



65 YEARS



24 June, 2006

408 "Goose" Squadron Association

Newsletter 2005



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From the Chairman

What a year! That just about sums up the extraordinary times the world, our country and especially 408 Squadron has gone through. You are all probably wondering if you were forgotten or missed an edition of the newsletter however let me assure you that you did not. Due to the squadron's operational priorities and the sheer volume of information for the membership, it was decided to delay this year's Spring newsletter. This "summer edition" will definitely be the largest that I have personally been involved in and will contain numerous articles that I hope interest all of you. As always, I solicit the entire membership to send information and articles from the past and present for inclusion in the yearly publications. We must continue to preserve the memories of this historic squadron and anything that can assist us to do that is essential and most appreciated.

I will let the articles within speak for themselves and hope you find them both interesting and informative. The squadron's report will bring everyone up to date on where and what 408 has been up to for the last year. There will be information on the retirement of "Lt Gosling" our mascot to the Kingsville museum as well as the squadron's 64th Birthday Party and Change of Command ceremonies. A longtime member and avid supporter of 408 received national recognition and there will be news about the planning and timings for the 2006 reunion. The 65th Anniversary Reunion Committee is diligently working on the plans for the event. I predict this reunion to be one of our largest yet and expect as many as 600 people to attend. Information and details are included in the "2006 Reunion" article.

This has been a historic year that many of us will not forget. The "Year of the Veteran" and the "60th Anniversary of end of WWII" have certainly focused our thoughts on those that sacrificed so much. We must also remember those that served since the war times and how they have contributed to Canada.

I hope you enjoy this newsletter and as always, I ask for your continued support of the "408 "Goose" Squadron Association".

Master Warrant Officer Rod Fader
National Chairman

NEW BEGINNINGS

By Capt. Mike O'Kane



Spring is here and summer seems to be right around the corner, and it is time to let everyone know how the 408 Squadron family is doing.

As you all know, the squadron was very busy last year supporting Operation Palladium in Bosnia. Since that time, all have returned and many new faces have come to be embraced by the 408 community, including myself. I recently completed the Basic Helicopter Course in Portage la Prairie and I have been working fiendishly to learn what it takes to be a contributing member of the Squadron, and what it means to wear the Goose on my shoulder. I'm still not quite up to spec on everything, but I'm sure I'll be there soon. I'm telling all of you this because, once upon a time, you too were in a position like mine in the Squadron, not quite with your feet rooted in the ground but ready and willing to become an integral part.

One of the first things I saw when I walked through the doors of the Squadron was the pride shown in remembering what 408 has accomplished since its inception. Walking down the halls and peering at the pictures, commendations, and faces of all who have been and are still a part of this great organization astounded me. There is something special about this Squadron, and the dedication to her shown by all of the members around me. It is something very amazing, as you all know. Since the return from Bosnia, a great deal of time and effort has been, and will continue to be, devoted into re-strengthening our assets and abilities through Squadron training and Events. working over the next few months.

STRONG CONTENDER

Once again in January (09-14), the Edmonton Garrison was the site of fierce competition amongst the various units and sections. The annual sports competition, Strong Contender, encourages physical fitness, esprit de corps, teamwork and sportsmanship. Specifically, 408 Squadron showed its teeth competing in Floor Hockey, Ice Hockey, Volleyball, Indoor Soccer, Curling, and Broomball. Every team did exceptionally well and gave the throngs of cheering Squadron members something to remember, including the Floor Hockey team, taking the Gold Medal over a team that summarily thwarted all of their attempts in the round robin portion of the tournament.

GANDER GUNNER

At the beginning of March, it looked as though spring was finally here. The weather was getting warmer each day, the snow melting, and in some cases, plants were breaking through the top of the soil. Mother Nature would soon counter all our wishes and beliefs as B flight headed to Shilo, Manitoba, for Exercise Gander Gunner. As we neared our destination on our second road move day, the convoys encountered freezing rain, snow, and an assortment of road vehicles sliding off the sides of the highway. If anybody happened to see the front of the Brandon newspaper the next day, you would see one of our own vehicles had slid off the side of the road. I'm happy to report, all injuries were very minor.

The aim of this exercise was to conduct field winter operations and practice 1 Wing battle task standards. By supplying five aircraft in support of 1 RCHA and 2 PPCLI, we were able to practice artillery adjustment from the Griffon with their 105 mm artillery cannons and 81 mm mortars. 408 Squadron showed its ability to move men and mortar around with precision and ease throughout the Shilo training area.

Additionally, section reconnaissance, tactical road movement, and the all important Forward Arming and Refueling Point crews were able to hone and improve their skills.





COUGAR SALVO

From March 18 until the 25th, 408 Squadron's A flight supported the Vancouver based 39 Canadian Brigade Group in their annual brigade level training event. The purpose of which was to train over 600 reserve soldiers in the challenge of the 3-block war concept. Meaning, the CF must be ready to conduct operations simultaneously and very close to one another in the forms of delivering humanitarian aid or assisting others, conducting stabilization or peace support operations, or being involved in high intensity fighting. This was the largest peacetime Army Reserve Exercise in British Columbia History.

Deploying four CH-146 Griffon Helicopters and crews, 408 was able to provide Air Mobility, Casualty Evacuation (CASEVAC), Command and Liaison, VIP Transport ! (The Lt Governor of BC), and training in resupply with helicopters via slung loads. The four aircraft flew a total of 100 hours and transported over 150 personnel on the various tasks.



408 inserted infantrymen from the Seaforth Highlanders for cordon and search operations and, as seen above, delivered an injured soldier during a casualty evacuation exercise. For all of the efforts and outstanding professional support to 39 Canadian Brigade Group, 408 Squadron was awarded the Brigade Commanders Unit Commendation. Truly a great honour



C FLIGHT

Continually striving to implement modern technologies, C Flight has begun to qualify all pilots on Night Vision Goggles (NVG) and Heads Up Display (HUD) utilization. As the days grow longer, and the nights shorter, it has taken the patience and drive of all involved to ensure Helicopters are ready to fly, crews are qualified, and all check rides are conducted in a timely and efficient manner. The additional weight of the HUD has been very demanding on all of the Flight Training Officer's in terms of hours flown and neck strain. A plan is in place to overcome this obstacle.

MAINTENANCE FLIGHT

The consistent effort to keep aircraft lined up at the hangar doors to fly has only proved that the attitude of all personnel is and continues to be outstanding. The number of qualified technicians is increasing, as is their performance. Of special note, a member of the maintenance team flight is also a professional Lacrosse player. Playing for the Calgary Roughnecks, Cpl Ryan McNish (Number 11) is an excellent example of the hard work ethic, professionalism, and diligence seen in all of our maintenance personnel who on a daily basis strive to keep 408 Squadron running at high pace.

SUPPORT FLIGHT

The Tsunami in December that devastated many regions of Asia and East Africa helped prove that 408 Squadron's Support is the best of the best. With the possibility of the Canadian Forces deploying to the stricken areas, 408 Squadron Support Flight worked diligently to ensure all pertinent classifications and certifications were up to date. While all sections were involved immensely with the preparation, only with the "nose to grindstone" attitude of all support members, would we have been able to deploy on short notice. The lessons learned and the practices employed will be of great assistance to the Squadron and the rest of the Air Force in the future.

INTERSQUADRON BONSPIEL

Rocks curled, brooms swept, and the cry of “HURRY... HURRY HARD” was heard throughout Lancaster Park as the members of 408 squared off against each other in the annual curling bonspiel on Feb 11. There were no losers, only winners, as a good time was had by all and some even walked away with trophies, Squadron hats and T-Shirts.



