



1941 - 2006



408 “Goose” Squadron Association Newsletter 2006



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From the Chairman

By the time you read this newsletter the summer and perhaps a good portion of the autumn has already passed us by and those frosty winds out the north are getting stronger and colder.

Since the last newsletter, the activities around the squadron have continued to occupy everyone's attention and time. The unfortunate cancellation of the reunion due to the high operational tempo only proved that 408 Squadron is always prepared and ready to serve!

Each time I sit down to write the opening remarks for this publication I am amazed at what has happened in the past year. The new sense of renewal in the restructured and funded CAF, our international involvement in Afghanistan and the ongoing preparations of our squadron to a "high readiness state" has kept the unit running at a feverous pace. The individual squadron accomplishments will be discussed in a separate article within the newsletter and you will soon realize that the famous 408 "Goose" Squadron is still flying high and leading the Airforce in tactical helicopter aviation and uninhabited aerial reconnaissance capability.

There are many articles that I hope will be of interest to all our members. We are always soliciting historical pieces or news from the membership to publish and would love to hear from you. The newsletter is also a great people and fact finder and your questions are always welcome.

For Freedom

Master Warrant Officer
Rod Fader
National Chairman

From The Commanding Officer

It is my pleasure to contribute to this annual newsletter as there are many aspects of our routine both past and future that need to be communicated to the loyal members of the 408 Squadron Association. First, a quick update on operational activities. Some of you may not be aware that the unit was given the first operational Tactical Uninhabited Aerial Vehicle (TUAV) mission in Air Force history. Back in May 05 we stood-up the TUAV Flight with the intent on deploying to Afghanistan in Jan 06. Many firsts were achieved including the formation of a truly joint organiza-



tion comprised not only of members of our 408 flock but with the 5th Light Artillery Regiment (5 RALC) from Valcartier. 5 RALC was instrumental in our success because they had previous experience in Afghanistan with the CU 161 SPERWER TUAV and were trained on many of the systems and procedures. During 7 months of training, we formed an additional Flight to take advantage of the availability of the contracted training to be ready for a follow-on deployment in Jul 06. Highlights of this period were ground and air campaigns in Valcartier, Suffield and Wainwright with first day and night flights achieved in the summer and a successful validation of our capability by 1 Wing HQ staff in the fall 05.

As one of the highest priorities within the Air Force for 2005 and 2006, 408 THS has been deployed in a combat support role in Kandahar, Afghanistan since Jan 06. Essentially we are providing integral Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance capability to the degree not seen since the Korean War. At home, commencing Nov 06, we will be creating an operational training capability within the Squadron under C Flight, to train all future TUAV rotations from all across the Air Force. It goes without saying that the TUAV effort has been one of the most important in recent history for us and continues to demand focus and a Herculean effort from all Flights within the unit.

408 Squadron was recently recognized for this extraordinary achievement, being awarded the Commander 1 Canadian Air Division Commendation in addition to being the recipient of the this years Air Force Association Golden Hawks Award.

Despite the focus on TUAV, the unit once again managed to deploy on a number of occasions with Canada's Army. Particularly noteworthy is the continuing contribution to the readiness of our Land Forces for the mission in Afghanistan through stalwart aviation support at the Canadian Manoeuvre Training Center (CMTC) in Wainwright, Alberta. As the centre of excellence for operational training, CMTC is the showcase and proving-ground for all Battle Groups from across Canada, committing forces to the ongoing fight against the insurgency in Afghanistan. As other years, 408 flew hundreds of hours in support of the RCMP drug eradication program as the front-line for domestic operations. This along with several Search and Rescue operations has once again illustrated the limitless talent and dedication of our men and women of 408 Squadron. As mentioned, the period from summer 2005 to 2007 has and will see many firsts. In the spring of 06, Canada's Air Force created the 1st Air Expeditionary Unit in Cold Lake, Alberta, with the goal of exercising High Readiness units within the new Air Force Support Concept. 408 was chosen to not only provide a Commander for 1 AEU but contribute the vast majority of air operations to test-the-metal of 17 Wing's Mission Support Squadron who immediately deployed to the Gulf Region for 6 months, to facilitate support primarily to Canadian Forces in Afghanistan.

While the focus on operations is paramount to 408 Squadron, I have taken on the personal responsibility of ensuring a balance between our missions and the development of relationships within the local community and maintaining continued ties to our proud history and valour. I am pleased to announce that Honourary Colonel (HCol) Col Bart West has been appointed our HCol for a second 3 year term. He continues to be the lifeline between 408 Squadron and leadership at all levels in the community. Further, the Squadron Chief Warrant Officer and I have been busy with the 700 Wing of the Air Force Association. I had the honour of speaking to the Wing at the Annual Gala Dinner in addition to parading the entire unit to recognize the Battle of Britain in both 2005 and 2006. As most of you are aware, the events to celebrate the unit's 65th Anniversary were scaled-back due to our prolonged commitment to Afghanistan however this did not diminish the importance of the occasion nor deter me from recognizing our veterans and serving members.

We spared no effort in bringing Molly “Mother Goose” Rayner from Ontario to celebrate the Anniversary with all ranks at a mess dinner and spend 2 days of quality time with us to reminisce and remember. Molly is thought to be one of the Squadron’s first serving members during the War Years whose unconditional loyalty and generosity to the unit continues to this day. We also had the honour of having Brigadier-General Marcel Duval, a former Commander of 408 Squadron, with us as our keynote speaker at the dinner. The grand finale of the occasion was marked by the acceptance of the Freedom of the City of Spruce Grove from the city’s Mayor and townspeople. The parade of 408 Squadron with “drums beating” and “bayonets fixed” down the center of Main Street was a proud moment in our history.

