



427 Squadron Association

Volume 5 – Issue 8

www.427squadron.com

May 2023

427 Special Operations Aviation Squadron

Commanding Officer - L/Col Matt Snider



Lions,

It is an honour to be able to address you again. In the last issue of ROAR, I wrote about how we had recently withdrawn from four years of support to overseas operations and how we looked forward to “reconstituting.” That has

not quite gone according to plan.

We have recently been involved in several unit-wide recalls conducting crisis-response planning in support of government and Canadian Armed Forces responses to emergent events around the world. One of these turned into a full deployment for one of our detachments, where they provided their Task Force Commander with trusted and highly professional aviation options. And even when the planning did not turn into a deployment, it demonstrated the continued commitment of Lions of all trades, whether technicians rapidly reconfiguring aircraft, air-crews laying out tactical plans, administrative staff confirming personnel status, traffic techs building up pallets for transport, or supply providing that last-minute environmental equipment for people going out the door.

Continued Next Page

Honorary Colonel Lianne Ing



Fellow Lions,

Spring has finally arrived in the Ottawa Valley and I am grateful to have the opportunity to interface with all of you again through ROAR. It has been a busy six months since the last edition, with many in-person events—a welcome change after three

long years of the pandemic.

In December, the squadron held its Leadership Symposium, which provides a valuable professional development opportunity for squadron members through an interactive symposium with invited speakers. This year, I had the opportunity to share some of my own personal and business experiences that have shaped my leadership approach in running a firm that delivers innovative technologies for defence, security and space applications. In addition, the squadron had the honour of hearing from Dan Gardner, an award-winning journalist and New York Times best-selling author. Mr. Gardner has written extensively on psychology and decision-making. He delivered a thought-provoking presentation on how the human mind makes decisions and discussed how

Continued Next Page

L/Col Snider continued:

Our dedicated fixed-wing airborne Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance capability has continued to be beset by procurement challenges. Originally intended to be received by 2022, we now hope to receive the first plane by late this year. As a brand-new capability for the Squadron and the CAF, we are learning as we go in this implementation. With recent strong support from high-level general officers and government officials, we have reason to believe we will be fielding this capability soon.

And now we look ahead to summer and our posting season. We will be welcoming many new Lions, who will be welcomed into the Squadron and the culture through Special Operations training as well as our first-ever Squadron Indoctrination Day. We will also lose many highly-valued Lions as they move on to new horizons – we only hope they think fondly of their time at 427 Squadron and bring the highest ideals of the Squadron with them.

Ferte Manus Certas

HCol Ing continued:

Paul Van Riper—a retired three-star general of the United States Marine Corps—applied unconventional tactics throughout his career to overcome “impossible” military challenges.

December also saw the return of in-person celebrations to mark the festive season. I was pleased to have the opportunity to meet with more members at a squadron “Sticky Floor” event before Christmas, where members were looking forward to a well-deserved break over the holidays. After a long hiatus in these events due to the pandemic, it was heart-warming to see squadron members enjoying the camaraderie—these are the light-hearted times that help build and amplify esprit de corps. Squadron members have also been busy building ties with the surrounding community. I was pleased to support two fundraising events where squadron members conducted “paint nights”. Attendees had the opportunity to paint their own artwork, under the guidance of a talented painter from within the squadron; proceeds from the events were donated to the local Robbie Dean Centre, which provides a range of mental health counselling programs for those in need.

In February, the squadron gathered for a parade in the hangar to recognize the latest graduating class from the Special Operations Tactical Aviation Course (SOTAC). SOTAC is an intensive six-month course encompassing academic, professional, and operational training. It culminated in a realistic simulated operation that tested a wide range of essential skills for the candidates. The course produced an outstanding graduating class and, in keeping with tradition, the *Del Lippert Award* was presented to the top graduate by the granddaughter of former HCol Del Lippert. More recently, 427 organized a 99th Anniversary RCAF Ball in April, where a hangar at 450 Tactical Helicopter Squadron was transformed into a glittering venue for the evening, with both a Griffon and Chinook on display. The evening featured a speech by the guest of honour, Major General (ret) Scott Clancy, and included the long-standing tradition of a ceremonial piano-burning.

