiman (Flight Engineer); WO "Granny" Jim Vollans (Bomb Aimer); F/Sgt George Woolmer (Rear Gunner); member of Ground Staff; F/O Bob Purves (Aircraft Captain); WAAF Iris Price; F/O Tommy Burke (Navigator); F/Sgt Jim Storey (Wireless Operator); Sgt Jack Crowther (Mid-Upper Gunner); Station Medical Officer; F/Sgt in charge of maintenance. Front Row: Seven, all kneeling, are members of Ground Crew whose names are lost in time. VOLLANS FAMILY COLLECTION/153 SQUADRON ASSOCIATION

When CWH member Rowen Baker and myself volunteered at the Canada 150 Celebrations Tall Ships Gathering presented by the City of Hamilton on July 1st weekend, we met David Vollans. Once David found out we were associated with the Canadian Warplane Heritage, he mentioned that his father served with a Lancaster squadron during World War II, and his father had a few interesting experiences during his time in the Air Force. As we were curious what he had to say, we invited David to the museum to see the Lancaster and hear more tales about his father. Later in the fall of 2017, Rowen and I met with David Vollans and his sister Linda at the museum. They proceeded to tell us about their father and one of the exploits he was involved when serving with 153 Squadron RAF during World War II.

James (Jim) Henry Vollans was born 29 April 1916 in Windsor, Ontario. When Jim was a young lad, his family moved to the small community of Galilee, which was located about 35 miles south of present day Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan. His father and mother divorced a few years later, and Jim accompanied his father back to Ontario to a farm in Woodslee.

At the age of 26, Jim married his sweetheart, Florence on 11 April 1942. Jim was not particularly fond of life on the farm, and enlisted into the RCAF on 16 June, 1942. After completing his initial training at No. 6 ITS in Toronto, Jim trained as an Air Bomber at No. 1 Bombing & Gunnery School (B&G) located in Jarvis, Ontario, followed by a six week course at No. 1 Air Observers School (AOS) in Malton, Ontario. At the graduation parade at Malton on 25 June 1943, he was promoted to the rank of Sergeant and awarded the Air Bomber's badge.

More training followed when Jim was transferred No. 18 Operational Training Unit in England during September 1943. Here he met his crew mates and together they undertook training on the Wellington in preparation for operations. Jim soon had his first taste of flying in the Avro Lancaster, briefly assigned to No. 300 Squadron at RAF Fadingworth in July 1944. He was then posted to 153 Squadron which was located at RAF Station Scampton, just north of Lincoln, England on 28 November 1944, assigned to Lancaster B.1, RAF serial number NG500 with squadron code P4-V (V for Victor). The Lancaster carried the name "Vicious Virgin". Being the oldest member of crew, Jim was known as "Granny" Vollans to his fellow squadron mates. He flew 30 operational missions over Europe as well as various missions over Holland dropping food and supplies to the Dutch people. He returned to Canada in the fall of 1945 and resumed his civilian life.

The following is the story of one of the World War II exploits as told by Jim Vollans in the RAF Bomber Command newsletter:

OPPOSITE PAGE: TOP: Sgt Jim Vollans shortly after graduation as an Air Bomber. VOLLANS FAMILY COLLECTION.

MIDDLE: Jim Vollans towards the end of the war, now a Warrant Officer, with 153 Squadron RAF. VOLLANS FAMILY COLLECTION.

BOTTOM: Flying Officer Bob Purves, RCAF aircraft captain of the "Vicious Virgin" and boyfriend of Iris Price. VOLLANS FAMILY COLLECTION



CANADIAN WARPLANE HERITAGE MUSEUM



"The pilot of my second crew, Flying Officer Bob Purves RCAF, was dating a WAAF (Women's Auxiliary Air Force), Iris Price, on the operational air base at Scampton. One night while they were out on a date, Purves dared her to fly on a combat operation. She accepted the dare and told him that if he would provide her with the proper flying equipment, she would go.

So the next night operation we were on. Purves secured the necessary flying equipment and placed it in the aircraft for Iris to put on before we took off for this night mission to the Ruhr. It was a night operation which made the plan of smuggling Iris onto the plane easy to achieve.

Editor's Note: The mission date was the 13 March 1945 and the target was the synthetic oil plant at Gelsenkirchen in the Ruhr.