In the case of Lt Sue French, for the second year in a row, she won the 50/50 draw and graciously decided to place her winnings on top of the bar. And yes, LCol Laplante did manage to get it into the four-foot ring with a little help from MWO Fader’s masterful sweeping.

KIDS WITH CANCER SOCIETY

Of a more serious note, a member of the 408 family is in the fight of her life. Capt Greg Cowan’s daughter, Tracy (Age 11), developed a form of cancer in her left upper arm and has been undergoing chemotherapy. Capt Mike Ortman took the onus upon himself to find a way we, as a unit, could support their family and show the community at large, the kind of people that we are. Forty-Five brave souls (including Cpl Terry Morphy whose husband was not too keen about this) placed themselves at the mercy of one another’s barber skills. By shaving our heads and raffling off the right to shave one another, we raised \$14,100 towards this great cause. As you can see from the next picture, a couple of interesting hairstyles appeared almost overnight. Of note, Capt Dave Agnew, far left, raised over \$1800 by himself canvassing friends and family. This was truly a noble cause and once again we proved that in the face of adversity we can depend on each other to lend a helping hand.

If any would care to contribute to the Kids for Cancer Society on Tracy’s behalf, please contact the Kids With Cancer Society via their website (www.kidswithcancer.com).

Tracy is an inspiration to us all, and her salon skills are top notch; we’re sure she’ll make a full recovery.



Here Tracy perfects her barber skills on her father Capt Greg Cowan.



FUTURE ENDEAVOURS

In the upcoming months, 408 Squadron will be involved in the following.

Exercise Spring Ram – Wainwright, AB.	May 02 – 20
Alberta Centennial – Ft McMurray, AB.	May 21 – 25
Royal Visit – Edmonton, AB.	Part of the Centennial Celebration
Support to Maple Flag – Cold Lake, AB.	May 17 – Jun 24
Tactical Uninhabited Air Vehicles (TUAV)	
Edmonton Garrison Sporting Events	Golf, Soccer, Slo-Pitch, Hockey
408 Squadron Change of Command	June 27 – 30
Calgary Stampede	July 08 – 18
Squadron Birthday	June 24

Comments may be sent my way. My e-mail address is:
O'kane.mw@forces.gc.ca

If that doesn't work: mwokane@hotmail.com

Feel free to send me stories, electronic pictures, or ideas for future newsletters and I will do my best to respond to all.

Thanks for reading.

Capt. Mike O'Kane

“FOR FREEDOM”

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL P. KEDDY, CD
Commanding Officer

Lieutenant-Colonel Keddy enrolled in the Canadian Forces in 1982. Following two years of pilot training, he was assigned to 408 Tactical Helicopter Squadron on the Twin Huey Helicopter. In 1986 and 1988 he deployed with the squadron as part of the 1st and 5th Canadian Contingents of the Multinational Force and Observers on the Sinai Peninsula, Egypt. In 1989, on completion of the Canadian Forces Staff School and Advanced Aviation Course, he was posted to 444 Tactical Helicopter Squadron in Lahr, West Germany, where he flew the Kiowa Light Observation Helicopter.



In 1993, Lieutenant-Colonel Keddy was appointed Executive Assistant to the Chief of Staff Operations at Air Command Headquarters. Upon promotion, he joined the HQ Command and Control Redesign Team responsible for Business Process Reengineering initiatives for the stand-up of 1 Canadian Air Division (1 CAD) and the Canadian North American Aerospace Defence Command Region HQ. In 1997, he assumed responsibilities as the 1 CAD A3 Tactical Aviation Systems Staff Officer and Battle Staff duties as the 1 CAD Chief of Air Tasking Order Development and Production Officer.

In 1998 Lieutenant-Colonel Keddy returned to 408 Tactical Helicopter Squadron as a Flight Commander on the new Griffon Helicopter. With the NATO ceasefire in Kosovo in 1999, he deployed with the 1st Canadian Contingent, Rotary Wing Aviation Unit, to Macedonia and Kosovo that provided tactical aviation support to NATO's Multinational Brigade Central Region. Upon return to Canada, he assumed responsibilities as the Squadron Operations Officer.

Following completion of the Canadian Forces Command and Staff Course in 2001, he was assigned to the Continental United States NORAD Region, Combined Air Operations Center, Tyndall AFB, USA, as the Director of Operations for the 701st Air Defense Squadron. At onset of Operation Noble Eagle, September 2001, he was reassigned as the Chief of the Combat Plans Division and Director of Operations for the 601st Combat Plans Squadron. Lieutenant-Colonel Keddy served as the Commanding Officer, Canadian Component, Continental United States NORAD Region from June 2003 until April 2005.

On 30 Jun 2005, he took over as the Commanding Officer for 408 THS.

Lieutenant-Colonel Keddy has a university degree in Strategic Studies from the University of Manitoba and is a graduate of the Peacekeeping Management, Command and Staff Course. He is also an adjunct faculty member of the Lester B. Pearson Canadian International Peacekeeping Training Centre and has completed the non-resident program of the United States Air Force, Air War College, Maxwell AFB, Alabama.



CWO B. Maudsley, CD
Squadron Chief Warrant Officer

CWO Maudsley was born in London, Ontario. In 1974, he enrolled in the CF as a crewman. Upon completion of basic recruit training in Cornwallis, he was posted to Gagetown NB to begin his TQ3 course at the Combat arms school. His first operational unit was the 8th Canadian Hussars, an armoured regiment in Petawawa, Ontario. In 1980 he remustered to Airframe Technician and commenced training at CFB Borden. In March of 1981, he was posted to 408 THS in Edmonton where he participated in a number of RV exercises.

In July 1987 he was posted to 2 Regular Support Unit, at CFB Toronto, to work with the Air Reserves. Promoted to the rank of Sgt in 1988, he was then posted to 427 THS in Petawawa. While with 427 Sqn he was deployed to the Sinai Egypt for 6 months with the MFO in El Gorah.

In July 1993, he was posted to 413 Transport and Rescue Sqn at CFB Greenwood, NS where he was employed as ARO, D/ETO and Crew chief in servicing and Snags.

Promoted to the rank of MWO in 2000, he was posted to the Aerospace Engineering and Test Establishment at 4 Wing Cold Lake, where he was employed as the Aircraft Production Support Officer and Acting Unit Chief Warrant Officer.

CWO Maudsley was promoted to his current rank in Aug 2004 and has recently completed the year long French course here in Edmonton. On 30 Jun 2005, he took over as the Squadron CWO for 408 THS.

CWO Maudsley is married to Laura Maudsley of Montreal. They have 2 daughters, Heather (23) and Colleen (20), plus a Canadian Husky dog named Blue.

INDUCTION INTO HALL OF FAME

By Paul Nyznik

Flight Lieut. Walter K. Kasper
408 (Goose) Squadron RCAF

WALTER (Wally) KASPER was born in Leader, Sask., in 1921. In 1941, shortly after graduating from high school, Wally enlisted in the RCAF. Following instruction at various training schools in Western Canada, he graduated as a pilot in 1942.

After arriving overseas and completing additional training, he was posted to 408 (Goose) Squadron in No. 6 Group of Bomber Command, at Linton-on-Ouse, York shire. This was in December 1943 - a time when the bomber offensive against Germany was well under way and Bomber Command aircrew losses stood at more than sixty percent. What follows is a published eye-witness account of the events involving Kasper's Lancaster bomber on the night of the 24th of June, 1944: "The Lancaster sat idling at the end of the short runway, ready to set off on the crew's 21st operational sortie. At maximum all up weight with bombs and fuel, the Lanc started to roll, but had not yet reached lift-off speed when, without warning, the starboard tire blew."