The year ahead is expected to include numerous events, as the RCAF prepares for its 100th anniversary in April 2024. The upcoming RCAF Ball, to be held in Ottawa in June, will feature Colonel Jeremy Hansen as the guest speaker. Colonel Hansen served as a CF-18 fighter pilot and was recently selected to be the first Canadian astronaut to go on a mission around the Moon, as part of the Artemis II crew. I look forward to many opportunities in the upcoming year to connect with current and former Lions, as the RCAF prepares for its Centennial Year.

Ferte Manus Certas



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RCAF Centennial

The 100th anniversary of the establishment of the RCAF occurs on 1 April 2024. The RCAF 2024 Team are planning a year-long program that includes International, National and Regional events, such as the RCAF Run, RCAF Gala, Legends of the Sky, and allied air demonstration team participation in Air Shows across Canada, as well as activities to inspire future generations of Canadians through STEM initiatives, such as the RCAF Gaming Tournament.

A website has been set up to share the preparations that are taking place as part of the celebrations, including historical highlights, events being scheduled and centennial merchandise that will be for sale. The website is:

<https://rcfassociation.ca>

By **Dr. Rachel Lea Heide,**
CAHS National Treasurer

Membership policy 427 Squadron Association

The following is a list of the current membership categories: Charter Membership, Life Membership, Annual Subscription Membership, Honorary Associate Membership, Associate Membership, Affiliate Membership and Association Partnership. For a complete definition of the categories please access the web site at: <https://www.427squadron.com>. To apply for a 427 Lion Squadron Association membership or make a donation or bequest, please complete and mail the secure form which can found at <https://www.427squadron.com/membership.html>

All previous Volumes of ROAR from Volume 1 on are available at:
<http://www.427squadron.com/roar/roar.html>
 As a reminder; ROARs from Volume 2 to the present are searchable.

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; Ken Sorfleet has excellent coverage on the Facebook site of most articles posted here.



Financial Report for 427 Lion Squadron Association

427 Lion Sqn Assoc.	2022	2021
Income/Expenses		
Income		
Donations Received	275.00	1,070.00
Membership Dues	150.00	150.00
Vancity Share Dividend	0.27	0.12
Total Income	425.27	1,220.12
Expenses		
Administration		
Bank Charge & Pay Pal	13.70	43.45
Web	271.11	245.75
Total Admin	284.81	289.20
Roar:		
Postage	79.27	232.52
Printing	25.00	379.60
Total Roar	104.27	612.12
Total Expenses	389.08	901.32
Total Income/Expenses	36.19	318.80

427 Lion Sqn Assoc.	2022	2021
Balance Sheet		
Assets		
Vancity	194.09	704.41
Vancity Shares	5.65	5.38
Investments *1	10,500.00	10,500.00
Web Prepaid	0.00	227.76
Total Assets	10,699.74	11,437.55
Insurance Transactions		
Cenotaph Insurance Fund opening	2,751.02	2,751.02
Annual Liability Premium	-810.00	0.00
Cenotaph Insurance Fund closing	1,941.02	2,751.02
Liabilities & Equity		
Liabilities		
Net Cenotaph Insurance Fund	1,941.02	2,751.02
427 Sqn NPF	965.00	965.00
Accounts Payable *2	79.87	43.87
Member Payable	1,500.00	1,500.00
Total Liabilities	4,485.89	5,259.89
Equity	6,213.85	6,177.66
Total Liabilities & Equity	10,699.74	11,437.55


TREASURERS REPORT

To the Members,
427 Lion Squadron Association.

I have compiled the financial records of the 427 Lion Squadron Association for the financial year ending 31 December, 2022.

In my opinion, these financial statements present fairly the financial position of the Association at 31 December, 2022, and the results of its operation for the financial year thus ended in accordance with accounting principals applied on a basis consistent with that of the proceeding financial year.

Vancouver, B.C.
31 March 2023


Richard Dunn - Treasurer

Notes

*1 Investments shown at cost

*2 Roar Nov 2021 - Cheque gone astray \$43.87
Roar Nov 2022 \$36.00

Notes

The aim of ROAR continues to be a link between the operating squadron and past members. As one of our recently deceased WW II members, Ian Thomson, said “I will not be able to represent our glorious squadron much longer but it has been a supreme honour to be a “Lion.” Many of us who served or “grew up” in the Squadron have wonderful memories of our time as a Lion. ROAR generally concentrates on historical stories/articles from the different eras highlighting the challenges and yes, even shenanigans, that surfaced throughout the 78 year life of the squadron.

Also please keep in Col (Ret) Ken Sorfleet at kensorfleet@yahoo.com has an excellent Facebook site . It contains topical information surrounding the Squadron.