Once on, she promptly donned the flying gear, chute and harness ready for takeoff. On the way to the target there were a lot of searchlights and flak. At this stage she began feeling ill. We arrived over the target, the bombs were dropped and we turned for home, mission accomplished. She then began to feel better. Then something happened we hadn't prepared for - she had to relieve herself.

Purves gave her a paper bag that we carried for air sickness and she went back in the fuselage. After some time passed, Purves, as he could not leave the station himself, sent the flight engineer to see why she was taking so long. He found her lying on the floor anoxic from lack of oxygen. Her supply hose had become disconnected while she was struggling to partly undress and dress again, as in those days; flying clothes were not made to accommodate women. He immediately gave her oxygen from a tank he had with him, and she gradually came around. But not completely, as the two gunners had to help her off the plane and into the crew bus which was being driven by her friend who kept the secret.

The next day she was still not feeling well, and went to the doctor. He gave her a couple of days off, as he put her not feeling too well down to a touch of the flu.

While all these problems were going on, I started to wonder if had Iris died, what we would have done. Would the whole crew be blamed or would it just be Purves? In any case, we all would have been charged if it was found out by the RAF. If we had been shot down with Iris aboard, it could have been a political embarrassment to the Allies. I must confess I had some evil thoughts of what to do with the body if Iris had died. Thank goodness she survived and my thoughts were never put to the test.

The incident was forgotten until many years later when Doris Davies, the crew truck driver who had covered for Iris and was in on the secret, brought it to light again in 1996. She approached Cilla Black, the host of *Surprise, Surprise* (a British light television program), with the story. She was interested in including the story on one of her programs. Iris was contacted in New Zealand, and myself in London, to appear on her program in London England.

The story was about Iris and her experience as the only woman who ever flew on a combat mission. I was there to confirm the fact that it was true and that she had flown with us. To date, her claim has never been challenged."



Jim "Granny" Vollans with Doris Davies (L) and Iris Price (R) on the set of the *Surprise, Surprise* TV show on 23 April 1996. VOLLANS FAMILY COLLECTION



Jim Vollans with fellow veterans Jack Jacques, Robert Stott & Bill Roger at the Brantford Airport with the CWH Lancaster, September 2009. VOLLANS FAMILY COLLECTION

DORIS DAVIES wrote in a letter to the 153 Squadron Association: "At the time of this event I was a crew bus driver on No. 153 Squadron based at Scampton. The girl involved was (and is today) a friend of mine named Iris Price. On the night of the trip I saw Iris at the dispersal and thought that she had gone out on the bus with the crew to wave goodbye to her boyfriend, Bob Purves, as she had done many times before. I did not see her again and assumed that she had got another lift or had walked back to the Control Tower. However, when I went to collect the crew of 'V-Victor' upon their return, I was amazed, when the plane door opened, to see Iris, semi-conscious, being supported by two crew members. I first gave this version of the story to the editor of the No. 153 Squadron Association Newsletter and it was immediately confirmed. This prompted me to get in touch with Iris now living in New Zealand, in order to get her version... and here it is."

IRIS WRITES: "I can remember Bob daring me to go on a mission with him, so being the daredevil that I was in those days I agreed. It was a night operation which made the plan easy to achieve. A friend stood in for me while I was gone. This night I boarded the "Vicious Virgin". Bob got me a helmet, mask, parachute and harness. I was in my Battle Dress... normal MT garb. We took off for Germany, via France and Belgium. There were a lot of searchlights and some flak. At this stage I was feeling sick. We arrived over the target, the bombs were dropped and we turned for home. Mission accomplished, I calmed down a bit. Then it happened. I wanted to relieve myself. This I managed to do, eventually, into a bag which was disposed of down the flare-chute. However In the process of partly undressing and struggling to dress again I lost my oxygen supply and became anoxic. Fortunately the crew, were checking on me and brought me to, but the feeling of sickness returned. The next day I reported to S.S.Q. (*Station Sick Quarters*) [the medical officer] put my disposition down to a touch of flu and got two days off duty. At the time neither I nor the crew members dared to tell anyone. Goodness knows what the consequences would have been! The whole business was an experience that I will never forget."

