



FERTE MANUS CERTAS

ROAR



427 Squadron Association

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May 2024

427 Special Operations Aviation Squadron



Commanding Officer - L/Col Matt Snider Lions,

It is a good time to be at 427 Squadron. I have repeated these words many times over the past few months, and I'm going to tell you why.

On the 23rd of February, 2024, we received our first CE145C *Vigilance* aircraft. Based with one of our Flights in Trenton, this fixed-wing intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance aircraft opens an entirely new chapter in 427's history and lineage. We expect to have our full complement of three aircraft by the end of June. We are now armed with a new and vital capability that was often missing from Canadian Task Forces. We will operationalize the capability over the next year or so, and have little doubt it will be employed very shortly thereafter.

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Honourary Colonel Lianne Ing Fellow Lions



It has been an eventful six months since the last edition of ROAR in November 2023. The squadron has maintained a high operational tempo, including participation in large-scale Nordic exercises with NATO and supporting important security operations in Haiti. In addition, another major milestone was achieved in February, with the addition of the new *Vigilance* fixed-wing aircraft to support Canada's operations in intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) missions. This addition to the 427 fleet marks the beginning of a new and expanded era in the squadron's operations and underscores the ever-evolving nature of the squadron's role in the CAF. In addition to these major milestones, the squadron has been busy with a range of events. The squadron hosted its annual Leadership Symposium at the beginning of December. Speakers are invited to share their leadership...

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Squadron Chief Warrant Officer Mark Jones Lions,



The Squadron is in good hands, we are very busy, and the moral and welfare of all our members is doing well. Some highlights of the past months: a new capability for the Sqn, with the CE-145 *Vigilance* being onboarded last month, we are now a multi-fleet Sqn again. With new capabilities comes new challenges. The squadron members have turned to these challenges with vigour, as they are keen to have this capability and ensure it is ready for the mission sets and requirements of the new battlespace, we find ourselves in. All sections have been able to provide support to ensure the *Vigilance* is ready. As with all new technologies, we must ensure that as a unit, we are moving to this new space and are prepared for the challenges that represents.

Continued Next Page

CO continued:

Only three days after receiving our first *Vigilance*, three CH146 *Griffons* of a 427 Special Operations Aviation Detachment projected far north, from Norway into Sweden and Finland, as part of the NATO Exercise Steadfast Defender. We integrated into the NATO Special Operations Forces, supporting SOF patrols and raids deep into the territory of a simulated enemy. This huge event of more than 90,000 troops tested and validated our ability to conduct SOF aviation tasks in the European High North under austere and degraded conditions against a simulated integrated air defence system. Another first for 427!

And then, before our aircraft had even returned from Europe, crisis struck in Haiti. With gangs taking over the capital of Port-au-Prince, the government directed that a SOF Strategic Assessment Team be sent to the Canadian embassy to assess security and provide advice. With the roads impassable, this was tasked to another detachment of 427. Launching four *Griffons*, we inserted the team onto the rooftop of the embassy in the middle of Port-au-Prince. We supported the team and the diplomats remaining in the embassy until the SOF tasks were complete and we were relieved by our brothers and sisters from 1 Wing.

This will be my last note to ROAR as Commanding Officer as LCol Chris Bray will be taking command in July. It has been an inspiring and humbling experience to hold this position and watch the members of 427 transform the unit to continue to deliver excellence and maintain relevance. It is a good time to be at 427.

HCOL continued:

...experiences from different sectors, with the goal of stimulating discussions with the squadron on best practices and lessons learned. This year's symposium included an informative and entertaining talk on the Tactics of Innovation by LCol (R) Dean Black, who highlighted lessons from a variety of notable aviators from recent history, as well as a compelling presentation from Capt Kevin Bond on the process of 360-degree performance reviews, using the process at Netflix as a case study. I had the opportunity to share my experiences on leading through transformation, including a discussion on change management processes and agents of change in an organization. Members engaged in thoughtful and forward-leaning discussions regarding how these lessons from other times and other places could be applied to continuously improve the squadron's operations.

