



## 427 Squadron Association

Volume 5— Issue 2

[WWW.427SQUADRON.COM](http://WWW.427SQUADRON.COM)

May 2020

### 427 Special Operations Aviation Squadron

**Commanding Officer - L/Col Jeremy Fountain**

**Honorary Colonel Lianne Ing**

**Dear Fellow Lions,**

**Fellow Lions,**



Greeting to all Lions from self-isolation. I'd like to take this opportunity to update you on our activities in the midst of the COVID crisis. We are still doing some flying but only for essential tasks as we maintain our standby responsibilities without

This edition of ROAR is being issued in the midst of the coronavirus global pandemic and I hope that everyone is weathering this unusual storm. While I would usually use this forum to share news about my activities with 427, the past six weeks have been almost entirely

consumed by my responsibilities running a 50-person company in the defence and homeland security industry. It has been an intense effort to adjust our company's operations in response to the pandemic. Our combination of research activities, manufacturing, and provision of equipment to law enforcement and first responder agencies resulted in our classification as an "essential business" in Ontario. This designation meant that we were permitted to continue operating; however, in order to adhere to public health guidance and protect our people, we transitioned 80% of our staff to remote work in March. That transition required rapid and focused coordination to ensure that all of the necessary protocols, equipment, secure connectivity, and communication methods were in place to enable our team to work effectively while physically apart. As with any sudden change, we needed to rely upon our team's dedication, creativity, and

impact. The vast majority of the squadron is working from home with the goal of keeping themselves and their families healthy and ready if called upon. Our focus at the moment is the successful repatriation of our Special Operations Aviation Detachment (SOAD) from Iraq. It will have been almost two years and 4 rotations of deployed support to CAN-SOFCOM, at times we also had a second SOAD deployed on international ops for extended periods, making 427 Sqn the highest tempo aviation unit in the CAF. While the current crisis is a stressful and difficult time for many, it is also an opportunity to reconstitute our personnel at home and reconnect with families. Likewise, we should take the time to reflect on our role within CANSOFCOM and where we are going in the future. History has shown that organizations that best weather crises of this type are

Continued Next Page

the ones that are most adaptive to change, a core aspect of Special Operations Aviation, and one that will benefit us in the future. To support our personnel the squadron senior staff will focus on direct, personal leadership leaning heavily on open, honest communication at all levels, maximizing the use of virtual platforms wherever possible. Our regular virtual town halls with families is an example of this. We are also very lucky to have the CANSOF North Military Families Services staff who have gone above and beyond to provide support.

The resilience of the Lions will see us through this difficult time as we continue to look out for our families and one another. Stay healthy, stay fit, and stay safe.



personal commitment to “getting it done” in order to find new ways of doing business and supporting our customers and equipment in the field; fortunately, we have an agile team that is accustomed to adapting, which made it possible to rapidly adjust and carry on. In many ways, this culture parallels that of 427—always finding ways around, over, or through obstacles in order to get the mission done.

The pandemic has resulted in the postponement or cancellation of many time-honoured events, including the 1 Wing Headquarters Mess Dinner, originally slated for April at CFB Kingston, and the annual Honorary Colonels conference, originally planned for June at 17 Wing Winnipeg. The current situation has also curtailed my ability to meet with squadron members in person; in the interim, email and phone updates have had to serve as substitutes. For the time being, we all have to do our part by following public health guidelines and government restrictions so we don’t contribute to the problem and by looking for ways to support our families, friends, and community from afar. I look forward to better days when we can meet again face-to-face. In the meantime, stay strong and do good.

## FERTE MANUS CERTAS

### A Bit of Squadron History

Although a Special Operation group had operated in Canada since 1966 when 427 Squadron assumed the aviation support responsibility to JTF2 with the creation of a SOA (Special Operations Aviation) Flight (B Flight) it wasn’t until the 2005 Defence Policy that an explicit policy was stated for the Canadian Special Operation Force.

That statement “A Special Operations Group will be established to respond to terrorism and threats to Canadians and Canadian interests around the world. This group will include Joint Task Force 2, our special operations and counterterrorism unit, our special operations aviation capability centered on helicopters and supporting land and maritime forces.”

The result being that 427 Squadron operational control transferred to CANSOFCOM in early 2006 and in 2008 427 Squadron became officially known as 427 SOAS (Special Operations Aviation Squadron).

It will be many years before the books can be opened on the many classified operations that have taken place in support of JTF 2 and an awareness of the hazardous conditions shared with JTF 2. A Squadron history of which one can continue to be proud.

*Quote from ‘9/11 and Canadian Special Operations Forces’ by LCol Stephen Day*

### Interesting Videos

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6sgS0akwHvE> ( 1 Wing video 2008 Rising Thunder)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f7qbKloYtec> (1 Wing video 2018))

&

What do retired LOH pilots do in their spare time, Alex Home sent me this answer.

Former LOH pilot (427 Sqn 1975-78) Edward Sprague-Kluch [continues to take to the skies.](#)

If you are receiving ROAR as a hard copy you will not be able to view these videos by clicking on the link. You must copy & paste each link in your browser address bar to view. This is the link you have to copy to see the Edward Sprague-Kluch video. [https://www.427squadron.com/roar/2020\\_may\\_roar/bob\\_video.html](https://www.427squadron.com/roar/2020_may_roar/bob_video.html)

***In This Issue***

CO's Greeting - P 1/2  
 H/Col's Greeting - P 1/2  
 Misc - P2  
 Membership - P3  
 Finance Report - P4  
 Remember - P5/6  
 Helicopter - P7/8/9  
 Sabre - P10/11/12/13  
 CF-104 - P14/15/16  
 WW II - P17/18/19  
 Truisms- P20

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## 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: <http://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 <http://www.427squadron.com/membership.html>

### Lost Trails—Mail “Returned to Sender (RTS)”

Please take a few minutes and check out the full membership list at

at [http://www.427squadron.com/member\\_finance/member\\_list.html](http://www.427squadron.com/member_finance/member_list.html)

Members we have “lost” have an RTS beside their name. If you can identify someone identified as RTS and know of an updated address or obituary please notify Dick ([richmark@telus.net](mailto:richmark@telus.net)). Thanks to all those who have already assisted in identifying and locating members.

### Moving ?

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

Email Dick at - [richmark@telus.net](mailto:richmark@telus.net)

Or regular mail to:

Richard Dunn

427 Lion Squadron Association

1998 Ogden Avenue

Vancouver, BC V6J 1A2

### IMPORTANT NOTE

Any and all 427 Squadron members, Association members or not, deserve to have recognition of their service displayed on our website [Remember Page](#) as well as a notice appearing in ROAR. We depend on you to notify us if one of your comrades dies. Military record information is requested if available, otherwise as many details as possible.

