

971 RCAF Air MARSHAL SLEMON WING AIR Force Association Newsletter

MAY 2005



Armed with lethal .303 Lee Enfield rifles the Canadian Army surges forth from Resolute on an 1,800 km patrol to Eureka and Alert. See page 6.

Social Calendar

- 01 Apr 17 of us retirees enjoyed a great mess dinner at which Admiral Timothy Keating, USN, amazed us with his knowledge of Canadian history. He quoted so many statistics that he must, in his younger days, have attended one of my world history classes. Sir, I know your pain at losing your friends in the attack on the Pentagon and it was certain from your tributes that you appreciate the pain we endured on a nightly basis in Bomber Command. On behalf of your friends and mine who were denied the privilege, and the pain, of growing old, I thank you for your sincere and thoughtful remarks.
- Apr 10 The 971 Wingers ran the table in winning the NORAD Canadian Hockey League Championship for the second time in 3 years. The Wingers were undefeated in the play-offs, out scoring the opposition (the bad guys & girls) 6-0. Yes, that's right - no team was able to penetrate the defensive wall put up by the Wingers.
- Apr 30 Chinese theme at Bill Shick's. We will distribute copies of this newsletter to attendees to save postage. A summary of the party will appear in the July newsletter.
- May 21 1730 at Yvonne and Gerry Robitaille's, 260-9976, 7345 Buckeye Court (south off W. Woodmen, west of I-25). Co-hosted by Gwen and Jim Czirjak. Menu: baron of beef.
- May 30 The Memorial Day ceremony will be held as usual at Memorial Park, Colorado Springs, commencing at 1100. Dress for wing members is hats, blue blazers (with medals), gray slacks. In case of inclement weather the ceremony will be held at the Retired Enlisted Club on Emory Circle. For further information please contact Darrell Levitt at 531-0836
- Jun We need a host.
- Jul 23 The Champions annual BBQ starting late afternoon. More in the July newsletter.
- Aug 13 Wing dining-out to celebrate "Year of the Veteran".

The Editor's Corner

ISLAM and MUSLIMS - A THREAT? We do fear the hold that Islam has on its followers, forgetting other religions do as well. Karl Marx warned us that "Religion is the Opium of the People". But, like all the others, Islam has its factions. Saudi Arabia and Turkey are quite different. We recoil at the inferior role forced on women in some Islamic countries. To conceal his loveliest creations from head to toe in mountains of cloth is, surely, an insult to Allah. Muslim men argue this is not degradation but protection. It saves women from the insatiable lust possessed by all men from puberty to at least age 100. They point to our widespread rape and murder of women, to our sexual harassment at military academies, to the many thousands of women forced into the sex trade, and to the large number of unwanted pregnancies where the sexes are mixed in military units. They suggest supervised brothels for us. But, sex and female inequality aside, what do we need to fear? Where and how much to spend?

The Federation of American Scientists lists 388 organizations that could be terrorist, freedom fighters, or just questionable. We should: watch them, keep our powder dry without getting paranoid, and stop broadcasting where our vulnerabilities are. The UK outlaws 25 "terrorist" organizations, but adds 14 more "Proscribed Irish Groups". The US designates 37 foreign organizations as "terrorist", one of which is in Ireland (Real IRA). Top of the "terrorist" list in many countries is the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency, USA) as the world's largest terrorist organization responsible for the deaths of thousands in Chile, Colombia, Nicaragua, Palestine, Turkey (Kurds), Vietnam, and others. Formed early in the Cold War, the CIA recruited many known Nazi killers to do its work.