"With the aircraft skewing to the right, and Kasper struggling to maintain control, Flight Engineer Larry Newton (RAF) instantly flipped the undercarriage selector. The heavy Lancaster shuddered in response, dipped slightly, recovered and was safely airborne but not before clipping the 10 ft.-high cedar palings which encircled the radio beacon at the end of the runway."

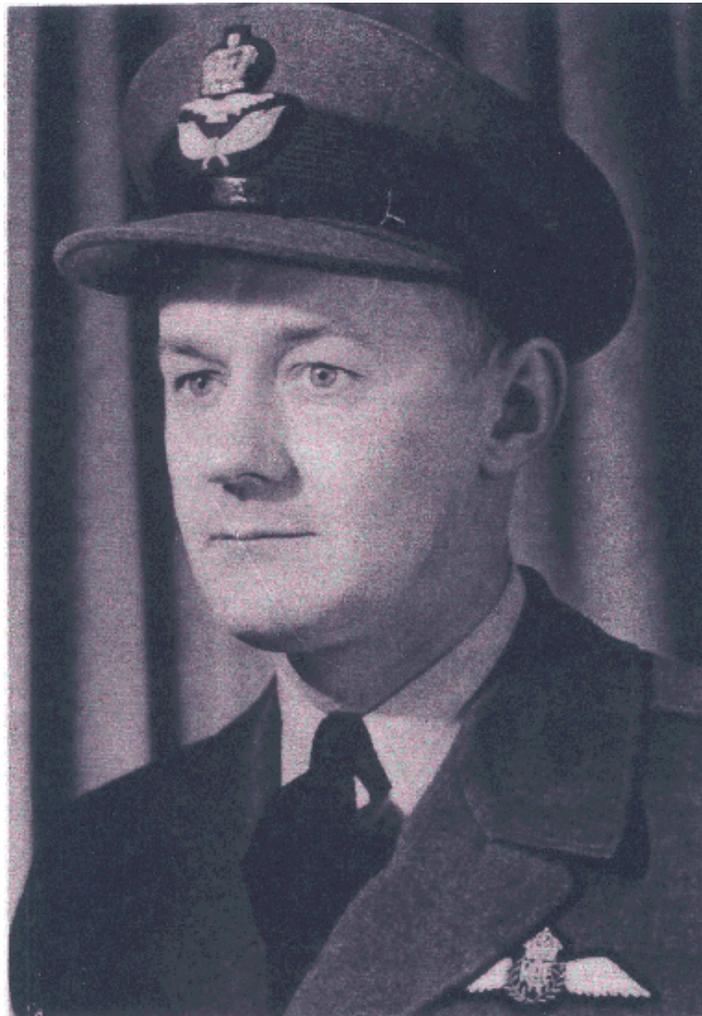
"Nevertheless, the bomber pressed on to the target, delivered its load and returned to a skillful, safe landing in the UK- blown tire notwithstanding."

"Squadron Intelligence debriefers characterized the incident as an outstanding example of dedication to the accomplishment of the mission, the airmanship and flying ability of the skipper and especially the teamwork between Kasper and his flight engineer which, without a doubt, saved the lives of the entire 7-man crew."

After completing a tour of operations and spending some time on administrative duties, Wally was released from the RCAF in December 1946. He and his wife Ruth Baier now live in Nepean, Ontario.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, PLEASE JOIN ME IN TRIBUTE TO A MAN WHO, UNTIL TONIGHT, HAS BEEN ONE OF THE UNSUNG; UNRECONIZED HEROES OF THE ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE. HERE IS WALLY KASPER.

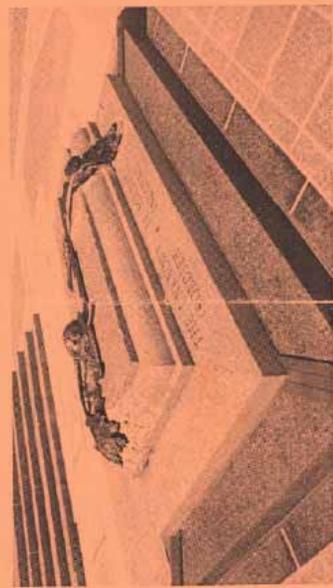
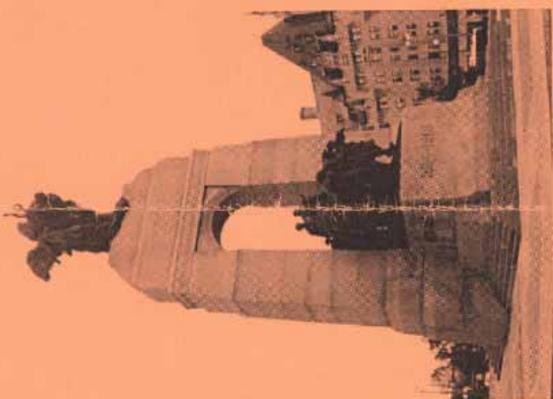
Note from Editor: this was the tribute presented by Paul Nyzuk on the induction of Wally Kasper into Canada Veterans Hall of Valour





Veterans whose Induction is being celebrated
Saturday evening April 23, 2005
Penthouse Panorama Room
Crown Plaza Hotel, Ottawa

- Warrant Officer George Bova DFC
- Capt. H. Cliff Chadderton CC OOnt OSJ CLI CAE DCL LLD
- Sergeant Alexander Cullin DCM
- Squadron Leader Glen Ellwood DSO DFC(2)
- Flying Officer Donald J.C. Fleming DFC
- Flight Lieut. Walter W. Kasper CD BA MSc
- Wing Com. Henry W. Keane DFC DFM CD
- Lieut. Russell J. Kennedy MC BSc DSc
- Corporal Philip Konowal VC
- Lance Corp. William F. McRae MM
- Squadron Leader Andrew R. MacKenzie DFC CD
- Squadron Leader Grenville Onyette CD
- Sgt. Major John R. Osborn VC
- Flight Lieut. D. Murray Peden DFC
- Sergeant Lance Ross
- Captain Arthur Britton Smith MC QC LLD
- Captain Campbell L. Stuart BA
- Brig. General Jack V. Watts DSO DFC(2) CD
- Major Evelyn Wilson



The Little Old Lady

by Wally Kasper

It was a raw November night with just enough broken cloud to reveal a full moon so we aircrew types had been stood down from ops. The Bomber squadrons didn't operate during the full moon period, they had enough hazards without giving the enemy night fighters the edge which a full moon would provide. So four of the crew shrugged our way into our raincoats and decided to go to a pub which had been discovered by Larry, our expert on pubs and one of the two Brits in a crew on a Canadian bomber squadron stationed near the old city of York. "It has a pleasant fire, is out of the way and not bedeviled with large numbers of you thirsty Canadians trying to drink up all the beer in the land." He said.

In truth it was a splendid place, a haven of jollity and good fellowship virtually untouched by the hordes of Canadian airmen who had come over to Jolly aide to help these poor benighted Brits pull their irons out of the fire for the second time in this half century.