Dick at [richmark@telus.net](mailto:richmark@telus.net)

Wayne at [macway01@gmail.com](mailto:macway01@gmail.com)

### Apology

We find it impossible to keep up with the changes in rank designations/salutations that may have changed during the passing years since you had first joined. We will continue to modify rank designations/salutations as we become aware of them or if you request a change, otherwise the rank or salutations that you signed up with will remain.

Flying Officer B.W. MacLellan

## 2019 Year End Financial Report for 427 Lion Squadron Association Treasurer \_ Dick Dunn

427 Lion Sqn Assoc. Income/Expenses	2019	2018
<b>Income</b>		
Dividend Income	1,387.86	779.36
Donations Received	860.00	500.00
Interest Inc	1.31	2.24
Membership dues	100.00	50.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>2,349.17</b>	<b>1,331.60</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Bank Charge	0.00	24.16
Insurance Cenotaph	810.00	810.00
Pay Pal	6.06	
Roar:		
Postage	344.25	
Printing	<u>250.86</u>	
Total Roar	595.11	
Web	191.75	225.65
Expenses - Other	0.00	0.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>1,602.92</b>	<b>1,059.81</b>

427 Lion Sqn Assoc. Balance Sheet	2019	2018
<b>Assets</b>		
Cash and Bank Accounts		
Vancity	435.20	1,805.63
Vancity Shares	5.10	5.00
Investments	12,388.4	10,887.88
Web Prepaid	161.88	<u>0.00</u>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>12,990.58</b>	<b>12,698.51</b>
<b>Liabilities &amp; Equity</b>		
<b>Liabilities</b>		
427 Sqn NPF	965.00	965.00
Accounts Payable	0.00	66.94
Cenotaph Insurance Fund	5,181.02	5,181.02
Loan Payable	<u>1,500.00</u>	<u>2,000.00</u>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>7,646.02</b>	<b>8,212.96</b>
<b>Equity</b>	<b>5,344.56</b>	<b>4,485.55</b>

### Notes

There is a change of the Publisher/Editor for ROAR. LCol (Ret.) Dean Black has worked since 2015 publishing the newsletter. He has decide to retire from this task with thanks from the Association. Your new Publisher, as part of the Association, is [Wayne MacLellan](#) and Editor is [Beth Maclellan](#). ROAR will be published in the fall and spring beginning with this Issue.

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 mind that [LCol \(Ret.\)Ken Sorfleet](#) has a Facebook site up and running. It contains topical information surrounding the Squadron.

Lastly our [Membership/Treasurer Dick Dunn](#) request that you be aware of our membership categories. We welcome Associates. See Page 3 and sign them up. 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.

All previous Volumes of ROAR from Volume 2 on are available at::

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



## We Will Remember Them

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

<https://www.427squadron.com/remember.html>

### **Flt Sg D.B.Brinkley 1868724 – 427 Squadron. Life Member 427 Lion Squadron Association.**

Father joined the RAF on the 4th May, 1943 and was seconded to RCAF, as Flight Engineer, in July '44 until March '45. He flew 33 missions, initially in Halifax bombers and completed in Lancasters. His operations included missions over Dortmund, Hagen, Bohlin, Wilhelmshaven, Goch, Wesel, Monheim, Essen, Hanover, Duisburg and many others surviving heavy flak, cannon shells and severe damage to the aircraft. He held in high regard his respect for his Pilot John Mullholland and was in contact with both John and his Navigator Nathan Isaacs in Ontario. I still have his Log book and many other items relating to his service years. He married in '46 to Norma, a WRAF (2127222) and had two sons. My mother passed away in 1993 aged just 67.

I attach two pictures of my father, one showing him during his service standing on the right of, I assume, Nathan and the other shows him receiving his framed and mounted medals from RAF Brize Norton after I had organized the visit.



*Included in a note from his son:*

*Up until his death in October 2015 aged 90, my father had kept in constant touch, by letters, with his former crew members of 427 Squadron, Pilot John Mullholland and Navigator Nathan Isaacs, both of Ontario. My father was a wonderful man, kind, thoughtful, generous and appreciative and he and I bonded into 'best mates' during his final years, following a stroke he suffered in 2003.*

**Allan Douglas Todd**  
**Navigator - d: April 2, 2020**



Left to right: Flight Sergeant Dave Hardy, Gunner; Flying Officer James Barrett, Bomber Aimer; F/Sgt Bernie Kidney, Wireless Operator; F/Sgt Jack Morgan, Gunner; F/O Earl Mayo, Pilot; and F/O Allan Todd, Navigator.

Allan graduated from the Ottawa Technical School and joined ERCO (Albright & Wilson) in Buckingham, Quebec. Originally hired as a laboratory technician, he went on to lead in the area of environmental affairs and was awarded a prestigious award from Albright & Wilson, Americas for his lifelong commitment to environmental stewardship.

Allan had a brief interruption in his professional career to serve as a Flying Officer with the RCAF 427 Squadron based at Leeming, England and flew the last of 31 sorties as Navigator on the Halifax Bomber aircraft in December of 1944.

It was during the wartime when he met and married his cherished wife Irene in Edinburgh, Scotland. Allan and Irene made their lifelong home in Buckingham, where he was active as a board member and steward of St. Andrew's United Church, school board trustee, scout leader, curling club and historical society member. Allan *and* Irene enjoyed the family cottage where Allan took pleasure in fishing, sailing and windsurfing. Irene and Allan took many family visits to Scotland, Canada and the US. Allan continued his involvement with the 427 Squadron over the years attending many reunions and Base functions and as a Director of the 427 Squadron Association.

[Click here for a more comprehensive look at Allan's military career](#)

### WW II Canadian RCAF Casualties

The summary of the work performed by the squadrons at home and overseas is but one part of the story. The other part of the story concerns the 249,662 men and women who wore the uniform of the RCAF. Of this total, 93,844 personnel served overseas, the majority with the British rather than Canadian units. Nearly 60 percent of RCAF personnel were with RAF squadrons. The RCAF contribution to the Royal Air Force was significant. At least one in four fighter pilots in the Battle of Malta was from Canada as were one-fifth of Coastal Command's Aircrew. At the end of the war, almost a quarter of Bomber Command's aircrew were from the RCAF.

The RCAF's Roll of Honour contains the names of 17,100 personnel who gave their lives in the service of Canada. Of these fatalities 14,544 occurred overseas - among them 12,266 on operations and 1906 in training accidents. The majority of overseas casualties were with Bomber Command.