Lastly our Membership/Treasurer Dick Dunn at richmark@telus.net request that you be aware of our membership categories. We welcome Associates. See Page 3 and sign them up.

We Will Remember Them

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



Victor L. Billsom, Leading Aircraftman (LAC), WW II
D: January 8, 1995. Terrace, B.C.



Rob Butler, Helicopter
D: March 27, 2023

Rob was a pilot on 427 in the early 1970s. Passed away peacefully at the Renfrew Victoria Hospital at the age of 77 years.

Thanks to Peter Krayner for the notice.



Clarence Kenneth Derry
D: February 7, 1993



**William Henry
Constantine**
March 24, 2023

William Henry Constantine
D: March 24, 2023

It is with heavy hearts we announced the death of William Henry Constantine, 64, on Friday, March 24, 2023. Born in St. John's NFLD, he was the son of the late Linus and Carol (Ableman) Constantine. Bill served in the militia for four years and the Canadian Armed Forces for 35 years with 21 years as an Aeroengine /AVN tech and 14 years as a Flight Engineer. He worked as an AME for Heli- One during the last four years. He enjoyed postings to Shearwater, Trenton, Petawawa and Greenwood. Bill loved his military career, especially B Flt in Petawawa; more importantly he loved those he served beside. He completed his career in 2015.

Bill will be sadly missed by all who knew him. He enjoyed playing hockey, baseball and golf and was a very dedicated husband and father who did everything for his family. He also loved to teach and pass on his wisdom.

A celebration of life has taken place on Sunday, April 16, 2023 at the Royal Canadian Legion, branch 5177 Petawawa. Bill grew up in Torbrook, N S where a celebration of life will take place later this year.

He was always there to lend a hand and had the kindest heart. Our memories will last a lifetime.

J. Laurie Cormier, WW II
D: October 29, 2009/ Dieppe, N.B.

Phillip A. Dubois, Flying Officer (F/O), WW II
D : May 28, 2005. British Columbia.



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. One of the notifications above resulted from a grandson's query.

Any and all association members are urged to notify us when they become aware of a 427 veteran passing away.

Helicopter Era

427 SQUADRON DEPLOYMENT ON OP DELIVERANCE IN SOMALIA - 1993

Introduction to 'Into the Fire' 10 min video (see page 9)



Due to ongoing 'civil war', drought and famine, by 1992 the UN authorized the establishment of a peacekeeping mission (Chap 6) in Somalia (UNISOM) to help bring stability to the region and allow relief supplies to those in desperate need of it. Canada agreed to support this mission and a battle group centered on the Canadian Airborne Regiment (CAR) was earmarked for deployment to

Bossasso in the North of Somalia. However, due to a rapidly deteriorating situation, this planned UN Chap 6 peacekeeping mission was changed in early Dec 1992 to a UN Chap 7 peacekeeping operation in which the UN authorized all necessary means (including the use of force) to be used to provide that stability and security necessary for the relief operations. Canada accepted the request for assistance with the proviso that they would do the initial operations to establish that required security, but then turn over to another force to maintain that security in the longer term.

The Canadian Joint Force Headquarters (CJFHQ) was established in Dec with the first elements arriving in Mogadishu on 10 Dec 92.



The CAR Battle Group followed with the objective to secure the Belet Huen sector of Somalia for the US led United Task Force (UNITAF). The HMCS Preserver had already arrived in the Indian Ocean with the bulk of the shipped supplies and equipment that the CAR would have needed for the peacekeeping mission in Bossaso, but their cargo lacked much of that needed for the major change to a peacemaking operation.

Addition of a Squadron of Cougars was authorized and the Sea King Helicopters from HMCS Preserver were initially used to support air recce and Casevac. Evident that more Helicopter Support would be required, particularly given the CARs area of operations some 200 miles inland, a warning order was issued to 427 Squadron in early Jan to prepare to deploy a detachment (det) of 6 CH 135 Twin Huey helicopters.

