



FERTE MANUS CERTAS

ROAR



## 427 Squadron Association

**PATRONS**

LIEUTENANT GENERAL (RET) DONALD MCNAUGHTON CMM CD  
MAJOR GENERAL (RET) ROBERT CHISHOLM CMM CD

[www.427squadron.com](http://www.427squadron.com)

NEWSLETTER

VOL 2 – ISSUE 9(AA)

March 2011

Honourary Colonel - *W/C R.G. Middlemiss (Ret)*

427 Squadron CO - *LCol J.J. Alexander*

Association Chair – *W/C R.G. Middlemiss (Ret)*

### From the Honourary Colonel

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The last five months have been very quiet and the Canadian winter has assisted in slowing things down. Back in November I attended the annual Command Training session at 1 Wing and then in December the Squadron Christmas party which was well attended and a great deal of fun for all.

In April I attend the Air Force Day celebration at Petawawa. The only other item on the horizon at the moment is the Annual General Meeting of the Honourary Colonels in October.

We all should be very proud of the new role that the Squadron has been given. They have been awarded a unique and privileged trust into which they are have managed to transition, with a great deal of hard work, seamlessly.

Ferte Manus Certas  
Bob

### From the CO 427 SOAS

**LIEUTENANT-COLONEL J.J. ALEXANDER, CD**



It has been all too quick since my last message to the ROAR! If time flies when you're having fun, then these past six months are reflective of a pretty awesome period in the life of 427 Squadron. From an operational perspective, we were pretty much maxed out last fall. At one stage, in excess of half the unit was either deployed, on professional courses or on well deserved leave. Through this period though, we continued to generate



flying five days and nights a week here on the Mattawa Plain.

Collectively, we were saddened upon hearing of the news of the passing of the 15th Commanding Officer of 427 Squadron, Lieutenant-Colonel Peter Borden St.Louis, MBE, CD, RCAF. Peter passed away on the 9th of December at the age of 87 in Ottawa.

We were also saddened with the loss of Brigadier General William Robert Dobson, CD2, OMM (retired). Bob was the 28th Commanding Officer of 427 Squadron from 1976 to 1978. He passed away on January 27, 2010 in his 76th year with his family by his side.

In November, we held the annual Gathering of the Lions in Pembroke. As always, it was great to see old and current members, friends and family of the Lion's Den. A recurring theme I heard from a great many of our out-of-towners was that they wished they had more advance notice as they know several others who "would've or could've" come. Well to that end, I can confirm we have booked our spot on the unit calendar for the November 5th weekend to hold the 2011 GOL. This year we will be returning to the Squadron lines for a hangar party and social. It looks to be an awesome time and we, as always, look forward to reuniting with the whole of the Lion's Pride.

As the unit continues to transition from a conventional Tactical Helicopter Squadron to a Special Operations Aviation Squadron, we have had to realign our force generation construct to more accurately reflect how we are employed on operations. No longer do A, B and C Flight exist. They have been amalgamated into two flying flights – Special Operations Aviation Flight (SOA Flt) and Immediate Response Flight (IR Flt). Maintenance Flight and Logistic Support Flight will remain extant; however, they will detach elements of each to the flying flights, under tactical command, for training and operations. This will permit each flying flight to train and deploy just as they would fight with all the necessary enablers to successfully prosecute the mission.

427 Squadron will be saying goodbye to the Commander of Canadian Special Operations Forces Command (CANSOFCOM), Brigadier General Mike Day. He is being promoted to Major General and appointed Deputy Commanding General Army of the Combined Security Transition Command/NATO Training Mission Headquarters in Kabul, Afghanistan. General Day has been an outstanding leader to this organisation and true champion of air and aviation power inside the command. The tremendous success we have enjoyed as a result of his relationship with the Air Staff and mentorship of 427 has directly benefitted the Lion's Den over the course of his tenure. We are now in a position where our allies are seeking us out to find out how we have transitioned from a conventional to special operations force. We wish him the very best. We are fortunate to be inviting back into the CANSOFCOM community, Brigadier General Denis Thompson, as the Commander designate. No stranger to this community, having served with Joint Task Force II previously, he will no doubt transition back into the fold very quickly and we are looking forward to the next few years with him providing the vision and direction to this unit.

### **Lion niner sends**

**FERTE MANUS CERTAS.**



**Treasurer & Membership**

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Wayne MacLellan - NATO

**Quebec**

Jim Moffat – WW11

**S. Ontario**

Roy Inkster – WW11

**N. Ontario**

Bob Middlemiss - WW11

**Ottawa**

Allan Todd – WW11

**Manitoba**

Ian Thomson – WW 11

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**B.C.**

Richard (Dick) Dunn - NATO

**USA**

Doug Nicholson - NATO

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## Membership & Finance

### Finance:

It's all good news and is basically an update of the information contained on the website.

Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Although 2009 was a downer for us financially, thanks to your generous support, 2010 was the best revenue year since our formation in 1996. We kept the expense side of the ledger under control and ended the year with an operating profit of more than \$800.00. Our bank balance is strong as you will see in the table on the following page.

One caution, please don't let this bright picture lull you into inaction. Each year we budget \$1800.00 just to cover operating expenses (ROAR, the Web-site and Admin) while our only sources of revenue are from an occasional new membership (at \$50.00) and your kind donations - so please keep them coming and once again ,thank you.

### Membership:

We have written a new Membership Policy which identifies our different categories of membership and facilitates the management of this portfolio. An example of this was a recent request for membership from 427 Greater Gee-long Squadron (Australian Air Cadets). They have been approved under the category of "Affiliate Membership". Please view the complete policy document below. A picture of the [letter](#) and [membership certificate](#) that these cadets are proud to display at their squadron is available on the web site.

