



427 Squadron Association

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www.427squadron.com

November, 2023

427 Special Operations Aviation Squadron

Commanding Officer - L/Col Matt Snider



Lions,

These past six months have been a series of ups and downs for Squadron tempo. We surged with multiple exercises into the summer, including one where we formed an Air Task Force HQ, directing and coordinating the efforts of many rotary- and fixed-wing aircraft in support of key training objectives. Following that, the Squadron took a well-deserved block leave period to allow all personnel to reset and recharge. And now we find ourselves in fall, with tempo ramping up again. Squadron members, including many just arrived this summer, continue to rise to the challenge at every turn.

Some of you may have seen our Squadron featured in a recent news article which was highlighted on the Association social media. Taken without context, it paints a negative picture of our working conditions and our relationship to supporting organizations, with a chain of command unaware or unwilling to change. In fact, the entire effort to collect these statements originated with the Commander of the Canadian Special Operations Forces Command (CANSOFCOM),

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Honorary Colonel Lianne Ing



Fellow Lions,

I am pleased to have the opportunity to connect with you once again through ROAR. On a personal note, my role as HCol has been extended through May 2024 and I am grateful to have the opportunity to continue supporting the squadron in the coming months.

The squadron will soon be holding its annual Leadership Symposium, with this year's theme focusing on "Innovation and Complexity – Adapting for A Changed Environment". The symposium offers an opportunity to bring together squadron members with leaders from outside the military in order to exchange ideas and perspectives on leadership principles. As the squadron continues to evolve, this symposium will explore ways to rapidly integrate positive changes in a dynamic environment.

Over the next two months, as we enter the holiday season, there will also be numerous opportunities for squadron members to gather and build esprit de corps. A Gathering of the Lions event is being planned, with details to follow. After a few years of cancelled events due to the pandemic, these in-

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L/Col Snider continued:

who wanted to gain a true understanding of the culture of this unit and the entire Command. Our members were honest and forthright, maintaining the belief that illuminating any issues was the first step, and that those around them, including the chain of command, would listen and make positive change. The change required is not precipitated by short quotes taken out of context, but by a holistic understanding of our culture prior to action.

While messy, this illumination has been successful, and the Squadron and Command have begun to take actions to address shortfalls and reinforce strengths. We are dedicated to this approach as the best way we know to make this the best Squadron in the future, and in doing so, honour our past.

Finally, we are thinking of all those who have been affected by the crash of the Chinook helicopter in Petawawa in June. Our hearts are with 450 Tactical Helicopter Squadron, whom we consider family and friends.

As Lions, we remember and honour fellow Lion Capt Marc Larouche, a pioneer and trailblazer in special operations aviation whose contributions helped make this Squadron what it is today. His legacy lives on at 427.

HCol Ing continued:

person celebrations represent an important avenue for bonding. The value of these interactions cannot be adequately underscored—the friendships that are initiated through these interactions form the foundation for the interpersonal trust that is needed during stressful times.

On a solemn note, since the last edition of ROAR, we experienced the tragic accident on June 20, 2023, when a CH-147F Chinook from 450 Squadron crashed into the Ottawa River near Garrison Petawawa while conducting a nighttime training flight. The pilots, Capt. David Domagala and Capt. Mark Larouche—who previously served with 427—lost their lives; two flight engineers were able to exit the helicopter with minor injuries. Members of 450, 427, other CAF members, the Ontario Provincial Police, and local first-responders surged in response to the accident to execute search and recovery.

The emotional impact of this accident reverberated throughout Garrison Petawawa and the local area; condolences were expressed from across the country. As we approach Remembrance Day, this tragedy is a sobering reminder of the risks and sacrifices that are routinely borne by all members; we must never take our time together for granted.

Ferte Manus Certas

28/7/44 From our WW II Squadron Log

The warning to stand by last night was not in vain because a total of forty-one crews from the station were tumbled out of their beds for operational breakfast at 0230 hours and Main Briefing at 0330 hours. All seemed to go well till take-off time when the red flares went up canceling the "do" for a few hours. The crews waited around till lunch time and then went to bed. Finally, word came through that the effort was really abandoned and a new target was set.

Eighteen aircraft were detailed for night operations tonight and around ten o'clock the aircraft took off, the target being HAMBURG. Red T.Is. were marking the target when first crews arrived at 0111 hours. Many explosions were seen in the target area between 0108 and 0116 hours, with two very large ones reported by practically all crews. Many fires were burning in the target area. Heavy Flak was moderate over target, bursting in barrage for 17/22000 ft. and numerous searchlights illuminated the cloud base. Fighter activity by single-engine and twin-engined fighters was fairly intense between target and HELIGOLAND on the return journey.

One of our aircraft, "Y" piloted by CAN.J.24299 F/O H.P. GORDON failed to return from this operation, the other seventeen aircraft landed safely at base. This Op was part of a 6 Group 239 aircraft bombing raid on Hamburg. **Twenty two aircraft crewed by 154 personnel failed to return to their Base.**

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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

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What is a Vet

He is an ordinary and yet an extraordinary human being - a person who offered some of his life's most vital years in the service of his country. Some veterans bear visible signs off their service, a missing limb, a jagged scar, a certain look in the eye. Others may carry the evidence inside them: a pin holding a bone together, a piece of sharpnel in the leg - or perhaps another sort of inner steel. The souls ally forged in the refinery of adversity. Except in parades, however, the men and women who have kept our Canada safe wear no badge or emblem. You can't tell a vet just by looking. He is the POW who went away one person and came back another—or didn't come back at all. He is the parade-riding Legionnaire who pins on his ribbons and medals with a prosthetic hand. He is the career quartermaster who watches the ribbons and medals pass him by. All the anonymous heroes, who's valor dies unrecognized with those on the battlefield or in the oceans sunless deep. He is the old commissioner —palised now and aggravatingly slow—who helped liberate a Nazi death camp and who wishes all day long that his wife was still alive to hold him when the nightmares come.

From **Tailwind** the newsletter of the **Aircrew Association of Nova Scotia.**

Morris

Morris, an 82 year old man, went to the Doctor to get a physical. A few days later , the doctor saw Morris walking with a gorgeous women on his arm. A couple of days later the doctor spoke to Morris and said, "You're really doing great, aren't you?"

Morris replied, "Just doing what you said Doc, "Get a hot Mama and be cheerful".