*Excerpts from the following: RCAF Squadron Histories and Aircraft 1924-1968 - Samuel Kostenuk and John Griffon and Sixty Years - Larry Milberry - CANAV Books*



**CH-146 GRIFFON**

Update from Overseas: Circa 2009  
By Major Luc Vermette

In a recent visit to the UK, I presented 9 Regiment Army Air Corps (AAC) with a preparatory brief in personnel recovery for their anticipated deployment to Afghanistan. Since I was in the area and interested in 427 Sqn's history, another former Lion, Capt Jeremy Fountain, coordinated a visit to RAF Leeming, 427 Squadron's home from May 1943 until its disbandment on 31 May 1946. Flt Lt Gareth Bradley-Sessions, Officer Command Performance Development Flight, was our host and Kenneth Cothliff, chairman of the 6 RCAF Group Bomber Command

Association, offered to come along as our historical guide.

Ken picked us up from Jeremy's flat in Harrogate and started the tour at Skipton-on Swale, 5 miles south of RAF Leeming. It was the home to two RCAF Sqn's, 433 and 424, from 1943 to 1945 and was one of 11 stations allocated to 6 Group in the North Yorkshire area. We visited a memorial to the Canadians in the centre of town and then toured the old watch tower (aka control tower) and dispersal areas. The area has now been completely taken over by agricultural endeavours but some outbuildings and concrete structures remain.

Upon arrival at RAF Leeming, we were met by Flt Lt Gareth Sessions and given a briefing on current operations at the airfield which includes BAE Hawk aggressor squadron, FAC training unit and Tornado GR3 disposal facilities. Ken talked us through the history and highlighted the excellent efforts of 427 Sqn within Bomber Command as over 26 000 hours were flown with the loss of 415 men. Gareth guided us around the





Memorial in Leeming dedicated to Squadrons who operated during WWII.  
Two young Lions with the Squadron Flag

the background and a newer control tower beside it. This might be the first time since World War II that the 427 Sqn flag has been flown at the base; historians may prove otherwise but it made for a great photo. We met the current station commander and were provided a guided tour of their headquarters where a large plaque included the inscription, 21 Nov 1943 SGT A.L. D'EON DFM, along with all the other decorated Canadians who flew from Leeming. Finally Flt Lt Sessions hosted us for lunch and a few pints in the Officers Mess. It was a very memorable experience.

On the way back to Harrogate Ken took us to Tholthorpe, affectionately know as Tholthorpe-in-the-Mud, where his father flew with 425 "Alouettes" Sqn. Ken's father Bill lost his life over Germany seven days before Ken was born and he has been instrumental in preserving the history of 6 Group. The airfield has returned to agriculture but many structures still stand. The watch tower was purchased by an architect who now lives there and has gone to great pains to restore it in the original style. He was gracious enough to allow us a view from his roof where you could almost hear the roar of Merlin and Hercules engines running up for the 1000 bomber raids into the Rhineland.

Finally, the drive home included a description of the best local pubs, prompting a return visit the next day to sample the local Ales and Bitters at the New Inn at Tholthorpe.

6 Group RCAF has a proud heritage in North Yorkshire and is well remembered by the locals who pay tribute each year at numerous memorials in the area and Stonefall Cemetery in Harrogate where many Canadian air-men are buried. As former Lions, it was a great honour for Jeremy and I to be allowed a glimpse into the squadron's past and gain some understanding of the lives of those that fought before us.

**Major Luc Vermette** is currently serving in Germany as the Training and Exercise Officer for the Interim Deployable Combined Air Operations Center of NATO specializing in Joint Personnel Recovery and Special Operations Liaison Element. He and his wife are expecting to return to Canada during the summer of 2010 and will have 3 young boys to introduce to their new Canadian lives.

**Captain Jeremy Fountain** is serving in a flying exchange position with 659 Sqn of 9 Regiment Army Air Corps as the Squadron Operations officer. Recent world wide experiences include a completed tour in Iraq, training events in Kenya and preparations for flying operations in Afghanistan. He currently flies Lynx light utility helicopters out of Dishforth Airfield, former home of 426 "Thunderbirds" Sqn RCAF. He and his newly wedded wife, Jennifer, are thoroughly enjoying life in North Yorkshire and would be happy to host any former Lions who are interested in visiting the area.

UPDATE to 2020

LCol Luc Vermette retired in 2019 and joined the reserves with CANSOFCOM as a Major while also becoming a local Petawawa business owner, [www.eaglemarine.ca](http://www.eaglemarine.ca). He and his family continue to support the CAF, local community and the squadron.

Lieutenant Colonel Jeremy Fountain is now CO of 427 SOAS

A 2020 biography for LCol Fountain is at <https://www.427squadron.com/bios.html#fount>



### **Three friends married women from different parts of the world.....**

The first man married a Filipino. He told her that she was to do the dishes and house cleaning. It took a couple of days, but on the third day, he came home to see a clean house and dishes washed and put away.

The second man married a Thai. He gave his wife orders that she was to do all the cleaning, dishes and the cooking. The first day he didn't see any results, but the next day he saw it was better. By the third day, he saw his house was clean, the dishes were done, and there was a huge dinner on the table.

The third man married a girl from Glasgow. He ordered her to keep the house clean, dishes washed, lawn mowed, laundry washed, and hot meals on the table for every meal. He said the first day he didn't see anything; the second day he didn't see anything. By the third day, some of the swelling had gone down and he could see a little out of his left eye and his arm was healed enough that he could fix himself a sandwich and load the dishwasher.

He still has some difficulty when he pees.

## GUNS, ROCKETS & BOMBS

FWIs in the Sabre Era of 427 Squadron  
by **Sask Wilford** and **Ed McKeogh**



Colonel W. Neil Russell (Ret.), penned an outstanding historical document titled “Canada’s Cold War Fighter Pilots”, and a “**must read**” copy may be found on our [website: 427squadron.com](http://www.427squadron.com). The following is an excerpt from Part Three of that document: “While each squadron had an OC and two Flight Commanders, the informal leaders were the young, most experienced pilots who had qualified to be four plane formation leaders. The best formation leaders were renowned all over the Air Division. And if one had been chosen to go back to the OTU to train as a Fighter Weapons Instructor, he was “god”.

So, when I was asked to submit an article on “musings of my time as a Fighter Weapons Instructor on 427”, my first reaction was that I can’t remember what I had for breakfast let alone musings from 60 years ago. However, after giving it some thought I developed a devious plan to get me off the hook. Why not get my mentor to collaborate on a joint “recollection” of our experiences in that era so many years ago? Colonel Ed McKeogh (Ret.) thankfully agreed and so what follows is an amalgam of memories, anecdotes and facts from 1957-60 and beyond.