Jim Vollans continues, "After the show they had a small reception for us in one of the board rooms to which my son David and daughter Linda were invited. Florence could not attend as she was ill, and many pictures were taken. I was standing by myself when this young man came up to me and said, "Jim, I am curious to know what you really would have done if Iris had died." I jokingly replied "No problem, I would have dumped her in the North Sea on the way back to England to get rid of the evidence." To my surprise, he was a reporter and put this story in his paper in England.

After the war, Jim found it difficult to readjust to life in Canada. Finding work was a challenge, as well as the adjustment to family life, but the family survived and Jim went on to work at the Ford Motor Company of Canada as well as the Fredric & Stevens Company in sales. Jim, Doris and Iris are all gone now, but their memory will live on in this story. There are other stories from that time in history that need to be captured, and as Jim said, "We were all young once".

Special thanks to David and Linda Vollans, and the 153 Squadron Association for sharing details for this story.

Canada's Fairey Fireflies

by Bill Cumming



Canadian Warplane Heritage's first Firefly, CF-BDH in a landing pose about 1974. Notice the deployed Fairey Youngman flaps, one of the notable features of the Firefly. Piloting the aircraft is Alan Ness, one of the four co-founders of CWH. This aircraft was lost in a flying accident in 1977. FORTAIR VIA BILL CUMMING COLLECTION

The history of the Royal Canadian Navy's Fairey Firefly would not be complete without some observations about the formation of the Royal Canadian Naval Air Service.

The beginnings of a Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) air arm date to 1915 when Canadians were recruited to join the Royal Navy Air Service (RNAS). The US Navy established air stations at Dartmouth and Sydney, Nova Scotia in August 1918 and the intention was for the Royal Canadian Navy to eventually take them over. The Royal Canadian Naval Air Service (RCNAS) was formed in September 1918, but following the Armistice in November 1918 there was little support for a RCN air capability and the RCNAS was disbanded.

THE BEGINNINGS OF A ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY (RCN) AIR ARM DATE TO 1915 WHEN CANADIANS WERE RECRUITED TO JOIN THE ROYAL NAVY AIR SERVICE (RNAS)

By 1943 proposals for a revival of the Canadian Naval Air Service were underway. Prior to and during WWII, Canadians served with the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm (RNFAA) gaining operational experience. Experiences during WWII drove home the vulnerability of ships without air support and in 1943 Canada was planning for a 'big-ship' navy in the post war period. At the Quebec Conference in August 1943 expansion of the RCN was discussed, and the Cabinet War Committee agreed to assist the British with manning of certain vessels. By January 1944 it was agreed the RCN would provide the ships complement for the escort carriers HMS Nabob and HMS Puncher. In February 1945, an agreement was reached to transfer two light fleet carriers to the RCN, HMCS Warrior and HMCS Magnificent.

In the summer of 1945, four "Canadianized" air squadrons began to take shape within the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm. On 15 June 1945, 803 Squadron, equipped with Seafire fighters reformed at RNAS Arbroath, Scotland; 825 Squadron, equipped with 12 ASH radar equipped Barracuda II aircraft was formed 1 July 1945 at RNAS Rattray, Scotland; 826 Squadron was activated

15 August 1945 at RNAS East Haven, Scotland as the second torpedo reconnaissance (TBR) squadron with Barracuda aircraft and the second Seafire squadron, No. 883, was reformed on 18 September 1945 RNAS Arbroath. On 19 December 1945, the Canadian Cabinet approved in principle the formation of a Naval Air Component.

The two TBR squadrons exchanged their Barracudas for Firefly FR.1s in January 1946. Work ups of the squadrons proceeded as the commissioning date of the first light fleet carrier HMCS Warrior approached in January 1946. A high percentage of the officers and men in 803 and 825 Squadrons were Canadian, but due to manpower issues with 826 and 883 Squadrons, the two squadrons were not able to complete their work ups. The latter two squadrons were temporarily disbanded on 28 February 1946, although on paper, they remained RCN units.

The RCN Firefly FR.1s originally belonged to the Royal Navy and formed part of the settlement of war claims between Canada and Britain, with the result that no money was actually paid for them by Canadians. A total of 29 Fireflies FR.1s were progressively taken on strength by the RCN between June 1946 and April 1947.