Islamic Organizations: 26 of the 37 "terrorist" organizations listed by the US are Islamic. Most have limited local aims, and are based in Afghanistan, Algeria, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Malaysia, Pakistan, Palestine, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Syria, and Tajikistan. Total members are estimated to be under 70,000. The first Islamic invasion of Europe occurred in Spain in 710. They made southern Spain a pleasant and prosperous region until cruelly expelled by Christians about 1492. After WWII, a devastated Europe needed cheap workers so opened the door to impoverished Muslims, expecting them to leave after their work was done. Like the Anglo Saxons who were invited in by Romanized Britons to fight off the Picts and Scots after the protecting Romans had left, today's Muslims are staying, and now number some 23 million. Of these, 6.5 million are in France, mainly from North Africa, 3.5 million in the UK, mainly from S. Asia, 3 million in Germany, mainly from Turkey (in 1987 I saw hundreds of these Turkish families housed in my former POW camp in Moosburg, Bavaria), 1 million in Holland, most from Indonesia, and 600,000 in Spain from North Africa. They are varied in outlook and in adherence to different aspects of the Islamic faith, and they are not organized as a whole. Perhaps, a social and police problem such as the brutal murder of Theo van Gogh in Amsterdam and the death threats to the courageous Dutch MP, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, from Somalia, who is fighting the inferior status Islam imposes on women as depicted in their film "Submission". The understandable reaction of mosque and Islamic school burnings by members of the world's most tolerant society aggravates the problem. We, who have endured many centuries of struggling for an open, democratic society, must deny refuge to those who would nullify our achievements. Immigrants are slow to integrate and do congregate in cities. Whose fault is that? With dangerous lack of foresight in not dispersing these immigrants around the country among locals who can demonstrate our democratic and liberal lifestyles, we allow them to congregate in the slums of cities with one of their few luxuries being satellite TV that brings them hate messages, and so we capitulate sections of our cities. Muslims have achieved the greatest equality in Britain and Germany, but remain underprivileged in French ghettos. There are 2,200 mosques in Germany, 1,200 in France, most tiny, and 800 in the UK. We show the same lack of foresight when we allow Jewish settlers to steal Palestine land with the righteous assurance that God gave them the land a few thousand years ago. Or Mugabe to confiscate efficient and beneficial white-owned farms to give to his unproductive cronies. Or 7 Congo war lords to wreck havoc. Or . . . so many others.

In 10,000 years of warfare we have not solved basic human problems. As we have yet to grow up, we must maintain effective defensive forces, but there are some who profit by crying "Wolf!" where there are only a few mosquitos. The devastating shock of 11 Sep 2001 is having the effect desired by the unscrupulous perpetrators into forcing us to go bankrupt in fighting illusory foes. A brilliant Saudi millionaire, annoyed at US might entrenching a cruel Saudi dynasty in order to ensure a continued flow of oil, used other Saudis as martyrs to engineer a strike using US assets as weapons. Retaliation hit back at the unsavoury Taliban and Sunni regimes with inadequate planning, forces, and unity, thus actually prompting the growth of resistance movements, and small cells of dedicated enemies who do pose a threat. Guerrillas are best fought with guerrillas, and with schools, jobs, and dignity.

Hazards are numerous from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe, but the greatest terrorists remain malaria, diarrhea, AIDS, and the like that can be fought with far fewer funds than we spend on minor human terrorists. The maligned United Nations, with inadequate backing, has done a credible job in clearing mines, mitigating disasters, controlling disease, and stopping wars, but needs much more support. The major powers, not the UN, were responsible for the Rwanda massacre. Only 88 nations have offered troops to the UN which often relies on cheap, under-trained, and under-disciplined troops from impoverished countries. Major powers should be contributors to, and not dictators of, world stability. World War Two was the inevitable result of the US not backing Woodrow Wilson's 14 Points and his League of Nations (thus forcing debt repayment, reparations, devastating inflation, the Great Depression, and the rise of dictators). The world cannot afford another such mistake, so do support the UN. Yes, like all other governments, it needs reforms, but it is the best hope we have. Remember, and support, Lester Pearson's vision.

THE GENERAL CAMPAIGN STAR:

Inaugurated 29 Nov 2004 to be awarded to members of the Canadian Forces and members of Allied forces working with Canadian Forces who deploy into a defined theatre of operations in the presence of an armed enemy.



Bars approved to date:

Allied Force: Fighter pilots and AWACS crews who flew at least 5 operations during Operation Allied Force, 24 Mar - 10 Jun 1999 (Kosovo, Yugoslavia, Albania, Macedonia, Adriatic, Ionian Sea)

ISAF + FIAS: To those who served at least 30 days in Afghanistan from 24 Apr 03 to a yet-to-be-determined date. (Submitted by Darrell Levitt)

MIKE LEWIS, our new member, has many interesting tales. He has been persuaded to let us have two for this issue. Mike was among 38 RAF pilots who earned their wings in 1938. Of the 38 only 6 survived the war. In 1940-41, Mike was piloting Manchester bombers out of Waddington, Lincolnshire,

which, like so many RAF stations at that time, was a grass strip. There was no snow removal equipment, so, when it snowed, operations were hampered until it melted.

Accepting an invitation from the Deans to spend New Year's Eve in Cardiff, Mike crossed London to change trains, unaware that London was being fire-bombed at the time. In Cardiff he met, and dated for the evening, a beautiful young lady. As he was dressing in his best uniform for the New Year's eve date, the air raid sirens sounded. He and Julie Dean went out the front door to see what was happening. A stick of incendiaries hit the road six feet in front of them. They could see that some had landed on the roof of the synagogue at the end of the street. They raced down to help save the building. The doors were locked, so Julie stood on Mike's shoulders to break a window, enter, and unlock the front door. They found the shovel and pail of sand and clambered onto the roof through a door they could unlock. Here Mike doused the fires and shovelled the incendiaries onto the road below.