In 2010 we welcomed new "Life" members, Walt Pirie (Sabres), Keith Rattew (Sabres), Bob Dahl (CF-104), Don Buckler (WWII POW). For the first time in our history we welcomed "Associate" members. They are Greg, Loreen and Lesley the "kids" of recently deceased LION Norm Guizzo (Sabres). Also for the first time we welcomed "Honourary Associate Members"; Enid White (Verne) and Grace McRae (Lorne). Yes, your Association is alive and well (thanks to you). Let's make it even better - together.

### Donation Procedure

And continuing on a positive note, I am pleased to reiterate that our "Partnership" agreement with the RCAF Association Trust Fund is working well and many of our members are using this option in order to receive a Tax Receipt for their donations (which exceed \$20.00), or their membership fees. Please review the full details of this new procedure in ROAR, March 2010 or the web site. Many thanks to Lion, Dean Black for providing us with this option.

Please adhere to the following when sending a cheque:

- \* Make your cheque payable to "RCAF Assn Trust Fund" (any amount exceeding \$20.00).
- \* In the "Memo" section of your cheque write: 427 Lion Sqn Assn.
- \* Address your envelope to:                   Air Force Association of Canada  
  PO Box 2460 Stn "D"  
  Ottawa, ON     K1P 5W6

The Air Force Association will then send a Tax Receipt to you, and then issue a cheque for the same amount to the Treasurer of the 427 Lion Squadron Assn, crediting you with the donation.

**427 SQUADRON ASSOCIATION FINANCIAL REPORT  
01 JANUARY 2010 TO 31 DECEMBER 2010**

ITEM	EXPENSES	DEPOSITS	2010 Ops	BANK
Opening Balance	0	0	0	\$3,498.86
Membership	0	\$299.43	\$299.43	\$3,798.29
Donations	0	\$2,722.36	\$3,021.79	\$6,520.65
Bank Interest	0	\$1.73	\$3,023.52	\$6,522.38
Leeming Memorial	\$514.81	0	\$2,508.71	\$6,007.57
ROAR/Web Site	\$1,459.74	0	\$1,048.97	\$4,547.83
Admin/Flowers	\$211.19	0	\$837.78	\$4,336.64

**New Membership policy – 427 Squadron Association – 2010**

While the majority of our members are either former or currently serving Lions, the Executive Committee appreciates that there could be circumstances develop from time to time which might warrant the awarding of a special category of membership to an individual or group. The following list identifies the current membership categories plus “special categories” and their associated restrictions.

***Membership categories:***

**Charter Membership** – A member in good standing who paid the required \$50.00 for “Life Membership” during the first year of the formation of the Association – namely 1996.

**Life Membership** – A member in good standing who has paid the required \$50.00 for “Life Membership” subsequent to 1996.

**Annual Subscription Membership** - A member who has elected to renew his membership on an annual basis for the fee of \$10.00/yr.

### ***Special Categories of Membership:***

**Honourary Associate Membership** – A special membership category which may be conferred upon widows/widowers of “Life” members at the discretion of the Executive Committee. No fees required.

**Associate Membership** – A special membership category which may be conferred upon individuals who were not members of the squadron, but are accepted as “Associate Members” by the Executive Committee for various reasons which are consistent with the aims of the Association. Regular membership fees are required.

**Affiliate Membership** – A special membership category which may be conferred upon individuals or groups who have aims and objectives which are consistent with those of the 427 Lion Squadron Association. No fees required.

### ***Partnership Agreements :***

**Association Partnership** – A unique agreement between the 427 Lion Squadron Association and another body for mutual benefit. Such agreement must not in any way restrict or reduce the autonomy of the 427 Lion Squadron Association and its ability to determine its own future.

*All “Special Category” applications for membership and or requests for “Partnership” with the Association, will be considered by the Executive Committee on an individual basis.*

## **JOIN THE 427 LION SQUADRON ASSOCIATION**

427 Squadron has a proud history and thus the main objective of the Association is to ensure that the achievements, traditions and memories of our famous squadron are maintained and perpetuated. The Association embraces not only the World War II and Post War Lions but all currently active Lions now serving on the Squadron and former Lions still serving elsewhere in the CAF.

We publish a newsletter titled ROAR and we have regional representatives all across Canada and in the US and UK. We welcome suggestions from all sectors on how to make the Association more meaningful for the members. We invite you to get on board and help make us even better.

To receive your 427 Lion Squadron Association Membership card or make a bequest, please cut out, complete and mail the form which follows or copy and paste in your browser <http://www.427squadron.com/membership.html>. Print out the form there and send it in.

Name..... Spouse/Partner.....

Address..... ZIP/PC.....

Tel ..( )..... Fax..... e-mail.....

Service years on 427 (from-to)..... Bases..... Rank ..... Trade .....

Membership: Life Member ( ) \$50.00 Annual Renewal Member ( ) \$10.00 per year.

I plan to include a bequest to the Association in my will yes ( ).

I have sent my membership or donation cheque to the Air Force Association of Canada . ( ) See the procedure detailed on the previous page.

Please mail this form to:

**A.W. “Sask” Wilford**  
**427 Lion Squadron Association**  
**9129 Side Road 17**  
**RR #2, Hillsburgh, ON, CAN ,**  
**N0B 1Z0**

## Leeming Memorial Cairn

On the morning of 21 February, 1944, an RCAF, 427 Lion Squadron Halifax, LV836, took off from RAF Leeming at 0015 hrs on a bombing mission to Stuttgart. Unfortunately, the a/c crashed some nine minutes later in fields just outside of the town Northallerton. All seven crew members on board were killed on impact. See stories and photos on the website. The cost of the memorial project was covered in the main by LIONS. See the accounting below.

