

427 SQUADRON 70TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL EDITION

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Battle Honours

Major *English Channel & North Sea 1943-1945
Baltic 1944-1945
Fortress Europe 1943-1944
France & Germany 1944-1945
Biscay 1944
Subsidiary: Ruhr 1943-1945
Berlin 1943-1944
German Ports 1943-1945
Biscay Ports 1943-1944
Normandy 1944
Rhine

Major Roles

NATO Fighter Squadron 1952-62
NATO Strike/Attack 1962-1970
Op. Calumet-Sinai-1985
Op. Sultan-Central America-1989-92
Op. Deliverance-Somalia-1992-93
Op. Pivot and Stable-Haiti -1995
Op. Recuperation-Ice Storm-1998
Op. Central-Honduras-1998
Op. Hurricane-Artic 1999
Palladium Roto 5-1999-2000 Bosnia
Palladium Roto 7-2000-01
Palladium Roto 11/12-2002-03
Special Operations Squadron 2006-Pres.
Afghanistan 2007– Pres.

Gathering of the Lions CFB Petawawa November 2,3,4 2012

Almost 70 years to the day a Gathering of Lions took place to celebrate the 70th birthday of 427 Squadron. There were distinct segments to the event and the first took place on Friday afternoon for a “Meet and Greet”.

We arrived Friday afternoon to a very busy hotel and quickly checked in. With other Lions, Sask Wilford, John and Susi Shute and Ted Hessel, we proceeded to Hangar 4 where the “Meet & Greet” was to take place.

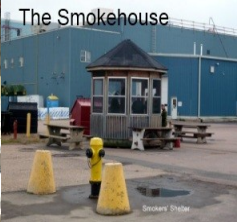
Sask quickly set up the Membership table beside the Squadron merchandise area with the help of some Squadron troops. However, our table was adorned by a six foot banner which Sask had purchased. It identified the



Association. Beside it another table carried Ted Hessel’s “Sabre Scissors” picture as well as a collage of Sabre photos.

The Air Force Association had generously provided a number of gifts which we awarded to new members when they signed up.

The afternoon was well attended by all eras of Lions and documented by Neil Lakins whose photos you will find in the following pages. Mike Lefebvre and his helpers provided a great selection of delicious food.



Friday evening after the Meet & Greet several of the Sabre Lions retired to Kelsey's restaurant for dinner. We were joined by Honourary Colonel Bob Middlemiss, Mikala Jacobi and LCol. Eddie Haskins. An early evening was needed to prepare for the celebrations on Saturday.

Saturday afternoon was the Squadron parade, consisting of two flights which were led onto the spotless parade area in Hangar 4 by SCWO Lou Di-Stefano. An inspection was conducted and medals presented by the Commander CANSOFCOM, BGen. D.W. Thompson. In addition to the fine display of Squadron marching, led by the CO LCol. Morehen, during the Marchpast, the Colour Guard and Pipes & Drums added to the dignity of the occasion.

In attendance also were Deputy Commander CONUS, NORAD, BGen C.J. Coates, Commander 1 Wing, Colonel K.G. Whale and Honourary Colonel R.G. Middlemiss. All are former 427 Commanding Officers. In the audience viewing the parade were another four retired COs including LGen. (Ret.) Don McNaughton and his gracious wife Fran.



Air Force blue inspired pride for the event spectators which included families as well as retired Lions. It was a pleasure to see Allan Todd attend the parade with his son. Allan was a Navigator with 427 at Leeming and completed 31 bombing operations.

Equally, as a source of pride was the summary of the Squadron history delivered during the first part of the parade. Since 1942 Lions have served their country with pride and professionalism assisting in times of hostilities, threatened hostilities, peacekeeping duties and even disaster relief in Canada and abroad. A new era was ushered in during 2006 when the Squadron was re-tasked as a Special Operations unit, entering a highly specialized and shadowy operations role. BGen. Thompson's address to the parade reiterated that 427 is one of Canada's oldest squadron with an unprecedented 70 years of service to Canada. It has always lived up to its motto, "Ferte Manus

Certas", Strike with a Sure Hand. At the conclusion of the parade a cake decorated in Squadron colours was distributed and enjoyed by many.



The finale to the anniversary was the dinner hosted by LCol. Morehen. 235 active and retired personnel packed the Normandy Mess on Saturday night. The Lions, past and present, were resplendent in formal attire. A cocktail reception prior to the dinner allowed the opportunity to mingle with all eras of Lions and their guests. In attendance was Mareth in his Glass case, transported from his permanent home at the Base museum.