With the building saved, Mike persuaded Julie to return home while he joined a group of volunteer firemen who were desperately trying to replace a cross-threaded hose to an underground hydrant. Mike got thoroughly soaked in doing this, then remained with the firemen fighting numerous blazes. When he finally got back to the Deans, who were safe, he knew his uniform was a complete wreck, however the women took it, dried it, cleaned it, and ironed it back into perfect condition. It was, however, too late for his date, and he had to get back to base. He never saw the girl again.

RAF Waddington was notified that King George VI and Queen Elizabeth would arrive at 1030, 26 Jan 1941 to present medals to seven Waddington airmen who had earned

them several months ago. As it was cold and snowy the recipients were lined up at 1000 in front of a Manchester in a hangar with the doors wide open. Because of icy roads the royal party was delayed until 1130 while the men were standing and freezing without greatcoats. Along with Mike, Sqn Ldr MacGregor was also to receive a DFC. He later became president of Trans Canada Airlines.

Following the investiture and revue all repaired to the mess where the King made for the fireplace. Mike had a 20-minute light-hearted and enjoyable conversation with him during which the King explained how he fought the cold during investitures by installing muffs to stop the draughts up his sleeves and pant legs. He pulled up his sleeves and pant legs to show them the installed muffs. He also explained how his father, King George V, had invented the hooks for attaching decorations to chests. Mike was also very impressed with Queen Elizabeth, a beautiful lady with a smile that won the hearts of all present.

HIGHWAY REST STOP: A large 2-storey building near Dusseldorf housed a restaurant, gift shop, and overnight accommodation for 30 travellers. Nearby was a repair workshop and an area for horses and chariots. This 2,000-year-old Roman site is currently being excavated. It was on the Roman Long Road from the North Sea to Brindisi in southern Italy.

INDIA: Checking on India's progress, we find that:

1. A million Indian professionals are now doing work once done by Westerners.
2. Those living in dire poverty have been reduced from 45 to 25%, but that still leaves 250 million. The population is still increasing at 15 million per year.
3. Only 7% of Indians had telephones but Canada's Nortel is building a 60,000 km fibre-optic network and has landed several new contracts in competition with Siemens (Germany), Ericsson (Sweden) and Motorola and Lucent (USA).
4. Bureaucratic delays and petty corruption still hamper progress.
5. India has 2.5 million foreign visitors per year led by the UK, USA, Sri Lanka, and Canada (90,000).
6. To the worry of Pakistan, India has increased its military budget 22% last year and is aiming for 40% this year. It has 1.1 million under arms, 3,414 tanks, 738 combat aircraft, 60 nuclear missiles, 27 warships, 16 submarines. Planned purchases include the Admiral Gorshkov aircraft carrier from Russia, Scorpion submarines, 126 F-16s (USA), 66 Hawk trainers (UK), and \$2.7 billion of arms from Israel.
7. With China trade at \$14 billion per year, military threats are downgraded. As India cannot outpace China militarily, it will remain a regional power.
8. India is straining to finance infrastructure such as roads, docks, airports, education and health.

PEACEKEEPING: This term was not in popular use until 1956 when PM Lester Pearson offered Canadian troops as part of an international UN Army for peacekeeping purposes. Since 1949, over 125,000 Canadians have served on over 50 “peacekeeping” operations with 116 killed.

CONTRIBUTORS: It is time again to thank Keith Greenaway and Bob Johnson for a steady stream of contributions giving me statistics and ideas for articles. Both live in the Ottawa area where there is a surplus of wisdom to share. Keith, a retired BGen, is an expert on the Arctic, has conducted many Arctic tours for ambassadors stationed in Ottawa, has been awarded the McKee Trophy, has been an advisor on numerous defence-related committees. Many of you will remember Bob from his NORAD days. He remains active in community and veterans affairs.

BATTLE OF BRITAIN MEMORIAL: Further to the article in the March newsletter, George Mitchell, 444 Wing, Barrie, and President of the Battle of Britain Historical Society, has sent us a brochure of the impressive 25-metre-long granite memorial along the Victoria embankment near Big Ben in London.