The doctor replies "I didn't say that , ... I said, "You've got a heart murmur be careful"



We Will Remember Them

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



William (Willie) Thomas Floyd, Captain, CD, OMM **b:09 July 1929 - d:10 Aug 2023**



Willie was born in Rivers Inlet, BC, to Tom and Beatrice (nee MacDonald), who moved the growing family back to Victoria during the Depression. The fourth of eight children, Willie had many jobs while attending Esquimalt High School before and after his graduation. On a lark, he enlisted in the post-war RCAF and was selected for pilot training, leading to a much-storied career "driving" CF 86 Sabres and CF104 Starfighters (2500 hours) at various bases in Western Canada and West Germany (Zweibucken, Baden). His final service was Chief Maintenance Test pilot (call sign "Tester13") for #1CAG at CFB Baden, Germany. Never one to rest on laurels, Willie's post-military years were varied: commercial Learjet and Twin Otter pilot, BC Coroner crash investigator, and survival school operator when he and his wife Carol settled in the Kettle River Valley. His "retirement" was filled with woodworking, hunting with good friend Kelly Harpur, homesteading and the sound of his accordion, which he continued to play until the very end.

"We'll not see his like again".

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

Charles Gordon Procter
D: 17 August 2023



At Seaforth Community Hospital on Thursday, August 17, 2023, Charles Gordon Procter formerly of Belgrave passed away in his 100th year.

Beloved husband of Grace Procter for 47 years.

Charlie lived through amazing changes through his hundred years of life – always embracing and moving forward with the changes he saw. With a keen mind that was intrigued by anything technical, he started his career working for CKNX radio. A world war changed all that and Charlie bravely volunteered for service in the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1943.

Upon returning home after the war, he enrolled at Ryerson Institute of Technology in Toronto before beginning a very interesting career. He started his employment with the Atomic Energy Research Facility located in Chalk River, Ontario, before moving on to help build early warning radar stations on the Pine Tree Line – a job that took him across Canada.

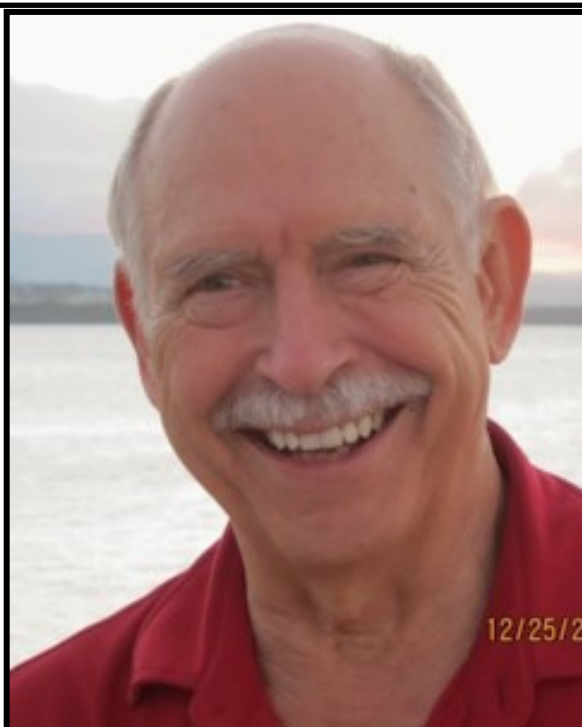
He was also employed by Burroughs Corporation, which at the time was one of the largest producers of main-frame computers in the world. Charlie never lost his interest in this technology – and adapted with the changes in computers through the years.

In 1963, at the age of 40, Charlie came back to his roots, becoming a founding partner of Bodmin Limited, with brothers Ross and George. In August 1976, he quietly left on a trip to Scotland and returned with a surprise - his new wife, Grace. Together they built a loving home, enjoying antique car restoration, gardening, raising sheep, and entertaining friends and family.

Charlie had a curious mind and never stopped learning, which also made him a good teacher. Nieces and nephews, employees, and also countless bagpipe students learned from Charlie, with his quiet and patient manner. Charlie was a world traveler and a member of several pipe bands, including the Brussels Legion Pipe Band, where he took on the role of Pipe Major for many years. As a member of the Ontario Massed Pipe Band, he travelled to the UK and played for the Queen.

Charlie's mind was busy right up to the end of his life, downloading hundreds of books on his Kindle and continuing to do his own computerized banking and book keeping.

Keith Michael Rattew
D: 11 September 2023

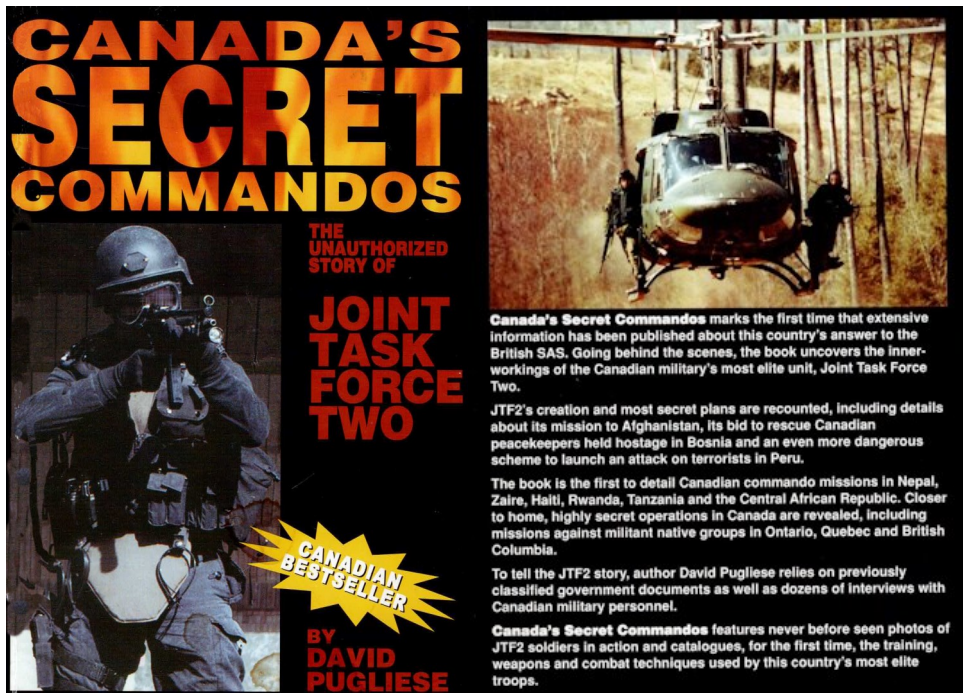


Keith Michael Rattew passed away peacefully at Montfort Hospital in Ottawa, Ontario, on September 11, 2023, at age 88 following a stroke.