On March, 2010, RAF Leeming presented a Memorial Cairn at the Romanby Golf Club in memory of the crew of LV 836. The organizer of this project was F/L Gareth Bradley-Sessions of RAF Leeming. The total cost of the project was £378.40 distributed as follows:

- 6 RCAF Bomber Group Association - Ken Cuthliff - £50
- In-person Donation - Major Luc Vermette - £28.40
- 427 Squadron Association - Bank Draught - £300

The 427 Squadron Association Treasurer, Sask Wilford, coordinated the donations from all Canadian donors resulting in the £300 bank draught. This amount broke down as follows; in Canadian funds, £300 @ 1.5676 = \$470.28. The donations came from the 427 Squadron Memorial Fund via L/Col Kevin Whale; the 427 Squadron Association; the Air Force Association via the RCAF Association Trust Fund and several 427 Squadron Association members.

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## 2nd Hollywood Squares

Those of you old enough may remember some of the wits who peopled this TV show.  
More wit and wisdom.

*Q. According to Cosmopolitan, if you meet a stranger at a party and you think that he is attractive, is it ok to ask him if he's married?*

A. Rose Marie: No, wait until morning.

*Q. Which of the fives senses tends to diminish as you get older?*

A. Charley Weaver: My sense of decency.

*Q. According to Ann Landers, what are two things you should never do in bed?*

A. Paul Lynde: Point and laugh..

*Q. As you grow older, do you tend to gesture more or less with your hands while talking?*

A. Rose Marie: You ask me one more growing old question Peter and I'll give you a gesture you'll never forget.

## Stories/Biographies/Books Wanted

We need your input. Consider sending your stories, biographies or books. A guideline for bios might include:

<p>Date of Birth—Birthplace Air Force career with details, the more the better Civilian career—Partner and children -Present location</p>
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For stories and books, the sky's the limit.

Please indicate whether you would be willing to allow it to be published on the web site and possibly in ROAR.

We should have two personal history books up on the web site later this year. One by Vern White, the other by John Dodge. Watch for them.

Email—[macway01@bigfoot.com](mailto:macway01@bigfoot.com)

Or mail to:

<p>MacLellan PO Box 83 Riverport, Nova Scotia, B0J 2W0</p>
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## We Will Remember Them

*At the going down of the sun and in the morning,  
We will remember them.  
Robert Laurence Binyon*

### **Brigadier General William Robert Dobson, CD2, OMM**

**Pilot—28th Commanding Officer 427 Squadron—d:January 27, 2011**



Bob joined the R.C.A.F in 1956 and completed his pilot training in Moose Jaw Sask. in 1957. He was a pilot, keen to fly, with a natural talent to lead, inspire, mentor and teach. He instructed on Harvards and Expeditors at the R.C.A.F Station, Moose Jaw until 1963; spending 1961 flying with the Golden Hawks and the next two years flying with the Harvard Aerobatic Team. Bob's skills and leadership talents were recognized early as he was posted to Ottawa as the Tutor Project Officer working on the construction of the CT114 Jet Trainer (Snow Bird airplane). In 1966, Bob was promoted to Sqn Leader and attended Cdn Forces Staff School in Toronto as a member of the first integrated (army air force and navy) College Course. Bob was posted to Cold Lake in 1968 to complete 104 pilot training before being posted to Baden, Germany to fly the jets full time with 422 and 441 Sqns. When Bob was promoted to Lieutenant

Colonel, he and his family were posted back to Cold Lake Alberta for a three year term as Base Operations Officer, before being posted to Petawawa as Commander 427 Tactical Helicopter Squadron. Bob had a tour in Borden and 10 TAG (St Hubert, PQ) and a wonderful three year term as Base Commander CFB Comox, BC before heading to NDHQ in Ottawa to fly a "mahogany bomber" full time until retirement as Director General of Force Development (1984-1991). During this final posting, Bob had the privilege of representing Canada and the Canadian Forces on several significant international committees, within Canada and abroad, for example the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT). More on Bob at [www.427squadron.com/remember.html/#dobson](http://www.427squadron.com/remember.html/#dobson)

### **Duncan—Pilot and Merrie, his Spouse & Partner - McLeish**

**Duncan d:October 9, 1999 - Merrie d:January 29, 2011**

Duncan was born in Hamilton into a family of flyers. Both his older brothers were pilots with the RCAF and fought in WWII. He married his high school sweetheart, Merrie Priddle, in 1952. She quickly began to enjoy the life of being a pilot's wife as they started their married life in Chatham N.B. Duncan was then posted to Trenton and later to Zweibrücken, Germany where he became a member of 427 Squadron flying F-86 Sabres. These were some of the happiest days of his life. After retiring from the airforce in 1972, he completed his BA and began a second career as a computer analyst. But, he always defined himself as a pilot and enjoyed flying two seater planes out of Ottawa. Both Duncan and Merrie kept in touch with many of the 427 group and enjoyed any chance to get together and remember the glory days of flying the Sabres. Soon SPAADS reunions began and Duncan was always busy with something to do with those arrangements. The reunion for the millennium (2000) was to finish with an Alaska cruise (not quite flying but maybe second best). Duncan and Merrie were quite excited; unfortunately, Duncan had an unexpected stroke and passed away in October 1999 so never did get to board the ship. Merrie's daughter, Margaret, suggested to Merrie that she need not give up her 427 friends and accompanied Merrie on the cruise. Merrie continued attending the SPAADS reunions.