Lions also had the opportunity to meet at the 81st *Gathering of the Lions* event in April, held at 2 Hangar. This casual event brought together Lions from many generations and offered a great chance to share stories over a cold drink. The event was followed by the *RCAF 100th Ball* the next day, jointly hosted by 427 and 450 and held at 450's hangar. Many attendees came dressed to celebrate the *Roaring 20s* theme and the night was capped off by the traditional piano-burning and a spectacular fireworks display. ***The celebratory weekend was also an opportunity to share the positive news that ownership of the majestic 427 Lion Cenotaph was being successfully transferred from the 427 Squadron Association to Whitewater Region Township, where the memorial resides. This agreement, spearheaded by the Association's Col (R) Ken Sorfleet, provides long-term stability for the ownership, insurance, and maintenance of the cenotaph, ensuring that the memorial will stand the test of time.***

The next few months will be another season of change for the squadron. The 427 Change of Command will occur in July, as LCol Matt Snider will hand over command to LCol Chris Bray. LCol Snider has made his imprint on the squadron and the team is ready to tackle an exciting era of expanded operations. Similarly, CWO Mark Jones will be retiring in July, after a long and storied career in many roles within the CAF. I have appreciated the opportunity to work with both of them and wish them the best in their next chapters. I look forward to working with LCol Bray and the incoming CWO to continue the positive evolution of 427.

SCWO continued:

The annual HCol Bob Middlemiss Cup between 427 SOAS and 450 THS was 28 March 2024, our squadron members did not disappoint this year and brought home the cup! In an exciting game we ensured victory with a 4-0 win. I have heard the cup needs some TLC, but the team and members will ensure it is in better shape and proudly displayed for the year and perhaps years to come.

Over the past year the squadron has been conducting proficiency training, courses, exercises, deployments and some much-needed leave; all of this, albeit exciting and required for our overall readiness posture, does take a toll on the members. Our NCMs are amazing at managing the expectations of the leadership by translating these expectations to core readiness and posturing our members and equipment to conduct the mission sets, training and operations that provide Canada and our allies agile SOF capabilities worldwide. The spring of the year is always a busy time for the squadron, we are supporting our SOF units' courses and training of personnel. This training, coupled with our own qualifications and exercising known or new skills, is imperative for mission success and interoperability with the other units. It is always good to...

SCWO continued:

...walk around the hanger floor or where we push forward to training areas to see our members working and smiling as they support other units training. In some cases, this translates to exchange of ideas and best practises between countries, and how we or they do various procedures. The stories are always the best, how they are working through various challenges, learning new things or what someone did, and the laughs ensue. By enabling our people to deploy on this type of training, it provides them real world challenges and nuances that cannot be learned by only chatting about what they would do in X or Y. Training is imperative to get 'one's hands dirty' to ensure that muscle memory is created so if and when things go sideways, the skills and drills are already fostered. This allows our people to be able to face the complex with ease, with a better understanding from the platform of knowledge they have garnered.

It has been an honour and privilege to serve in CANSOFCOM for six years and the CAF for 34 years. It is time to move on to other pastures and find new challenges. My time at 427 SOAS has been interesting, challenging and rewarding. I know CANSOFCOM and the RCAF will choose an excellent person to lead their greatest asset, our people into the demands of war-fighting, conflicts and solving complex problems on behalf of the government.