The Squadron immediately started those preparations. Though the Sqn had personnel experienced in Night Vision Goggle (NVG) flying and in the use of the side-door mounted 7.62 mm machine guns, the helicopters were only fitted for but not equipped with Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR), Radar Warning Receivers, Missile Approach Detectors, Flare and Chaff dispensers, or Global Positioning Navigation Systems (GPS) all of which were deemed essential for their future in-theatre employment. 10 Tactical Air Group (TAG) and Air Command resources assisted in the equipping the helicopters and in the training of the techs planned for deployment, but, necessarily aircrew training on some items had to be initially piecemeal, with final training on the full equipment suite only occurring in the last week or two prior to deployment. A Flight of 427 under Maj. Bill Vogan provided the nucleus of all the aircrew earmarked for deployment, and B Flight under Maj. Paul Jefferies provided all possible assistance in pre-deployment aircrew training and performance evaluation. NVG training, and door-gun employment on simulated convoy missions were the initial focus, followed increasingly with GPS and FLIR integration on day and night missions. As the Squadron Detachment was to be deployed to Mogadishu via 5 USAF C5 Galaxy departing from CFB Trenton, the helicopters would be flown to Trenton, disassembled, loaded with other vehicles, equipment, and personnel, and reassembled in Mogadishu for self deployment and ground vehicle convoys to Belet Huen. This occurred in the 25 Feb to 5 Mar timeframe.

The Commander 10 TAG, authorized the CO to deploy with the last “chalk” in order to sort out any Canada specific pre-deployment issues, then to assume command of the Det upon arrival in theatre, but only temporarily. Once satisfied with the Det set up, and that operations in theatre were becoming more routine, the CO was to hand over command of the Det to Maj Vogan and return to Canada. This action was to ensure he would be very familiar with the in-theatre operations, and could be the in-Canada voice for the Det's in-theatre issues. As well, he needed to then focus preparations for the reintegration of the Det into the Squadron upon their return to Canada. Maj Vogan took command of the Op Deliverance Det from mid Apr to redeployment to Canada in mid-Jul 1993.



This Video 'Into the Fire' was filmed in theatre in the Mar and early Apr 1993 timeframe, and gives some insight into the operations conducted by 427 Det, which remained in theatre supporting the CJFHQ until the Canadian withdrawal from UNITAF in mid July 1993.

The credits are listed at the end of the video, but in addition to those named and those pictured in the video, overall credit for a most successful deployment, at least from a Tac Hel perspective, goes to all in the Det, and particularly to the often unsung heroes in our aircraft maintenance and logistics/support organizations (headed respectively by Maj. Greg Poulin and Capt Paul Arsenault). All did the Squadron proud.

I also wanted to add my personal thanks to Sarah McLachlan for the use of two of her songs in the video. I understand she comes from a military family, if not, she has one now...

[Video - Op Deliverance - Somali - 1993](#)

Ferte Manus Certas—Col.(Ret.) Ken Sorfleet



427 SQUADRON DEPLOYMENT ON OP DELIVERANCE IN SOMALIA - 1993



Thanks to Yves Grenier for these six photos.



Re 427 helo pic over Somalia =The photo was taken by Sgt Dixon of the CF Photo Unit and the photo was included in an article written for the Canadian Military Journal by LCol Charles Oliviera circa 2001.



The beach at Kismaayo. 400 K SW of Mogadishu



Arriving for the big Trip



Almost Ready to GO



Para and Rappelling training

In addition to operational missions the 427 Det was tasked with the CAR's requirements to maintain currency in both parachuting and rappelling. Not only were these a welcome change to the operational routine, and a morale enhancer for the troops, but both activities were conducted in the countryside where all in the local area could view them and may have impressed the locals and armed factions and reinforced a 'Don't mess with them' feeling, much as firepower demos did. No photos of the later are readily available.



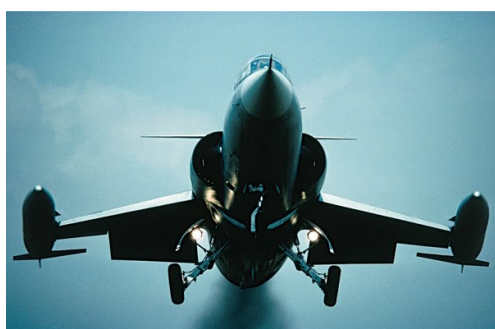
Ed. Note: I received the following email from Bill Best a 427 CF-104 pilot and Editor of "Der Flugplatz", a 3 Wing base newsletter. I was also given the last page of the last issue of "der Flugplatz". Due to the fading and it's production on a typewriter (remember those ?), the contents have been transcribed.