### Learning to Teach

My Fighter Weapons Instructor (FWI) course began Jan. 26, 1959 and was comprised of six Air Division pilots from five squadrons: Buster Kinkaid 441, Dick Spencer 430, Pogo Hamilton 421, Jerry Chalmers 422, Clare Vasey and Sask Wilford 427. The first step in becoming a Fighter Weapons Instructor was learning how to instruct, so off we went to Trenton to the RCAF

School of Instructional Technique, better known as the SIT course. Since all Sabre pilots (especially 427 pilots) were already recognized as the best in the world (with egos to match), how in the world could any one hope to teach them anything? In addition, we had already accepted the old adage that “you can tell a Sabre pilot, but you cannot tell him much”. Therefore, in our view, this SIT program must be something special and at a higher level, so we renamed it the School of Higher Instructional Technique (create your own acronym).

To be fair, the two weeks we spent on the SIT course were well worthwhile and prepared us psychologically for the next phase, which was learning the technical side of the .50 calibre Browning Machine Gun, the A-4 radar gunsight, under slung 2 1/2 “rockets and high incendiary bombs and then how to deliver them effectively.

### Learning How It's Done

It sounds pretty simple at the start but once you get into the trigonometry functions and the physics in order to answer the what, how and why questions, it becomes a daunting task to say the least. You all will remember – “For the .50 calibre machine guns, to find the lead (in mils) for a target in motion the formula is:  $V_t \times \text{sine of the angle off} \times 1000$  divided by  $V_p$  (where 1mil = the angle subtended by 1 unit at 1000units or 17.78 mils per degree”. Also, can we presume that at one time or another you blamed your abysmal score on the armourers for not harmonizing your guns with the sight properly. Obviously, you did not appreciate that the harmonizing procedure was itself a daunting task considering such things as MGBL (mean gun bore line),



EGBL (effective GBL), trajectory shift (in mils) which is governed by the amount of “G” you are pulling,

the Gravity Drop of the bullet and bullet grouping from 6 guns. Need we say more?

The six of us had already spent many hours in air to air gunnery at Deci and were already old hands, so what made it all bearable was the fact that we would soon get to the practical side and start learning from some of our icons such as: Capt. Jim Kassler, Korean War Ace (6 kills) USAF, F/L Ernie Glover (4 kills), F/L Jerry Billings, F/L "Tappy" Carruthers, F/L Jeb Kerr, F/L Jack Frazer, F/L Tony Hannas to name just a few. And we did just that. There was no room for ego here. These guys had "been there and done that" so now it was our turn to start climbing up the leadership ladder and once we learned to follow, we could then understand how best to lead the squadron in this demanding discipline.

### And Then "Doing it"

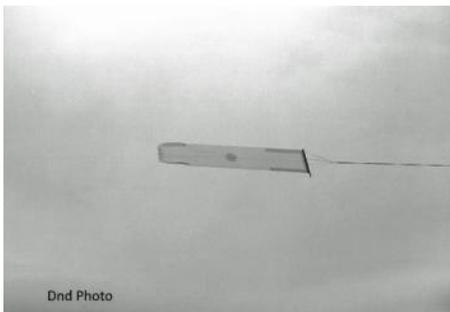
The FWI course was two and a half months long. It was so well designed and tutored that we returned to our respective squadrons full of confidence that we could not only continue the great work of our predecessors but motivate our fellow pilots to perhaps improve on the enviable record we enjoyed as the top guns in NATO.

Clare and I returned to the squadron on Apr. 27, 1959 and set to work, preparing the Squadron for yet another visit to Decimomannu, Sardinia, on May 27. At Deci, everyone pulled their weight and we escaped with a Squadron average of around 25% which was similar to the performance of all the Air Division Squadrons. But it was much better than our NATO competitors. We still had Eddie to lean on but not for long since he was soon to be seconded to 440 the "Clunk" (CF-100) Squadron based at Zweibrücken to teach them air-to-air gunnery.

The secret for achieving good scores in air-to-air gunnery is to fly the pattern accurately, put the radar ranging gunsight "pipper" on the target, a "flag" 6' high x 30' long, which is towed 1000 feet behind an F-86 or T-33 and then let it settle on the bullseye just long enough for the gunsight to do its final calculation before you squeeze the trigger for about 1 – 2 seconds. Easy eh? Here's a refresher just in case you have forgotten.

You are number 2 in a four-plane formation and are on the "perch" flying parallel to and 2 miles abreast to the right of the tow ship but 4000' above. You crank on left bank, pull the nose down into a descending turn and call "Alpha 2 – in." You are aiming for a point at 90 degrees to the flag, one mile out and 2000 feet high. At that moment number 1 is calling, "Alpha 1 – off", so you snap roll the aircraft to the right still descending but now heading for the flag in a curve of pursuit. You are approaching the target at approximately 600 feet per second so you have about 6 seconds to find the target in the gunsight and pull the pipper onto the flag while at the same time trying to pull approximately 3 "G" smoothly. At this point you are about 1200 feet from the flag so you let the pipper settle momentarily then squeeze off a 1-2 second burst of .50 calibre ammunition (600 rounds/min.) just in time to pull up over the flag and tow ship while turning back to the perch calling "Alpha 2 – off." Piece of cake.

Since all our students were cream-of-the-crop fighter pilots, our main challenge was to hone their skills in two specific areas. First: hit the turn reversal point accurately and second, let the pipper settle before you squeeze the trigger.



Dnd Photo



The Moment of Truth

### Were We Successful?

Measuring success in this highly demanding arena was, to say the least, a daunting task since it was the result of a team effort with major contributions from maintenance, armourers, airframe techs, and pilots. The record shows that from the early 1950s until 1962, this team effort by each of the squadrons of 1 Air Division was superior to all other Air Forces in the NATO family of seven countries

On a smaller scale, perhaps the most tangible measurement of success was the NATO forces competitions, held throughout this period, culminating with the Guynemer Trophy Shoot which was held annually and pitted the best of the best against each other in Air-to-Air gunnery.

This competition began in 1958 and ended in 1962 and throughout that stretch (and for many years before), the Canucks were the unrivaled "Top Guns". The initial competitions were held at Cazaux, France and the latter two at Leuwarden, Netherlands. It's worth recognizing some of our heroes in these competitions and to thank them for their outstanding performances.



1957 – Hank Henry, Bill Norn, Johnny Ursulak, Bob Paul.