I had the opportunity to attend the fly-in at the Nanton Lancaster Society in Nanton Alberta this summer. This gave me the chance to connect with more of our veterans and thank the society for their exceptional contribution to the preservation of the history of the Bomber Commands during WWII as well as the sacrifice made by so many Canadians in those difficult years. This fall, the SCWO and myself will be traveling to Kingsville Ontario to visit the Historical Park and the 408 “Wild Goose” Squadron collection. The town adopted the Squadron in 1944 and maintains its ties to the unit as demonstrated most recently by inducting the retired Battle Standard into the museum as well as proudly displaying Lt Gosling, our first mascot, in a room dedicated to the memories of the unit. Finally, I would be remiss if I did not mention the recent retirement of Brigadier-General James Hunter this fall. As the Honorary Patron of the 408 Squadron Association, we all look forward to getting reacquainted with BGen Hunter on home turf. As a former Commander and veteran of 408, he brings to the Association the leadership and camaraderie that he is well known for throughout the Air Force. In closing, I pass on my congratulations to our National Chairman, MWO Rod Fader for his continued leadership of the 408 Squadron Association and publication of this newsletter. Rod has been instrumental over the years in maintaining close ties among members and whose efforts have been nothing short of exceptional.

As always.....For Freedom.

Signed

Lieutenant-Colonel Paul “PK” Keddy

408 in Review

By Capt. Andie Gallagher

The early winter months of 2006 were relatively quiet, permitting the squadron to carry out some of its own training, such as night formation flying and running a course to train maintenance test pilots.



In March, the bulk of the squadron packed the trucks and headed out to Kamloops, BC to provide aviation support to 39 Brigade for Exercise Cougar Salvo. This change of scenery from the plains of Wainwright, AB to the mountains of BC provided not only a refreshing change but also an opportunity to



train in new and far more challenging conditions.

The remainder of the spring was spent either cleaning the kit from the field, packing the kit for the field, or using the kit in the field as 408 Sqn deployed once again to Wainwright, AB for 1 Brigade training support in early May and then to Cold Lake, AB for Exercise Maple Flag at the end of the month.



Following this busy month, most of the squadron enjoyed a greatly needed week-long pause.



On 10 June 2006, 408 Squadron accepted with great honour the Freedom of the City award from the city of Spruce Grove. The event was marked by a parade and four helicopter fly past.



The end of June saw yet another squadron deployment, this time to Hinton, AB. While this again was in support of the army, 408 Sqn benefited from operating in the unusual conditions of the Rocky Mountain foothills.

While the squadron itself did not deploy during the summer months, members of the team found themselves operating all over the country in locations such as: Alert, NWT in support of Operation Hurricane, Iqualuit, NU to increase the military's presence during Operation Connection, and Trenton, ON to support Operation Starfish.

Calgary, AB for this year's Stampede



As the fall season rolls along, the tempo of squadron life has picked up once again with 408 assets being sent to Shilo, MB to provide casualty evacuation (casevac) support to those training in the field. As well, 408 Sqn members found themselves back in Wainwright, AB to provide additional casevac support along with tactical and utility helicopter support to LdSH (Canada's only remaining tank regiment) as they prepare for a last minute deployment to Afghanistan.



For the remainder of 2006, 408 Squadron expects to carry out a full squadron deployment to Wainwright, AB, to send a three-ship of helicopters to Winnipeg, MB for this year's Grey Cup and finish the busy year similar to how the year was started: with some in-house night formation training. The year of 2007 should be no less busy and hopefully no less exciting.

Squadron Chief Warrant Officer - 408 Tactical Helicopter Squadron Chief Warrant Officer Dave Herman



Chief Warrant Officer Dave Herman, of Liverpool, Nova Scotia, is in his first year with 408 Tactical Helicopter Squadron and performs the duties of Squadron Chief Warrant Officer, the senior non-commissioned member of the Squadron, responsible for the training, morale and welfare of all 408 Squadron non-commissioned members.

Joining the Canadian Forces in 1980 and after graduating from basic recruit training at Canadian Forces Recruit School Cornwallis, Chief Warrant Officer Herman did his initial aircraft Contact Training at Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan supporting CT-114 Tutor and CH-136 Iroquois helicopter operations.

In 1981 he attended Qualification Level 3 Aero Engine Technician Training at the Canadian Forces School of Aerospace Ordnance and Engineering at CFB Borden, Ontario.

He was posted to CFB Greenwood, Nova Scotia, his first operational unit in 1981, where he worked as a Servicing / Snags technician on the CP-140 Aurora aircraft. He was a member of the 415 (MP) Squadron Maintenance Team, winning the O'Brian competition in 1985 and again in 1987 when both the Aircrew and Ground Crew went on to represent Canada at the International Fincastle Maritime Patrol Competition.

In 1988, he was promoted to the rank of Master Corporal and was transferred to the CP140 Aurora Engine Bay and Engine Test Facility, where he continued supporting the CP-140 at 2nd Line.

Promoted to Sergeant in 1990, he was posted to CFB Edmonton to join 447 Transport Helicopter Squadron as a Maintenance Crew Chief on the CH-147 Chinook aircraft. On the closeout of the Chinook aircraft from active service he was assigned to 435 Transport Squadron supporting CC130 Hercules 2nd Line Maintenance as a Periodic Inspection Crew Chief and T56 Engine Bay I/C. While assigned to 435 Sqn, he deployed in support of African Famine Relief as part of the Canadian Air Transport Detachment Somalia operating out of Nairobi, Kenya.

Following the move of 435 T&R Sqn from CFB Edmonton to 17 Wing Winnipeg in 1994, he was promoted to the rank of Warrant Officer and subsequently assigned to 1 Canadian Air Division Headquarters Winnipeg, Manitoba. Throughout his staff tour, which continued through until 2000, he was involved in support of the CT-114 Tutor, CF5 Freedom Fighter, CC130 Hercules and assumed the responsibility as Program Manager for Fleet Wide programs including Aircraft Battle Damage Repair (ABDR), Aircraft Recovery and Salvage (RAS) and Surplus and Damaged Aircraft Disposal (SADAD).