The first nine Firefly FR.1s of 825 Squadron arrived in Canada aboard the aircraft carrier HMCS Warrior 31 March 1946 and flew off to the Royal Canadian Naval Air Section at RCAF Station Dartmouth. The RCN Firefly FR.1s were characterized by a large chin radiator and upon delivery were painted in 'Extra Dark Sea Gray and Dark Slate Gray' camouflage. The squadron was assigned to the 19th Carrier Air Group in May 1947. In August 1947, 825 Squadron transferred its aircraft to the reformed No. 826 Squadron and the squadron's aircrew sailed to England on HMCS Warrior, where it reequipped with 9 Firefly FR.IVs.



Firefly FR.1 PP456 undergoing maintenance at Dorval, Quebec 1947.
JACK MCNULTY VIA GORD MCNULTY

A total of 13 Fairey Firefly FR.IVs were loaned to the RCN by the British Navy until the anti-submarine version, the Firefly AS.5, became available. The first Firefly FR.IV was taken on strength by 825 Squadron was TW741 in February 1948. The Royal Navy paint scheme of 'Extra Dark Sea Gray' upper surfaces and 'Sky Blue' under surfaces; fuselage sides and vertical tail were retained on the RCN FR.IVs. On completion of the work ups, the squadron and its Firefly FR.IVs embarked to Canada on HMCS Magnificent in May of 1948. Along with the Firefly FR.IVs, four Firefly T.1 Trainers were also taken on charge in May 1948. The Firefly FR.IV aircraft were returned to Britain on the 12th January 1949 and the squadron reequipped with 11 Firefly AS.5s on 16 February 1949.

The Firefly AS.5, used in the anti-submarine role in keeping with the 1949 NATO accord where Canada assumed a specialized anti-submarine role for the RCN, differed from the FR.IV in having upgraded electronics and a capability to detect submerged submarines by dropping sonobuoys into the ocean and transmitting the sounds emitted by the submarine to the aircraft by VHF radio. Prior to the arrival of the Firefly AS.5 into Canadian naval service, 12 RCN aircrew attended a five week training course in San Diego, on the use of American type anti-submarine equipment with which the Firefly AS.5s were fitted.



A rare colour photograph of a RCN Firefly FR.1 being readied for launch from an aircraft carrier.
DND



From the outset, the RCN had been using the British technique of deck landing but in 1949 both the RCN and Royal Navy decided to adapt the American technique. As the US Navy was the largest, the chances were greater of Canadian and British navy aircraft to land on American carriers during joint exercises. Consequently, RCN Firefly aircraft departed to US Naval Air Station Quonset Point in July 1949 for deck landing training. In September 1949 the Fireflies joined USS Saipan to commence their shipborne phase of training. It was soon discovered the British/Canadian and American approaches to deck landing proved sufficiently different to create problems for the Canadians. The Firefly aircraft experienced undercarriage damage and "hook-bounce" when using the American technique.

After the signing of the NATO pact in 1949, Canada's Navy participated annually in joint operations with Allied fleets, and it was not too long before the RCN Air Arm was gaining the attention of senior officers of the collateral Services. In March of 1950, the Fireflies of the 18th Carrier Air Group were pitted against the more modern Phantom jets, Bearcats and Skyraiders of the USN, and the quality of the Canadian pilots did not go unnoticed by those with whom they



Firefly FR.1 PP457 in flight near Shearwater. The distinguishing feature of the FR.1 is the prominent ASH radar bomb fitted beneath the engine cowling.
DND/SHEARWATER AVIATION MUSEUM



Firefly FR.1 PP412 of 826 Squadron, 18th Carrier Air Group taken at Rockcliffe, 1948.
JACK MCNULTY VIA GORD MCNULTY



75th Anniversary DAMBUSTERS

May 12, 2018





Royal Canadian Navy Firefly AS.5 VH142 about to launch from HMCS Magnificent. DND

were working. One Firefly crew was commended by the USN for the "cunning and skill" with which it went about its business, while the Air Group at large was observed to deliver its low level simulated torpedo attacks with "realism", "skill" and "deception".