On 28 bronze panels are the names of the 2,935 airmen from 13 countries, including 113 Canadians, who took part in the battle. George has sent us details of the 20 Canadians who were killed in the battle and the 32 participants who were killed later in the war. To emphasize what we were fighting for, George also includes a copy of the 1940 speech of Nazi ideologist, Obergruppenführer Richard Darré:

“As soon as we beat England we shall make an end of you Englishmen once and for all. Able-bodied men and women, ages 16 to 45, will be exported as slaves to the continent. The old and weak will be exterminated. All men remaining in Britain as slaves will be sterilized, a million or two of the young women of the Nordic type will be segregated in a number of stud farms where, with the assistance of picked German sires, during a period of 10 to 12 years, they will produce annually a series of Nordic infants to be brought up in every way as Germans.

These infants will form the future population of Britain. They will be partially educated in Germany and only those who fully satisfy the Nazi requirements will be allowed to return to Britain to take up permanent residence. The rest will be sterilized and sent to join slave gangs in Germany. Thus, in a generation or two, the British will disappear.

It appears there was no follow-up on Darré wishes.

Again, donations to the memorial may be sent to AFAC, Box 2460, Stn D, Ottawa, K1P 5W6.

PILOT TRAINING: Bombardier is somewhat miffed at losing the contract renewal for the next 22 years at \$1.77 billion to Allied Wings, led by Kelowna Flightcraft. New facilities will be built at Portage la Prairie. (Submitted by Roy Thompson).

A RARE BREED TO BE HANDLED WITH CARE:

Just how precious scribes are was again revealed when Norm Blondel, after 4 years as editor of the excellent 888 (Komox) Wing newsletter, *Contrails*, tried to retire in order that he and Julie could do some travelling to place like New Zealand and Colorado.

This wing has 608 members, not one of whom has volunteered to fill Norm’s shoes. So, Norm will be back at his old job as soon as he goes broke travelling.

SILVER KEY: Back in the 1970s and 1980s, when Canadian wives assumed responsibility for running the *Silver and Such* shop there were plenty of volunteers and a very commendable job was done for the community. Recently Margit Thompson has been the mainstay while Roy has organized bus drivers and the repair of wheel chairs. Unfortunately, the number of Canadian volunteers has fallen off to such a degree that Roy, as co-ordinator, has had to inform Silver Key that this Canadian contribution has now terminated.

We are not alone. Charitable organizations, like Kiwanis, Lions, and Rotary are suffering from declining membership. We are all wealthier today, but with both parents in the workforce there is little time left for charitable work. We are caught in a rat race.

NEW MEMBERS: Patrick and Wendy Dennis, 2985 Royal Pine Drive, Colorado Springs, 80920, (719) 266-9315. papadelta@23@msn.com.

Pat hails from Windsor. As a member of the ROTP he graduated from the U. of Windsor in 1973. He was trained as a fighter controller, and transferred to the 24th NORAD region in Great Falls, then to the 22nd Region in North Bay. After graduating from the Air Weapons Instructors’ Course, he was kept on staff as an instructor. In 1980 he was transferred to Falconbridge. He then spent a year as Military Commander at the Cambridge Bay DEW Line sector. Then it was AWACS at Colorado Springs which included the Mission Commanders’ Course at Tinker AFB, Oklahoma. While here he earned his MSc at UNC. In 1986 he became Chief of the Ground Radar Sensors Branch as a LCol, shortly afterwards receiving the Order of Military Merit.

From 1987 to 1991 he was at NDHQ, then Geilenkirchen as a tactical director aboard AWACS. In 1995 he went to Brussels on the Partnership for Peace program. In 1997, as a colonel, he was Defence Counsellor to Canada’s NATO ambassador. In 1998 he went to SHAPE in Casteau, Belgium, as Chief of the Air Command and Control Section, In 2000 he trained in Canada in the Hebrew language for the position of Canadian Defence Attaché to Israel.

In 2004 he was appointed vice director, Exercises and Training, in Colorado Springs for his 2nd tour here.

BEST AIRPORTS: A poll of world travellers claims the best airports are Hong Kong, Singapore, and Seoul. Best in North America is Halifax, best in Europe, Copenhagen, and best in the Middle East, Dubai. 4

PRIVATE JOHNSON BEHARRY, VC: For the first time in 20 years a Victoria Cross has been awarded, this time in Iraq to Private Beharry, age 25.

An native of Grenada, he left the Caribbean in 1999 to join the British army. In May 2004, as the driver of a Warrior armoured vehicle, he was leading a convoy of six vehicles when they were ambushed near Amarah. Under heavy fire, he got them to safety, then returned twice for wounded. He saved all 30 men. A month later he received head injuries while transporting troops. Again he got them to a safe area. He is now recovering from brain surgery. When congratulated on his bravery, he replied he was just too busy doing his job under fire to think of bravery.