The war had been going on for more than four years now and Bomber Command had been the only weapon the Allies had which had been at the throat of Hitler's Germany since the war began. Their losses were horrendous, six out of every ten men who had entered the doors of Bomber Command would not be able to answer roll call at the end of the war. But these statistics were far from our minds as we entered this pleasant pub, bid all the locals a "Good evening" and took a place at a corner table as Mike went to the bar and ordered a round of mild and bitter. From where I sat I could see, off in the other darker corner of the room, a little old lady. She seemed a bit the worse for wear with shabby clothes and a rather ragged shawl around her shoulders, and looked as if she had not had a decent meal in some considerable time. There was something striking about the hawkish sculptured face which seemed to gaze unseeingly out into space.

Larry saw me looking at her and said "She's come in out of the chilly evening, I expect". I turned away and got into the usual airman's conversation in this crowd but after a while I felt the eye of the little old lady was on me and when I looked at her, sure enough she was looking steadily at me. It seemed a bit unusual, if not weird so after a while I went over to where she was sitting and asked her if she would care to join us for a drink. She looked at me for a very long moment and said "No, perhaps I shouldn't join you but Thank you I will have a drink. A gin if you please." So I went to the bar and ordered a double and took it over to her table. I asked if I might join her but she said "No, you are very kind but you should be with your mates but do come back before you go home." So I went back to our table and we prattled on as airmen will do until it was getting close to It "Time Gentlemen, Please" and I remembered the

little old lady. A quick trip to the bar and another double gin for the lady, with a curious glance at me from the bartender, and as I came to her table she said "please sit down for a moment" so I did. She looked at me for a very long and almost embarrassing moment before she said "It was very kind of you to be so considerate of an old lady sitting off in the corner. Few people do. I would like to suggest to you that when next Thursday rolls around you should do all of your flying with all the care that you can muster because the stars are not going to be in conjunction and you and the fellows who fly with you will be in greater danger than you have ever known before. Thank you again for your kindness. We will not meet again." I said "Goodnight" and returned to our table a bit puzzled as to how she could have any information of what we were going to be doing next Thursday when we didn't and no one on the squadron did. The guys were curious but just then came the "Time Gentlemen, Please" from the bartender and, as we got ready to go, their questions were lost and I let the matter die.

Thursday morning rolled around and after breakfast the usual check on the aircraft was called for and I observed that the bomb load and gas load laid on indicated a long trip, probably deep into Germany. Since this was the time when Bomber Command was in the midst of what history now calls "The Battle of Berlin" it didn't take a genius to guess where we were going. While doing our aircraft checks the incident with the little old lady in the pub popped into my mind and sort of hung there like a spider web with questions going round and round in my mind, asking how could she have possibly known or even guessed that this would be an operating day for us much less make dire predictions about the trip?

I didn't know it yet but we were to find out the hard way that she was as right as she could possibly be, to say the least. As we walked into the briefing room we saw the large red line on the map showing the route from base to Flensburg and then down to Berlin. Two simple course lines but how fraught they were. We would climb to 20,000 feet and the weatherman gave us a wind which would be blowing right up our backs as we dove down to the big city. About thirty knots he said. Hah?

Our navigator estimated a northwest wind about 60 knots by the time we got to the flak ships at Flensburg. We did our turn onto the 135 degree course which would take us to Berlin and as we flew through the dark night the navigator gave me Estimated Time of Arrival for the target. As we were in the first wave of main force bombers as we came closer to the city, a few minutes away, we saw the whole world of German defenses open up like a tremendous, orchestrated stage to

welcome us to this moment in hell. We did not know this until much later but the winds behind us were not our estimated 60 knots but 120 knots. Blowing right up our jumpers, as we used to say.

Now the Lancaster's we had, used to cruise at 265 knot" With the 120 knots we had blowing we had a forward speed of 365 knots. The problem-was that our estimated time of arrival was based on a 60 knot wind. We were in fact, going much faster than we thought we were. And we would arrive early.

As the German defenses opened up into full flower to extend their welcome to us we flew on from the outer northern edges of the massive ring of defenses around the city and expected the target markers to go down any second so we could drop our bombs. We flew on with my anxiety level increasing by the second and as we reached the southern edges of the Berlin searchlight ring the rear gunner said" The yellow markers have just gone down behind us".

The navigator had been brilliant in getting the wind estimate we had and no one could have known that we had hit a Jet stream. After all in those days no one had ever heard of a jet stream much less factored it into their weather calculations. As we turned 180 degrees to the left to take another run at releasing our bombs from our overshoot of the target markers we were faced with a new and devastating problem. Our speed had gone from the 385 to 265 minus 120 or just about standing still as far as the German radar was concerned and in the blink of an eye the radar had us and so did what seemed to be 100 searchlights. Since the flak was coordinated with the radar I knew we had to move quickly since not only was the flak coming up our jumper but the place was a-buzz with night fighters who could see us and of course we were blinded by the searchlights and could see nothing, least of all any instruments on the panel which most pilots find it convenient to use in flying at night.

Since the flak was fused for our position and altitude it seemed expedient to vacate the space we were presently occupying and at the same time to take some evasive action which might help us avoid the tracer which the fighters were hosing off in our direction. An interesting but not very comfortable position to be in so we took our evasive action, jinking the aircraft with rapid changes of position, height and direction. We still had more than half of our gas load plus the bomb load so this violent evasive action was a serious test of the plane's structural strength.

We had the searchlights follow us down to nearly ten thousand feet before they broke off and we managed to escape from the

welcome the Germans had arranged for us. As we emerged from the engagement and flew into the dark of the outer regions of the Berlin area we turned to go back to drop our bombs on the target markers, which was why we came. It was not very comfortable flying through that area with all the rest of the main force flying thousands of feet above us and dropping their bombs but we managed and went through the target area and turned west to get on the route back to base.

We were well below the main stream of the bomber force and of course were not protected by the presence of all our buddies at the higher altitude, so we felt as if we were walking down Piccadilly Circus, stark naked, in broad daylight. However we started to slowly climb part way up to where the main force was so we could blend in with them but climbing always consumes extra fuel which had not been programmed and it slows you down so you are climbing but gradually falling behind the main stream of the bombers.

You have some hard choices to make but discovered that there were even harder ones lying in wait for us in the dark night skies ahead. Our track out from the target took us between Osnabruck and Munster and of course we were still well below the main force and had fallen behind them so we must have been becoming visible on the radar screens of the good folk below.

Their first burst of flak was disgustingly accurate and a piece of shrapnel took out a sizeable chunk of the exhaust pipe which was wrapped around the outer rim of the port inner engine. Not more than a dozen feet from where I was sitting. We moved rather quickly to vacate the space we had been occupying and this seemed to discourage the flak fellows below but we now had another problem. When the flak hit the exhaust pipe it tore a piece of metal off which permitted a splendid looking ten foot high "candle" of red hot exhaust gases to go shooting up into the sky.

Advertising like this would be a winner on Broadway but was not really desirable in our situation. so now we had to decide to shut down the engine and fly on three or to continue on with four and the advertising we had. The engine was working perfectly well but if we shut it down to give us some level of anonymity in the dark German night sky we would have to be traveling along on three engines and as you can imagine it always takes more fuel to fly on three than it does on four and we had already used up our allowable margin of fuel.

The main bomber force was, of course, by now far ahead of us and we would be fair game for any German night fighter who could find us.

We could only hope that all of the fighters which had been up were

low on fuel or back at base. It was now time to cross our fingers and hope that the Germans were as weary as we were and more interested in a bit of rest than some vagrant aircraft in the night sky. Once again The Little Old Lady popped into my mind-I couldn't guess if she was being a guardian angel or if she was instrumental in causing this.