**Wing Commander, L/Col  
Peter (Pete) Borden St. Louis, MBE, CD  
Pilot—15th Commanding Officer 427 Squadron—d:December 9, 2010**



Peter lived in Shanghai as a child, was schooled in England and joined the RCAF in 1941 at the age of 18. In 1951, Peter married Frances and also received the MBE medal following his daring rescue of a British scientific survey party in Antarctica in 1950. He remained with the RCAF thereafter becoming a Squadron Leader in Europe during the Cold War era. He served as 427 Squadron Commanding Officer from 1960 to 1962 and ended 427's decade of flying the F-86 Sabres when on December 14, 1962 he handed the Squadron diary to W/C Bob Middlemiss, the new 427 CO with CF-104 Starfighters. He retired from the RCAF as a Wing Commander (L/Col) in 1972. With more adventure in his first 50 years than most, he was quite happy to settle into a structured domestic life, working for the federal government, spending time with his family and playing a lot of golf. He was a devoted husband and was immensely proud of his children and grandchildren. He was a fine example of how to live with dignity, humility and courage. More on Peter at [www.427squadron.com/remember/#st](http://www.427squadron.com/remember/#st)

**George Lindsay Vogan, DFC  
D: OCTOBER 11, 2009**



George Lindsay Vogan, B.A., B.D., M.A., M.Div., S.T.M., D.D., D.F.C. Reverend Doctor Lindsay Vogan at 91 years of age passed away on October 11, 2009 from complications due to Alzheimer disease. Lindsay was born August 21, 1918 and raised in Waterloo County, Ontario. As a young man he worked at the Bank of Commerce in Ayr, Ontario until 1941 when he enlisted in the RCAF. He saw active service as a member of bomber command and 427 Squadron during WW2. He received the Distinguished Flying Cross for his contributions.



After the war, he was ordained as a United Church Minister. He had a flair for ancient

Greek and Hebrew languages and Old Testament theology, and as a result was hired by St. Stephen's College, Edmonton, in 1953 where he taught until 1971. He then took a pastoral charge at Westminster until he retired from the United Church in 1983. His love of teaching took him to teach at numerous multi-denominational theological colleges in the Edmonton area. He continued to teach until his retirement in 1992. For more information copy and paste to your browser [http://](http://www.427squadron.com/memoir.html)

[www.427squadron.com/memoir.html](http://www.427squadron.com/memoir.html)





## So They Will Remember John S. Dodge

### Last Trip to Hanover

*This is an excerpt from the book by John S. Dodge who joined 427 Squadron on December 3, 1944 on his second tour.*

On January 6th, 1945 the Squadron was scheduled to bomb Hanover, which had a major German railroad terminal. Our crew was not assigned to go on this operation; however, at the 13:00 hour briefing, one of the assigned crews had not returned from leave, so Jersey covered for them by putting our crew on as a replacement.

The difficulty was that several of our crew, knowing they were not assigned to fly, had taken off for York city to enjoy the day off. So our crew that night consisted of the regulars, Jersey, Soup, Doug and myself with three spares we had not flown with before. In addition the two replacement gunners were on their first operational trips and had no experience at all spotting enemy fighters.

During the main briefing Jersey was unusually quiet and I believe he must've sensed what was coming. We took off from Leeming at 4:00 PM and circled for height over the station. We had to climb to 12,000 feet before setting course as weather conditions were reported to be very bad over the North Sea. It was 5:00pm when we set course, due East.

Hanover was quite a long trip so we were carrying wing overload fuel tanks. Over the North Sea we tried to use these overload tanks but the pumps would not work, which meant that we would have only enough petrol to bomb the target and then reach the first aerodrome back in England. Jersey decided to go on.

We were now at 20,000 feet and it was pitch black. At 6:05pm. we saw the flak and searchlights, which meant we were nearing the German coast. Shortly thereafter we knew we were in for a rough trip as German fighters started dropping hundreds of illumination flares along our route. We could see fighters and bombers exchanging tracer shells and we saw many go down in flames.

At 7:19 p.m. we were concentrated on making a perfect bombing run when we were suddenly raked from stem to stern by cannon shells from a German fighter which our gunners did not see or detect. We fell off to port, out-of-control. At about

17,000 feet, Jersey managed to get the aircraft flying in a normal attitude when the mid-upper gunner reported our starboard wing was ablaze. At the same time the engineer reported that the whole fuselage from his position back of the main spar was a mass of flame.

Jersey gave the order to abandon aircraft. In the order of bailing out I was to go first, so I raised my table and chair, lifted and jettisoned the escape hatch which was directly under my chair, warned the bomb aimer and wireless operator that we were jumping and prepared to leave aircraft. All this happened in just a few seconds.

I rolled out of the escape hatch first (not recommended) and somersaulted into space. As soon as I could get out of the spin I pulled the record and thankfully the chute opened. I could see Hanover about 5 miles to the southeast all ablaze with flak, fires and searchlights and I was afraid the wind would carry me over the target.

The light from the target lit up a layer of what I believe to be strata-cumulus clouds beneath me. I figured when I hit these clouds I would have about 5000 more feet before hitting the ground. When I hit the layer of cloud I also hit the deck with a great jolt. The white cloud turned out to be ground frost.

It had taken me approximately seven minutes to fall seventeen thousand feet. By this time, the last of our planes were leaving the target and I could hear the engines dying away in the distance. Then all became silent and I think my morale at this moment was at its lowest ebb. This had been my thirty second operation over Germany.