EMAIL from Bill:

The first attachment was of the little lion that I drew to place on the header of the 427 Sqn. page in Der Flugplatz, Zweibrücken's base magazine/newspaper of which I was the editor as a secondary duty. It drove the 430 Sqn guys nuts and I was told to create a page for them. I was the editor and could pretty much do as I pleased as long as W/C Knight was pleased. I had hoped the little lion, who never did get a name but I would vote for Leo, might see the light of day in the much newer 427 Squadron ROAR publication.

The rest are for your interest. My hero shot happened when one day I realized that every single pilot on the squadron strength was there at the same time. I asked Tappy Carruthers, CO at that time, to not let anyone wander off as I organized the Base Photo Section to send over a photographer. They did that and I organized the pilots (like herding cats as you know) to come over, one or two at a time, to a close by revetment where a Starfighter was parked. I had the airman lay down on his stomach in front of the jet, not without some questioning why but I prevailed and we all had hero shots taken like mine. From down low like that the aircraft has a swept wing look to it that I haven't seen duplicated. We also had the base photog guy take a picture of us all together out front of the



427 Squadron. The 3rd shot was Doug Fenton's favourite (he was a recce type, not that there is anything wrong with that). The 4th pic was in a yearly photo contest in the Aviation Week & Space Technology magazine and the centerfold image was the 104 landing almost on the camera which won part of the military aircraft category. I wrote to the editor and they sent me a CD of the picture. Some of the guys would say that the jet was going around but is actually landing and did land. They should know. It was approaching the camera at about 700 feet/min down at around 170Kts IAS. The last pic is neat with the Squadron crest and building in the back-ground.

Following is a transcription from the last "Der Flugplatz"

FROM
THE
DEN



Well fellow 3 Wingers, the inevitable is about to occur and with the passing of an era, we on 427 say well done to everyone who contributed to the success and pride of an exceptional Air Force station. We believe that 3 Wing has bowed out as a Canadian Forces Base with head high. This was only accomplished through the conscientious efforts of every member of the station and we are sincerely proud to have served with you. Because this is the last edition of "Der Flugplatz", we will take this opportunity to say thank you for your support over the last sixteen years and in particular over the last four months. Your performance during our current state of upheaval has been outstanding. We would particularly like to recognize the accomplishments of our Servicing personnel who have been untiring in their efforts to provide flying hours for current operations—Congratulations. In bidding farewell, we would be remiss if we did not pay tribute to the staff of "der Flugplatz" and to the members of SAP who assemble it each Friday. Too often we ignore the behind-the-scenes personnel - Thank You

- To the members of CFN-Z - Well Done, even through the static of trans-oceanic air-waves.

- To L/Col Villeneuve and the "Falcons" of 430 - thank you for your contribution to last Saturday's fly past, it was most appropriate that the last two operational squadrons at 3 Wing could get together and say farewell to Zweibrücken.

- Finally, to our German friends of Zweibrücken, "Auf Wiedersehen", you have become part of our way of life and wherever we go we will remain "Zweibrückers".

In closing, 427 Squadron was the first Canadian NATO Squadron in Zweibrücken and fittingly, mid June, will be the last to leave. If we can leave you with one thought, it would be this. It has been said that the meek will inherit the earth, however, even the meekest Lions Roar -r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r.

To all "3 Wingers" - Auf Weidersehen and Good Luck

Ed. Note: CFN-Z was the Base radio station and in addition to Canadian news provided music and local news.



The Great Wheelbarrow Race

In 1957 Europe a decision was made to share some facilities and bases with our NATO allies. Canadian squadrons had been travelling twice a year to Rabat, Morocco for a two week stay to practice live firing and for an obscure reason which was not shared with us, about 1957, switched to Decimomannu, Sardinia, an Italian owned and managed Base. Henceforth, the squadron, twice a year, packed up and flew to Deci to begin our two week stay and practice live firing. The accommodations were sparse and sleeping in a barrack block with twenty five other pilots, burping, passing gas, sleep talking, etc. was an experience we tried to forget.

About 1959 the Luftwaffe decided also to use Deci as their live firing base. However, the Germans had standards and they requested modernizing the base accommodation. (they also rented or bought a huge palazzo in Cagliari for their HQ but more in a future issue on the Mess dinners we were invited to attend there). Unfortunately, Italian design flaws of that period caused some consternation errors which the first Canadian squadrons (fortunately not 427) encountered in the new accommodation. This flaw was ADDED on top of Montazuma's Revenge which affected about half of all the squadron personnel after arriving at the Base in the first few days. The new toilets were a hole in the floor with two footprint impressions sunk into the concrete for positioning. The installation of regular toilets was completed before we had to make the first bi-annual trip to Sardinia.

