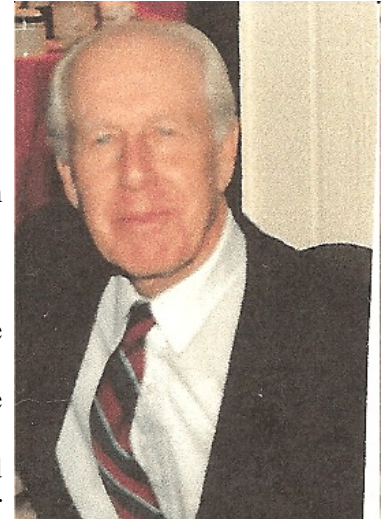


971 RCAF AIR MARSHAL SLEMON WING AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION

Newsletter, May 2008



GROUP CAPTAIN BERT BANVILLE died in Regina 11 March 2008 from cancer. Born in Winnipeg 08 July 1918, he enlisted in the RCAF, graduating as a pilot in Nov 1942. He served at Brandon, Gimli, Coal Harbour, BC, Trenton, Jericho Beach, Alliford Bay, Portage la Prairie, Chatham, NB, Grostenquin, France, Ottawa, Washington, and Colorado Springs.

Bert married Eileen Keenan in Winnipeg 01 July 1944. Their two daughters are Moira Lucas of Regina and Leslie Bent of Colorado Springs.

After retiring in 1969 Bert worked for McGill University in Montreal where he also completed a degree in commerce. They returned to Colorado Springs in 1980. Bert was a founding member of 971 Wing in 1982, was its president 1984-85, and contributed considerably to our 1991 RCAFA Convention and to the building of our Peterson AFB museum.

Bert and Eileen moved to Regina in 2000 where she died in Sep 2006. Bert was an ardent golfer and was planning a Colorado Springs visit this spring.

Bert contributed several articles to this newsletter and was a moderating voice to some of my outbursts on world affairs, military rank inflation, and the like.

Social Calendar

- Apr 04 12 Wing members, including 3 still serving, attended the Dining-in at Peterson AFB. The guest speaker was Dale Eisler, Canadian Consul General in Denver, who gave a humorous and informative talk. I told him we have something in common - my first university course was in Political Science from the U of Saskatchewan, taken in Stalag Luft III. I still have one of the 3 books they sent me. It survived bombings and strafings as I carried it across Germany when we fled the Soviet advance.
- May 06 Your scribe will be guest speaker at an Air Force Academy dining-in.
- May 24 Celebrate Victoria Day at Yvonne and Gerry Robitaille's, starting at 1800. 7345 Buckeye Court, 260-9976. Take Woodmen Road west of I-25 to Buckeye Drive, then south and east to Buckeye Court.
- May 26 Memorial Day in Memorial Park, starting at 1100. Dress is blazers, grey slacks, medals (miniatures or full), and hats. Inclement weather: Ceremony will be held at the Retired Enlisted Club on Emory Circle.
- Jun ? Date TBA at the Berwick/Freimuth/Maestrelli party.
- Jul 19 1800 at the abode of Nancy and Peter Rallis.
- Aug 02 Our annual feast at Charlene and Bill Champion's, starting at 1500.

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Gloria Scott/Dick Lindstom have moved to 185 W. Calle de las Profetas, Green Valley, AZ, 85614. We miss them while wishing them well.

The Editor's Corner

INTELLIGENCE

We need to pause, more often than we do, to ponder the state of human intelligence. Too often we think we know more than we do and we all love a good argument to display our knowledge, so tag along while I pretend to know what I am talking about. First, remember that life exists only within a tiny 12-mile air and water depth on this globe and that naked humans can survive in about half of 1% of this - immeasurably less than our constituent atoms.