*To be continued.....*



The notice to his parents from the Minister of National Defence that F/L Dodge was reported missing.

**QUIZ PAGE****Answers for the Quiz from the October 2010 ROAR****WW II**

**Q.** What was the range of the Avro Lancaster with Mk III Rolls Royce engines with a: 7000 lb bomb load

**A.**—2530 NM

12,000 lb bomb load

**A.**—1730 NM

22,000 lb bomb load

**A.**—1550NM

**Canadair F-86**

**Q.** What was the max. take off weight for the Mk. 6 with two 100 Imp. Gallon drop tanks?

**A.** 16,135 lbs.

**Q.** What take off distance was required with two 100 gallon drop tanks at sea level, 14,400 lbs., maximum thrust, 15C, no wind?

**A.** 1,500 feet

**CF—104**

**Q.** What roles were assigned to the Canadian 104s by NATO?

**A.** Nuclear Strike and Photo Reconnaissance

**Q.** How many Squadrons were assigned to each role?

**A.** Six were tasked as Nuclear Strike and two as Photo Reconnaissance

Copy and paste this link in your browser.

[http://www.guessthespot.com/index.php?cat\\_id=3](http://www.guessthespot.com/index.php?cat_id=3)

**Helicopter**

**Q.**In 1970 how many CH136 Kiowa were ordered for the Air Force?

**A.** Seventy four were ordered to replace the 44 Nomads and L-19s.

**Q.** In appearance, how did you identify a Kiowa from a Jet Ranger?

**A.** The Jet Ranger lacked the Kiowa's angled lower edge of the rear door window

**How Kids see Marriage**

**Q.** *How do you decide whom to marry?*

**A.** You got to find somebody who likes the same stuff. Like, if you like sports, she should like it that you like sports and she should keep the chips and dip coming.

Alan , age 10

**Q.** *How can a stranger tell if two people are married?*

**A.** You might have to guess, based on whether they seem to be yelling at the same kids.

Derrick, age 8

**Q.** *How would the world be different if people didn't get married?*

**A.** Sure would be a lot of kids to explain, wouldn't there?

Kelvin, age 8

**Q.** *How would you make a marriage work?*

**A.** Tell your wife that she looks pretty, even if she looks like a truck.

Ricky, age 10

**Check Out You Tube**

Bob Middlemiss has 5 videos posted. One on Remembrance and the other four on his wartime career. Copy and paste in your browser <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E5I-NyApWag&feature=related>

The other videos are selectable from this web page.

**Help**

Do you recognize the man in this photograph? Either 425 or 426 Squadron. If you do, please get back to Mr. Alan Smith at

[alansusan71@btopenworld.com](mailto:alansusan71@btopenworld.com) )

**Do You Use the Web?**

We are always looking for volunteers to take ROAR as an email attachment or to read it on the web. The email and web are PDF files with colour photos and is also highly readable with the free Adobe Reader software. You are also able to increase the size of the font. The reason for this request is that it will save us the cost of printing and mailing as well as the time taken to prepare it for mailing.

**Moving?**

Please notify us of your new address and email if you move.

email me at -

[macway01@bigfoot.com](mailto:macway01@bigfoot.com)

**Web facts**

The web surfers who check out our web site come from USA, Canada, Great Britain, Germany and Australia. In that order. We average 10,000 hits a month.

## CANADA'S COLD WAR FIGHTER PILOTS—PART III

BY COLONEL W. NEIL RUSSELL, CF RET.

### THE SABRE PILOTS—1 AIR DIV

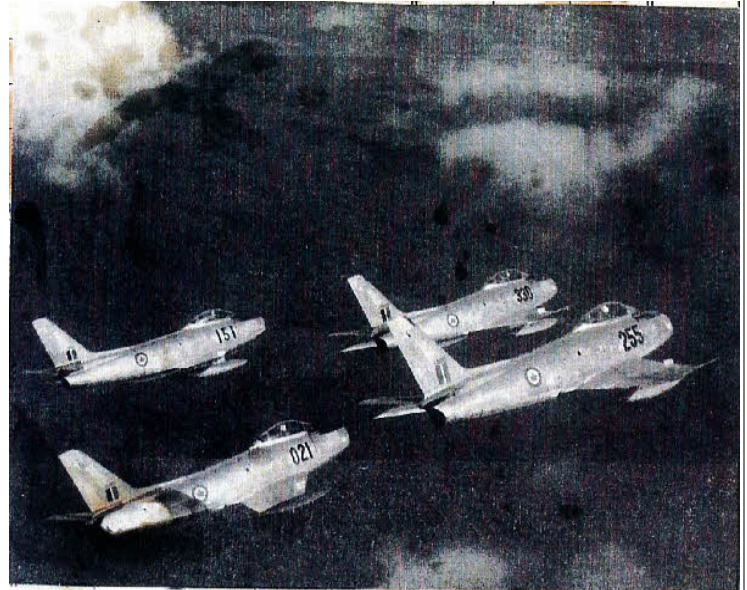
The previous two parts described the Cold War and the origin of 1 Air Division, its role and organization, now its time to talk about the Sabre pilots of 1 Air Division. A typical pilot would be a Flying Officer [Lieutenant], 21 or 22 years old. He had to be at least a high school graduate and accept a five year short service commission as an officer in the RCAF. After background security checks, comprehensive medical examinations and a battery of aptitude tests, if accepted, he would be sent to initial pilot training on the Harvards at Centralia, Ontario or one of three bases in Western Canada. (later the DeHaviland "Chipmunk" became the initial trainer then continuing on Harvards) If still successful he would go on to advanced training on the T-33 Silver Star at one of three bases in Manitoba, graduating with the coveted RCAF pilot's wings. If still successful and recommended, approximately a year after entry, he would enter the most exciting part of his training, the Sabre Operational Training Unit (OTU) at Chatham, New Brunswick.