The Germans and Canadians got along quite well. A mutual respect and cooperation existed between the Germans and Canadians as many of the Germans had flight trained in Canada. There, they had been also indoctrinated into such team building sports such as Crud, Red light / Green light, DeadAnts and of course Wheelbarrow racing (without the wheels).

In Deci there was major construction still going on and there would now be now three air force units occupying the base. A one story temporary officer's mess had been set up but workmen were still working in the area and would leave their tools at hand when they stopped for the day. These tools included several wheelbarrows propped against the mess wall. (You can see where I'm going with this).

During one typical evening near the end of our deployment the Canadian and German squadrons were relaxing in the temporary mess and engaged in various activities. The pressure was

off, everyone had qualified.

S/L Pete St. Louis and the German commander had spent a few hours after dinner discussing the problems of the world over a few drinks. Their conversation must have touched on the wheelbarrows abandoned by the side of the Mess and perhaps sparked memories of competitions in their past which led to a proposed wheelbarrow race in the officer's mess between the Germans and Canadians. Losers buy the drinks. This great idea met with overwhelming approval by both squadron members and two wheelbarrows were immediately borrowed from those outside the Mess. A track was quickly constructed inside the Mess by rearranging a few tables and sofas. Since tradition decreed that teams had to be two men, much discussion took place regarding who would be carried in the wheelbarrow and who would be the "driver." After inputs from all participants and a free vote it was unanimous that the two COs would be "carried". A few practice runs were made, rules established and a few preliminary races run. However, at a table at the back of the Mess a foursome of Italian officers were playing bridge and they became annoyed with the noise. They were invited to enter a team, an offer they declined and to register their disapproval they eventually contacted the Orderly Officer who also happened to be Italian, to intervene.

After a reasoned and rational discussion between the Orderly Officer and the two COs which did not result in an acceptable solution for the two COs, the Orderly Officer was told to leave the mess, politely, and write his report which the two COs would take up with their Italian counterpart in the morning.

The very conscientious orderly officer decided that he had to impose his will on the mess participants so after a short disappearance he walked back into the Mess and ordered in a loud voice everybody out and left the door open so that everyone could see he had a machine gun crew set up about twelve feet back from the door and machine gun loaded and cocked, ready to fire.

The two Bosses decided that it was probably a good idea to shut down the race and both Squadrons exited the Mess. There may have been some senior officer discussions with the Italian commander about the Orderly Officer's inappropriate response but we never heard any more about it. Never saw the orderly officer again either.

With the assistance of Dale Horley

Ten rules of this public house

1. Telling lies is unacceptable, you may however grossly exaggerate.
2. If there is ever any confusion, the fuller beer is yours.
3. If you hesitate more than three seconds after getting the barman's attention, you do not deserve a drink.
4. If you buy a woman a drink and she refuses, she does not like you.
5. If you buy a woman a drink and she accepts, she still may not like you.
6. If someone offers to buy you a drink, do not upgrade
7. Persons drinking a pint of Guinness before it has fully settled will be immediately barred.
8. Anyone behind the bar is 50% better looking
9. Girls hang out, apply makeup, and have long talks in the bathroom. Men do not.
10. Buying someone a drink is five times better than a handshake.

With thanks to The Merry Ploughboy Pub, Dublin

HEAVY BOMBER ERA



RCAF Centennial Documentry

Toronto filmmaker Bob Barrett is producing a documentary for the RCAF Centennial next year. For the video, Bob is looking to connect with any centenarian veterans who flew during the war, whether fighter aircraft or other types. In particular, if there are any centenarian veterans who flew flying boats such as the Canso or Catalina on Canada's east or west coast as well. Bob can be reached by email at: bobbarrett@rogers.com

L'Association Rossitten Histoire et Memoire Commemoration du 80E Anniversaire du Crash du 427 Escadron Wellington

On January 23, 2023 we received the following email and invitation to a ceremony in memory of the crew of a 427 Squadron Wellington that crashed on February 4, 1943 after an attack on the Lorient submarine base. Since my French is basic I contacted Col (Ret) Ken Sorfleet, our Facebook Manager, and he immediately translated the original email, notified the Squadron and then contacted the Canadian Embassy in Paris asking them to forward the information to the Defence or Air Force Attache at the Embassy so that someone from our military might attend. Although in the past commemorative events such as this RCAF personnel or even Association personnel attended, in this case it was not possible. The UK Air Force Attache, Group Captain Anthony McCord and a grandson of the only survivor was able to attend with members of the Royal British Legion as well as those detailed in the email to us.