Keith was born and raised in London, Ontario. Keith started his working life at age 8, selling newspapers on a train that ran from London to Toronto. He joined the Air Force right out of high school and earned his Pilots' Wings in Gimli, Manitoba. He had fond memories of his first posting, flying the F-86 (Sabre) for 427 Squadron at 3 (Fighter) Wing, Zweibrücken, Germany from 1955 until 1959. After he returned to Canada, Keith joined the Army and travelled with his young growing family through postings in Borden, Petawawa, Kingston, Winnipeg, Cyprus, Calgary, Ottawa, England and back to Ottawa where the family settled. In 1977 he joined the Public Service. He retired in 1988 as Procurement and Financial Manager for the Low Level Air Defence Project. He moved to beautiful British Columbia in the early 90's living there for more than a decade where he attended UBC earning a Master's of Education. His Master's thesis was titled Transforming the Canadian Healthcare System. He spent years researching healthcare delivery models to reduce costs and provide better patient outcomes only to succumb to dementia before presenting his final work to key stakeholders.

Keith had a lifelong love affair with travel. He travelled throughout Western Europe, favouring the South of France and Italy. He also travelled to Hawaii, Japan, Australia, Bermuda, Brazil, Dominican Republic and spent many winters in Mexico and Florida. He often invited family and friends to join him on his travels. He would act as a tour guide to show his guests the nearby sites or the best outdoor patio. Keith always had a camera close by to capture the moment for friends and family but he also appreciated the natural beauty of his surroundings and took hundreds of photos of beautiful flowers, scenery and sunsets. He was happiest surrounded by his friends and family enjoying a delicious meal and a beverage on a patio with a great view.

Ed. Note: Obituaries in ROAR have to be edited because of space concerns. Full obituaries with arri-tional photos are found on the [website under Remember](#)



Canada's Secret Commandos

" The Unauthorized Story of Joint Task Force 2 "

by David Pugliese - © 2002

Ed.note: This book by David Pugliese is a must read for anyone interested in the history and lead up to making Canada's JTF2 into a world class Special Operations Group. Of necessity, due to space , I have trimmed some of the information below, with apologies to Mr. Pugliese. However, the book is available on Amazon and is a fascinating story.

In the highly censured history of Joint Task Force 2, the afternoon of October 8, 2001 will be remembered as a turning point. While most Canadians were enjoying the Thanksgiving holiday, preparing turkey and cranberry sauce for the evening ahead, those with any connection to the country's top secret counter-terrorism forces were glued to the TV sets waiting to hear from the country's Defense Minister. Just before noon Art Eggleton walked into a spacious conference room at National Defence Headquarters in Ottawa to meet with journalists. Most government offices were closed for the holiday, but Defence department planners had been hard at work, reviewing last minute details of what was to become, in numbers at least, one of Canada's largest overseas missions. Looking grim, Defense Minister Eggleton stepped up to the podium. The Chief of the Defence Staff General Raymond Henault, the company's top military officer was at his side. Both men knew that the details they would unveil in the next few minutes would be closely followed by American officials in Washington.

Less than a month earlier the world had radically changed. By this time, television images of the September 11 terrorist attack on the US and their aftermath were still a regular part of most American and Canadian news lineups: video coverage of two hijacked planes plowing into New York's World Trade Center; firefighters removing body parts from the rubble; construction crews pulling out pieces of aircraft and debris from the section of the Pentagon that had been hit by another plane; interviews with family members of passengers who had tried to prevent a fourth aircraft from wrecking similar damage. Across the United States and Europe investigators were searching for clues to help them understand how a band of terrorists could seize four passenger jets and use them as kamikazes to strike at the heart of America's financial, political and military centers.

Not long after the strikes, intelligence agencies had identified the most likely culprit behind the attacks as Osama bin Laden. Bin Laden was operating from Afghanistan with the full support of the Taliban regime which ran the country under strict Islamic law. The Saudi millionaire from the rubble's training camps were turning out dozens of fanatics, who like those behind the controls of the planes used in the September 11 attacks didn't question dying for their cause. Now the United States was on a war-footing, with President George W. Bush

vowing to bring in Bin Laden dead or alive. The American military was busy trying to make good on the president's promise and just a day before Eggleton's press conference in Ottawa, the Pentagon had unleashed waves of cruise missiles and bombers to strike targets in Afghanistan.

Ed. Note: After Minister Eggleton had outlined the military support that Canada would contribute to the response to the September 11 attacks he paused ...

But Eglinton wasn't finished outlining Canada's war commitments. He paused anticipating that his next sentence would catch journalists in the defense department conference room off guard. "...finally, a component of our Specialists Force, Joint Task Force 2, has been requested and will contribute to the overall effort," he announced. "you will understand, however, that for reasons of security, no further details will be provided."

The fact that JTF2, the military's secret counter terrorism group was going to war sent a buzz of excitement through the usually cynical press Corps. The inclusion of JTF2 meant that Canadian soldiers could potentially end up in the front lines in the Afghan war. Even Eglinton's brief acknowledgment of JTF2 was a landmark of sorts; it was the first time the government had openly discussed sending the unit overseas. As far as the public was concerned JTF2 was a mystery unit. Even Canadian lawmakers knew little about the organization that was the country's force of last resort in the event of a terrorist attack. In fact, JTF2 was so low-key it only had a passing reference in a sweeping 1999 Senate report on how Canada should deal with terrorism. However JTF2 troops had been on at least a dozen overseas operations since the unit was created in 1993 and there was certainly nothing benign about them. Soldiers talk about "the sharp end" to designate combat troops who do the fighting. JTF2 was very tip of the Canadian sharp end. Its snipers were trained to stalk and eliminate terrorists and its assault groups skilled in raiding hijacked aircraft and ships to free hostages. Operating behind enemy lines in two or four-man teams, the unit could be the eyes and ears of commanders overseeing a battle.

But over the last decade, JTF2 had yet to be used to its full potential. With the war in Afghanistan, Canada's secret commandos were on the verge of becoming a full-fledged member of the world's elite special forces club.

The backbone of JTF2's air operations is its helicopter fleet. In the beginning the unit used three CH-135 Twin Huey's. A long-time veteran of military operations worldwide, the Twin Huey had a speed of 222 kilometers an hour and a range of 463 kilometers. It could carry 12 passengers. Flying operations were originally handled by 450 Squadron at Canadian Forces Base Uplands. That squadron was disbanded in 1996-97 and JTF2 operations were taken over by 427 Tactical Helicopter Squadron.

The 427 Tactical Helicopter Squadron/B flight was declared operationally ready on November 1, 1997, to use the Canadian Forces Utility Tactical Transport Helicopter (CFUTTH) CH-146 Griffon for JTF2 operations. The Griffin has a three-man crew pilot, copilot and flight engineer and can transport up to 12 troops depending on the equipment they carry. A combat load in the summer is around eight soldiers while in the winter, because of extra gear, the Griffin can carry six. The CH-146 has a maximum speed of 260 kilometers an hour. With normal fuel tanks its range is 630 kilometers but that can be increased with the use of two auxiliary fuel tanks, boosting their range to 1020 kilometers.