In any case I was too busy to give her much energy at this point We were by now at about sixteen thousand feet flying along on three engines so we decided we would trade the altitude we had for a bit of forward speed and headed for the Dutch coast as we saw the first, fine delicate fingers of morning light break behind us as we looked on the lovely countryside below. It looked so peaceful as the coast seemed to accept the caresses of the waves rolling onto the shore.

How deceptive this wandering notion of mine was. There was nothing peaceful or caressing in that cold sea and certainly there would be nothing peaceful or caressing if a German night fighter found us. The odds on evading a German night fighter when you are flying on three engines in a Lancaster must be just about the same as winning the lottery. I asked the Wireless Operator to break radio silence and ask the Fighter Command people to send us 80 me fighter escort.

We had crossed the Dutch coast and were now over the North Sea and felt we were agonizingly visible to any German night fighter who might be on patrol in the area. Not many sights in my life have given me the joy that that squadron of Spitfires brought as they flickered in the early morning sun on their upward journey to join us, and then nested around us. How comforting it was to know that these lovely and elegant birds flying beside us had teeth which would discourage any German intruder. They flew with us until we had made contact with the emergency landing field at Woodbridge on the English coast. Then, one by one they flew past us in turn and waved farewell as they left for home.

We were unknown to them and they to us but they looked like never-to-be-forgotten guardian angels with the pleasant morning sun reflecting off of their wings 88 they carried us to safety. As I came in to land I wondered about the little old lady in the pub and her advice to be careful. It was indeed a night to remember. I never did go back to that pub so we did not meet again but I have often wondered if she was somehow a gifted fey lady or just a shrewd, wise, little old woman finding a warm place on a chilly night

Editor's Note:

During WWII Wally Kasper completed a tour of operations as a skipper on the Lancaster 2 flying with 408 (Goose) Squadron out of Linton-on-Ouse, Yorkshire.

408 Squadron and Arctic Reconnaissance: A glance at the Past and a Glimpse of the Future

By Ron Cleminson

Geography is likely to remain, as it has been in the past, the single most important determinant in modeling a framework for defense of the nation. "In the current security environment", a recent Defense analysis stated, "the Government believes that a greater emphasis must be placed on the defense of Canada and North America. It will require the Canadian Forces to re-examine their approach to domestic operations". For members of 408 Squadron serving from the late 1940's to the early 1960's, domestic operations in support of Canadian sovereignty and national security priorities represented their primary task.

The Hans Island incident, which continues to make headlines across the country. Brings Back to life vividly the sorts of unexpected challenges in the high arctic which might threaten Canadian sovereignty in the next few decades Fifty years ago, Canada's 408 (Arctic Reconnaissance) Squadron ensured that we had a national capability to monitor all of the Canadian north including the "Canadian Sector" of the Polar basin for sovereignty and security Purposes. In those days, the Queen Elizabeth Islands in Canada's high arctic were subject to Surveillance by 408 Squadron on a routine basis. Ward Hunt Island, Hans Island, Pinnacle Island And Easter Island were all included in the primary mission of Canadians sovereignty reconnaissance. Today, in the high Arctic ,we are literally blind. Fifty years ago, the Canadian Navy possessed an ice breaker capable of escorting foreign vessels through the Arctic. Today we are limited to thin skinned naval vessels unable to operate routinely north of '60'. Fifty years ago, the Canadian Army could sustain operations in the Canadian tundra under winter conditions. Recent deployments suggest that sustained operations in the high Arctic, even during the summer Months ,would be hazardous, if not impossible.

Undertaking sovereignty reconnaissance operations in the late 1950s came about for 408 Squadron in a natural transition of roles as the aerial survey of the country "from coast to coast to coast" wound down. Experience gained in penetrating the high arctic in those days could be directly relevant to the evolving situation in the Arctic today. For example, planners in Air Force Headquarters decided in the mid- 1950s that a truly unique "mission specific" mark of Lancaster was absolutely essential for undertaking what was then perceived as a new and unique mission. With a lengthened fuselage, but with the same "Merlin" power plants, three

Arctic Reconnaissance Mark 10 (AR) Lancaster's, (MN837,MN 882, MN 976), made their appearance at Rockcliffe. The squadron was redesignated as 408 (Arctic Reconnaissance) Squadron. With operations mainly above the 70th parallel, it routinely undertook missions within the Queen Elizabeth Islands and the Canadian sector of the polar basin. When required, the squadron flew special intelligence sorties well beyond.

The Lancaster 10 (AR) as modified was truly a unique long range photo reconnaissance aircraft. Festooned with an oddly distinctive array of antennae, it tackled a newly enhanced electronic reconnaissance role as well. Electronic equipment for the job ranged from the pre-war RAF R 1155 low/middle frequency radio receiver to the USAF's most advanced (for those days) radar detecting UPD 501. Seldom did an AR Lancaster return from a mission in the Northern Reaches with all of its antennae intact.

On the photo reconnaissance side, the Lancaster 10 (AR) carried a sophisticated array of camera,. Based on the 3 camera horizon to horizon trimetragon fan of F224 cameras and the vertical F52 camera of survey days, the 10 (AR) included a forward firing fast cycling 20 inch camera and a similar rear-firing 7 inch camera . With a low level S7A (sonne) completing the camera suite, a Lancaster 10 (AR) provided a formidable capability to accomplish its photo recce mission from altitudes ranging from 10,000 to 200 feet. It's fair to say that in those days, we knew more about Soviet Arctic activities as anyone on the Allied side.

The 10(AR) with a greater all-up weight than the 10(P), was both a "darling" and a "dog" to fly. Fully loaded with 2954 imperial gallons on board, take offs from the single, short runway (09/27) at Rockcliffe (the squadron insisted that it was 4,408 feet in length) were seldom uneventful. For safety reasons, fully loaded departures from Rockcliffe were increasingly discouraged and the standard operating procedure was to fly from Rockcliffe across town to Upland; for "topping-up" purposes. With the propensity for the aging Lancaster once on the ground to become un-serviceable, crews occasionally found themselves returning home at the end of the first day by taxi having only accomplished as the first leg of the mission ;the trip "across town".

Nevertheless, with these mission-specific modified aircraft, and more importantly with the dedicated, specially trained personnel, both air and ground crew, 408 (AR) Squadron created a reconnaissance profile for Canada which was unparalleled in terms of Arctic activities. With the retirement of the Mark 10 (AR) from service in 1962, this unique national capacity for Arctic reconnaissance was lost. Other squadrons, with more up-to-date aircraft. attempted to fill the void; but without great success.

One principle has been immutable throughout the years. If a country wishes to claim sovereignty over distant and relatively uninhabited areas, it must have an ability to know what's going on there and be prepared to react if anomalies are detected. To emulate the reconnaissance capability which was perfected by 408 Squadron with its three 10 AR Lancaster's a half century ago, National Defense might find it prudent to "re-examine its approach to today's domestic operations". For example, the three Arcturus aircraft, currently being withdrawn from service in the Maritimes, might be modified along the lines of the Lancaster Mark 10a of a half century ago. With modern mission-specific sensor suites installed, these aircraft could provide Canada, once again, with a dedicated and effective Arctic reconnaissance capability.

In 2005, effective "real-time" overhead surveillance providing information about what is going on in the far reaches of our own country could be of immense value for the maintenance of Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic and other offshore waters. It could also provide useful support for a number of Canadian requirements other than security or defense. Some of these would include development in the Canadian Arctic, reaction to natural disasters, (floods, forest fires, ice storms, crop blights), search and rescue support in high latitudes, protection of fisheries and detection and monitoring of pollution in the Arctic.