All the best,
Mark

Ferte Manus Certas

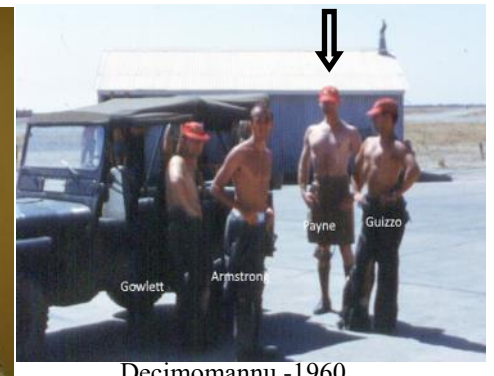
DOC PAYNE'S 100TH



The following write up was copied from our Facebook site. The photo of the Lionheart award below is also from there. The other photos are from our 427 archives. For more information about Doc's legendary career see Dick's six video interviews with Doc at https://427squadron.com/bio_bk_story_hum_vid_misc/videos.html

Our Treasurer/Membership Dickie Dunn was able to attend these celebrations and his full report will follow. The photos on Facebook include congratulations from retired Gen Ray Henault (L), a letter signed by the current CDS and Comd RCAF; the 427 Lionheart award which Dickie presented on behalf of our Assn; the cutting of a eminently appropriate birthday cake with an RCAF sword; and a photo of Doc, Gen Ray Henault, and Dickie; then Dickie presenting the Lionheart award to Doc; then CO 442 who flew down in a Cormorant with a photo of Doc in his younger years likely destined for the Comox museum; and finally a congratulations and best wishes signed by King

Charles III. Apart from the photo of the Lionheart award photo taken on Dickie's camera, credits for the remainder go to Luc Cardinal. Thanks to all the wishes from afar and particular those presented in person to this legendary Lion.



Decimomannu -1960

When Insults Had Some Class

A member of Parliament to Disraeli: "Sir, you will either die on the gallows or of some unspeakable disease." Than depends, Sir," said Disraeli, "whether I embrace your policies or your mistress."

"He is a self made man and worships his creator." - John Bright

"He has no enemies but is intensely disliked by his friends." - Oscar Wilde

We Will Remember Them

At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them - Laurence Binyon



Colonel ABH “Tony” Bosman d: January 10th, 1992



Tony flew CF-104s with the RCAF/CAF. His major postings were as CO of 417 Squadron, CFB Cold Lake; Base Commander 4 Wing Baden; Director Flight Safety DND Hq, Ottawa and Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations, Air Command, Winnipeg. He compiled more than 1000 hours of flight time in the CF-104. He was a “Cold War Warrior” and his mission throughout most of his operational flying career was nuclear strike/attack. His military career began in a Flight Instructor role at which he excelled.

Master Warrant Officer Wayne Douglas Durkee



Master Warrant Officer Wayne Douglas Durkee was born to Alison and Elaine Durkee on October 27, 1971 in Yarmouth Nova Scotia. He passed away on January 7, 2024 after a fight with cancer. Wayne is survived by his loving wife and best friend Catherine Durkee, his cherished sons Jessie (Katelynn Stonehouse) Sebastian (Kayla Wagner); his grandson Joshua, his brother Troy Durkee (Carrie Steidel), his sister Heidi Durkee (Jonathan Ernst) brother Joshua Durkee, mother in law Isabelle Connors, brother in law Warren Connors (Amy Connors) and his friends who are family David and Sherry Fredette.

Wayne had a long and dedicated career with the RCAF, which sprung from his youth as a cadet. Wayne had a desire to serve from a young age and after graduating college in Yarmouth he joined the RCAF as an Aviation Systems tech. This career took him Catherine and the boys to various postings including Shearwater, Petawawa, Goose Bay and his most recent posting to 435 Squadron in CFB Winnipeg. When not working Wayne could be found hiding away at their trailer with Catherine, fishing with his sons, and enjoying a beer by the lake. If you couldn't find Wayne in the hanger you could find him by his smoker. **Full obituary at https://427squadron.com/remember_1.html#durkee**



A tribute enclosed in an email notification to the Squadron from his friend Captain RE Busch

Former Lion Captain Andrew Mercer passed away December 6, 2023 after a long courageous fight with ALS. He was a member 427 Squadron back in the late 90s and early 2000s before he transferred to SAR, having completed tours in Bosnia as well as numerous other domestic work. He was one of the finest men you could meet. Always ready for the next adventure and he never lost his joy for life and for those around him even during his battle with ALS. A sheer pleasure to be around or fly with and a true professional. He was also a gited artist and a great friend to many. His artwork hangs in the CO's office, the Normandy Officers Mess, JTF II and in numerous other units in the RCAF along with many living rooms and dens. He will be sorely missed.