FORESEEABLE CHALLENGES OF AIRBORNE ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE CALLED FOR EVEN MORE SPECIALIZED ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT AND AN ADDITIONAL CREWMAN TO OPERATE IT

The Firefly AS.5 had proven to be ill suited to all weather anti-submarine warfare operations and to the American style of deck landing, and it was difficult to maintain. Because of its 2 ½ hour endurance, the Firefly could not be used for long range patrols. The Firefly also had no "growth potential". The foreseeable challenges of airborne anti-submarine warfare called for even more specialized electronic equipment and an additional crewman to operate it, and the Firefly had room for neither. No sooner had the type been taken on strength than the Navy was searching for a replacement.



In order to fulfil its new found NATO ASW mandate, a more suitable carrier borne, anti-submarine aircraft was needed. The best machine available in sufficient quantities was the American built Grumman Avenger. The Avenger was easily maintained, could carry the latest ASW equipment, and was suited for the American style of deck landing and all weather carrier operations. The first Avengers were brought on charge on 13 May 1950 to replace the Firefly aircraft. As more Avengers were brought into the RCN, 825 Squadron (which had been renumbered to 880 Squadron in May 1951) continued to operate the Firefly AS.5s until the end of November 1951.

The Royal Canadian Navy operated a total of 64 Firefly aircraft of five different marks as follows:

FR.1	(29)	Strike-reconnaissance fighter
FR.IV	(13)	Strike-reconnaissance fighter
AS.5	(18)	Anti-submarine warfare version
T.1	(4)	Unarmed trainer
T.2	(2)	Armed trainer - remanufactured from two FR.1s



Firefly AS.5 VH168, BD-A at Shearwater air base 1949.
JACK MCNULTY VIA GORD MCNULTY



RCN Firefly T.1 assigned to the Air Training Group to provide currency checks for regular aircrew and refresher training for reservists. DND

The Firefly ceased to function as an operational aircraft with Royal Canadian Navy by 1951, although the useful lives of the aircraft did not end there. Over the next three years, a number of Mk FR.1s, AS.5s, T.1s and T.2s were sold to Great Britain, Sweden, the Netherlands and Ethiopia.

FIREFLY WH632

by Bill Cumming & Al Mickeloff

The Fairey Firefly will always be associated with the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum as its flagship aircraft. Canadian Warplane Heritage's first Firefly, WD901 (CF-BDH) was acquired by a small group of aviation enthusiasts in the early 1970s which formed the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum around this rare aircraft. Being the flagship aircraft of the Museum, the image of the Firefly was emblazoned on the logo of the Museum as well as part of the first logo of the Hamilton International Air Show. The Firefly was immaculately restored into the markings of a Firefly AS.5 of 825 Squadron of the Royal Canadian Navy. Sadly, Firefly WD901 was lost in a tragic flying accident on 2 September 1977 along with the loss of the pilot Alan Ness, one of the co-founders of the Museum. It was a great loss to the Museum.

A replacement Firefly was located at the Camden Air Museum in Australia, where it sat for over twenty years. Firefly AS.6, WH632 was acquired by the Canadian Warplane Heritage in 1978, arriving at the Museum in Mount Hope, Ontario on 22 August 1979.

ON 17 JUNE 1966 FIREFLY WH632 WAS DONATED TO THE CAMDEN AIR MUSEUM UNTIL SOLD TO THE CWH IN 1978.

Firefly AS.6 WH632 was manufactured by Fairey Aviation Company and delivered to the Royal Navy on 22 February 1951. WH632 was assigned to 1840 Squadron, Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve squadron stationed at Ford, England. It had a short career with the unit and was involved with two known incidents. On 20 September 1951 it hit an obstacle during landing on an aircraft carrier and on 3 February 1952 it suffered a wheels up landing. This accident required WH632 to undergo a major overhaul and the aircraft did not return to service until 26 July 1952. Shortly following the completion of the restoration, WH632 was delivered to RNAS Abbotsinch, a Reserve Aircraft Storage Facility and Maintenance Yard. Transferred to the Royal Australian Navy on 5 June 1953, Firefly WH632 operated briefly from the aircraft carrier HMAS Sydney before being placed in storage at Schofields, Australia on 19 August 1953. It was transferred to the RAN's Apprentice Training Establishment at HMAS Nirimba on 3 April 1958. WH632 remained there until 29 May 1960 when it was donated to the Marrickville Air League, a private youth training organization which used it for instructional purposes. On 17 June 1966 Firefly WH632 was donated to the Camden Air Museum until sold to the CWH in 1978.