1958 – Hank Henry, Bill Norn, Dave Barker, Ron McGarva, Jerry Westfal

1959 - Ron McGarva, Dave Barker, Bill Norn, Alf MacDonald, Bill McArthur

1960 – Dick Spenser(lead), Bill McArthur, Al McMullen, Gerry Tremblay and Bud Granley (Photo at left)

1961 – Dick Spenser(lead), Rick Flavelle, Bernie Reid, John Swallow, Gary Brooks

1962 –Russ Challoner(lead but didn't fly),Bernie Reid, John Swallow, Chuck Winegarden, Doug Dargent and Carl Bertrand (spare).

The Lions of 427 (F) Squadron are proud to note that for the year 1960, Lion Al McMullen was the top scorer. Its also worth noting that at one of the earlier events F/L Hank Henry scored 97%. (95 hits out of 98 fired), the other two bullets were jammed in the gun. Also, at one of 427 Squadron's sojourns in Deci, Lion F/O Larry Hill broke the 90% barrier.

Ed McKeogh was such a good FWI that he was seconded to 440 Squadron in that same role.

### SABRES TO CLUNKS

by Ed McKeogh



440 AWF (All Weather Fighter) squadron arrived at #3 Wing Zweibrücken in the spring of 1957 flying their CF-100 Mark 4B's with under slung .50 calibre gun packs to much fanfare and ribbing because a couple of their crews, having cancelled IFR had difficulty finding our well camouflaged base as they flew nearby. Because each aircraft had a crew of two their aircrew considerably outnumbered the 25 to 30 pilots on either of the two remaining Sabre squadrons on the base. And

they were a very lively bunch making their presence very much felt at the officers' mess. For example, Ron Weseen had twisted his ankle doing some daring act and was seen hobbling around on crutches loudly singing Harry Belafonte's banana boat Day-O. Then there was Dale Nadon, Reg Froom, Ted Bartlett, George Levesque and navigators Gerry Boissoneault. Glen Dowle, Newf McDonald and the very personable Gerry Ovington to whom we used to feed rum and cokes while he was up on the scaffolding at the officers' mess bar doing a great job painting that large colourful mural.

NATO had requested Canada to equip its all weather fighters with machine guns. Since weapons training while on conversion at Cold Lake on the Mark V solely involved the use of the 29 rockets on each wingtip as they executed their primary role attacking enemy aircraft using the lead collision course manoeuvre, the crews had no training using those guns. Air Division headquarters, therefore, decided to second an FWI from a Sabre squadron at each wing to the CF-100 squadron to help out. I was seconded to them from my 427 Sabre squadron and was confident that Sask and Clare could fulfill my duties there. Also, I was happy to work with a fine bunch of guys most of whom I knew quite well because they were active participants in mess life. The four-plane formation Sask refers to which we used when practice firing on the 6 by 30 foot

flag at altitude, did not work as well as I wanted with my being in a T-33 as one of the four aircraft section so it was suggested I ride in the rear seat on all CF-100 four plane sections. I balked at this because I very much wanted a complete feel for what their pilots had to handle during these exercises. So, they not only checked me out on the aircraft but got me fully combat ready doing the night Harlequin exercises and all. I have since been a full-fledged member of 440 and am invited to all their reunions including one this August in Cornwall Ontario.

Some of those pilots turned in very impressive scores firing on the flag at altitude and, since there was intense rivalry among the four CF-100 squadrons in Air Division, some pilots tried a little too hard. For example, when scoring the flag on the ground, we liked to see holes in it not much bigger than the round itself (1/2"). Two or three, inch-long holes meant the shooter was getting too line astern to the target and risked shooting down the tow aircraft. Indeed, that very nearly happened to a certain pilot who ran a round up the tailpipe of the T-33 tow flown by Bob Saxberg who, noticing that he had lost hydraulic pressure, immediately returned to base and dropped the flag. The round had pierced the hydraulic reservoir draining it and thankfully was not just a few inches to the left destroying the engine. It was easy to identify which aircraft fired that round by the long red bullet traces on the flag. A Warrant Officer on the flight line examining the T-Bird and seeing the puncture in the hydraulic reservoir shouted out "one red". Our wonderful and much loved 3 Wing CO Group Captain, JKF McDonald, happened to be visiting us during the investigation and while playing the nightly card game "Stuke" and not doing so well (because he had to fill out many little Bank of Montreal cheques) was heard to say " Give Saxberg all my cheques and send him up in the tow again."

Some of the pilots were very good shots and their scores rivalled the best on the Sabre squadrons who did this type of gunnery more often. One of these pilots was George Levesque who produced impressive scores and, being the envy of the other pilots on squadron, was asked to give a briefing on technique. Now George was quite a character and spoke with Yogi Berra type aphorisms. As mentioned by Sask, one of the positions in the four-plane gunnery pattern was the "perch" out there high and abreast the tow ship from which the descending high "G" entry into the curve of pursuit was made. George said "don't stay too long on the perch, get off, even if you're not on, get off." All roared with laughter. Wanting their own FWI's, the CF-100 squadrons received permission to send their own man to the course at Chatham. 440's man was future Chief of Defence Staff, Flight Lieutenant Paul Manson who, having returned to Germany following the course, came to Deci where I was coaching his squadron. Together we observed the tow take off with a slightly cocked flag . The weight at the front bar was unable to get the flag flying perfectly vertical as usual.

When it was thought that perhaps we should get the tow to return, I pointed out to Paul that the tilt was a favourable one and might improve scores. That was the only time that Flight Lieutenant Paul ever pulled rank on Flying Officer McKeogh, when he insisted, because of that squadron rivalry, that the tow had to return.

I almost forgot to mention that 423 Clunk squadron at 2 Wing had Bob Paul (of Cazaux fame) as a visiting FWI. While being checked out on cockpit layout in the hangar, somehow the ejection seat was triggered. Fortunately, he did not hit the ceiling and landed on the seat pan and was uninjured.

### CONCLUSION

The Canadair F-86, MK-6 was by any measure, the best jet-propelled air-to-air combat airplane ever flown. Although the North American must be credited with the design and initial production, the Canadair improved version made under licence in Canada would become the ultimate air-to-air fighter aircraft of its era. Those who were selected to fly this incomparable warbird , the MK-6, had the skills to match and were justifiably proud to wear the mantle "TOP GUN". They deserved the recognition.

Since the CF-104 began to replace the Sword in 1962, we never had the opportunity to "teach" the intricacies of rocket and bomb delivery to our guys but the skills we learned at the FWI Course would come in handy, later in our careers.

As FWIs, we were not only honored to have been chosen to fulfill the role but felt that we were privileged to be accepted by "some of the best fighter pilots in the world" as their "coaches."



Wikipedia— Image from the René Francillon Photo Archive.