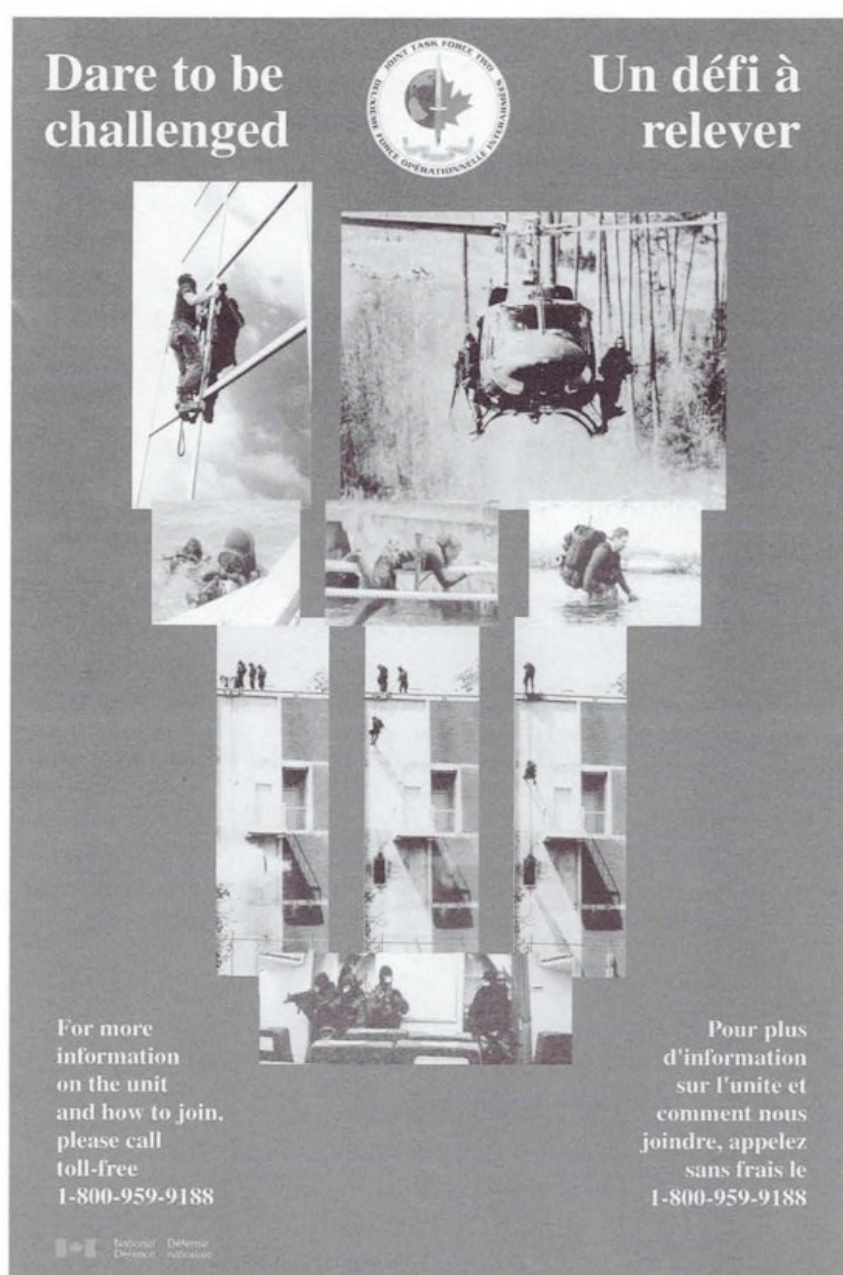
JTF2 Griffons were outfitted with a tubular A-frame device, also used in the Twin Hueys, for the attachment of a fast-rope used in infiltration or extraction. The frame juts out on the side of the helicopter. Rappel lines can also be anchored onto the floor of the aircraft. The Aerospace and Telecommunications Engineering Support Squadron at CFB Trenton, Ontario, was given the job of producing a fast-rope rappel/insertion/extraction system that will not only replace the existing system but also do away with the use of a rappel ropes hooked onto the floor of the Griffon. It was not known whether that new system has been put in place yet.

Other modifications ordered for the Griffons include a new design in seating arrangements so snipers can sit on each side of the aircraft on the front of the skids. Armor protection kits are also required for the JTF2 helicopters. The unit's Griffons have been outfitted for the installation of the Westcam Forward Looking Infrared camera which has a range of up to two kilometers, as well as a specialized secure communication package.

The unit works its helicopters hard. In 1998-99 for instance, JTF2 Griffins flew 625 hours while 1999-2000, they logged a little more than 850 hours.

JTF2's Griffins are scheduled to be among the first to be outfitted with the ERSTA system starting about 2003. This Electro-Optical Reconnaissance Surveillance and Target Acquisition system would give the unit increase intelligence-gathering capabilities. The ERSTA sensor package will consist of an infrared device with a range of about four kilometers, camera for day use, a laser-range finder and a laser designator. ERSTA would also include a data link system to relay real-time information to ground commanders while the helicopter is airborne. The various missions will determine how that information is sent; it could be as simple as a text message or as advanced as a live video feed. Using the system JTF2 commanders or senior military officers could watch an operation on a video screen as it actually takes place

For JTF2 missions, the Griffin pilots are exceptionally trained. Standard flying techniques involve operating the helicopter low to the ground to avoid detection as well as manoeuvres and practices required by the unique demands of special operations.



The poster features a central collage of black and white photographs showing various special operations activities: a soldier rappelling, a helicopter in flight, soldiers in a field, and soldiers in a building. At the top center is the JTF2 logo, which includes a maple leaf and the text "JOINT TASK FORCE TWO" and "OPÉRATIONS SPÉCIALES". The top left and right corners contain the slogans "Dare to be challenged" and "Un défi à relever" respectively. The bottom left and right corners contain contact information in English and French.

Dare to be challenged

Un défi à relever

For more information on the unit and how to join, please call toll-free 1-800-959-9188

Pour plus d'information sur l'unité et comment nous joindre, appelez sans frais le 1-800-959-9188

Ministère de la Défense / Department of Defense

JTF2 Recruiting Poster circa 1999



Editor's note: Every year The Canadian Aviation Hall of Fame awards four individuals and one organization honouring those "...that have made outstanding contributions to aviation and aerospace in Canada; and to collect, preserve, exhibit and interpret artifacts and documents, thereby inspiring and educating Canadians". The organization award is called the "Belt of Orion for Excellence" and was founded by Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame to honour organizations, groups, societies or associations who have made outstanding contributions to the advancement of aviation in Canada. Previous Belt of Orion awards have been made to, the Golden Hawks, Snowbirds, Canadian Owners and Pilots Association, Trans Canada Airlines and others. The 2023 Belt of Orion award was given to No. 1 Air Division of which 427 Squadron was a part of from 1952 to 1970 flying the F-86 and the CF-104. See more information at [CAHF/ Belt of Orion](#).