Middleton Funeral Home Obituary—Captain Andrew Mercer



It is with heavy hearts that we announce the peaceful passing of Capt. Andrew Mercer, 55, on December 6th, 2023 from a courageous fight with ALS, surrounded by his family and loved ones, in Point Prim, PEI. Andrew's journey through life was marked by his unwavering spirit, boundless passion for adventure, and his unyielding dedication to his family, and friends.

Andrew's journey began in Goodwood, Ontario where he was born and raised. His passion for the skies led him to the School of Aviation at Seneca College in Toronto and then into the Canadian Air Forces for 32 years as a helicopter pilot. Andrew's wings carried him to distant corners of the globe and across the vast landscapes of Canada. His most notable service in Gander, Newfoundland and Greenwood, Nova Scotia, as a part

of Search and Rescue Operations.

Whether cruising along winding roads on one of his many motorcycles, soaring through the skies, or embracing the open waters, Andrew found solace and joy in every moment of his life. The skies were his domain, the roads his escape, and the waters his refuge.

Andrew was also a gifted artist, his ability to bring life to his imagination on the canvas reflected the depth of his soul and the beauty he saw in the world around him.

Andrew was predeceased by his father, Robert Mercer. He leaves behind his loving wife, Sara, and their son, Ben (Emilee). Along with his mother Penny, mother-in-law Tish, brother Timothy (Bina) and sister Caroline (David), sister-in-law Sylvia (Ross), brother-in-law Doug (Michelle) and all his nieces and nephews, whose lives he touched in profound ways. **Complete obituary and more photos found at https://427squadron.com/remember_2.html#mercer**





Major Keith Donovan Lavender

Keith, a decorated military officer and a beloved member of the Salt Spring Island community, passed away peacefully on April 3, 2024, at the age of 93 at the Veterans Memorial Lodge in Saanich.

Born January 20, 1931, in Broderick, Saskatchewan, Keith was the third eldest of seven sons of Lucille and Donovan Lavender. He spent his formative years on the family farm in Saskatchewan during the Great Depression, where he cultivated a strong work ethic and a deep sense of duty. When his family moved to their farm in Lashburn in 1945, he and his brother Dean travelled by boxcar with the horses, a couple of cows and furniture while the rest of the family drove to the new home in a 1929 Graham Paige car.

Keith's life was marked by his unwavering dedication to his family and his country. He joined the Canadian army in 1951 and served with honour and bravery until 1977. He saw action as an artillery spotter pilot in the Korean War with the 81st Field Regiment. He later served in various postings throughout Canada, along with West Germany and England. Notably, he served as Officer Commanding 1 AirOp Troop at Camp Gagetown, New Brunswick Commanding Officer 1 Artillery Regiment Training Headquarters at Camp Shilo Manitoba, and **Commanding Officer 427 Tactical Helicopter Squadron at CFB Petawawa**. In 1976 he was transferred to NDHQ, Ottawa, in the Directorate of Operations and Training, with responsibility for support for civilian agencies such as Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, flood control, royal visits and other activities. In this role, he was honoured to assist Queen Elizabeth II and other members of the Royal Family on several royal tours to Canada. Following his retirement from the regular forces in 1977, he was called out for full time reserve services with Militia Area, Prairie Regional Headquarters, Winnipeg, Man.

In addition to his distinguished military career, Keith was a devoted husband and father. He nursed his first wife, Theresa, through a long illness until her passing in 1970, all while caring for their four children and fulfilling his duties as an officer in the armed forces. Later, he found love again with his beloved wife, Patricia, also a serving military officer, with whom he shared 52 happily married years, first in Petawawa, then later in Ottawa, Winnipeg and on Salt Spring Island.