For the 21st century, however, Canada might even augment these standard airborne sensing technologies and build upon the demonstrated success of RADARSAT, a satellite originally designed for surveillance of ice cover; subsequently found to be useful for many other applications. Additionally, with proper sensors, helicopters and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) might be added to the mix to round out what might prove to be a unique and powerful Arctic reconnaissance package. If helicopter and UAV expertise became part of an Arctic reconnaissance capability, it would fall within the area of specialized training of today's 408 Squadron and thus, renew a link to the past. Poetic justice really, since after all, 408 Squadron's home base of Edmonton has always been known across Canada as the "Gateway to the North",

Editors Note:

Ron Cleminson served with 408 Squadron at Rockcliffe from Feb. 1953 to June 1962 as aircrew and ultimately as Squadron Intelligence Officer. Mr. Cleminson joined the department of Foreign Affairs in 1982 and headed Canada's verification research program. In 1991 he was appointed Commissioner on UN special Commission relating to Iraq. On March 10, 2000 the General Secretary of the UN appointed him to serve as a member of the College of Commissioners for UNMOVIC.

MEMBERSHIP

MEMBERSHIP DUES

408 "Goose" Squadron Association is run entirely on the funds generated from membership dues and donations. The administrative costs for office materials and the twice annual printing of the newsletter use a considerable amount of the total yearly membership dues collected. It is very important that all members pay their yearly dues so that we can continue with the important principles of the Association. As Association Chairman it is my responsibility to manage the operating budget on your behalf. Date membership dues paid till can be found on the address label in upper right corner.

When you receive your newsletter please remit your dues quickly. Dues are \$10.00 yearly.

**Please send your dues to: National Chairman
408 "Goose" Squadron Association
PO Box 10500 Stn Forces
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 4J5**



408 Squadron Association Website

Please note the association website address has changed to www.forfreedom.ca If you have ideas of what you would like to see on this website please let the National Chairman know.



MEMBERS WITH E MAIL ADDRESSES

If you have an Internet address please let us know what it is. If you would prefer having the newsletter sent by electronic means please indicate that as well. All membership lists containing this information is completely secure and access to our membership lists are restricted and protected.



REUNION 2006



COME
CELEBRATE
408 SQUADRON'S

65th Anniversary

9 - 11 JUNE 2006 EDMONTON ALBERTA



IN CONJUNCTION WITH 408 "GOOSE" SQUADRON ASSOCIATION



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT PO URKOSKY AT 780-973-4011 EXT 4386
EMAIL ENQUIRIES AND ONLINE REGISTRATION AT WWW.FORFREEDOM.CA

REUNION 2006

408 Tactical Helicopter Squadron in conjunction with 408 “Goose” Squadron Association will be hosting a reunion to celebrate the unit’s 65th birthday. Dates for this reunion are 9, 10 & 11 Jun 2006 to be held in Edmonton, Alberta.

The meet and greet will present an expose of the unit through the times. Saturday will consist of a parade and an open house at the squadron. In the evening the dinner, which will be held at Barbeque Acres in St. Albert, will have a western feel with a dance to follow with live entertainment.

All members will be receiving a personal invitation with a more detailed breakdown of the events. More information can be obtained off of the internet at:

www.reunion.forfreedom.ca

REUNION 2006

List of Events

Friday June 9, 2006

Evening *Meet & Greet*

Saturday June 10, 2006

Morning *Parade*

Afternoon *Open House*

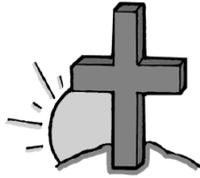
Evening *Dinner & Dance*

Sunday June 11, 2006

Morning *Church Service*

Brunch

Association Meeting



FINAL FLY PAST

It is with deep regret that the Association wishes to inform its membership of the passing of the following Squadron Association members

William (Bill) Holden
Gordon Foye
Jim Atherton
Stewart F. Cowan
Maurice Jamin
Fred MacDonell
Nelson Smith
Robert P. McLarnon
John P. Quane
George McCormick
Frank Brattan

"Bruce The Goose II" Retired to Kingsville Military Museum

By Brian Penstone

(Reprinted from The Essex Free Press)

To see a Canada Goose fly into Kingsville is not unusual. To see one fly in by way of a Canadian Forces helicopter, 'well that's different. Then again, this goose is different. For one thing, it's been dead for close to 20 years, but thanks to the work of a skilled taxidermist, it doesn't look it. And it has a name -- "Bruce" -- and for anyone concerned about technicalities, it's "Bruce the Second."

Bruce the Goose is the mascot of the Royal Canadian Air Force or Canadian Forces 408 "Goose" Squadron based in Edmonton, Alberta. Most recently, the 408 Tactical Helicopter Squadron has worked in Canada helping the RCMP with drug interdiction and Search and Rescue. Overseas, it has seen peacekeeping assignments in Bosnia and Kosovo.

Like so many military things this year, the origin of the "Goose" Squadron dates back to the 1940's. It was 1944 when Kingsville became the adoptive home of 408 Squadron.

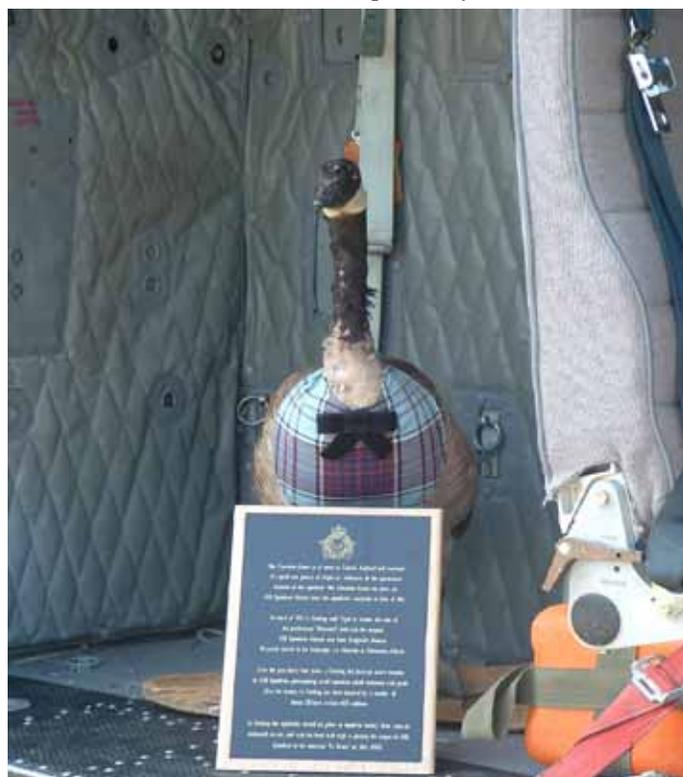
The squadron also adopted a goose as its nickname and as its mascot, not just because of its connection to Kingsville, but also because of its ability to fly long distances in formation and to return safely. Bruce II was presented in 1986 by Bill Balkwill, Charlie Campbell and Lomer Ouellette at the 408 "Goose" Squadron' Association reunion in Toronto, but now ready for retirement, it has been decided a more fitting home would be at the Kingsville Historical Museum and Military Park.