The citation reads:

From 1952 until 1993, the Royal Canadian Air Force's 1 Air Division (later the Canadian Armed Forces' 1 Canadian Air Group) was at the forefront of Canada's aerial commitments supporting NATO in Europe during the Cold War. Initially comprising four fighter Wings and support units and crew, between 1953 and 1967 the Division was headquartered at Metz, France. Unification of the Canadian military led to a reorganization of forces deployed to Europe and the Air Division was reconstituted as a Group with new headquarters at Lahr, Germany. The Division's and Group's ground crew and pilots were always some of Canada's best, and they flew the leading fighter aircraft of their day: F-86 Sabres, CF-100 Canucks, CF-104 Starfighters, and CF-18 Hornets on missions ranging from interception to all-weather and night fighting, to nuclear interdiction and low-level photographic reconnaissance. Collectively these pilots won numerous air fighting competitions and set such a high operational standard of military aviation that they earned the respect and admiration of many – excellence that was testament time and again to the quality of Canada's post-1945 air force leadership and personnel.

The award was accepted by Col. (Ret) Walter Pirie on September 14, 2023 at the CAHF Gala Dinner in Calgary. His acceptance speech on behalf of 1 Air Division/1 Canadian Air Group is below.

Ladies and gentlemen, fellow aviators, and aviation enthusiasts. Let me first say how honoured and privileged I felt when MGen Huddleson offered me, through Kevin Anderson, Director of the New Brunswick Aviation Museum, the opportunity to accept the Belt of Orion Award. I will formally accept in a few moments on behalf of the thousands of Airmen and Airwomen who served with great distinction in Canada's 1 Air Division and or 1 Canadian Air group over 40 years. But first, if I may, a few comments.

You may wonder why it is me up here accepting this prestigious award. I must say I was somewhat surprised by the offer to accept the award considering the availability of Commanders and others who held more responsible positions in theatre than I, including attendees here tonight. But I guess I do represent a considerable number of those years. I was 19 years old when I arrived in 1 Air Division on 427 Sabre Sqn at Zweibrücken, Germany in the latter years of the Sabre era. 427 was the first Sqn to convert to the CF104 Starfighter and stood down as a Sabre Sqn in Dec 1962. I completed my tour with a transfer to 441 Sqn in Marville, France.

Ten years later I was back in the fighter world flying the CF104 Starfighter in the ground attack role. Following a tour on 439 Sqn in Baden Soellingen, Germany, I spent a couple of years on staff at 1 CAG HQ in Lahr. After a tour of instructing on the 104 at 417 Sqn, Cold Lake, I was back in Baden in Wing Operations.

This posting lasted five years ending in the summer of 1986 and covered the transition of the CF104 to the CF18. So, all in all, I spent close to 12 years in 1 Canadian Air Division and 1 Canadian Air Group and served there in three consecutive decades.

And the other significant thing that I assume led to my representation here this evening is the fact that I have been the National Chairman of SPAADS (Sabre Pilots Association of the Air Division Squadrons) for the past 14 years. By the way, although we held our final large-scale Reunion in Montreal one year ago, we still continue as an organization. However, my main duty these days is informing the members, on an almost daily basis, of who has passed away. No surprise there. We are all in our 80s or 90s with a few over 100. Congrats again Kenny Lett! We still have 266 SPAADS members, 203 wives and 164 Associate members (widows of Sabre pilots).

Now, back to the *raison d'être* for the Belt of Orion Award. Our contribution to NATO and the deterrence force countering the aims of the Warsaw Pact was, from the outset, formidable, with 300 front line fighters, four Wings, a Headquarters, and Yellow Jack Radar. And we added an all-weather capability in the mid-fifties by replacing one of the Sabre squadrons on each Wing with a CF100 squadron. It was a significant Canadian contribution to the successful outcome of the Cold War.

But there were a lot more factors involved in that success than the aircraft and the aircrew who flew them. Along with honouring the pilots, fighter navigators, groundcrew, Yellow Jack Radar personnel, administrative staff, medical staff and others, I would like to recognize the contribution and support so unselfishly given by the spouses. The D/Ws or Dependent Wives. Especially those wives who lost their husbands in flying accidents. Their stoic and brave reactions to those trying times were always incredibly moving and a fine example to their families and friends. I salute those wonderful ladies.

And let's not forget the support we received from our children and their educators. They all contributed to the success of the uniform folks and are also deserving of a mention in acceptance of this award.

And speaking of those who lost their lives while serving in Europe and were laid to rest in the RCAF Military Cemetery at Chaloy, France. Be they aircrew, who bought the farm while flying on training or operational missions doing an inherently dangerous job in often less than ideal weather conditions, or other service members who perished for any number of reasons, they all deserve to be remembered for their sacrifices on behalf of their Nation and the preservation of freedom. And we will remember our Fallen Comrades!!

I would now like to personally add my congratulations to this year's inductees to the Canadian Aviation Hall of Fame. With special note of course to Kenny Lett, a stalwart, and much admired, member of SPAADS.

Before concluding I would like to thank the members and the Board of Directors of the Canadian Aviation Hall of fame for giving due consideration to the nomination put forward by Kevin Anderson and certainly for your popular and appropriate decision.

And finally, to those of us who served and are still around to treasure the recognition that this prestigious award entails, congratulations one and all.

And now, I humbly but proudly accept the Belt of Orion Award on behalf of you and all those who served in 1 Air Division / 1 Canadian Air Group from the early 50's to the early 90's.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!



September, 2022 was also the last Sabre Pilots Association of Air Division Pilots (SPAADS) reunions, a three day affair in Montreal.

Walter Pirie, National Chairman of SPAADS for the last fourteen years gave the following address at the final gala dinner.

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Good evening fellow SPAADS and Associates, Guests and Families. For those who don't know me my name is Walt Pirie. I am the Chairman of the SPAADS National Committee, and on this occasion also the Chairman of the SPAADS 2022 Reunion Committee. I won't keep you long from this evening's festivities, but, given the significance of this year's event, I may be a little longer than I have been in past years.

Well, here we are winding up the last big SPAADS Reunion. I sincerely hope you have all enjoyed it so far, I have several people and organizations to thank, so bear with me. First, I would like to thank the personnel of the Sheraton Centre Hotel. They have been a pleasure to work with from the event organizing staff through reservations to the kitchen and dining room staff. Accolades also to the McGill Faculty Club for providing such a wonderful venue for our function last night, What a beautiful building and a great dinner. And special accolades to Veterans Affairs Canada for providing us with a grant of \$5700.00 that allowed us, along with a \$1500.00 grant from the Air Force Association, to subsidize last night's event.