Retiring to Salt Spring Island 40 years ago, Keith became an integral part of the community. He was actively involved in various organizations, including the Salt Spring Island Golf Club, the Royal Canadian Legion, and Meals on Wheels. He was generous of his time, often taking more elderly community members to medical and dental appointments both on the island and to Victoria. His warmth, generosity and sense of humour endeared him to all who knew him. Full obituary at https://427squadron.com/remember_1.html#lavender

Any former member of 427 Squadron deserves to have their service remembered. We continue to receive queries from families wanting to know if their grandpa, spouse or child can be added to our Remember page. All we ask for is a name, service theatre and date of death. If possible provide an obituary listing their military career and a photo. It does not matter whether they passed away while serving but that they did serve as a member of 427 Squadron. All Association members are urged to notify us when they become aware of a veteran passing.

Ed. Note: Obituaries in ROAR have to be trimmed because of space concerns. Full obituaries with additional photos are found at <https://427squadron.com/remember.html>

Ferte Manus Certas

427 Squadron CF-104 Pilots

Harry Prins operates another website dedicated to the F-104. (See the ROAR CF-104 section for a link to his website and his story. He recently browsed our website and found the list of CF-104 pilots that we believe deceased but have no other information for an obituary. He has kindly advised us of the information he has on each one. This information he provided is below and will be added to our Remember page on the website.

This is the paragraph at the bottom of the page at https://427squadron.com/remember_2.html And below this is an additional list of personnel who served with 427 Squadron for which we have no further information regarding where or when they passed away or their military service. Please forward any information that you can provide. It would be appreciated and would be posted with the veteran's name.

F/L Dick Kaye, I have not much information but do know that he died in 1983.

F/L Lucky Lawson, his nickname was “Lucky” but his name was F/L D.C. Lawson, He was sadly killed in a crash with CF-104 12798 on March 4th, 1966.

F/L Ted Millar, sadly no details of his passing but his name was F/L E.L. Ted “T-Bar” Millar

F/L Robert “Bob” Prescott was sadly killed in a July 23, 1963 accident with CF-104 12802.

Major Ed Rozdeba, I am in contact with his son Dave Rozdeba and he told me that his father passed away in 1992. He was an F-86 Sabre pilot and flew with the RCAF Golden Hawks aerobatic team (1959–1961). Then he flew the CF-104 and logged 2242 hours while on 427 Squadron from 1965 to 1969 and Strike Recce from 1970-1974.

F/L Don O. “Slim” Schneider was killed on September 11th, 1963 in an accident with CF-104 12794.

F/L H.B. “Bruce” Sheasby was killed in an accident on October 24th, 1963 in CF-104 12793

Major Wally S. Sloan died in April 2004

Captain R.M. “Bill” Wright was killed when his CF-104 104721 crashed January 7th, 1970

NOTE

[The Facebook site](#) has much more extensive coverage of articles in ROAR and I urge you to check it out. Space restraints limit how much coverage I can provide to ROAR articles unless I am willing to write a book, however, you are in luck; most articles are posted to the web where space is not limited but it takes more time and Ken Sorfleet has excellent coverage on the Facebook site of most articles posted here.

Helicopter era



**Come to the
81st Gathering
of the Lions!**

Meet & Greet
Friday April 5th 2024
1300-1700 hrs
2 Hangar
Free food & Non-alcoholic
drinks
Dress: Sqn Mbrs - Multicam
Guests - Relaxed
Spouses and Partners Welcome

Did You Miss It ?

Once again the Squadron has hosted a casual get-together on April 5 that was widely enjoyed by all who attended. The Gathering of Lions (GoL) is an annual event where serving and former Lions may gather and meet old friends as well as an update briefing by the CO. The oldest Lions there were three retired 427 Sabre pilots (59-61) Walt Pirie, Dick Dunn and Wayne MacLellan who have already broken the 80 year old age barrier, and joined by the younger Ken Sorfleet, former CO of 427 (92-94). All are members of the 427 Association Executive. The rest of 2 Hangar was a full house of serving and former Lions. Dick's report and photos follow.