Now, consider the Evolution vs Intelligent-Design argument. Evolutionists have the facts but cannot explain why. Intelligent-Design people have few facts but believe they know why. But, have they been looking for a Supreme Being in the wrong place? Perhaps, instead of the skies, they should look inside ourselves into the world of the very small, even though the human brain is not yet wired to understand the fuzzy, cloud-like atom where real power lurks. We have found strong and weak forces there, but even the weak force is trillions of times stronger than gravity. This is power that not even a hydrogen bomb can fully exploit. Can we even begin to understand it, even with computer intelligence?

There are 45 billion billion molecules in every cubic centimetre and at least double that for atoms which are extremely durable for billions of years and recycle after our deaths. Every atom has been through several suns and through millions of organisms, so it is quite probable that millions of your atoms once made up a sun, a leaf, a slug, a dinosaur, Cleopatra, Attila the Hun, or Eric the Red. It does take atoms time to recycle so do not look for any recent celebrities in you.

Increasingly, we are finding that the tiniest forms of life exhibit what can be interpreted as intelligence. They match our intelligence in nullifying our defences. Human intelligence saved millions from starvation by developing wheat strains resistant to rust, but now rust has re-designed itself (with intelligence?) into a new fungus strain, Ug99, that surfaced in Uganda in 1999 and has now spread via Kenya, Ethiopia, and Yemen to Egypt and Iran, threatening wheat crops so vital to millions. Teeming bacteria, that need to disperse, will launch themselves (with intelligence?) into the atmosphere where they latch onto dust particles and assist in the condensation of water vapour to form water droplets or snow flakes that will deposit them back to earth in far-off locations. Our bodies house 3 million bacteria per square inch. What does our behaviour and intelligence owe to them? We do have 100 billion brain cells and 100 billion nerve cells that do communicate with our livers and toes but neglect to give us any summaries of the conversations. Yet, if they are part of us, why do they not inform? Their few pain or pleasure messages are insufficient for our curiosity.

We have done wonders to reach into the vastness of space, travelling back in time for over 13 billion years, discovering in the process that we are aware of only 4% of what actually exists. We are capable of theorizing on "dark matter" that could be composed of WIMPS (Weakly Interacting Massive Particles), trillions of which must pass through the earth every second. And, we are capable of building instruments such as the French-Swiss Large Hadron Collider which, later this year, may detect them. While looking deeply into the vastness of space we can also look deeply into the vastness of atoms, finding over 150 different particles with 100 more suspected, divided among quarks, leptons, and bosons. Then there are DUNNOS - Dark Unknown Nonreflective Nondetectable Objects Somewhere.

All this ability reveals our inadequate intelligence. We do have a huge repertoire of beliefs that we call religions which demand faith which is why we have so many of them. Humans have a longing to know why but too many of us are so mentally lazy that we accept the arguments, gods, and customs of selected others with insufficient questioning. This laziness, or selfishness, is not restricted to the least intelligent among us but flourishes among the highest intellects. Scientists, economists, politicians, and the like are noted for holding in disdain the arguments of fellow "intellectuals".

If, within each of us, human or otherwise, liver cells, kidney cells, blood cells, nerve cells, and so many other cells can co-operate with each other and with all those bacteria and atomic particles to function together while maintaining a defensive immune system, to deny their innate intelligence is folly in the extreme. To go along with $E = MC^2$ we need other formulae: Intelligence needs to be linked with consciousness and also with neurons, synapses, and surroundings. If a cell can take, or borrow, bits of DNA from different cells and if they can evolve to flourish in formerly-deadly environments then there has to be an intelligence of which we are totally ignorant.

Would you mind looking into all this, then explain it to me?

PER ARDUA AD ASTRA ET ATOMUS.

WOMAN POWER

While always, in every society, the mainstay of the family, not since Scythian and Celtic times have women been more prominent in public life. With women put down by the rise of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, we have endured the loss of the brilliance of half of our population which may account for the mess we are in. In a time span measured in decades we have now seen unleashed women become heads of state, top economists, authors, doctors, politicians, journalists, and scientists including such positions as president of MIT. So, my challenge to the women of 971 Wing - let us have some thought-provoking articles on items of your choosing for the newsletter.