Few pilots can forget their first flight on the Mark V Sabre at the OTU. There was no two seat version of the Canadian F-86; your first flight was "for real." Granted, there was a simulator of sorts. It replicated the cockpit instruments and controls, and experienced F-86 pilots could lead you through engine starting, taxi and some basic emergency procedures. But on the day of your first flight, an instructor would stand on the wing of your aircraft, watch you get the engine started, then pat you on the shoulder saying, "It's all yours; good luck." Although first landings were a little bouncy, most of my group of students had no trouble; however, one classmate got a case of the nerves, had to be talked down by an instructor in the control tower and decided that single seat jet flying was not for him.

After three solo fights at the OTU, my group im-

mediately started close formation flying.

Flying in close formation is basic for all fighter pilots. It's not just for "show" but for "efficiency", to allow four aircraft to take off, join up, and climb through cloud making one radar "blip". Once above cloud, Canadian fighter pilots used a loose, "finger four" battle formation. The flight [section] leader was the primary hunter/shooter; Number Two was a wing man, guarding his tail. Number Three [element leader] was also a hunter/shooter, flying abreast or behind the section leader, with Number Four guarding his tail. Returning



A section of four Mark V Sabres in close formation  
[Photo from OTU Christmas card, 1958]

from the "hunt" and "battle", the four aircraft would re-assume close formation, descending to base as if they were again one radar blip. While practicing both close and battle formation on every trip, student pilots at the OTU soon went into air-to-air fighting, first one-on-one, then two-on-two, and four-on-four. It was exciting for young pilots, and not without risk.

After acquiring some 50 hours on the Mark V Sabre, OTU student pilots joined the real fun, firing the guns, first, against stationary targets on the ground, then air-to-air. In the latter, four aircraft led by an instructor would take off, fly to an air-to-air gunnery range located off the coast and space themselves



**CANADA'S COLD WAR FIGHTER  
PILOTS CONTINUED.....**

in line-a-stern, above and abeam a 15 metre long drogue ["flag"] towed behind a target aircraft. Taking turns, each pilot would dive his aircraft in a curve of pursuit toward the flag, watch while his range-finding radar acquired the target, and close in to 1,200 to 800 feet, smoothly tracking the target, firing for a few seconds, slipping past the flag and returning back up to the "perch". Each of the four firing aircraft was armed with .50 calibre bullets tipped with a different coloured wax. When the flag was towed back to base, retrieved and inspected, the great hope was to find holes made by your colour of bullets. An eventual passing grade was to have a score of 15 or 20%; a few instructor "aces" could achieve more than 50%. I was never an "ace" in air-to-air gunnery at the OTU, but I passed the course and before long, in January, 1959, I was on my way to my first operational posting as a fighter pilot of 1 Air Division.

Friends have asked me if I had any particularly interesting flights while on Sabres overseas. Yes, especially one where I saw the real "enemy" and I armed my guns. The occasion was the first time I was a member of the special standby flight, with six guns fully loaded, called by NATO "Zulu Alert". My log book showed 500 total hours of which just 130 hours were on Sabres. We were "King Formation", King Lead being F/L Mart Eisner, an experienced WWII pilot upgrading to section lead; his wing man, King Two, was F/O Eddie McKeogh, Squadron Fighter Weapons Instructor. King Three was our highly experienced OC, S/L Hal Knight. I was "Tail End Charlie", King Four. We had inspected our aircraft, set parachutes and helmets in the cockpits ready in case of the need of a quick start, and had just returned to the readiness hanger expecting a quiet morning of knock rummy, when we received the command, "King Formation, take off on a live scramble; head 090 degrees [East]; make angels four zero zero [40,000 feet]". The OC was sure it must be a mistake, stating, "The Air Division always uses practice scrambles; never a live one [Real emergency]." But half an hour later, still

flying east, and having been handed off from Yellow Jack to an allied radar, "Race Card", we were informed that there was an unusual amount of air activity across the Iron Curtain in Czechoslovakia. Our job was to mount a show of force on our side of the border. No sooner had this been explained when King Two, Eagle Eye Eddie McKeogh, transmitted, "King Lead, Bandits, 12 o'clock, 30 miles, level". From behind, squinting my eyes, I couldn't see any "bandits", but I didn't have long to look before our formation leader transmitted, "King Formation, arm your guns". "Arm our guns?!?", I questioned, "Does Lead remember that with just a slight squeeze of the trigger we could spray bullets all over Germany"? But, that's what the leader had ordered, so quickly I went through the three steps ending with the arm guns switch. There was a bumping vibration and sound, ker-chunk, ker-chunk, as six armour piercing rounds thrust forward into the breach blocks of the six machine guns in the nose of my Sabre.