Gathering of Lions - 5 April 2024.

Friday morning, fellow 427 Sabre Pilot of the early 1960s, Col (Ret'd) Walt Pirie, and I set out for the 2024 Gathering of Lions at Petawawa, stopping briefly at the Cobden "Memorial to the Fallen." I photographed an informative plaque installed after the unveiling ceremony of September 2017

Arriving 20 minutes late, the introductory awards were over, and Squadron members were dipping into the food and beverage on offer. We searched out, and were introduced to the Commanding Officer LCol Matt Snider. I explained that we had two "Lionheart Awards" to present during the gathering. Shortly after 1400 hrs, Walt approached the podium and summarized the complex issues of the Lion Memorial at Cobden:

The original intent was for 427 Squadron to own and maintain the Cenotaph. Through the efforts of former Honorary Colonel Del Lippert, a substantial grant was pending from Veterans Affairs Canada. However, VAC rules stipulate that funds cannot be given to government organizations. As an urgent measure, 427 Squadron Association took titular ownership of the Cenotaph with the understanding that there would be "no financial burden."

With a high profile astride the Trans Canada highway, liability insurance was mandatory. Some money leftover from the construction has funded the annual insurance, but is now depleted.

Col (Ret'd) Ken Sorfleet, a former Commanding Officer of 427 Sqn, and currently serving on the Executive of the 427 Association, jumped into the fray to find a solution to the ownership and insurance problems. He spent more than a year of complicated written and verbal communications and negotiations with several interested parties. In the end he solved the problem to everyone's satisfaction. The ownership of the Lion Cenotaph, has recently been transferred to the Township of the Whitewater Region, which will cover the insurance premiums for the foreseeable future.

In recognition of the lengthy and rigorous process so diligently accomplished by Col Sorfleet, it is an honour, privilege, and pleasure for me to present our Lionheart Award to Ken Sorfleet, who continues to serve this squadron with distinction!

After photos by the Squadron photographer, I stepped up to the podium.

When I joined 427 at Zweibrücken November 1961, I knew little or nothing of the Squadron history, until the Colours Presentation, here at Petawawa May 1976. That all changed with the first edition of the publication "Roar" in December 1996 under the leadership of WWII veteran Al d' Eon; and after he passed away in 2004, by Sabre era Wayne MacLellan, adding the website in 2007.

There is a wealth of information on the website, including all back issues of Roar, thanks to the tireless efforts of Wayne. So I am most honoured to present the Lionheart Award to Wayne on this auspicious occasion.

Shortly afterwards, we departed for Ottawa, where I boarded a flight back to Vancouver. Mission accomplished.

Dick Dunn—May 2024





CO LCol Matt Snider Briefing and Update



Ken Sorfleet

Paul "Pud" Jeffries



HCol Ing

SCWO Jones





Harry Prins,

Chairman of the International F-104 Society recently contacted us to advise that he had some information that we were looking for. He had information on 10 CF-104 pilots who had either passed away or been involved in an accident.. Much appreciated. Harry has a fascinating website. You should take a look.

The International F-104 Society has one major goal. It is the ultimate platform to share, maintain and support preserving F-104 aircraft and its historical information, including the pilots who flew them, with a large group of interested people (members). Most of the members have connection with the F-104 in the past such as (ex) pilots, crew chiefs and aviation enthusiasts. Some members own an F-104 or a cockpit and also the current Starfighter Inc team in the USA is member. The International F-104 Society is a non-profit and non-military organization. We focus on the F-104 aircraft and its pilots only and are not interested in specific weapon specifications etc. The Society has been established in 1989 by two fanatic F-104 enthusiasts. In 1990 the society started to release small newsletters. In 2005 we stopped with these releases. Because it took too much time from only a few people, and internet became a good alternative, we decided to change from real paper magazines to electronic special subject magazines downloadable from the internet. This was quite a change but kept the 104 soul alive and the 104 Society community together. Currently our [IFS website](#) in combination with our [Facebook group account](#) and our [IO-groups membership platform](#) has taken over all the Society activities were everyone can become an official member for free.