Although the Royal Canadian Navy never operated the Mark AS.6 of the Firefly (such as WD901 and WH632), this version is externally identical to the Mark AS.5 version as operated by Canada. The difference between the two Marks can be found internally. The Firefly AS.5, a derivation of the Firefly FR.5, was the first anti-submarine version of the Firefly, and could carry sonobuoys or mines below its wings. The Firefly AS.6 version was a dedicated anti-submarine warfare aircraft. Its 20 mm cannon were removed to make room for extra anti-submarine weapons and equipment that could be carried on hard-points under the wings.



Restoration of Firefly WH632 did not begin immediately and the aircraft sat dormant in the CWH hangar for 10 years as funding was sourced by the Firefly Restoration Group for the project. In 1989, a sponsor was located who had a desire to see the aircraft fly again. Due to the complexity of the restoration, the Museum decided to move the Firefly to the Victoria Air Maintenance facility in Victoria, British Columbia. The wings were removed from the aircraft and the fuselage travelled to the west coast by flat bed trailer, leaving Mount Hope on October 6, 1989. The wings were flown to Victoria aboard a Canadian Forces C-130 Hercules. After the aircraft arrived at Victoria Air Maintenance facility, the restoration of the Firefly began under the guidance of CWH member Russ Popel.



Firefly WH632 still in RAN colours on its delivery from Australia to Canada, taken while on route at Shearwater in June 1979.
BILL CUMMING

Following a 1 1/2 year restoration project, the Firefly emerged from the Victoria Air Maintenance facility in the colours of a Royal Canadian Navy AS.5 aircraft, RCN serial number VH142 of 825 Squadron with aircraft side letters BD-G. This Firefly was assigned Canadian registration C-GBDG. CWH's original Firefly AS.5 WD901 carried aircraft side letters BD-H.

Successfully test flown following the restoration project, Firefly WH632 was to start its flight to Mount Hope on 6 May 1992. On takeoff from the Victoria airport the Firefly rolled to the right, severely damaging the wing and undercarriage. It was returned to the Victoria Air Maintenance facility for restoration to the damage and emerged four years later, arriving at CWH Museum on 11 June 1996 in time to make its first public appearance at the 1996 Hamilton International Air Show.

For more than 15 years, Firefly C-GBDG was flown at many airshows. It became one of the most high profile and popular aircraft in the CWH Collection. In June 2012, James Bradley took his father, Museum co-founder Dennis Bradley, for a ride in the Firefly to mark the 40th Anniversary of the Museum. The Firefly has always made a strong impression because of its folding wings and mighty Rolls-Royce Griffon engine. It is among the few Griffon-powered warbirds that remain today.

In November of 2015, one of the wing folding brackets failed after the Firefly was moved into the hangar. Consequently, both wings were removed from the Firefly for inspection, and examination of wing folding brackets showed evidence of mild fatigue cracking. The brackets and hinges for the wing are considered "non-airworthy" parts and are specifically only used for the folding of the wings. Once the wings are spread and locked into place, they serve very little to the support of the wing while the aircraft is in flight.

Currently the CWH Firefly C-GBDG is the only airworthy example, and as there are only ten remaining Fireflies worldwide, very few replacement parts are available for the Firefly. However, CWH has been able to source a company that can manufacture the replacement brackets. Hopefully, these parts will be produced and the re-attaching of the wings can be completed in the near future, allowing the Firefly to return to the air.



Rare photo of Firefly WH632 patrolling the English Channel in July 1951. VIA RAY STURTIVANT

Upcoming 2018 Closures

April 3 to 10 inclusive

2018 Calendar

March 17	ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - 11 am
March 25	HERITAGECON XII Model Contest & Sale
April 15	DRAGSTRIP MEMORIES Back by popular demand!
May 12	DAMBUSTERS 75th Anniversary
June 16 & 17	Come fly with us at FLYFEST
July 7	AIR FORCE DAY Past, Present & Future
July 29	VINTAGE WHEELS & WINGS
August 29	COMMUNITY CHARITY AIRSHOW At the Brantford Airport
September 8 & 9	CLASSICS OF THE GOLDEN AGE Indoor Car Show
November 11	REMEMBRANCE DAY - Large indoor service
November 17	SWING OUT TO VICTORY Dinner & Dance

*Please visit warplane.com for additional updates. Dates subject to change.