A highlight of his time in 1 CAD HQ was the creation of a joint US/Canada Aircraft Recovery Training program, which has been held annually at Davis Monthan AFB, Tucson, Arizona since its inception in 1997.

Pursuing an interest in Information Technology he successfully completed his Certificate in Computer Information Technology, at the University of Winnipeg and went on to instruct the Continuing Education Computer Program and act as a member of the Advisory Committees for the Diploma and Certificate Programs for the University.

Promoted to Master Warrant Officer in 1999, he was posted to 416 Tactical Fighter Squadron, Cold Lake, Alberta as the Senior Aircraft Maintenance Superintendent for the units CF18 Hornet aircraft.

Continued/

In June 2004, he moved over to 417 Combat Support Squadron, where he performed the duties of the Squadron Warrant Officer supporting CH146 Griffon Combat Support operations.

Promoted to his current rank in June 2006, Chief Warrant Officer Herman moved to Edmonton, Alberta and took on his present appointment as SCWO for 408 Tactical Helicopter Squadron which currently operates the CH146 Griffon and the C161 Sperry TUAV.

Being an avid sports participant, he enjoys golfing, fishing, hunting and V-Twin motorcycles. He is married to the former Debbie Baker of East Jeddore, Nova Scotia and they have one daughter Melissa.

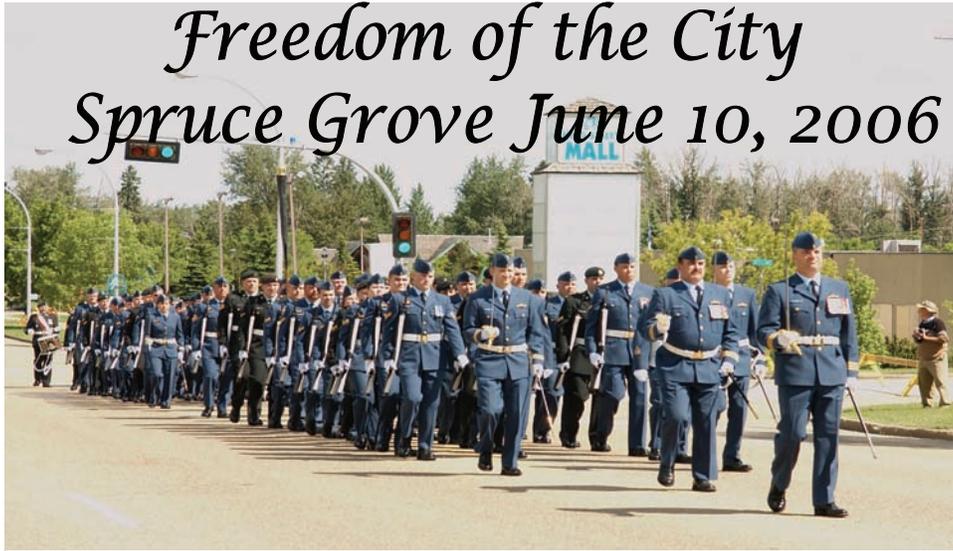


Memory From the Past



F.S. RITCHIE 35
Barrack Block, Leasing Bar 1943

Freedom of the City Spruce Grove June 10, 2006



The ceremony starts as the unit to be granted the Freedom of the City marches towards city hall, colour cased and rifles carried without bayonets fixed. When the unit nears city hall, they are stopped by the chief constable standing in front of a barrier in the centre of the road. The unit halts at the barrier. The chief constable challenges the unit on its identity, and the commanding officer responds with the unit's title. The chief constable then calls for the unit to "advance one and be recognized". The commanding officer only, moves closer to the barrier.





The commanding officer, accompanied by the chief constable, then marches to the door to city hall where the commanding officer knocks on the door three times with the pommel of his or her sword. The door is opened by the mayor, and the commanding officer declares his name and that of the unit. The mayor and councillors line up at the entrance to city hall and the mayor then reads a proclamation proclaiming that Freedom of the City is bestowed on the specific unit. The commanding officer accepts the freedom and returns to the unit and chief constable orders that the barrier be removed. The unit fixes bayonets, and the colour is unfurled. The unit marches past, with the mayor taking the salute.





Once a unit has been granted Freedom of the City it may exercise its freedom on occasions arranged with the civic authority. The ceremony to exercise Freedom of the City is similar, except the unit may march directly to city hall with drums beating, colours flying and bayonets fixed. After the unit is challenged and identified by the chief constable, the mayor proclaims the unit welcome, inspects the troops, and invites the unit to exercise its freedom



Mountain Man Challenge 2006

Reprinted From the Western Sentinel Sept 21 2006

408 Squadron Team



L to R - Cpl Laska ,Capt Wray , MCpl Mancin, MCpl Lahey, Sgt Friesen
(Team Lead)

The Mountain Man Challenge was run in Edmonton's River Valley Thursday, August 31. The 1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group annual competition is not for the faint of heart.

Participants don a 15 kilogram rucksack and run or speed-march 32 kilometers through the valley trails. At the end of the first 'leg,' they pick up two sandbags, each weighing 17 kg. Competitors must haul the 49 kg (108 lb) load 3.2 km to the river bank. Their backs get a short break, as they ditch the sandbags, remove their rucksacks and climb into canoes.

They must then paddle the canoe 10 km downriver. The difficulty of this task generally depends upon the weather. Finally, after hours of heavy activity followed by roughly an hour sitting still in a damp metal boat, cramps take over. The runners must fight through this, don the rucksack for a final 5.6 km dash to the finish line.