It is heart warming in this day and age to see European citizens remember the sacrifices, challenges and tragedies faced by the Armed Forces and continue to honor them eighty years later. These days there appears to be difficulty recognizing contextual history and interprets history through a modern context which often results in punitive judgements.

80^e Anniversaire

Crash du Wellington ZL-X

Le 4 février 1943

Cérémonie

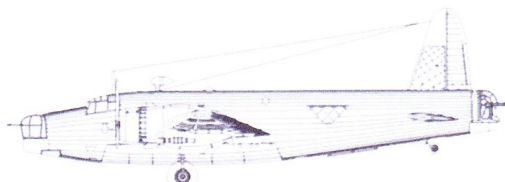
10h45 : Accueil

11h00 : Début de cérémonie

Levée des couleurs

Evocation historique

Dépôt de gerbes



Sous la présidence du capitaine de vaisseau Pierre MARCELLIN

Commandant l'aéronautique navale de Lann-Bihoué

Monsieur Ronan LOAS

Maire de Plœmeur

Vice-président

du Conseil Départemental du Morbihan

&

Monsieur Jean ROBIC

président de l'association

"Rossitten Histoire et Mémoire"

ont le plaisir de vous inviter à la cérémonie d'hommage
à l'équipage du Wellington tombé à Plœmeur le 4 février 1943
qui se déroulera à la stèle de Breuzent

le samedi 4 février 2023 à 11h00

RSVP avant le 28 janvier 2023 à: rossitten.association@gmail.com

A Translation of the original email with thanks to Ken Sorfleet. The original email in French will be posted on the website shortly.

Hello,

Allow me to introduce myself, I am a reserve frigate Captain Philippe Troussard, naval aviation officer and former “TACCO” on the “Atlantique” maritime patrol aircraft.

I am the secretary off the Association “Rossitten Histoire et Memoire” located near Loirent in France and whose objective is the preservation and enhancement of the heritage of the Second World War.

In 2015, we inaugurated a stele in memory of the English crew of the “Wellington 111, coded ZL-X, serial number be BJ668” of the 427 squadron of the Royal Canadian Air Force who fell in Ploemeur on February 4, 1943 after a bombing mission on the Lorient submarine base killing four the five new members.

- Flying Officer Cuthbert Michael PARSONS (Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve) 22 years old – Captain
- Sergeant Hughie Francis DAVIES (Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve) 19 years old – Air Gunner
- Sergeant Peter SANDOVER (Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve) 20 years old – Navigator
- Sergewant Arthur Moore TEMPLETON (Royal Air Force Air Volunteer Reserve) 30 years old – Wireless Operator/Air Gunner

Only Flying Officer Alfred James Barnard THOMPSON (Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve) 25 years old – Bombadier will survive the crash of the aircraft after parachuting.

The four victims rest in the military square of Guidel with 113 of their comrades. As for the survivor Barney THOMPSON, after his failed attempt to reach England via Spain, he ended the end of the war in a prison camp. I found traces of his family with whom I have been in correspondence for two years. This presentation was necessary before informing you that a ceremony will take place on February 4, 2023 to commemorate the 80th anniversary of this tragedy and thus pay tribute to this young crew but also to all of the crews of “Bomber Command”.

This ceremony will be chaired by Captain Pierre Marcellin, Commander of Naval Aviation of Lann – Bihoué in the presence of the Mayor of Ploemeur, Ronan LOAS and a detachment from the Lann – Bihoué airbase. It seemed important to us to inform the authorities of 427 squadron of this ceremony to which you are cordially invited.