The last VCs were awarded to two soldiers killed in 1982 in the Falklands.

DARFUR: The killing and displacement continues unabated in spite of loud vocal complaints from the rest of the world. The decades-old misery in Sudan stems from the Khartoum government's indifference to its people. While the government has grown wealthy from oil in the south and mechanized agriculture in the west and east, the producers of the wealth have not had a share in it. The Muslim north has persecuted, not only the Christian south, but also Muslim factions in the north. The government assists the Jinjaweed militias in their wholesale raping, murdering, and village burnings in an attempt to suppress other uprisings such as the Free Lions, the Beja Congress, and the Al-Shahamah.

The UN threatens sanctions, but as we, especially China, need the oil, oil sanctions are ruled out. Khartoum can ignore UN threats as long as the quarrel continues between the UN and the US (John Bolton faction) as to the venue to try the perpetrators of the mayhem. The UN, naturally, wants the International Court of Justice that the US has not joined, unwilling to accept possible international sanction on its actions.

HOCKEY and ISABELLE: Isabelle was quite prompt in replying to my query in the last newsletter:

"I agree that the Canadian and US women's teams should compete for the Stanley Cup. Why not? They do offer a very good entertainment. I saw them in Ottawa a few years ago during their North American Tour prior to the Olympic Games in Salt Lake City and these women, boy!, they're very good hockey players. They skate fast and they work hard on the ice (is it the difference between being paid big buck\$\$\$ and not?). They don't fight too often (that doesn't mean they're not aggressive) though, but to me, that's what hockey should be - more technical, more strategies/systems, less fighting (and less money for these spoiled NHL players - it's probably gone too far now, unfortunately).

Hope I'll still be able to receive the newsletters when I'm posted back to Canada. I'm leaving this Summer for MARPAC (Victoria). I'm pretty excited about it, should be a very nice posting. I needed some maritime experience, so that'll be my chance!"

We will miss you, Isabelle, but before you go would you teach the membership to be as prompt as you?

OUR CANADIAN GOVERNMENT excels in the **Delay and Review Department**. The study to recommend defence policy, due in October, has been postponed until 2006 to permit the committees to do a little sight seeing. They are off to all parts of Canada, to Europe, to Afghanistan, and to the United States (New York, Norfolk, San Diego, and Colorado Springs). Of course the study will not be complete without the advice of 971 Wing. Why else would they come to Colorado?

THE BATTLE OF NAVARINO, 20 Oct 1827, was the last naval engagement in which all 5 navies were under sail. Sir Edward Codrington led a British-French-Russian fleet to a decisive victory over the Ottoman-Egyptian fleet off Pylos, Greece. This ended the Greek War of Independence from the Ottoman Turks in favour of the Greeks.

ALBERTA, SASKATCHEWAN AND THE QUEEN: The Queen will participate this month in centennial celebrations for these two young provinces.

SODDEN FLODDEN: That the male of our species is not a very bright creation is borne out by so many examples that choosing one for a newsletter is just too easy. Take Flodden, for instance. In 1513, Henry VIII had chased off to France thinking he would earn fame and glory by littering French fields with French bodies. James IV of Scotland thought this was his opportunity to litter England with English bodies, so he assembled 40,000 Scots eager to oblige. Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey, also sought fame and glory, but, at age 69, he feared he did not have too much time left, so he marched an army north to meet the invading Scots. Of course, it was raining. The English were running out of the little food they carried and there was only two days of beer left. Foraging was poor, so they did have to hurry, even though thoroughly soaked.

Learning of Howard's advance, the Scots, augmented by 5,000 French troops, took position on Flodden ridge, a mile long hill, protected on one side by a marsh and by a steep hill on the other. Howard sent James IV a message, inviting him to battle on a nearby flat plain on 9 September between noon and 3 PM. The offer was declined, so Howard, against all advice, marched his army, tired, hungry, and soaked, over soggy terrain to outflank the enemy and hit them from the rear. James' artillery officer begged for permission to fire on the English in this vulnerable array, but James forbade it, allowing the English to form up in proper battle array with numerous grunts and curses as they got their artillery placed. Efficient English artillery fire then played havoc among the Scots who charged but halted their success to plunder. English archers and cannon then took a terrible toll. Soon five earls were cut down while James suffered a severed right arm, had several arrows in him, and his throat slit. Howard's forces withdrew at dusk, and the surviving Scots slipped away but left 10,000 dead including 12 earls, 14 lords, 5 bishops. The English lost 1,500 dead, but few nobles. Pleased, Henry VIII made Howard the Duke of Norfolk.