Corporal Marie Laska of 408 Tactical Helicopter Squadron was the fastest female at 6:52.

Letter From The Commanding Officer



National Défense
Defence nationale

408 Tactical Helicopter Squadron
PO Box 10500 Station Forces
Edmonton AB T5J 4J5

1110-1 (Reunion Committee)

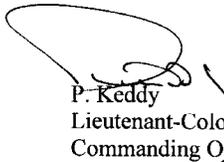
9 February 2006

To the Honoured Veterans of 408 Tactical Helicopter Squadron,

Regrettably, recent events have forced us to alter the scope of our 65th Anniversary Celebrations. Over the last several months, the pace of operations has been relentless as we prepared to deploy the new Tactical Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (TUAV) to Afghanistan. In addition, our Squadron was recently tasked to assume high readiness duties effective January 2007. This commitment has only increased our burden as we now prepare to deploy a second TUAV detachment while undertaking the arduous training implied by the high readiness commitment.

The net result is that we have fewer people available to assist with 65th Anniversary preparations and those people cannot spare the time due to the demanding training schedule. It has been my decision; therefore, to reduce the 408 Tactical Helicopter Squadron 65th Anniversary Celebrations to a formal dinner limited to Squadron members and their spouses.

I hope you will understand the necessity to change our planned celebration of the grand history of this Squadron and the people who have made it such an institution amongst Canadian military units. Thank you for your continuing interest and support of 408 Squadron; they are much appreciated and are vital to continue the legacy of this wonderful Squadron.



P. Keddy
Lieutenant-Colonel
Commanding Officer

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 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.



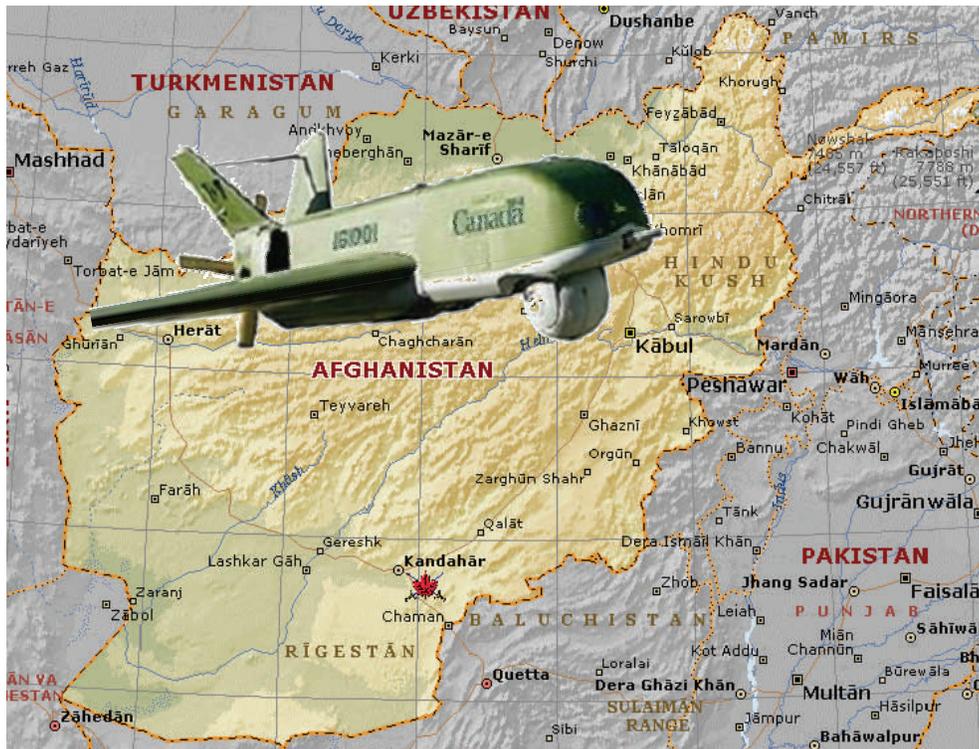
FINAL FLY PAST

It is with deepest regret and sadness that I must
inform the membership of the passing of our 408
“Goose” Squadron members

Robert P. McLaren
Stanley Harper
Charles Wilton
Harlo L. Jones
D. Neil Carmichael
Allan H. Faux
Jack Lynch
Gordon Schacter

MWO Rod Fader
National Chairman

TUAV IN AFGHANISTAN



The TUAV programme was set in motion in May 2006 with the decision to stand-up Roto 1 and 2. The requirement to have a tactical level unmanned aerial vehicle (TUAV) was necessary for the Canadian Task Force (TF) conducting operations in Kandahar, Afghanistan. The UAV to be employed was the CU161 Sperwer built by the French company Sagem. Following the Sperwer's 2003 deployment to Op ATHENA in Kabul, an agreement was struck to the effect that the Land Force (LF) would be the Force Employer while the Air Force would assume the responsibility of Force Generator for subsequent Rotos. This resulted in the assignment of the task to 1 Wg who then turned to its flagship Sqn, 408 THS, to breathe to life the TUAV capability.

Roto 1 first met in May 06 at CFB Valcartier where their TUAV erudition commenced with the manufacturer, Sagem, leading the ground school instruction. The reality of a bilingual flight was evident when the six weeks of ground school was taught in French. Fortunately, a foreshadowing of Roto 1's teamwork was evident when francophones helped anglophones through the technical jargon of the ground training. Following ground training Roto 1 took a leave break and then rejoined in CFB Suffield at the beginning of August to commence flight training. Following the five weeks of flight training in Suffield, both Rotos packed up and transported the equipment to the Canadian Manoeuvre Training Centre (CMTC) in CFB Wainwright. At CMTC, Roto 2 would complete their flight training and both rotos would undergo validation for deployment.