## A Typical CF-104 Tactical Evaluation

By Bob Hyndman

Back in the early sixties I lucked in with a posting to join 427 Strike Squadron then working up with 12 pilots in Zweibrücken, West Germany. Originally, I was to be their simulator driver but after some time assisting Bob Ayers in testing newly assembled aircraft and no simulator forthcoming from CAE, I was brought onboard as Atlas 33. Our OC was the very friendly, able and experienced [Bob Middlemiss](#) with a hard-earned Spitfire and Battle of Malta reputation. A wonderful boss, he had been heavily involved in the 104

selection process and knew the aircraft intimately. My background was 1000+ hours in two CF-100 tours and I was the first to join without a Sabre background. Early on in my career, I very nearly avoided a court-martial for low flying in a CF-100 and this may have brightened my resume. The Berlin Crisis was then winding down but the Cuban Crisis and the Cold War were still with us. On receiving nuclear weapons, we became heavily involved in the NATO Tactical Evaluation and Operational Readiness Inspections, 'Tac Eval' to the squadron pilots. All pilots had no notice Tac Eval rides once or twice a year, sometimes in the two-seater CF-104D, but usually with a Metz headquarters pilot riding shotgun. I encountered three Tac Eval pilots during my time with the Lions, Paul Argue, Tony Bosman and Tappy Carruthers. All had reputations as great pilots and committed lifers destined for promotion.

On arriving at the squadron dispersal early in the morning and having checked the weather and the board to see if I had a flying slot, Paul would appear with a stern look, pass me a strip map and a pre-programmed SSU cassette for my navigator, the Litton LN-3. Then it was 'OK Bobbie let's go'. Out to the aircraft for a quick walk around, an LN3 alignment and startup. My aircraft would have a bomb dispenser mounted on its centerline rack containing one small bomblet. An airman would climb the ladder behind me and assist in my getting settled and fastening the many clips and lanyards required. A tap on my helmet and he would retreat. Ready, I signal for air and soon hit the start switch. A quick taxi to the arming point and an armourer would dart under the wing, show me the pins and wave me on.

"Atlas 33 plus 1, takeoff." "Atlas 33 cleared for takeoff." I line up on the left side of the runway with 8700 feet remaining. I quickly review my abort drill and stand on the brakes. Throttle smartly to full military 100%, EGT near 600, oil pressure, fuel flow. Chop the throttle to idle, IGVs and nozzle tracking-all ok. Throttle again to full military, the engine howls, a glance towards Paul in the slot. I nod my helmet forward, release brakes, then throttle outboard and advance. The burner lights and I push the throttle to the wall. Acceleration is very rapid. Keep it straight. 100 knots. 150. At 170 I start the stick back. Then it's gear-up before 260. Quickly level at 200 feet. Burner out and flaps up. 87% will give me about 450 knots. Search for the Hack Point and check on Paul in my rear-view mirror. He has moved out to battle and sits a little above and behind me. He stays mute for now. We hit the hack point and I quickly start my clock and roll into the turn. These are early days in the 104 program and we are blessed with few rules and regs.

The first turn. Turns are quick and crisp. Rate one is 45 degrees of bank, rather more than less. I flip my map folder to the next page and turn point, rolling out on the next track. 450 knots, not less. 450 is our low-level max range speed. There is usually little drift from light low-level winds. The view out the front and off to the sides is spectacular and makes the job easier. The 104 is a delight to fly at this speed with beautifully balanced light controls. She is tiny for a warship and difficult to see coming head on. The small thin seven foot wings yield a very smooth ride. The LN3 clicks off the miles to go to the next waypoint and displays an accurate heading. Paul will expect me to stay within a hundred meters of track and plus or minus 3/5 seconds at our turn points. He has a sister to my map folder. Our routing and turn points are designed to mimic the avoidance

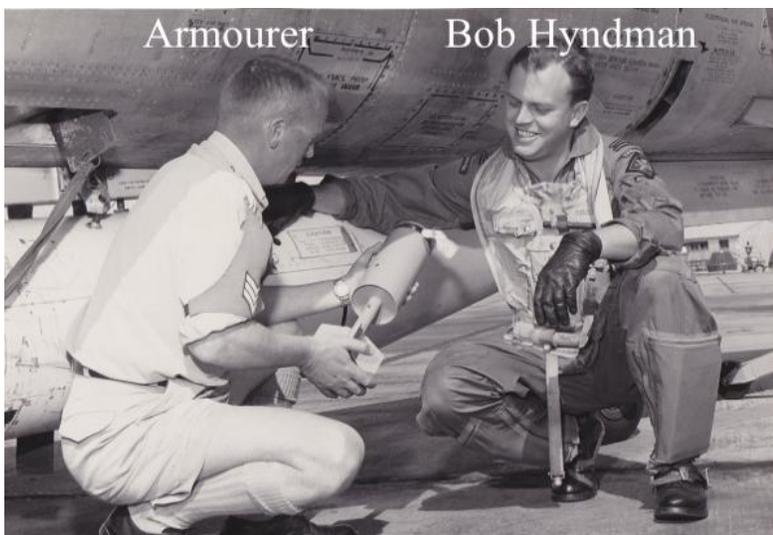
of SAM batteries, towns, and other hazards, and turn points are easily identified when one is on top of them. River bends are a favorite turn point. We need something that will show on radar at night or in foul weather. Night and cloud at these speeds can be nasty business. At first we flew our night routes at 500 feet but soon increased it to 1000 AGL for each of the legs on our route. We had in the aircraft nose a NASARR radar with which I was not impressed. It had a mapping function difficult to manage in a single-seater. It also had a forward-looking radar altimeter function that I found almost useless. Our fitters spent hours trying to calibrate the damn box with little success. One otherwise quiet night in the clag I was startled by a bright light on my left. Looking out I sped by a Canberra PR-8 with a few feet to spare. All black. No nav lights but his cockpit lights were on bright! Probably heading for the same river bend as I.

Paul stays mute. We approach the first push-up point, It's now enemy coast ahead. Throttle up and start down-hill. I steady at 100 feet and 540 knots. It's clickety clack-stay, on track. Villages, trucks, trains all drift by. The occasional cyclist. Nobody hears me coming. I scan for chimneys and smoke. Paul is still with me at 5 o'clock high. I approach a low range of hills and start up a little early, skim the top, then down tight to the backside. Some of our training routes take us into the foothills of the Alps but we stay away from the mountains. I scan for gliders and light aircraft. Their fields are not marked on our maps and this my first time on this CPM. Fuel is good. I run thru my bombing checklist. This is farming country now with few obstacles. Green forests in the distance. Good country for Patton's tanks.