In addition to the 408 Squadron's CH-146 Griffon helicopter's delivery of Bruce II to an open area behind the Museum and Park, it was a full weekend of Air Force activities in southern Essex County. Canada's Snowbirds Aerobatic Team put on a demonstration of their flying skills Saturday at Leamington's waterfront, one of their favourite venues. The RCAF Six Group Bomber Command veterans held their Annual General Meeting and Reunion in Leamington and Kingsville from June 3 to 5. World War II veterans of 408 Squadron were among other members of Bomber Command Association, bringing together more than 60 years of Canadian military aviation history.

Members of the Leamington Air Cadet Squadron are helping to keep alive Canadian military aviation and they turned out for full inspection by the Commanding Officer. At the same time, members of the Canadian Historical Aircraft Association reminded everyone of where it all started with a flyover of vintage aircraft.



The old “Bruce” (left) is replaced by the new “Bruce” (right)



Bruce the Goose II resplendent in a sash of the Air force tartan waits patiently after its flight from Edmonton to be put in its place of honour in the Charlie Campbell Historical Museum.









408 SQUADRON CELEBRATES 64 YEARS

408 Squadron celebrated 64 years of service to Canada on 24 June this year. A huge BBQ was held to celebrate the event. Amongst the guests were BGen Gillespie, Deputy Commander LFWA, and Honorary Colonel Bart West who both wished the squadron a happy birthday and continued success in all future endeavors. Mr. Clarence Simonson from the Nanton, Alberta “Bomber Command” Museum presented the Commanding Officer LCol Laplante with a book on Canadian War Nose Art containing many 408 WWII aircraft. There were several ex 408ers in attendance who took the time to pass on their experiences to the current serving members. All had a great time and many invitees are looking forward to next years activities. The 408 “Goose” Squadron Association sponsored the event.



Going away gifts to CO and SCWO



Presentation of gift to Squadron from LCol Laplante and CWO Bissett



Nose art presented to Squadron by Clarence Simonson

Change of Command Parade



Signing of Change of Command Scrolls



New Commanding Officer
LCol. P. Keddy
Upon presentation of
Squadron Colours



Gift to Former SCWO CWO Bissett from the Former Commanding Officer
LCol Laplante



Griffon Flypast



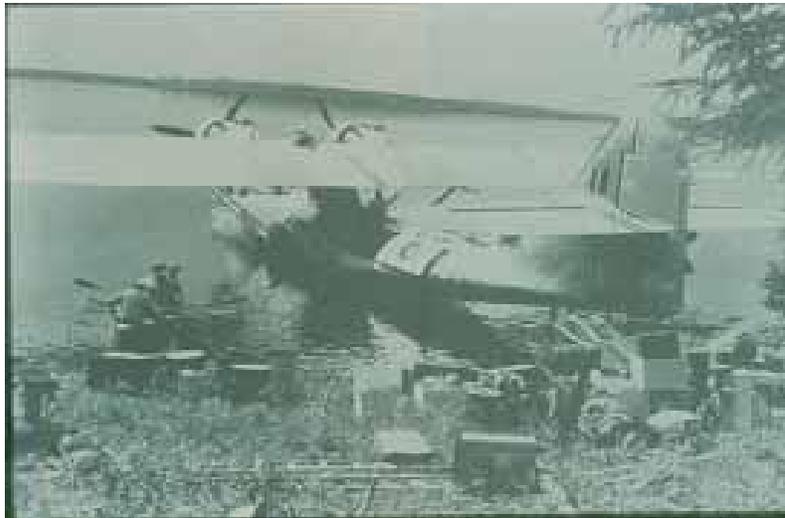
Squadron Colours March past

MEMORIES FROM THE PAST





Rockcliffe





Dining Hall Camp Meridian Shoran Project



No. 6 Detachment Yellowknife living quarters

Rivers





Lt K.C. Wilson of 408 shows officers of the land element how it's done as he talks a 408 T-Bird onto a target at Gagetown - 14 Mar 69

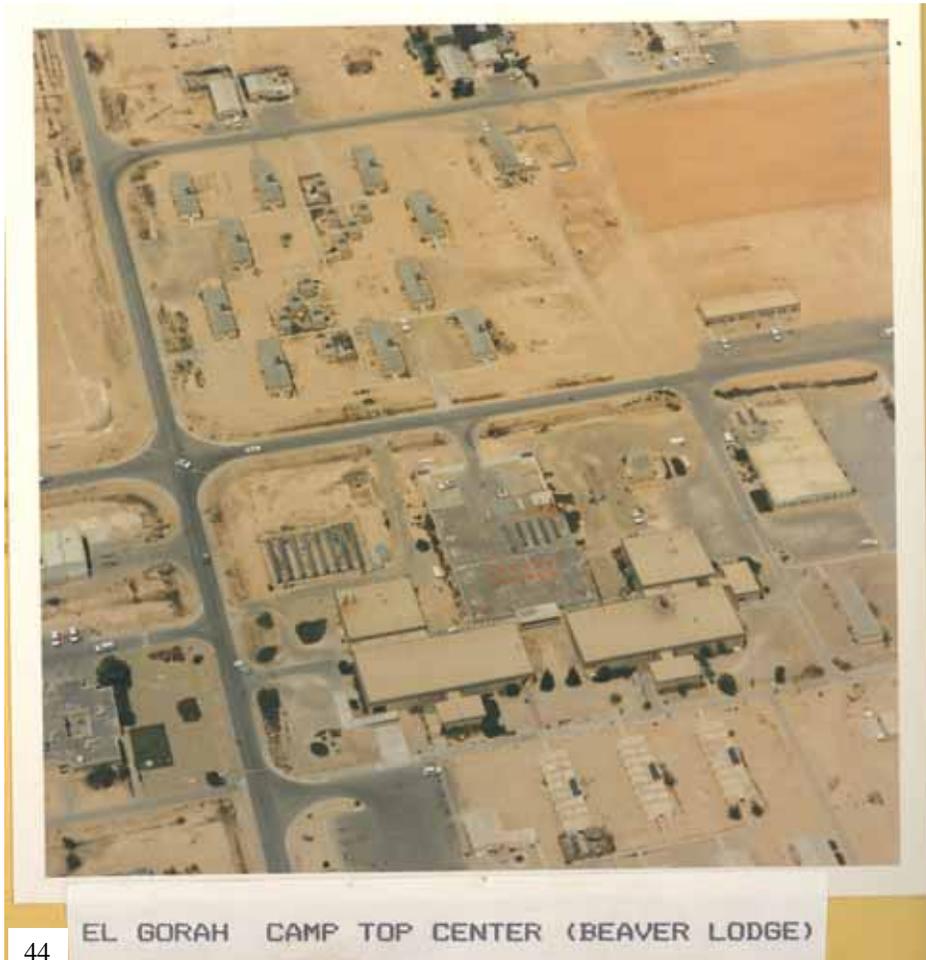


Edmonton





Camp Black Bear at VK, Bosnia



EL GORAH CAMP TOP CENTER (BEAVER LODGE)

Letters and Requests

MWO ROD FADER

Re A/C our Mary

I enjoy it each year when I receive the news letter from 408 sqn. The center fold interested me this time.

Dec 1942 our crew completed converting to Halifaxes and we received our brand new Halifax EQ X. We had to find a name for her and as our navigator was married we called it 'OUR MARY'.

We completed many exciting trips in her. Unfortunately on June 21, 1943 we bombed Krifeld. X-ray was in the hanger for repairs as we had a rough trip the night before. We had to take T 'Tommy'. On our way home we were jumped by an HE 119 whose guns shot straight up and we didn't see it below us until it was too late.