When Roto 1 set foot in Afghanistan on Feb 06 there was much work ahead of them. Quarters were 200 man tents, they had only the skeleton of a launch site and the equipment would not be arriving for another month. In this time frame Roto 1



established local procedures with the other operators on Kandahar Air Field (KAF), a vacant gravel lot on the edge of KAF was transformed into a launch site, and the flight assisted with guard and staff duties for the BG.

Approaching Sandstorm

When the equipment did arrive TUAV was prepared. The first operational mission was flown on 9 Mar 06. It became quickly apparent that the austere Afghan environment of hot temperatures and thin air density would restrict daytime operations. In the ensuing months Roto 1 accomplished much: successful deployment of forward detachments to support the Battle Group (BG) in the far reaches of their Area of Operations (AO), providing

21 Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield (IPB), conducting convoy escort

and overwatch missions, reconnaissance of routes and areas of interest, and battle damage assessment.

Roto 2 arrived in theatre on 2 August 06 with many challenges of their own. Pers, which included members from all three environments and ten bases from across Canada, had now been separated for ten months, during which none had any hands-on time with the equipment as it was all in theatre. Following a brief two-week hand-over period Roto 2 was at the helm of the TUAV operation. Operations in Kandahar and neighbouring Helmand province required reconnaissance and real time missions right away for TUAV Flt. Certain aircraft were cannibalized to guarantee at least one aircraft was always ready to support operations.

UAV Launch



Roto 2 continued to not only execute the missions carried out by Roto 1 but expanded the TUAV capability.

Communication techniques and UAV manoeuvre tactics were developed to better co-ordinate and facilitate fires and other kinetic effects. This led to the first-ever TUAV facilitated air strike and fire missions in actual combat operations, a landmark indeed. As well, simultaneous control of two separate AVs by one crew was field-trialed in theatre, which permitted doubling of continuous UAV presence thru the conduct of relief-in-place operations.



UAV recovery in suspected Minefield

Roto 2 is currently approaching the halfway milestone of their tour. They continue to battle spare parts shortages that affect serviceability rates, but despite this are providing unparalleled daily support to the LF.

It is a priority of the current leadership to ensure that during the remainder of their

Afghan tour they continue to expand the tactical capabilities of the TUAV system while becoming more efficient. Continued emphasis is being placed on reviewing and developing tactics, techniques, and procedures, and at ensuring all lessons learned are passed onto future rotos, which are planned out to the end of the CFs current mandate in 2009. .



Camel Spider

Although the units supporting both Rotos 1 and 2 are spread all across our country, and the team-building time was short, all members wear the same Maple Leaf on their shoulder and feel the same determination to succeed. It is this sense of professionalism, coupled with the virtues of teamwork and excellence that allow past, current, and subsequent rotations of TUAV to succeed.

Presently within 408 THS itself, C Flt is well into the stand-up of an Operational Training Section (OTS) for the generation of crews required to fill the Rotos in Afghanistan out to 2009. The first batch of students should be trained in the spring of 2007 and roughly every six months thereafter. Association members will be kept up to date with the Sperwer OTS in future articles



Letters and Requests



Wing Commander (Ret'd) R. W. (Ron) Butcher, DFC, CD

702 - 1120 Beach Drive
Victoria, BC V8S 2N1

Phone: (250) 595-5186 E-mail: exsqn408RCAF@shaw.ca

April 3, 2006

Lieutenant-Colonel P. Keddy
Commanding Officer
408 Tactical Helicopter Squadron
Box 10500 Stn Forces
Edmonton, AB T5J4J5

Dear Colonel Keddy:

Reference is made to your letter 1110-1 (Reunion Committee) of 9 Feb.

It is regrettable that we cannot have a reunion this year as planned; however, it is recognized that operational requirements must win out.

My wife and I have each recently published memoirs and had expected to feature them in Edmonton. Now, however, other means will be required to get information about them to members of the Association. Do you think it would be possible to borrow the Association membership address list for the purpose of advertising the books only? I would have suggested that we send the material for addressing there but that would involve extra manpower, which you currently find rather scarce.

As far as the Squadron itself is concerned we are looking for suggestions on to how to publicize the books with squadron members.

Information on the books is enclosed. They can be obtained from the publisher, but postage on Internet orders is quite expensive. It would take a bit longer, but we could send them from here for a handling and postal charge of \$3.50 each, and without GST (we would already have paid it) on the books. Total by cheque for two books would be, - \$56.90; for one book- \$28.45. Another feature of getting them here is that we would autograph them for the purchaser.

Our web sites at Trafford Publishing (<http://www.trafford.com>) where you can get additional information are:

For my book: <http://www.trafford.com/05-0697> and

For Veronica's: <http://www.trafford.com/05-1771>

For Freedom

Best regards to all the Officers and Airpersons.

Been There, Done That- Through Treacherous Skies and From Veronica With Love

About the Authors

Ron and Veronica met on the Internet in 2002, and were surprised to find that they were living only blocks apart in Victoria, BC. From auspicious beginnings they have since married and continue to enjoy retirement and travel.

Both served in WWII and post-war air forces. They had been stationed 7 miles apart in England in wartime, and frequented the same pub, but never met. Subsequent to military service, they both had varied and exciting careers.

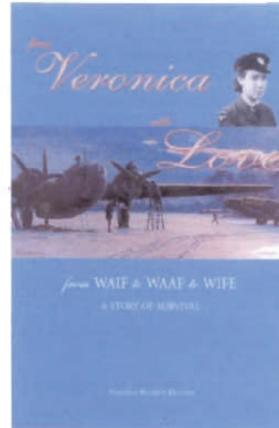
Ron, born in New Brunswick, Canada in 1921, was an Air Navigator in the Royal Canadian Air Force. He completed a tour of operations on Lancaster bombers in 6 (RCAF) Group of RAF Bomber Command, serving with 408 RCAF Goose Squadron, and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. Postwar he managed the family construction business, then returned to the RCAF in the Construction Engineering Branch. Retiring from the air force in 1972, he managed the Royal Canadian Air Force Association for 5 years. Later he formed Unique Decor, a company that sold Forces nostalgia items at wholesale and mail order and had a small manufacturing plant. In addition, he was a volunteer director of Air Force Productions Ltd, and was involved in the RCAF Association sales program.