AIR CADET VISIT: Roy Thompson, who has been coordinating this visit, advises: "I have just been informed by Captain Richard Murdryk that the 205 Collishaw Air Cadet Squadron visit to NORAD and Colorado Springs 11-16 April 2005 has been postponed until later in the year. The cadet group could not raise the required funds on such short notice after the Airlift was cancelled. We were all aware that the airlift was slim at best but was worth the try. However the cadet squadron had gained much information about travel arrangements that they will find useful in planning a trip to Colorado Springs. We look forward to the visit.

Many of you worked hard to plan this visit and I want to thank each of you for your efforts and fast response in putting together such a great program that was both entertaining and most informative to those young men and women, to make them better citizens."

PIERRE PETTIGREW, Foreign Affairs Minister, in a speech to the Association of Universities, praises the mosaic of Canada, its approach to world problems, and assistance to developing nations. He encourages people to travel, study abroad, do volunteer work, learn foreign languages, and be Canadians in the world - but, first, to acquire a sound base of Canadian history, literature, traditions, achievements, values, peoples, and problems.

GOVERNOR GENERALS and TROPHIES: Adrienne Clarkson's foray into the use of the Stanley Cup follows an honoured line of Governor Generals who have been involved in sports. The Earl of Dufferin (1872-78) donated a trophy for curling; Lord Stanley (1888-93) for hockey; Lord and Lady Minto (1898-1904) for figure skating, lacrosse, and curling; Earl Grey (1904-11) for football; the Duke of Connaught (1911-16) for NWMP revolver marksmanship and women's golf; Lady Byng (1921-26) for gentlemanly hockey; Viscount Willingdon (1926-31) for lawn bowling; Lady Tweedsmuir (1935-40) for women's curling; Vincent Massey (1959-67) for university football; Roland Michener (1967-74) for sports fishing; Edward Schreyer (1979-84) for soccer.

THE DIEFENBUNKER IS NOW A MUSEUM: When Igor Grouzenko, 5 Sep 1945, defected from the Soviet embassy in Ottawa bringing with him 109 documents depicting spy rings in Canada, the UK, and the US, it ushered in the Cold War. The Berlin Crisis of 1958 prompted the Diefenbaker government to plan for the evacuation of Ottawa and the protection of government offices. An underground bunker was built near Kemptville, but, as it would be large enough for only a selected few, other above ground buildings at scattered locations were selected to have their basements bomb-proofed, but only three were ever completed.

CANADIAN WWI VETERANS: Only 6 of the 600,000 are still alive. Clare Laking, now 106, gave up his pipe at age 80, his curling broom at 96, his NHL season ticket at 100, and his driver's license at 102 along with summer trips to the cottage in Haliburton. He retains a full head of grey hair and a sense of humour. Long silent on his war

experiences, he has now been speaking out on the slaughter and horrors of war, yet mixing tales of death and suffering with many humorous experiences. (Thanks to Frank Fraser and the Edmonton Journal).

ARCTIC PATROLS and LEE-ENFIELDS:

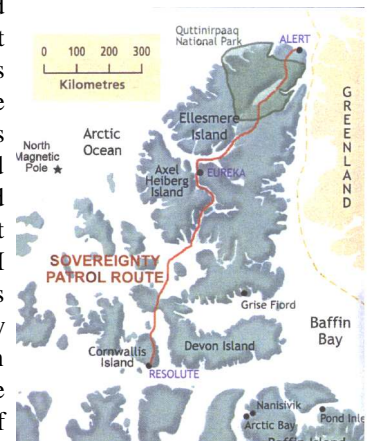
Forgive me - I could not resist taking a crack at our current defence forces on page 1. Actually I have great regard for the Rangers and for the Lee-Enfield which evolved in 1903 and became one of the best WWI and WWII rifles. I trained on Lee-Enfields 1937-41 in Militia infantry and artillery regiments. In the 1950s, when given the secondary duty of recruiting, organizing, and training the St. Hubert aerodrome defence team, I used Lee-Enfields. Even with its shoulder-busting kickback, many of the young women I recruited outshot the men in marksmanship. In 1962 at Cape Parry, DEW Line, when I had to track for 8 hours in darkness across the tundra to capture an Inuit after he had disabled a Mountie, I had to borrow a shotgun from the Hudson Bay store. I begged ADCHQ for some surplus Lee-Enfields. A year after I left the DEW Line, a dozen arrived.