And now many many thanks to the members of your 2022 SPAADS Reunion Committee. To the good folks who manned the registration desk. An unenviable but necessary task and a job well done by Sylvia Noonan, Susi Shute, Angel McKeogh and Heather Bacon. Now, my three compatriots who worked tirelessly for four long years planning and executing what I hope will be a memorable event for you all.

My Vice Chairman Ed McKeogh, whose continuous advice on Montreal, his native city, and on a myriad of other issues was outstanding. Your Registrar and Treasurer, Pat Barrett. I cannot imagine a better person for those jobs, and, again, a fountain of invaluable advice throughout. Our IT specialist, Catherine Pirie. Yes, my daughter. Catherine not only designed the 2020 and 2022 logos and the Reunion website, but designed and produced the souvenir placemats before you. Catherine's business background in convention and exhibition planning proved invaluable as well.

Now is when I would normally present the Reunion Chairman with a gold SPAADS lapel pin. The SAM medal, named posthumously for Sam Allingham, the epitome of volunteerism. But I am the Reunion Chairman and I already have a SAM and I don't need another one. So, with the unanimous approval of the SPAADS National Committee, I would like all three of our core Committee to come forward to receive your well-deserved SAM medals. By the way, Catherine will be the first non-member of SPAADS and the first female to receive this honour.

Now I would like to formally introduce our guests. First our Guest of Honour, John Maris, and his guest Nancy Boisvert. John, a member of Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame, gave us that most interesting and inspiring presentation this afternoon. Thank you and a warm SPAADS welcome to you and Nancy.

Now my personal guests, LGen (retd) Al DeQuetteville and his wife Susan. Al is a former Commander of Canada's Air Force (once again the RCAF). Al is currently serving as the Honourary Colonel of 412 Squadron in Ottawa. LCol (retd) Dean Black and his wife Cathy. Dean is the Director of the Air Force Association of Canada. He is also our de facto official photographer for the Reunion. Hopefully we will soon see a follow-up article in Air Force magazine. That's a not-so-subtle hint Dean. Welcome Dean and Cathy. A great friend of SPAADS, Kevin Anderson and his wife Pamala. Kevin is the Director of the New Brunswick Aviation Museum located at the former RCAF base Chatham in Miramichi, and the former home of the Golden Hawks air demonstration team. Kevin has been singularly responsible for putting the museum together, and through his tireless promotion of the endeavour and successful fund raising, the museum is rapidly becoming one of the most prestigious Aviation Museums in the world. Kevin also put together a nomination a few years ago on behalf of SPAADS to the Canadian Aviation Hall of Fame for consideration for that year's Belt of Orion award. Unfortunately, SPAADS was not selected. However, there was a silver lining in that the selectee was the Red Knight air demonstration solo. Most of the Red Knight pilots over the years were former or current SPAADS members. Well done Kevin and welcome to you and Pamela. Two rather special guests from Belgium who came a long way to join us in celebrating our last big Reunion. Pierre and Phillippe Barre, who have over the years organized multiple and successful 1 Wing Marville Reunions. Welcome back to Canada Pierre and Phillippe.

And a special thanks to all the friends and family members of current and past SPAADS members who are in attendance. I hope you have gleaned some understanding of what your fathers and grandfathers did in service to their country and the camaraderie that brings them out on these occasions. Great to see such a turnout. Welcome all.

I know you have not yet heard their complete repertoire, but their reputation around Montreal is outstanding. I am referring of course to our band for this evening, the 438 Tac Hel Squadron Band from St Hubert. And it is always apropos to recognize our longest distance traveler who consistently makes it to these Reunions, Associate member of SPAADS, from Australia, Dorothy Mayberry.

I would of course be remiss if I did not acknowledge and honour the man who would have been the oldest SPAADS member to attend a Reunion. He unfortunately fell recently and broke a bone in his back or neck. By all accounts, he is mending well but not soon enough to make the journey. I refer of course to Air Vice Marshall Ken Lett who turned 99 earlier this year. The Reunion is not the same without you!

Now, I would normally finish with what you all really wanted to hear. Namely, where will the next Reunion be held. Unfortunately, you all know our time has come. This is the last big one, and once again I hope you have found it to be an enjoyable and, most importantly, a memorable one. Of course, SPAADS as an association does not die tomorrow. If any SPAADS member wishes to host a more local and smaller version of these Reunions in the future, such as a SPAADS Beer Call, your National Committee would encourage that and help where we can, although our bank account is dwindling fast.

I will also continue to pass on SPAADS information via email including those horrible “sad news” emails. And lastly, it has been an honour and a privilege for me to have been your National Chairman for the past 13 years. I would like now to publicly thank the other members of your National Committee, who reside across the country, for their support and sound advice to me over those 13 years.

The Ottawa Group
My vice Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer, Bill Nichols
Bob Caskie
Jim Strang
Norm Peveril
Bill Arthurs
Brian Castledine
Harry Hrischenko
The Others
Bill Worthy – Kingston
Paul Hayes – Toronto
Arnie Cavett – Winnipeg
Gerry Morrison – Calgary
Murray Neilson – Vancouver
George Miller – Abbotsford
Dick Dunn – Vancouver
John England – Victoria
Syd Burrows Comox

And all those who have passed away during my tenure, and significantly my predecessors as National Chairman, Herb Graves and B R Campbell.

I would now like to quote the Airman's Grace



Skip Hit

Low Level Flying in Germany

By BGen (Ret) Dave Jurkowski

After all the sacrifices of the Second World War, we had to continue our air and ground presence and readiness to swiftly counter the Eastern Bloc nuclear and conventional threat.

A excerpt from a story posted on [Vintage Wings](#).

Continued next page

Like those before us in the Sword (F-86 Sabre), Clunk (CF-100 Canuck) and real war fighter eras, Canadians strapped into CF-104 Starfighters daily and consistently demonstrated the highest levels of combat effectiveness, achieving top scores on Annual NATO Tactical Evaluations and winning NATO-wide weapons and reconnaissance competitions. In the early 104 days, Canadian fighter pilots were well-trained to fly long-range, high speed, low level, visual or - more often - all-weather missions to deliver nuclear "buckets of sunshine" to selected targets well into Warsaw Pact territory. A number of squadrons were also unsurpassed in their ability to fly reconnaissance missions. The DNA for both skill sets were handed down to those who continued to fly the Zipper - as the 104 was sometimes called - in the conventional role after the transition to the conventional role in the early '70s. As a consequence, we were well trained to deliver conventional weapons at 540 Knots Indicated Air Speed (KIAS) a few hundred feet above ground level (AGL) on selected targets with tolerances of plus or minus three seconds and plus or minus 100 feet either side of designated bomb impact point. While we flew with the LN3 inertial navigation system in the early days, we really relied on watch-map-ground techniques to make our time-of-day deliveries. And, we were good at it. And so, it was serious business. That said, there were many lighter moments and this is one "war story" worth telling from which lessons might still be learned.