Veronica, born in London, England of a Canadian father and an Irish mother in 1925, was brought up in a convent. Her working life started at age 14 and she was learning various office jobs while dodging bombs in London, followed by employment at Vickers Armstrong in Weybridge. At 17½ years of age Veronica enlisted in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force as a Flight Mechanic Engines, working on Wellington aircraft at Operational Training Units that provided crews to Canadian squadrons. After postwar emigration with her parents to Canada, she returned to England and re-enlisted in the WAAF as a Drill Instructor of recruits. After her demobilization from the WAAF she returned to Canada, then to live in the USA over a 40-year period, where she held various interesting positions with Liberty House in Hawaii and Joseph Magnin in California in Cosmetic sales, as well as Secretarial positions with Marriott Hotels in California, Arizona and Florida. Upon reaching retirement Veronica returned to her 'roots' in Canada.

About the books

Been There, Done That- Through Treacherous Skies by Ron Butcher (2005), 211 pages, quality trade paperback (soft cover); photos; catalogue #05-0697; ISBN 1-4120-5797-3; US\$21.70, C\$24.95, EUR17.82, £12.48. Described and available at <http://www.trafford.com/05-0697>.

From Veronica With Love: From Waif to WAAF to Wife - A Story of Survival by Veronica Bennett-Butcher (2005), 211 pages; quality trade paperback (softcover); photos; catalogue #05-1771; ISBN 1-4120-6860-6; US\$21.70, C\$24.95, EUR17.82, £12.48. Described and available at <http://www.trafford.com/05-1771>



According to Lieutenant General Bill Carr, an ex-Commander of Canada's Air Command, and himself a decorated WWII Spitfire pilot: "This book contains the most vivid, uncomplaining and honest descriptions I have ever read of what the WWII Bomber Command aircrews went through during the years 1939-1945 when they delivered no less than one-and-a-quarter million tons of bombs on Hitler's empire. From 1943 onward, the US Army Air Corps added a further three-quarter million tons to this total. And those young aircrew suffered incomparable losses."

It is the gripping life story of a decorated Air Navigator who, with his crew in a Lancaster, did a tour of operations in a Canadian squadron of RAF Bomber Command in WWII, spending nine months in the front lines. There are tales of night raids to Southeast Germany and 6 raids to Berlin. This milieu had up to 1 million personnel, 20,625 guns, 6,680 searchlights and about 400 fighters, a formidable barrier across Western Germany and around the targets, all with the prime purpose of frustrating the efforts to bomb, shooting down aircraft and killing crews being their preferred outcome. The tour terminated with bombing raids in France preparing for the invasion of Normandy. There are also interesting details of cultural life on the base, and in wartime Great Britain

In addition, the life and times of growing up in New Brunswick, Canada in the 1920s are included, as well as stories of pre-war employment. There are also post-war stories of managing the family business, returning to the RCAF as a construction engineer, time as General Manager of the RCAF Association and proprietorship of Unique Decor Unlimited. Stories of retirement include much about worldwide travel.

Veronica has chosen a wonderful way to celebrate her 80th birthday, publishing her memoirs within the auspices of the Dominion Institute's Memory Project, established to keep memories of the 20th century from being lost.

Her memories encompass education in a convent, starting work at 14 while bombs rained on London in 1940, joining the Women's Auxiliary Air Force and working as a Flight Mechanic on aircraft engines, then emigrating to Canada; a second WAAF engagement as a drill instructor and later, to the United States where she spent 40 years in Hawaii, California, Arizona and Florida before retiring in British Columbia, near where her father had started out 80-some years earlier.

"Looking back I can't help wondering where I would be if there had been no WWII. That event affected everyone and the course of our lives was changed forever. Most of us were able to pick up the pieces and move on, but for others, that wasn't possible.

"The years spent in the WAAF were all part of an education, being able to get along with others in all walks of life. We were all different, yet wearing the same uniform and marching to the same drummer. Many friendships were formed, and love affairs started only to end when a posting happened and there was a parting of the ways.

"Despite all the potatoes and carrots I peeled and other penalties paid for breaking the rules, I wouldn't have missed the experience. Now that I've finally settled down after all my moves, I am able to relive those days with my friends in the WAAF Association here in Canada. Our monthly luncheons are a noisy affair, it seems as if we have all become those 17 and 18 year olds again as we recount a funny event".

F/O Gordon Schacter P.O.W.

NAVIGATOR - 408 Sgdn 1943 + 1944.