Time to check in. "Suippes Range Atlas 33 plus one." "Atlas Suippes, the range is clear." "Suippes Atlas 33 single laydown." "Atlas roger, call leaving the range." The final outbound turn comes up and I turn to the attack heading. Timing good. Track good. Complete the bombing checklist and PUP. Throttle up. 600 knots. 596 KIAS corrected. A slight burble from the open dispenser doors. I drift down. "I have smoke at 11 o'clock." "Roger." I offset a smidge to the left and speed comes back a few knots for a tailwind correction. Throttle set. My vision now all tunnel and my adrenaline up. Track-speed. Speed-height. Watch the trees. My eyes now see only a narrow cone dead ahead. Of to the sides much is a blur. Power lines and trees. I pass over a country road. My bomb release height is the laydown standard 50 feet AGL. For every foot I am high at release the bomb will be 10 feet long. "I have the target." A click-click on his UHF from Paul. 50 feet steady, steady. NOW-I press the pickle button and the target sweeps by on my right.

I apologize if the above seems too much of Atlas 33. A lot of other people worked hard long hours to get me to this mock target. While the 104 was a superb aircraft for the role, it could sometimes be a real headache for those on the base tasked with keeping our machines ready and airborne. They also had their 'Tac Evals', indeed sometimes the whole base was pushed to its limits.

I climb to 200 ft and slow down. Flip my folder to the next page. "Suippes Atlas 33 has left the range. Switches off." "Atlas 1 o'clock at seven zero. Good day."



My bomblet emitted a puff of marker smoke when it struck the range. I was late on my pickle with not enough offset. In a Squadron book I found a photo of an armorer and I underneath a 104. He is explaining to me the operation of the dispenser and the bomblet.

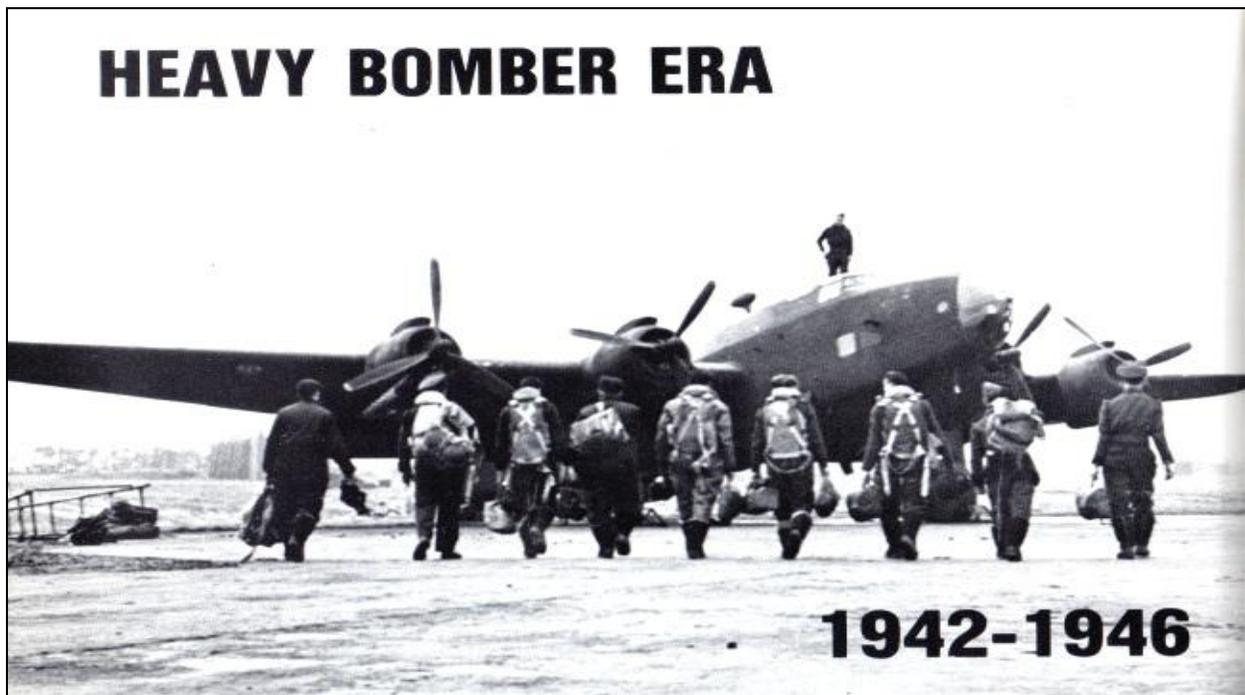
In bad weather the bomb would be dropped by flying a LADD. The Low Altitude Drogue Delivery. We never did this on Tac Eval that I recall the delivery maneuver was just too "hairy." It involved navigation to a prominent radar fix.

close to the target and then with the use of two timers tossing the 2000 pound weapon at a point in space where the 'shape' would drift down on a parachute. We trained for this at the Italian range in Decimomannu, Sardinia or on a sandbar island on the West German coast whose name I have forgotten.

One bumpy day while running in towards a radar target at 500 feet and 540 knots my autopilot disengaged and the aircraft bunted hard down. I grabbed the stick and hauled back just barely avoiding the trees. Climbing away I saw the cockpit warning lights indicating my gear had extended. Some time later, at the other end of the runway with hook extended, the chute still on, and the barrier just yards ahead, I noted the hydraulic quantity now zero. A fire engine cooled the brakes. When a ladder finally arrived I climbed down to find the undercarriage doors all gone, the flaps front and rear wrecked and twenty plus shrapnel holes in the aft end and tail. Phil, our maintenance boss, was not amused. In the mess that evening I had to ante up the Parkbrau.

Of the original 12 pilots I think only one survives today. On returning to Zweibrücken some years ago I found the base overtaken by USAF F4s. The gate guards turned me away but I had a nice stay at the Hotel Hasengarten. Years later I was hiking on my own in the south of France, trying to keep fit. I was somewhere east of Orange when I heard that sound. Off to the west, I caught the familiar shape of a Mirage low down and speeding northeast towards the foothills. Soon followed by eleven more, all loaded for bear and each a minute or two apart. Well well. Must be either WW3 or Tac Eval! I kept on walking. And remembering Zweibrücken and my time with 427.





## Stuart Leslie - Ashes to Belgium

Report of the internment in Belgium of the ashes of the late Stuart Leslie, Air Canada Flight Dispatcher, and WWII RCAF Halifax bomber pilot.