The number of F-104 pilots known in our database at this moment : 7266 (+376 since last count)

The latest updates to the website can be found in our update log [here](#).

**Harry Prins
International F-104 Society (chairman)**

www.i-f-s.nl



A flag being counted after a 427 Trophy shoot which took place on the first two days after the Squadron arrived in Decimomannu, Sardinia to start their gunnery practice deployment. All Squadron pilots had to shoot and two guns were loaded with 200 rounds for this first exercise. Rabat, Morocco was the first gunnery deployment base and was changed to Sardinia in 1957. Anyone remember the only time all six guns were fired other than in anger?





427 Special Operations Aviation Squadrons [SOAS] was invited to represent their unit and country at a memorial service and plaque unveiling ceremony at Sauzon, France in memory of the 427 Squadron Wellington BK 343 ZL – V crash on 28 February 1944. In attendance were Squadron Chief Warrant Officer Mark Jones and the Chief of Staff of Operations Major Luc Vermette.

"We were truly honoured and humbled as to the efforts put forth for the Remembrance Ceremony held in Sauzon, France on 30 September 2023 .

The town was out in full force for the dedication of the new plaque and to pay their respects to the five families who lost a loved one and to the family whose father parachuted to safety only to be captured as a POW shortly thereafter, all of this 80 years later, a testament how the French appreciated the efforts of our bomber crews during World War II"

On Sunday, 28 February 1943, 437 aircraft (152 Lancasters, 119 Wellingtons, 100 Halifaxes, 62 Sterlings and 4 Mosquitos] and almost 2,900 aviators took off from various British bases with the mission of bombing the



Ceremony for Wellington BK 343 ZL-V Sauzon, France—September 30, 2023

German submarine base at Sainte-Nazaire, France. Under the charge of No. 6 Group of Bomber Command there were five Wellington's from 427 Lion Squadron of the RCAF. Wellington BK 343 ZL -V took off from Croft base at 6:10 PM with a load of explosives and incendiary bombs. At 9:24 PM the Wellington dropped its bombs on the submarine base from an altitude of 16,500 feet and was immediately struck with anti-aircraft guns from the 22 Marine Flak Regiment based in Sainte-Nazaire, France. The aircraft, with one engine on fire immediately headed out to sea to escape the barrage. The crew also immediately began to reduce the weight of the Wellington by throwing all heavy objects not bolted down through the forward escape hatch in an attempt to sustain level flight. The crew under the impression they were safely over the ocean, were suddenly square in the searchlights and fire from Marine Flak Abteilung 708, of Belle Ile en Mer, France and was caught in a deluge of shells. Flt//Sgt. Donald Ferguson was near the hatch, thrown off the balance and fell without a parachute. Sgt. Edward Allison immediately bailed out and landed in a marsh on the island only to be taken prisoner by the German occupied Belle Ile en Mer. He was the only survivor and died on 23 January 2022 at the age of 81.

The burning Wellington fell onto the rocks of the island near Sauzon, France at 9:40 PM and the Germans recovered four bodies, Warrant Officer William Hartney, Flt/Sgt. James Kilpatrick, Sgt. Reginald Radford and Flt/Sgt. John Ward. The crews were buried in the commune of Le Palais then later transferred to the Pornic Commonwealth Cemetery in Loire – Atlantique.

"They (the people of Sauzon) were quite impressed current serving members of 427 SOAS were in attendance and that we still honour the fallen whom have gone before us, our tenaciousness in battle, the fighting spirit of our members and how we honour those who were gone before us and passed the torch for us to hold high is the same now as it was then."

SCWO Mark Jones

Maj. Luc Vermette