From the Archives – The Guinea Pig Club

by Erin Napier

The Guinea Pig Club was the name given to RCAF aircrew that were badly burned and treated at Queen Victoria Hospital located in East Grinstead, England.

As the air war progressed into the early years of World War II, more aircraft were downed due to the increase in flying missions, resulting in loss of life or sometimes for those that survived, severe burns to their body. Burns most commonly found amongst aircrew were on the face, hands and legs; areas of the body that were not protected by leather flight gear. These young airmen were often burned beyond recognition, but not beyond repair. With the pioneering techniques of Canadian surgeon, Dr. Ross Tilley and New Zealand surgeon Dr. Archibald McIndoe, airmen underwent extensive surgeries and treatment to help reconstruct their bodies and faces.

In 1943, an increase in the number of wounded RCAF aircrew arriving at the Queen Victoria Hospital saw the expansion of the burn clinic. The new burn facility, known as the Canadian Wing, provided care for all RCAF burn patients and was headed by Dr. Tilley. The townspeople of East Grinstead played a very important role in the acclimation of the young servicemen. This was very important to Dr. Tilley and Dr. McIndoe, which they felt was essential to patient healing and acceptance into everyday life. At the end of the war the burn patients, having developed a unique bond with each other, formed the Guinea Pig Club and met annually, with Dr. Tilley being elected president. Of the 649 members, 146 were Canadian and went on to live normal lives thanks to the revolutionary techniques and care from Queen Victoria Hospital and its staff.

Plan to visit the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum in the spring 2018 to see a full exhibit on The Guinea Pig Club.

CANADIAN WARPLANE HERITAGE MUSEUM



How Can I Help?

The Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum is pleased to announce an exciting new exhibition for summer 2018, on loan from the Smithsonian Archives for American Art, *The Monuments Men: On the Front Line to Save Europe's Art 1942-1946*.

During World War II, an unlikely team of soldiers was charged with identifying and protecting European cultural sites, monuments, and buildings from Allied bombing. Officially named the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives (MFAA) Section, this U.S. Army unit included art curators, scholars, architects, librarians, and archivists from the U.S. and Britain. They quickly became known as The Monuments Men. Towards the end of the war, their mission changed to one of locating and recovering works of art that had been looted by the Nazis. The Monuments Men uncovered troves of stolen art hidden across Germany and Austria, some in castles, others in salt mines. They rescued some of history's greatest works of art.

If you are interested in becoming a sponsor of this exhibition or would like to sponsor future exhibits, please contact Pam Rickards, VP – Operations at 905-679-4183 ext. 230 or pam@warplane.com



CANADIAN WARPLANE HERITAGE MUSEUM

The Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum



As we know, the success of the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum over the last 46 years has only been possible because of the hard work, dedication and sacrifice of a number of employees, members, volunteers and supporters at large. Today, our own museum history is rich and deep with the stories of all the special people who have helped us along the way.

One such person is our own Vice President of Operations, Pam Rickards, who after 30 years of outstanding service will be taking her well desired retirement later this year. Pam originally started with the museum as a receptionist and over time due to her personal talents, abilities, dedication and skills, progressed through a number of various positions ending up as our VP Ops several years ago.

As the President & CEO of the museum, it has simply been a privilege to work with Pam and be the beneficiary of her many talents and support. I know that Pam has worked with almost every member of our staff and was the person who hired many of our current department managers. As a group, we have all enjoyed working with Pam and have all benefited from her efforts, guidance, and advice.

While I know we are all pleased for Pam and her family in reaching this important milestone in her career and life, I also know that we will all sincerely miss her. Of course, Pam will not be allowed to leave us without an appropriate send off and more information on the event will be forthcoming.

Congratulations Pam and best wishes on all your future endeavours.

Per Ardua ad Astra

David G. Rohrer, CD
President & Chief Executive Officer,
Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum



Pam Rickards,
Vice President of Operations



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