Once seating in the dining room was completed, the head table was introduced. The Honourary Colonel received a noisy recognition for his participation and support of so many 427 activities. Also at the head table was the 427 Lion mounted on a marble base. During the evening the duty of Lion Guardian was passed to the newest officer of the Squadron, another 427 tradition.

BGen Coates was the first speaker and his message addressed three areas of importance. First, he pointed out that the spirit of 427 was forged to a large part by the exploits of the Squadron during WW II. Secondly, he stated that Lions believe they are part of a 70 year old family and mentioned many of the Lions who were there celebrating with their “family”. He also mentioned some of the Lions who had been special in his career and had mentored him.



LCol. Morehen thanked BGen. Coates for his remarks and continued with his own. He spoke of his pride to be Commanding Officer of 427. He said that in his previous two tours with 427 he could never have dreamed that he would return for a third tour as CO. His pride stemmed from the history of 427 and the honour of being a part that history. Lions past and present have distinguished themselves in so many parts of the world in so many aviation activities.

All attendees at the dinner were once again inspired by the words of BGen. Coates and LCol. Morehen and shared their feeling of reward and satisfaction in being part of the Pride.

A four course meal, tables decorated with white orchids and convivial company along with dancing after the meal concluded a splendid evening.

Ferte Manus Certas





Ed: The following remarks are a testimonial by BGen Dabros and appeared in Air Force Magazine, Vol. 35, #4. They summarize eloquently what many of us have experienced through our link to 427 Squadron.

Brigadier-General Michael Dabros

427 is the historical continuum and human story that is defined by the many folks who have served the Squadron over time. Sgt. Wegner, whose family's original homestead and farm occupied the point of land on which the Squadron is currently located; Al d'Eon, Mr. Carter Edwards and Stan Millar among the many wartime Lions who account for many of our dearest traditions; Bob Middlemiss, whose wartime experiences with other flying units are the stuff of legend, but whose closest unit affiliation remains 427; the likes of Sask Wilford, Walt Pirie, Dick Dunn and others, who epitomize for me the heady days of Sabre operations in Europe; peers such as Jack Cuypers, Pud Jeffries, 'Cutter' Malejczuk, Dan Wilson and Rick Engler who between them can account for close to 100 years of service to the Squadron; LGen Rick Findlay who played such a key role in the NORAD response to 9/11; and most recently LGen Charlie Bouchard who led the NATO Air mission against Libya, but who was also a member of 427 in the late 1970s. Despite their individual accomplishments, and in many cases their larger contribution to Canada's Air Force history outside of 427, I associate all of them most closely with their service to 427 Squadron and Canada. Certainly this is the environment in which I know them best, due primarily to the Squadron's power to bring folks back time and time again, in order to exploit that common bond of service and friendship.

As a result I have always been impressed by the extent to which connecting 'people' through their relationship to and within 427 Squadron has remained one of the Squadron's greatest strengths and lasting legacies. I know of no other current unit whose tradition of linking people has endured to the extent it has at 427. Among those whose greatest personal achievement were perhaps accomplished elsewhere, in other units and other aircraft, even in occupations outside the military and well removed from their time at 427, most continue to identify most closely with the 'Lion Squadron' as being at the foundation of their tactical roots and as figuring prominently in their recollection of their own service. With two postings to the Lion's den under my belt, including having been fortunate enough to have served as Commanding Officer, I am certainly one of those who consider 427 Squadron as home.

Remember



MEMORIAL FOR THE CREW OF HALIFAX LW165 OF NO. 427 SQUADRON, AT ECURIE (FRANCE)

*The picture and some comments below are from the site
<http://www.rafcommands.com/forum/>*

Earlier today ,November 4, 2012 , a memorial was unveiled at Ecurie, 5 km north of Arras, in the Pas-de-Calais département in northern France, for the crew of Halifax III LW165 ZL-M, which crashed there during the night 12/13 June 1944.

You can view some pictures I took at this address :

<http://www.aerostories.org/~aeroforums/forumactu/aff.php?nummsg=9587>

By Joss, WebMaster

Ed. :Josh was asked by one of his forum readers to comment on why the inscription on the memorial plaque had a picture of a 76 Squadron Halifax with code - MP-L and not as expected, a 427 Squadron aircraft LW165 - code ZL -M. Josh pointed out that the memorial committee had access only to a picture of a Halifax which they copied not being aware of the code significance.

L/Col John Alexander, our previous 427 CO was one of the Canadian military representatives attending the dedication.





Ferte Manus Certas

Strike with a Sure Hand