I remember my heart was beating fast as I tried to fly as smoothly as possible, my head and eyes on a swivel, when Race Card finally gave us the order to turn left to 350 degree [North], parallel to the border. Then, as we turned, I saw them. at least three, possibly more, silver, swept wing aircraft, probable MIG-17s, flying parallel to us, approximately 15 miles distant. Being low on fuel, we didn't have long to impress the Czechs with our little show of force. Released by Race Card, our throttles back to idle, we glided into Erding, a NATO air base near Munich, waking up the sleepy air traffic controller with the announcement that we were, "four Canadian Mark Six's, landing with hot guns". The significance of the hot guns was that, once the Canadian F-86's machine guns were armed, it was not safe to shut off electrical power until the guns had been de-armed. Fortunately, no member of King Formation had itchy fingers and Eddie McKeogh was able to go from aircraft to aircraft, pulling each belt of .50 calibre shells out of the breach blocks so we could safely shut off battery power. Knight complimented Eagle Eye Eddie as the first to see the bandits; he also agreed with King Lead, Mart Eisner, with his order to arm our guns. As the OC said, "For every bandit you see, there can be more; we could

have been bounced at any time". And to me, squadron rookie, he thought I had flown a good battle formation position, "...except, perhaps, just a little too close toward the end." I explained, "Thank you boss; I was doing my best to look out and guard your tail; however, once I had seen the enemy, there was no way I was going to lose you."

Any other incidents? Yes, a short, but significant, one. On one of those flying circuses north of Zweibrücken, with perhaps 16 aircraft swirling high in the sky, I had got behind an "enemy" aircraft and was concentrating on tracking him through my gun sight, when my aircraft shook and a shadow passed over me. Back at base, when another pilot and I were reviewing my gun sight cine film, we saw the cause of the bump and shadow. A French Mystere IV had passed from above to below, its profile nearly filling the windscreen, perhaps less than 50 feet in front of the nose of my aircraft. I'm very lucky to be alive!



The Author, F/O Russell, 1960, in a light mood, posed on the tail of a Mark VI Sabre  
[Photo by F/O Wongkee]

Many other Canadian Sabre pilots were not so lucky. In all, between the years 1951 to 1963, 107 Sabre pilots were killed in accidents in Canada and overseas. Most were buried with military honours in the RCAF Cemetery, Choley, which with a grim sense of humour the Sabre pilots used to call "Five Wing". A me-

memorial to the 107 stands on the grounds of the RCAF Memorial Museum at Trenton, Ontario.

There are many other stories which could be told, some even humorous. Deployment for air-to-air gunnery in Sardinia was always a high time for squadron pilots. Besides honing our shooting skills other happenings took place. One such occurred when a tow plane with target flag above cloud, got too close to the coast. Four sabres scattered .50 cali-

bre bullets onto a tourist beach. No one was hurt; there was no damage; the mistake might have gone unnoticed, except, on holiday, near the beach, was none other than Air Marshal Sir Harry Broadhurst, Commander 2 ATAF. As I recall, no one was punished; however, a rule was soon published that the pilots of aircraft towing drogue targets must at all times be able to see the coastline and be 100% sure they were flying in the published air-to-air range over the sea.

Incidents like this, while perhaps not completely typical, were interspersed with the serious type of flying which was done by 1 Air Division's Cold War fighter pilots. The young short service commission officers worked hard and played hard but they flew well and many were good leaders. While a squadron had an OC and two flight commanders, the informal leaders were the young most experienced pilots who had qualified to be four plane formation leaders. The best formation leaders were renowned all over the Air Division. And if one had been chosen to go back to the OTU to train as a "Fighter Weapons Instructor", he was "god". As stated by Greenhouse and Halliday: "Canadian Sabre pilots regularly bounced and out flew their rivals in other air forces. On three occasions RCAF Sabre teams won the Guynemer Trophy, emblematic of gunnery supremacy in NATO air forces. The Sabre years were the happiest times for those serving in 1 Air Division; in retrospect, many would consider it the RCAF's golden age".

*Colonel Russell served as a Sabre pilot and later as tactical intelligence officer in 1 Air Division Headquarters from January 1959 until November 1963. He was on duty in the 1 Air Div Combat Operations Centre during both the second Berlin Crisis and Cuban Missile Crisis. Later he was posted to the Directorate of Air Intelligence, Air Force Headquarters, Ottawa where his work included monitoring the daily activity of the Soviet Long Range Aviation and Rocket Forces.*

*This is Part 3 of his four part article. The complete text is on the web site and the next ROAR will finish with the last part of the article.*





### Lost Trails—RTS

The names listed here are only a few of the Association members whom we are no longer able to contact. A complete list is posted on the web site under **News/Lost Trails**. If you know of an updated address, phone or Email, for anyone on the list please notify Sask ([wilsas@sympatico.ca](mailto:wilsas@sympatico.ca)) or myself ([macway01@bigfoot.com](mailto:macway01@bigfoot.com)). Thanks to all who have previously helped to reduce the list.

Capt.	Daniel	Coutts	Helicopter
CWO	Jack	Leroux	Helicopter
Mr.	Charles	Logan	WW II
Mr.	Billy	Lossing	WW II
Mr.	Donald	MacDonald	WW II
Mr.	Holgar	Magnusson	WW II
Mr.	Bruce	Mason	WW II
Mr.	Donald	McCann	WW II
Mr.	Alan	McCaskill	WW II
Mr.	George	McIntyre	WW II
Col.	Bruce	McQuade	WW II
Mr.	Pat	Mitchell	WW II
Mr.	John	Mulvihill	WW II
Mr.	William	Poohkay	WW II
Mr.	Charles	Procter	WW II
Mr.	James(Dusty)	Rhodes	WW II
Mr.	Howard	Salmon	WW II
Cpl.	Christine	Saunders	Helicopter
Mrs.	J.E.	Slocombe	WW II
Mr	Harold	Smith	WW II
Mr.	William	Stephen	WW II
Mr.	John	Turnbull	WW II
Sgt.	Bernd	Wehmeyer	Helicopter
Mr.	Harold	Whittaker	WW II
Mr.	Harold	Widdess	WW II
F/L	Emil	Zuber	Sabre