DECEASED: DEC 29 - 2006

F/O Schacter trained as a navigator at ANCIEN
LORLETTE (Quebec City) and went overseas in 1942
after training in ENGLAND at advanced Flying School
and then at OTU. AT WELLESBORNE in 1943 and
conversion unit, he was posted to 408 Sgdn at
Leeming YORKS. F.O Schacter and his crew participated
in many raids - ESSEN - BERLIN HAMBURG etc. but
were shot down after a flight to Nuremberg the crew were forced
to bail out and became prisoners of war. The crew
returned to Canada and F.O Schacter returned to
school and completed an engineering degree at the
University of Toronto. Upon graduation, he returned
to the family business

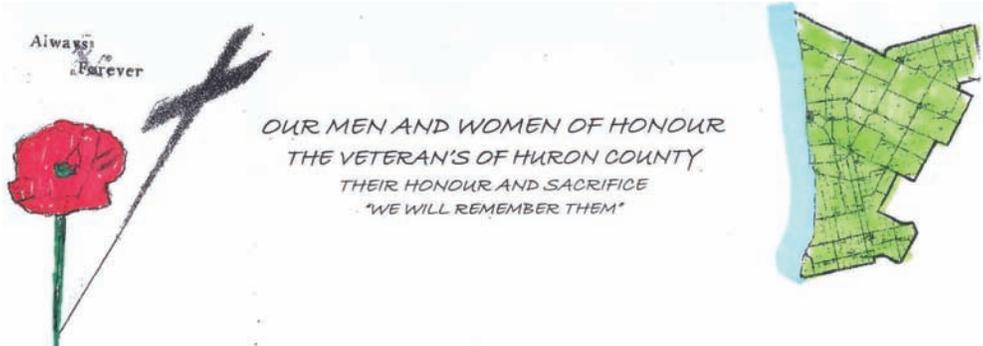
Gord had a wonderful personality and
was always a proud member of the 408 Sgdn Assoc.

He had a great personality and ^{was} proud to have
served on 408 Sgdn in R.C.A.F. from 1941 to 1945.

Rest in peace Gord - you have
earned it.

M E. Howard

Navigator: 408 Sgdn



April 28, 2006.

Mr. R. Raeder,
RCAF 408 Goose Squadron Association,
PO Box 10500,
Station Forces,
CFB Edmonton,
Edmonton, Alberta.
T5J 4J5.

Dear Mr. Raeder:

At the present time I am writing a book about the men and women of Huron County who did not return home to Canada after both world wars and Korea.

To make this effort successful, we are looking for the crests and mottos of the battalions, regiments, squadron and ships that these men and women served with or on.

I am asking for your assistance and support in this effort. It would be very much appreciated if I could obtain a print quality crest of RCAF 408 squadron along with the squadron motto. Should you not be able to provide this, could you lead me in the right direction as to where this might be available?

You may reach me at 129 St. Georges Crescent, Goderich, Ontario, N7A 2M1. My phone number is 519-524-2605 and my email is oldfuzzywuzzy@yahoo.ca.

I am very much looking forward to your reply.

Very Respectfully,

Jim Rutledge

2 June 06

DEWE A BROWN
ARI
PRESCOTT RN
KOLE ITO

National Chairman
408 'Goose' Sq In Assn.
Edmonton AB T5J 4J5

Dear Sir

Enclosed please find my check to
cover 2 years dues in the HOS Assn.

At the moment I have arranged
to place memorial stones at the Air
Museum - Astro-Trenton On - on behalf of
all members of my crew (operational
Linton on base)

I have no recent news of the following
so am unable to tell the whereabouts of any
year of their demise if applicable.

The Honourable Manitoba Judge NEIL McPHEE
Navigator - Sandy McKillop, Navigator - Arthur
Quinn Herbert, Bomb Aimer.

If you have any information on these
men with you please advise me.

Yours truly

Doug 'Lans'

From: Martin Armstrong [mailto:mr8urns@hotmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, July 19, 2006 7:05 AM
To: secretary@forfreedom.ca
Subject: RAGG, PERCY ALBERT GEORGE 927081

Dear Sir,

My name is Martin Armstrong, and I am researching my Grandfather's war service. He served with 408 Goose Squadron RCAF, and gave his life on 22 October 1941. My mother was born in the following March 1942, and such was the grief felt in the family at the time, that personal documents of my Grandmother, concerning my Grandfather were destroyed by "well meaning" relatives, so all we have is my Grandmother's memories. She is now nearing 90 years, and whilst of full mind, does not recall all the detail.

She beleive's Perry, as he liked to be know, was serving from a base in Yorkshire, and was on a mission to Mannheim, Germany. I think he was the wireless operator in a Hampden Bomber, and it crashed in an electrical storm. There was one survivor, and Canadian gentleman who wrote to my Grandmother, and told the story of the mission.

I am making a pilgrimage to vist his grave in Durnbach Germany this August, but would really appreciate any information you might have of his service, or comrades. I only just found out that he served with the RCAF instead of the RAF through my own internet research, and would be interested to understand the reasons behind this that were prevalent at that time.