Four of the crew were killed immediately. The pilot held the plane up so I could bail out (minus my right leg). The navigator had bailed out. Five of the crew were killed and 2 POW

I was fortunate to be on an exchange of wounded in June 1944 and returned to Canada.

I stayed in the Air force till 1946 as a personnel Officer

The Crew Names were

P.O. Richart	Pilot	KIA
F.O. Monahan	B/A	KIA
P.O. Docherill	WAG	KIA
P.O. Scarle	A/G	KIA
WO2 MacLean	F/E	KIA
F/L Russell	NAV	POW
F/L Pridham	A/G	POW

I got to the rank of F/L as a personal officer. I thought you might be interested in knowing how 'OUR MARY' got her name.

In 1985 the Dutch honoured my crew with a large monument, but that is another story

keep up the good work
F/L G.I. Pridham C.D. Ret

From: "Ralph Kirchner" <ralphkirchner@hotmail.com>
Date: Fri, August 19, 2005 8:18 am
To: webmaster@forfreedom.ca
Priority: Normal

Hello

My name is Ralph Kirchner and I'm currently doing research for a Lancaster Mk2 profile. A friend of mine had a relative who flew with the 408 in a Mk2, his plane was shot down over northern Germany in January of 1944. One thing that I haven't been able to pinpoint is whether or not these Lancs were equipped with the belly turret. I have seen some Canadian Mk2s with and without these turrets. Were they put in at the factory and removed by some crews, or were they only installed on some Mk 2s to begin with? If anyone knows the answer I would very much like to hear from you. Any help with the general appearance of these Lancs would be greatly appreciated.

Thanks, Ralph

.....
From: Heather <heather@lectio.ca>
Date: Mon, February 21, 2005 5:12 pm
To: secretary@forfreedom.ca
Priority: Normal

Hello - I am trying to locate any information (especially photographs) of Roger Victor Clitheroe R/108256. He was a member of the 408 Squadron and was lost on a bombing mission to Dortmund on May 4/5, 1943. I believe his designation was HR-658.

Is there any chance you'd have any information? Any help would be really appreciated. Thank you!

Heather Clitheroe

Dear Rod Fader;

Received the winter newsletter today 13 Dec 04
That's me on page 29 you will find the entire story at Nanton Lancaster
Society website. Look for the item "" A special suitcase"

sincerely George Oliver

Editors Note: please find a copy of the article from the website

Rear-gunner George Oliver flew with No. 408 Squadron in Lancaster Mk II aircraft. Rather than having the standard Rolls-Royce Merlin engines, these Lancs were fitted with Hercules radial engines. George recalls the reason for the Nose Art painting on Lancaster Mk. II LL725, "For some reason the call sign at Linton-on-Ouse, Yorkshire, was changed from Z-Zebra, to Z-Zombie [the living dead]. On our 8th operation to Essen, Germany on 24 March 1944, we lost an engine and had the option to dump our bomb load and return to base. The crew decided to carry on but arrived over the target late and all alone. After the release of our bomb load, 'All Hell Broke Loose' and we were lucky to escape the intense ack-ack. On our return to base we found out that we were posted as lost in action. After this experience we all agreed "Zombie" [return of the living dead] should become the nose art, and it was."

George painted the "Zombie" nose art on Lancaster LL725 on 7 April 1944 after the crew had completed an air-test flight and later he painted it on his suitcase. On 20 July 1944, George completed his tour of 30 operations, 22 flown in "Zombie." He flew two additional operations, one in Lank-L as the mid -under gunner with Frankling 27-5-44 and another in Lank-L on 17-6-44 with Bryson as mid-upper gunner. George says he must have come back from leave early because the money ran out and filled in for something to do. Eight days later LL725 was shot down on a raid to Hamburg, Germany, one of three Lancaster Mk. II's the squadron lost that single day.

265, Upper Grosvenor Road
Tunbridge Wells Kent TN1 2EJ United Kingdom

Dear Major Phillips

I have found your name and address on the RCAF 408 squadron website and am writing to You for possible information on a particular aircraft.

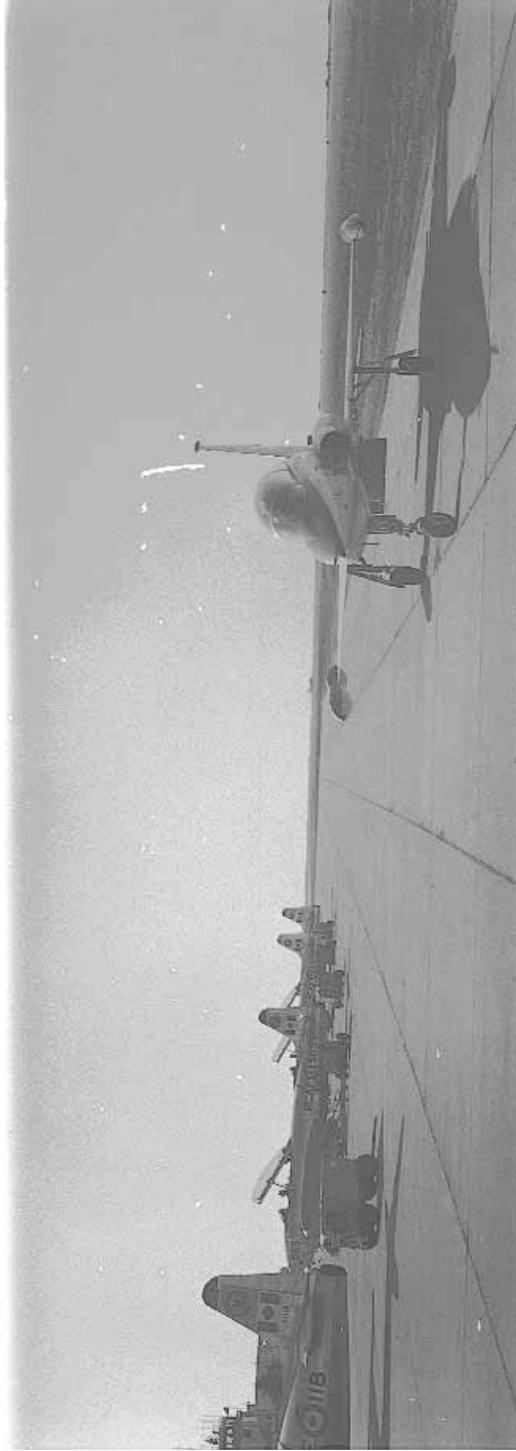
To set out the facts regarding my interest: my paternal grandmother had a nephew who Served with 408 squadron in the UK. His name was Flight Sergeant Victor Dadson Service number R/76568, the aircraft he flew was a Hampden reg.no. AD 782 EQ that Sadly crashed soon after take off from North Luffenham on 25th January 1942 and Victor Was killed. His war grave is in the cemetery here in Tunbridge Wells.

I have had a lifelong interest in aviation matters and have recently obtained a model kit Of a Hampden and would dearly like to make the kit up to be as accurate as possible Especially in regard to its camouflage scheme and any distinguishing features it would Have had in memory of Victor. If you can provide any photographs or details of the Aircraft or indeed any details of the service record of Victor and the aircraft I would be Most grateful. I do not wish you to incur expenses over postage etc. and I am therefore Also giving you my e-mail which is trevor.verrall@btinternet.com on which you may Contact me or of course write to me at my postal address as given above.

I look forward to hearing from you

Yours sincerely

T.J. Verrall



408 Sqn T-birds and F-5 on ramp in Rivers Manitoba