Flemish Newspaper of 3 May 2019 translated by Google with emendations by Richard Dunn, Willem Stronck, and Myles Leslie

### CANADIAN WW II · PILOT (94) BURIED IN OUDENAARDE



#### Lone Crash Survivor Reunited with his Crew

Stuart Mackenzie Leslie was reunited with his war mates after 75 years. Their plane was shot from the air over Oudenaarde, Belgium on the 2nd of May 1944. The Canadian pilot was the only one to survive, eventually turning 94. On the 2nd of May 2019, and according to his last wishes, his ashes were buried next to the graves of his six crew members.

A last drink for a departed father; flowers for his six crew members. While grandson Nick (30) plays “Amazing Grace” on the bagpipes, Myles (46) and Scott (64) lay their father's ashes in

their final resting place. Not in Canada, where Stuart Mackenzie Leslie lived for most of his life, but at the cemetery in Oudenaarde. His name is now displayed between his six wartime mates: Flying Officer Robert Webster, Flying Officer John Hawke, Warrant Officer Garnet McCann, Sergeant George Elliott of the Royal Air Force, Pilot Officer George Vipond and Sergeant Earl Baldry. Stuart Leslie always wanted to be buried

among the six other crew members of "his" aircraft, a Handley Page four-engine Halifax bomber.

The seven airmen in their twenties, six Canadians and one Englishman, departed on May 1st, 1944 from Yorkshire, England, becoming part of a 136 aircraft-strong bombing group. Their D-Day preparatory mission: railway junctions at Bergen-Valenciennes, France and Bergen-Tournai railways in Saint Ghislain, Belgium.

A defective compass saw Stuart's aircraft separated from the group, arriving late and alone at the target. On their way home they became a "bird for the cat." A German night fighter hit one of the starboard engines and a port engine of his aircraft. The aircraft exploded over a field behind the Van Tieghem farm near Oudenaarde. Leslie landed with his parachute in a field 300 meters further on. The flight engineer Elliott, air gunners Vipond, Baldry, and McCann, bomb-aimer Hawke and navigator Webster did not survive the crash.

Having sustained an eye injury during the explosion, he remained fit enough to travel. He followed the Scheldt river towards the small village of Kerkhove, seeking shelter in a farmer's field. "My father was hiding in a haystack and, after his emergency rations ran out, he approached the farmer, Maurice de Clercq," says Leslie's youngest son Myles. "Imagine! Suddenly, a young man crawls from under the hay in your farm. You don't understand him, because you don't speak a word of English. What do you do? Others might have turned him away, or turned him in to the German garrison, but not Maurice. Maurice gave my father a bed and took him to the chateau of the Van Wassenhove family where they spoke English."

The Van Wassenhoves gave Stuart shelter, cared for his eye, and through resistance contacts procured him a fake passport. "For three months at the Van Wassenhove chateau, and then on his escape voyage, my father pretended to be a Flemish student who had been hit so hard on the head that he could not speak." As son Scott continues. "The plan was first to go by bike to Brussels, then by car to Namur, eventually driving to the Pyrenees and a hike into neutral Spain." Eventually arrested during the escape attempt, he was handed first to the Luftwaffe, and then claimed by the Gestapo as a saboteur and terrorist. Loaded on a train for a concentration camp, Stuart and many others managed to escape thanks to the efforts of Belgian resistors, and was in Brussels as it was liberated in September 1944.

Returning to Canada, Stuart visited the families of his five Canadian crew members. "He was sitting in their living rooms," explains Myles, "telling them what had happened the night of the 2nd of May, when he had been in command. Did he visit the families then, and return over and over again to the graves in Oudenaarde out of guilt for the fact that he survived and they had not? Did he want to pay his respect because they had given their all? Did he want to show them a life well lived? I think so."

Since then, the Leslie family have made many crossings to Belgium: to the de Clercqs; to the Van Wassenhoves; and to Kerkhove, the village that never betrayed him. A first time in 1964, and now, 55 years later, one last time. Stuart Leslie is buried next to his six friends, in the end, at ninety-four-years old. "Returning was his last wish. The circle is closed," say sons Myles and Scott.



However, burying their father's ashes in Belgium presented some difficulties. The graves of the other six crew are the property of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, an organization based in the UK. "And because my father did not die during the war, we could not get permission to bury within the CWG land. Thanks to the local Military Officers' Association, and some members of the



Oudenaarde city council, we managed to inter the ashes five centimeters outside of the War Graves boundary. Now, his ashes are buried there, and that is the most important result.”

Two sons, three grandsons, a granddaughter and daughters-in-law brought Stuart Leslie to his final resting place “In fact, it's not hard for him to be here, so far from home.” says Myles. “We would not have been here without the help of the Belgians. My father would not have lived without the Belgians. Without the de Clercq family, I would never have met my wife Sofie. I met her at the wedding party of Maurice's granddaughter, to which we also were invited. These folk have always been family, and Belgium is as much a “home” for us as is Canada.”



## Truisms and Guidance

There are only two things a copilot should ever say:

1. Nice landing, Ma'am.
2. I'll buy the first round.

There are certain aircraft sounds that can only be heard at night.

If helicopters are so safe, how come there are no vintage helicopter fly-ins?

An old pilot is one who can remember when flying was dangerous and sex was safe

I've flown in both pilot seats, can someone tell me why the other one is always occupied by an idiot?

If you deviate from a flight rule, it must be a flawless performance (e.g., If you fly under a bridge, don't hit the bridge.)

Never let it be said that ground crews lack a sense of humor. Here are some actual maintenance complaints submitted by pilots (marked with a P) and the solutions recorded (marked with an S) by maintenance engineers.

**P: Autopilot in altitude-hold mode produces a 200-feet-per-minute descent.**

**S: Cannot reproduce problem on ground.**

\*

**P: Evidence of leak on right main landing gear.**

**S: Evidence removed.**

\*

**P: Number 3 engine missing.**

**S: Engine found on right wing after brief search.**

\*

**P: Aircraft handles funny.**

**S: Aircraft warned to straighten up, fly right and be serious.**

\*

**P: Target radar hums.**

**S: Reprogrammed target radar with lyrics..**

\*

**P: Mouse in cockpit.**

**S: Cat installed.**

\*

**P: Noise coming from under instrument panel. Sounds like a midget pounding on something with a hammer.**

**S: Took hammer away from the midget.**

### Stories/Biographies/Books Wanted

We need your input. Consider sending your stories, biographies, books or photos. As little or as much as you want. We especially are requesting Helicopter era articles. There are thousands of interesting stories from the Rotary Wings area and we ask you to share them.

There are spouses who had to follow partners around for a number of years throughout a military career and who had to keep the home site operating while the significant other was on assignment halfway around the world for a number of months. You have a story too. Let's have it.

Check out the current stories at:

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

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