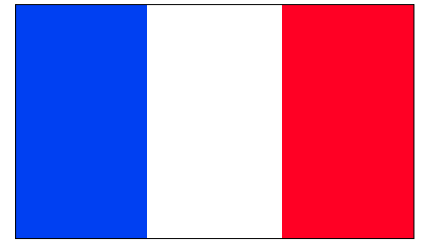
The Canadian Forces have been mounting a series of Army-Navy-Air Forces exercises in the Arctic (Banks Island, Magnetic North Pole, Baffin Island, Ellef Ringnes). This particular patrol was in April 2004. It consisted of 5 Regular Force plus 15 native Rangers. There were 20 snowmobiles plus towed sleds. The Lee-Enfields gave military authenticity and were more than adequate for any possible enemy (polar bears). The 9-day trek from Eureka to Alert was the more arduous portion. Parks Canada limited the number of snowmobiles to cross Quttinirpaaq National Park with its fragile ecosystem. Here they saw foxes, musk oxen, polar bears, ptarmigans, hares, and caribou.

440 Squadron provided a twin otter for re-supply. **56 RUSSIAN RETIRED NUCLEAR SUBMARINES** are being dismantled in the Barents Sea by a Canada-Germany - Japan - Norway - Russia - UK - US team. This is a \$20 billion, 10-year project with the Canadian contribution amounting to \$1 billion and responsibility for dismantling 12 of the 56 submarines.

Now, if only this team would continue its good work on the nuclear submarines of other nations.

DENMARK DUMPS CANADA TO SECOND PLACE in the *Economist* ratings as to the best country with which to do business, followed by Singapore, Hong Kong, and the United States. Based on 10 categories including: political and institutional environment, economic stability, private enterprise and foreign investment policies, financing, and infrastructure.





French Gratitude

This is a summary of a touching, true story written by Tom Linning, copied by Jean-Louis Denis, editor of the 426 Squadron Association Newsletter, and sent to us.

Tom and Elsie Linning live in Penticton, British Columbia. Tom's cousin, William, had enlisted in the RCAF in 1941, was on a Halifax Squadron in the UK, and was killed in 1944. Tom and Elsie tried to learn more, but Ottawa records were of little help.

On 17 August 2003, Tom received a strange phone call asking if he knew a William Linning. The caller was Alain Berthelot, Mayor of Larré, Normandy.

The mayor explained that an RAF Halifax, attempting to deliver supplies and an agent to the French underground was shot down, 16 July 1944, into their village. The Germans had uncovered, and liquidated, the Resistance cell, and, with the correct signals, had lured the Halifax in to be met with a hail of flak.

The villagers were made to bury the 7 bodies: 3 RAF, 3 RCAF, and 1 unknown agent.

The mayor told of a memorial they had built inscribing the six known names, and asked Tom to forward an eulogy he could read at a memorial service. Then, in May 2004, Tom and Elsie were invited to Larré for six days of ceremonies, banquets, tours of battlefields escorted by Alain and Catherine Berthelot, and great hospitality from all members of the community. They met the man who had buried William. On the first day, at the town hall, Tom was asked to lower the French tricolour and replace it with a Canadian flag which would fly throughout their stay. At the stone monument at the entrance to the field in which the Halifax crashed, the national anthems of France and Canada were sung. Elsie's strong voice so impressed them that she was asked to sing the anthem again. Elsie was asked to read the names of the six RAF/RCAF men, then schoolchildren read the names of the many villagers who had been killed during the occupation. Halifax wreckage can still be found on the field. Tom even found a live .303 round. Villagers had made shoes from the rubber tires and blouses from the parachutes. Tom took home some pieces of wreckage.

In liberating Normandy, we killed 50,000 Normans as "collateral damage". Yet, survivors can still show gratitude for the sacrifices we made. The Linnings were continually overwhelmed with the outpouring of genuine thanks. Many tears rolled down many cheeks.

The mayor had done research of his own. The Halifax came from 298 RAF Squadron which was based at Tarrant-Ruston, Dorset. It was a secret base, used for clandestine incursions into German-occupied Europe. Along with supplies, agents, whose names were never known by the aircraft crews, were dropped and picked up. The RAF was unable to provide the mayor with the name of this agent. One line is left blank on the monument for him. The inscribed names are:

RAF
James Crossley, 24
Enzo Grasso, 23
Edward Wilkinson, 20

RCAF
William Linning, 24
Joseph Fournier, 27
Derwood Smith, 22

On the back of the monument is the inscription: Dedicated 9 May 2004 by Tom and Elsie Linning of Penticton, Canada.