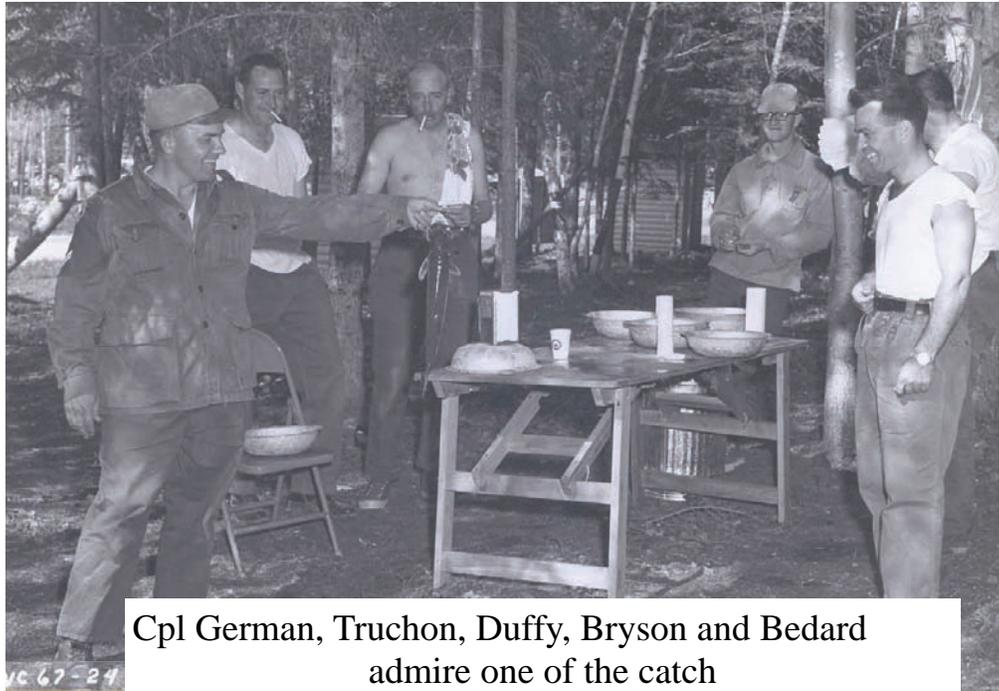
Your sincerely

Martin Armstrong
100 London rd
Rayleigh
Essex
SS6 9JA
ITK

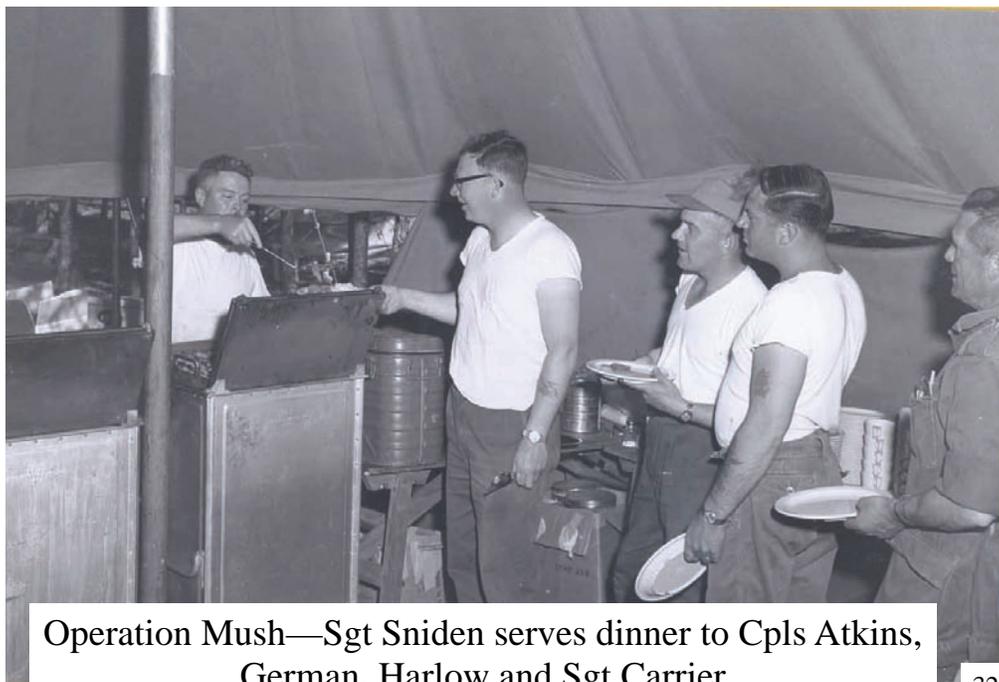
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408 Squadron Rivers, Manitoba

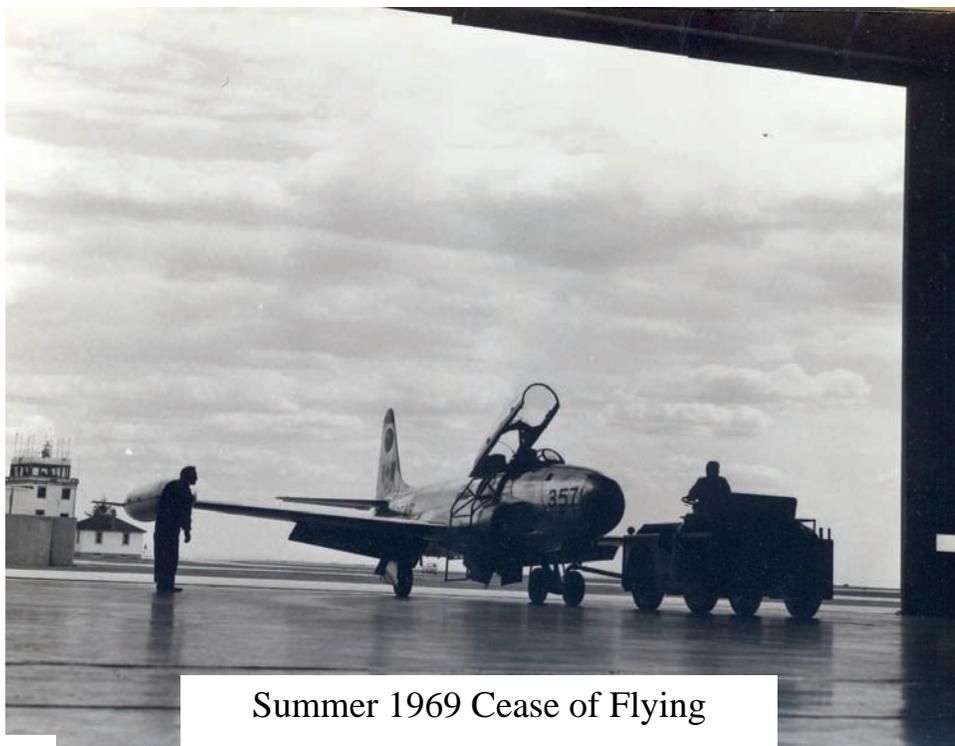




Cpl German, Truchon, Duffy, Bryson and Bedard
admire one of the catch



Operation Mush—Sgt Sniden serves dinner to Cpls Atkins,
German, Harlow and Sgt Carrier



Summer 1969 Cease of Flying