### BOMBER COMMAND VETERANS

*Email from Dean Black, Executive director, Air Force Association of Canada*

The Canadian Press wants to do an article on the subject of the long-delayed recognition (medals and the like) of service and sacrifice during the Second World War. Bomber Command veterans, or those caring for these veterans, are urged to make contact with John Ward of the Canadian Press in Ottawa. His e-mail [john.ward@thecanadianpress.com](mailto:john.ward@thecanadianpress.com). Failing that you can contact Vic Johnson, Editor Airforce Magazine at [vjohnson@airforce.ca](mailto:vjohnson@airforce.ca), Subject: Planned Canadian Press Article on the 65 Year Struggle for Recognition and Honour of Service in Air Operations of RAF Bomber Command

*Original email from John Ward*

I am a reporter with The Canadian Press in Ottawa and I am working on a story about the long-delayed honour for veterans of Bomber Command. I am looking for men who were on ops with Bomber Command and who would be willing to talk about the 65-year-and-counting delay in getting a distinct honour.

After all, there was a Battle of Britain Star and a North Atlantic Star, but nothing for the hardest-hit branch of any Allied service. Was it early political correctness that persuaded the British government to give the command short shrift? After all, Sir Arthur Harris was the only senior commander denied a peerage. Is it time for Canada to remedy this situation. Any thoughts you might have would be appreciated. I would also appreciate if you could put me on to other vets of Bomber Command.

Thanks  
John Ward The Canadian Press Ottawa

To see the full email correspondence on this subject, copy and paste to your browser [www.427squadron.com/news\\_file/afa\\_request.html](http://www.427squadron.com/news_file/afa_request.html)

## DAY 132/133—Roto 12 Bosnia & Herzegovina

*LCol now BGen Dabros was the CO of the 427 detachment assigned to SFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Stabilization Force was there from Jan. 1996 to Dec 2005. These are two excerpts from LCol Dabros' 188 day diary of his tour. The full diary is available at [www.tachelmemoires.com](http://www.tachelmemoires.com)*

### Part of Day 132

Another interesting story from today - It seems the supply system inadvertently shipped us an aircraft part in error - a part we hadn't ordered, but rather was intended for CFB Bagotville. It is a replacement tail-plane for a CF-18, weighing about 750 kg with its packing. The techs did their best to fit it onto the Griffon in the maintenance bay for a photo opportunity, and then returned it to its crate for the long trip home to Bagotville (I will try and send the picture). Of course, it has been suitably re-decorated with appropriate 427 Squadron, 400 Squadron and Hel Det zappers, a copy of the picture, and signed with chalk by the technicians who had such a good time with someone else's mistake.

### Part of Day 133

This is the promised picture of the techs trying to make good on their intent to fit a CF-18 tail plane to the Griffon. As one experienced officer put it, "Given the 'usual suspects' identifiable in the picture, I am surprised they didn't get the thing on there to stay! At least you can tell they are having a good time..."

M. R. Dabros LCol  
Commanding Officer  
TFBH Hel Det, Velika Kladusa



## Help



### *Does anyone remember serving with my Uncle Alec?*

Alec (Duncan Alexander) Carmichael, nicknamed "Mike", from Sand Point, ON. He received his air observers badge April 25 '42 at Rivers Manitoba, then became a pilot officer in July '42, deployed to the UK, and was assigned to 418 Squadron on Nov 17 '42, as a navigator, then was reassigned to 418 and flew until he was KIA on June 23 '42 at the age of 23. He is buried with his Boston crewmates: Flight Sergeant Findlay, E.Q.(Pilot) and Sgt.Robertson, J.W.(Wireless Operator/Air Gunner) near Bretteville-Sur-Laize near Caen, France. I would very much like to speak with anyone from RCAF Bomber Command who may have known my Uncle Alec so that I may get closer to a man I would like to have known better. Thank you. Please e-mail to Sharon Boone ([sharonboone@gmail.com](mailto:sharonboone@gmail.com))

### How Fast Are You ?

Check it out, copy and paste the url below:

<http://www.ferryhalim.com/orisinal/g2/applegame.htm>

### Confucius no say...

Man who leaps off cliff jumps to conclusion.

Man who stands on toilet is high on pot.

*Ed. Note: Sorry, but I couldn't resist. More next ROAR*

### Membership Facts

We have a total of 238 members who receive a mailed out copy of ROAR. We have another 29 members who either receive it by email or read it on the web site.

Lastly, we have 57 members who were receiving mail copies that now have an invalid address. We have been unable to contact these members by any means. Please check the web site for the full list and advise [Sask](#) or [myself](#) if you have information.

## SMILE

A cabbie picks up a Nun. She gets into the cab, and notices that the VERY handsome cab driver won't stop staring at her.

She asks him why he is staring and he replies: "I have a question to ask you but I don't want to offend you."

She answers, "My son, you cannot offend me. When you're as old as I am and have been a nun as long as I have, you get a chance to see and hear just about everything. I'm sure that there's nothing you could say or ask that I would find offensive."

"Well, I've always had a fantasy to have a nun kiss me."

She responds, "Well, let's see what we can do about that: #1, you have to be single and #2, you must be Catholic."

The cab driver is very excited and says, "Yes, I'm single and Catholic!"

"OK", the nun says. "Pull into the next alley."

The nun fulfils his fantasy, with a kiss that would make a hooker blush.

But, when they get back on the road, the cab driver starts crying.

"My dear child," says the nun. "Why are you crying?"

"Forgive me but I've sinned. I lied and I must confess that I'm married and I'm Jewish."

The nun says, "That's OK. My name is Kevin and I'm going to a Halloween party."