Believe it or not, one of a handful of principles to which many fighter pilots subscribe is humility. The willingness to be on "receive" rather than "transmit" is critical to understanding one's abilities and shortcomings in air-to-air combat or while racing along a few hundred feet AGL in poor visibility at 900 feet a second. You'd better know exactly where you are and what you're doing. You'd better be constantly in the self-analysis mode if you erred. But sometimes, it was hard to be humble, especially when you were a young CF-104 pilot cut loose in Europe; especially when you were taught high speed, low-level navigation techniques over tough European terrain by the best in the business: reconnaissance (recce) trained RCAF pilots like Bud Berntson, Dan Graham, Larry Kinch, Roy DeWolfe and Gord Dejong.

Now many nasty things have been said about "Click click, you're dead" recce pilots and of course, I agree with all of them. That said, these luminaries in the mysteries of high speed navigation for snapshot sake had to be exceptionally accurate in capturing their targets in their camera pod at just the right time and angle in any kind of weather, and on the first go. The information on their filmstrips and in their analytical minds would be critical to a post-strike assessment in a real war. These squadron Magellans were legendary, unbeatable and always on time with a quality product.

As a newcomer to 439 Tactical Fighter Squadron (the Sabre Tooth Tigers) in the Cold War January of 1973, I listened attentively to the brain trust of recce nav techniques on a squadron that had recently re-rolled from the recce to conventional weapons delivery mission. On the south "marguerite" - dispersal - in Baden-Soellingen West Germany, I learned to build my strip maps using best terrain masking and nav checkpoints in countries where all the villages, church steeples and autobahns looked the same. Like my mentors, I learned to cut my maps as narrow as possible to force myself to fly accurate ground tracks and to minimize cockpit adminivia at 500 feet AGL at 540 KIAS over unforgiving terrain, checking six for commie bogeys and still drop qualifying bombs from 200 ft AGL.

I was becoming so confident finding my way around Europe at low altitude, I was able to cut my maps a whole two inches wide and roll them on pencils just like my teachers. I would often test myself by cutting my map with no headings, just minute marks and still make it to my equivalent "EQ" targets within acceptable limits. I even learned to fly a map cut down the track line itself with only one side to cross-check for landmarks.

Map preparation was an intensely personal craft. Once these 1:250,000 / 1:50,000 sets were built, you never, never let them go astray. One good reason was the Duty Ops Officer. When taking our turns pulling that non-flying duty day, some of us simply had to be amused by way of compensation for not flying, I suppose. Woe to the unsuspecting pilot who was foolish enough to leave his maps on the ops desk while he checked and donned parachute, helmet and spurs (Yes, spurs. But that's another story*). Reason? Some of us held a secret but rapidly accessible cache of pre-cut autobahns, cities and lakes which we quickly glued on or near the flight path of the unguarded map. We'd also look for opportunities to take a felt-tipped pen to change 3's to 8's and 1' to 4's or 7's on headings for added spice! Many a cockpit had been awash in adrenalin and dismay as the owner of these vulnerable maps strained vainly through the ubiquitous haze for non-existent track checks. Ah, the good old days before digitally displayed maps!

HEAVY BOMBER ERA



Approaching November 11 - A History Review An Excerpt from the Historical Revue of No.6 RCAF Heavy Bomber GP

At the very onset of the present War there were a certain number of Canadians, who had come to this country in 1938 or earlier to join the Royal Air Force flying with bomber command. As the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan got underway RCAF Bomber Crews began to make their appearance. The first of these were posted to vacancies in RAF formations, but it soon became possible to man all Canadian squadrons. It had been decided in the early stage of the Air Training Plan that a Canadian Bomber Group should be formed in Britain as soon as those RCAF squadrons became numerous enough to comprise an effective unit, and by the end of 1942 it became possible, with much appreciated RAF technical assistance to implement this decision. Some RAF Flight Engineers and other personnel, as well as a few aircrew members from sister Dominions remained attached but towards the end of Phase 1 the operational personnel, those in training and the ground staffs were in the overwhelming majority Canadian, and many of the squadrons flew Canadian built Lancaster aircraft.

The RCAF Group (No. 6 Group) formed an integral part of Bomber Command. Its operations were controlled by the Headquarters of that Command in the same way as those of the other Bomber Groups, and like them it was able to function either in combination or as a separate tactical or strategic striking force. On the administration side, however, Canadian personnel policies were largely followed, under the direction of RCAF Overseas Headquarters, in conjunction with the Air Ministry. The cost of the Group, with the single exception of the pay and allowances of attached our RAF personnel was born by the Canadian government and the full upkeep of the operational Squadrons, including expenditures for fuel and ammunition, was defrayed from Canadian taxes and domestic loans. In addition, Canada supported several training and headquarters establishments.

Canadianism of the Group was reflected in the naming of squadrons, the RCAF believing that this helped to develop a healthy Esprit de Corps among the personnel. It was also found that such names attracted considerable civilian interest, and enabled the public to follow more readily the exploits of individual units such as the Ghost, Moose and Lion squadrons. Other units had names of distinctive significance to Canadians, such as

Porcupines Alouette, Iroquois and Bluenose. As a result, squadrons were “adopted” by cities or organizations at home which supplied them with gifts and comforts and assisted them in the furnishing of their Messes and huts.

Growth of the Group from relatively small beginnings was an outstanding feature of Canada’s wartime aviation development, but was not accomplished effortlessly. The rate of expansion was such that sometimes Squadrons or Stations which had themselves only recently attained a state of full efficiency had to suffer the loss of numbers of their more experienced members in order to facilitate the formation of new units and also to permit the dispatch of three entire Squadrons to form a Canadian Wing in North Africa, which, based on desert airfields, for several months carried out sustained operations connected with the invasion of Sicily and Italy. Furthermore, superimposed on the manning and administrative problems created by these shifts of personnel were a series of additional “headaches” incidental to the conversion of Squadrons from one type of aircraft to another. These conversions involved a more or less systematic progression from the Wellingtons, with which the original Squadrons were mainly equipped, through Halifax II’s and V’s and Lancaster’s II’s to the later Halifax III’s And VII’s and Lancaster X’s. Quite apart from the necessity of air crew familiarizing themselves with each new type, the problems created for equipment Specialists and Technical staff by such conversions, undertaken during a period of active expansion, can well be imagined. It therefore speaks highly for both the adaptability and devotion to duty of all ranks, and the organizing ability of the responsible officers, that these difficulties were successfully overcome, enabling the group to contribute its full quota to the large-scale effort initiated by Bomber Command prior to D-Day and reaching its quantitative climax during the Battle of France and the anti-flying bomb campaign.