I wish you and your loved ones a happy new year 2023

Best regards,

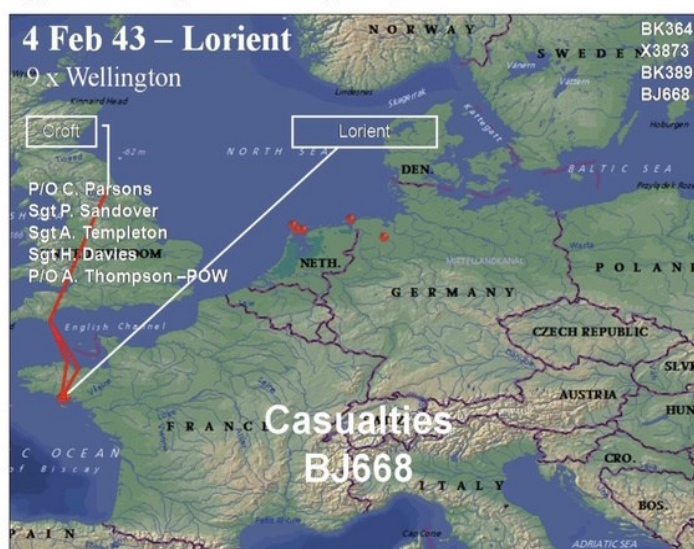
CF((R) Philipe TROUSSARD





4/2/43

Nine aircraft were detailed to attack the submarine base at Lorient. The aircraft took off in two lots. These carrying incendiaries first. Eight of the aircraft successfully bombed the target and returned to England. P/O Parsons and his crew did not return from this operation and are listed as missing. Photographs showed that Sgts Johnson and Schmitt bombed directly on to the aiming point, the only squadron on the operation with two aircraft bombing directly onto the aiming point. Six aircraft landed at base - the other two landed at Longmanston and Church Honeybourne. P/S Higgins overshot at Long Manston but damage was very minor.



Vickers Wellington Crew Positions, 1943-45

1. Pilot
2. Wireless Operator
3. Navigator
4. Rear Gunner
5. Bomb Aimer



Note

Throughout the Newsletter you will find [highlighted](#) web addresses. If you are receiving this via email or reading on the web site, you should be able to click on the highlight to open the web address. If you are receiving a hard copy through the post office you must copy and paste the address into the address bar on your browser to access the highlighted address.

Col (Ret) Ken Sorfleet looking through old copies of ROAR came upon this article from Volume 2, #5, April 2009, page 16 and suggested it should be re-printed given the author.

Keeper of the Lion

The "Keeper of the Lion" is traditionally the youngest officer at 427 squadron. The Lion itself is a bronze statue that was presented to the squadron in 1943 by the president of the famous movie production company Metro-Golden-Mayer, a company with close ties to the Lion squadron. Legend has it that the Lion went missing for almost 20 years after the war before being found used as a door-stop by Wing Commander Davie Ross. Since that time, the "Keeper of the Lion" has had the duty of never letting the Lion get out of sight. Lately, the Lion spends most of its time in the Petawawa Base Museum, coming out for official Squadron functions such as the Gathering of the Lions and the Change of Command ceremony in 2008. According to Orders, the Keeper of the Lion has the following responsibilities:

- Ensure the safety of the Lion. This is Paramount. The danger does not come from other Lions, but from outsiders;
- Bring the Lion to any official function or when requested by the CO;
- Retrieve the Lion from the museum and return it to the museum following the function;
- Ensure with museum personnel that only you and the CO can pick up the Lion;
- Be aware of the Museum opening and closing hours

Thanks to Captain Matt Snider

Stories/Biographies/Books Wanted

We need your input. Consider sending your stories, biographies, books or photos. As little or as much as you want. Check out the current stories at:

<http://www.427squadron.com/memoir.html>

Plus the many stories on ROAR

All posted mailed material will be returned to the sender.

Email—macway01@gmail.com and if necessary request a snail mail address

Everyone has a story.

Wife's Diary

Tonight, I thought my husband was acting weird. We had made plans to meet at a nice restaurant for dinner. I was shopping with my friends all day long, so I thought he was upset at the fact that I was a bit late, but he made no comment on it. Conversation wasn't flowing, so I suggested that we go somewhere quiet so we could talk. He agreed, but he didn't say much. I asked him what was wrong; he said "nothing." I asked him if it was my fault that he was upset. He said he wasn't upset, that it was nothing to do with me, and not to worry about it. On the way home, I told him that I loved him. He smiled slightly, and kept driving. I can't explain his behaviour I don't know why he didn't say, "I love you too." When we got home, I felt as if I had lost him completely, as if he wanted nothing to do with me anymore. He just sat there quietly, and watch TV. He continued to seem distant and absent. Finally, with silence all around us, I decided to go to bed. About 15 minutes later, he came to bed. But I still felt he was distracted, and his thoughts were somewhere else. He fell asleep; I cried. I don't know what to do. I'm almost sure that his thoughts are with someone else. My life is a disaster.

Husband's Diary

A two-foot putt. Who the hell misses a two-foot putt?

With thanks to John Swallow of the Vernon Flying Club