2005 - THE YEAR OF THE VETERAN
By Darrell Levitt, 971 Wing Ceremonial Advisor

The Canadian government has declared 2005 the "Year of the veteran". To this end, communities are celebrating this year in recognition of our military veterans. From picnics, to parades, the people of Canada are paying tribute not only to the our dwindling numbers of war veterans, but to all past members of the Canadian Forces.

We owe much to those that have served our great nation both in peace and war. The Canadian military member today is not known only for the deeds that were performed by our citizen soldiers in WW I, WWII, and Korea, but also as "Peacekeepers". We have the distinction of having been honoured with the Nobel Peace Prize. Our armed services are constantly being asked to deploy to faraway locations in order to restore peace and democracy. Our troops are constantly being placed in harms way all in the name of peace. We have participated with world coalitions in Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and many other countries. Many of our numbers have died in order to preserve freedom and to ensure that citizens of Canada have the right and ability to speak, act, and pursue their chosen paths without oppression or opposition.

We as Canadians need to pay special homage to all those that have ever worn the uniform of the Canadian Forces. As we live in the United States of America, we need also thank the members of this great nation's military for the sacrifices that they have made in the pursuit of freedom. Our two countries are intertwined in so many ways that we are truly brother (or sister) nations. We have supported each other economically and militarily. We share the longest undefended border in the world, we can still today very easily travel from the US to Canada and back again without fear.

So during the remainder of 2005, when you see men or women in uniform, regardless of the nationality, stop and thank them for their devotion, dedication, and sacrifices or perform random acts of kindness, such as buy them a coffee or simply shake their hands. Remember I am able to write this article because of the sacrifices made by these brave and humble human beings.

THE WING PRESIDENT ADDS: We have many members of 971 Wing who have served their country with distinction and honour/honor in the military forces of Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom - and some are still serving today. 971 Wing intends to honour the contributions and sacrifices of these servicemen and, in particular, to pay tribute to all our wartime veterans. We are planning for a "Year of the Veteran" celebration, focusing on August for this event. Look for complete details in the July newsletter.

DENISE SENDS HER THANKS: "I would be grateful if you would pass along my thanks to the members of 971 RCAF Air Marshal Slemon Wing for the beautiful assortment of flowers and plants which were sent to me at the hospital in Edmonton. In particular the very beautiful little cactus plant, in bloom, will be around for a long time and will be a constant reminder of the many friends back in the Springs and the good times we shared. Also, a special thanks to Joan Peterson who arranged for the flowers; and, to Gary Thompson, Lew Lomas, Chris Dooher and others who set my wheelchair aside and carried me around, and up and down stairs at the many houseparty meetings I attended and enjoyed so much." Warmest regards, Denise Best

FREE WORKSHOP: Larry Best will host a free workshop on Tuesday, 17 May 2005, starting at 10:00 AM and running for about two hours at his home in Monument. The subject will be "everything you need to know about funeral homes and cemeteries before you really need to know." After retiring from the RCAF/CF in 1993, Larry worked as a full time volunteer for Pikes Peak Hospice in homecare until 1996 after which he worked as a memorial counselor at several cemeteries and funeral homes. From 2000 until 2002 he was a regional manager in charge of operations at several funeral homes and cemeteries throughout Colorado. The workshop will adequately prepare participants to answer the question "if one of my loved ones dies tonight, what will I be doing tomorrow?" Please RSVP to Larry by Thursday, May 12th, at 488-8650.

CANAM 2005 will be played as a 4-person scramble at Peterson AFB Silver Spruce Golf Course, 3 June 05. Check-in starts at 0700, followed by a Tournament briefing at 0740 at the south entrance of the club house. Shotgun start at 0800. **Eligibility:** Every team must consist of 2 Canadians and 2 Americans (an Australian or Briton may substitute for one US). Open to all active or retired military and/or DoD civilian liaison only.

Selection: Limited to 32 teams. 5 teams are reserved for VIPs with the remaining slots open on a first-come-first-served basis. Team composition will be announced/published 20 May. A standby list will be created in case a team drops out. **Registration:** The official registration form must be completed. Full payment of tournament, green, and cart (if requested) fees in cash or cheque made out to Canadian Unit Fund is required before the registration will be processed. Registration must be hand carried to Cpl Sine at Canadian Support Unit(CFSU) no earlier than 0830, 9 May and no later than 13 May 05.

KAROL JOSEPH WOJTYLA: We join the world in paying tribute to a great man. Over four million people converged on Rome, seeking one last look. Perhaps, Joe, this answers your question: "How many divisions does the Pope have?" when you scoffed at Churchill and Roosevelt who suggested a role for the Pope in the peace after WWII.