Subsequent to D-Day, operations became both more numerous and more diverse, Germany itself was by no means neglected during this period but emphasis was shifted to attacks on railways and other communications serving the German armies, enemy troop concentrations, and military installations of all kinds including airfields, submarine bases, heavy gun in placements and flying bomb sites. A notable feature of operations during this period was the fact that many of them were undertaken by day with fighter escorts and resulted in losses which were gratifyingly low. However, such daylight precision bombing, by heavy aircraft, of small and often well concealed targets called for a still higher level of competence from pilots, navigators and bomb aimers, then did the earlier night attacks on marshalling yards and coastal defenses. The scale of 6 Group’s effort at this time can be judged from the fact that during August, 1944, the group flew 3,700 operational sorties and dropped some 14,000 long tons of bombs, - more than the total dropped on London during the entire war. Although, aircrew, operations, control, ground and maintenance staffs were working under heavy pressure during this period, aircraft serviceability was maintained above an 80% average and bomb dump personnel performed herculean effort grudgingly ungrudgingly, often spending many weary hours changing bomb loads when adverse weather had forced the cancellation of projected operations.

In addition to the bombing operations outlined in the foregoing, 6 Group from its inception took a very active and prominent role in Bomber Command’s campaign of aerial mine laying which took a tremendous toll of enemy shipping and badly disrupted enemy water transport. Mine laying often involved long and fatiguing journeys under conditions which, in the later stages, were more hazardous than bombing mission’s. Successful mining (known as “gardening”) required a very high level of ability on the part of the crews who were specially trained for the work. The mine layers from six group achieved a very enviable record in developing new techniques of aerial minelaying.

During the last month of operations the Allied Forces were advancing so rapidly and so many former targets were being overrun that there was a little left to bomb and it became apparent that Bomber Command’s job was about done. 6 Group’s last offensive operation was for a very successful daylight raid (April 25th, 1945) on coastal batteries at Wangara wall. As a fitting conclusion to their Phase I operational activities, the group was given the very welcome task of returning hundreds of prisoners of war bracket (many fellow airmen) by air from the continent to England.

**The Royal Candian Legion
Recommends wearing your Poppy beginning
October 28, 2023**

“Lest we Forget”

An excerpt from an infamous speech in 1940 by Richard Walter Darre, SS-Obergruppenfuhrer and a leading Nazi ideologist who strongly influenced Heinrich Himmler.

As soon as we beat England we shall make all of you Englishmen once and for all... Able-bodied men and women between the ages of 16 and 45 will be exported as slaves to the continent.

The old and weak will be exterminated.

All men remaining in Britain as slaves will be sterilized.

A million or two of the young women of the Nordic type will be segregated in a number of stud farms where with the assistance of picked German sires during a period of 10 to 12 years will produce annually a series of Nordic infants to be brought up in every way as Germans.

Chilling and inhumane strategies and unfortunately areas of the world still echo with that barbaric mentality or worse, the systematic extermination of children, women, men.

We Canadians

Almost 10% of Canada's entire population of 7 million people served in the armed forces during the first World War, and nearly 60,000 died. The great Allied victories of 1918 were spearheaded by Canadian troops, perhaps the most capable for soldiers in the entire British order of battle. Canada was repaid for its enormous sacrifice by downright neglect, its unique controversial contribution to victory being absorbed in the popular memory as somehow or other the work of the "British".

The Second World War provided a re-run. The Canadian Navy began the war with a half dozen vessels, and ended up policing nearly half of the Atlantic against U-Boat traffic. More than 120 Canadian warships participated in the Normandy landings, during which 15,000 Canadian soldiers went ashore on D-Day alone. Canada finished the war with the third largest navy and the fourth largest Air Force in the world. Some 17,000 aircrew never returned from overseas duty. The world thanked Canada with the same sublime indifference as it had the previous time. Canadian participation in the war was acknowledged in film only if it was necessary to give an American actor a part in the campaign in which the US had clearly not participated which, of course, Hollywood has since abandoned. It is as if in the very act of becoming famous a Canadian ceases to be a Canadian. Canada is every bit as alert to the achievement of its sons and daughters as the rest of the world is completely unaware of them.

We Canadians proudly say of themselves - and are unheard by anyone else - that 1 percent of the world's population has provided 10 percent of the world's peace-keeping forces. Canadian soldiers in the past half century have been the greatest peace-keepers on earth—in 39 missions on UN mandates, and six on non-UN peace-keeping duties, from Vietnam to East Timor, from Sinai to Bosnia, and recently to Afghanistan. Yet the only foreign engagement which has entered the popular non-Canadian imagination was the story affair in Somalia, in which out-of-control paratroopers murdered two Somali infiltrators. Their regiment was then disbanded in disgrace—a uniquely Canadian Act of self-abasement for which, naturally, the Canadians received no international credit.

So who today in the US knows about the stoic and selfless friendship its northern neighbor has given it in Afghanistan? Rather Canada repeatedly does honorable things for honorable motives, but instead of being thankful for it, it remains something of a figure a fun. It is the Canadian way, for which Canadians should be proud, yet such honour comes at a high cost.

*From **The London Daily Telegraph** by Kevin Myers and published in the **Tailwind, The Aircrew Association of Nova Scotia—2006***

The Farmer

I recently spent \$6,500 on a young registered Black Angus bull. I put him out with the herd, but he just ate grass and wouldn't even look at a cow.

I was beginning to think I had paid more for that bull than he was worth. Anyhow I had the Vet come and have a look at him. He said the bull was very healthy, but possibly just a little young so he gave me some pills to feed him once per day.

The bull started to service the cows within two days, all my cows! He even broke through the fence and bred with all of my neighbor's cows!

He's like a machine! I don't know what was in the pills the Vet gave him but they kind of taste like peppermint.

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.

Tech Savvy ?

Customer: My keyboard is not working anymore.

Tech Support: Are you sure its plugged into the computer?

Customer: No. I can't get behind the computer.

Tech Support: Pick up your keyboard and walk 10 paces back.

Customer: OK

Tech Support: Did the keyboard come with you ?

Customer: Yes.

Tech Support: That means the keyboard is not plugged in.

Customer: I can't get on the internet.

Tech Support: Are you sure you used the right password ?

Customer: Yes, I'm sure. I saw my colleague do it.

Tech Support: Can you tell me what the password was ?

Customer: Five dots.

A customer called the Canon help desk because of a problem with his printer.

Tech Support: Are you running it under Windows?

Customer: No, my desk is next to the door, but that is a good point. The guy sitting in the next cubicle next to me is under a window and his printer is working.

Customer: I have a huge problem. A friend has placed a screen saver on my computer, but every time I move my mouse , it disappears.