THE RCAF TARTAN:: On 11 Jan 08 Dean Black, AFAC Executive Director, advised us: "Senator Joseph Day informs us of the passing of Enid Inch, of Loomcrofters – a weaving artisan shoppe in Gagetown, NB. Many of our Association members will recognize that the RCAF Tartan was created in Gagetown, by the artisans at Loomcrofters, and that Enid Inch and Patricia Jenkins played a role in that creation."

Bob Tracy was quick to respond: "With all due respect to the good Senator Joe Day, the RCAF Tartan was actually designed by RCAF Group Captain Elmer Fullerton, with the assistance of two young Flying Officers, Williamson and Chappel, and both were interviewed at length during the 1990s and both provided samples of the original Tartan eventually approved by the RCAF's Air Council, later submitted and registered with Scotland's Lord Lyon King of Arms. A carefully framed swatch of the original Tartan, with appropriate reference to the true events, hangs on the wall at AFAC HQ and in the RCAF Memorial Museum in Trenton (at least they did at the time of my departure in mid '04). Yes, before the approval there were slight alterations to the design before it was acceptable to authority. Basically, our Tartan colours include the light blue of the Air Force, navy blue (from the Royal Naval Air Service) and maroon (for the Royal Flying Corps). There's a lot more to the story, but basically the RCAF Association "saved" the RCAF Tartan following intervention by me personally, past AFAC president Group Captain Arnie Bauer, and HRH Prince Philip (who was a willing Royal conspirator). This all happened after the Canadian Forces decided to dump the RCAF Tartan in favour of the Toronto-designed "Highland Queen" (Edee award winning fashion) Maple Leaf Tartan, proposed as the CF Tartan by MND Hellyer and DND's Directorate of Ceremonial. They abandoned the plan in the early 1970s.

Check out past issues of Airforce magazine, and the sworn affidavit by Squadron Leader Williamson (safeguarded in AFAC files) Interestingly, today Williamson's son pipes with the AirCom Pipes & Drums. I could go on, but the stuff is all there, sworn statements and all, including a handwritten letter from Scotland's Lord Lyon King of Arms. I personally spoke with Enid Inch, followed up by mailing the published material and she agreed that indeed, Fullerton was the "primary" designer of the RCAF Tartan.

Good luck with correcting the record! Interesting to note too, that through the efforts of CF Senior Liaison Officer LCdr Jeff Agnew, the Chief of the Air Staff agreed in 2003 that AFAC would be the provider of all kit items for Air Force pipe bands. The plan died aborning when I, Agnew, and the CAS departed in 2004, before the plan could get off the ground. A mutually beneficial great opportunity was lost..

Sad; because today Air Force pipe bands are garbed in RCAF Tartan of incorrect (and shockingly eye-shattering) colours. The plan had the potential to bring a six figure income to AFAC's Kit Shoppe. 'Tis

indeed a pity that our Air Force traditions are so easily cast aside!
Happy Robbie Burns Day."

MY FOGHORN STORY: When I was 10 years old in Toronto my widowed grandfather, who lived with us, thrilled me by mentioning we had a relative who had invented a foghorn. I neglected to ask him for details so it has taken me 78 years to come up with:

The world's first fog horn was invented by Robert Foulis, an engineer who had emigrated from Scotland and who taught chemistry and music in Saint John, NB. In 1825 he started New Brunswick's first iron foundry. Walking home in an 1853 fog, and being distressed by a recent sinking of a ship that ran aground in a fog with loss of life, he could hear his daughter playing her piano scales with some notes reaching him clearer than others. He ran into the house, asking her to keep playing the scales, then walked away from the house in various directions. The note "G" pierced the fog the best. He then made a steam-activated metal tube that would sound this note and installed it on Partridge Island. People laughed at him as he waited for weeks for a fog. Finally one rolled in and he rushed out to the island. The coded fog horn note could be heard all over Saint John. Orders poured in from around the world. Unfortunately he neglected to patent his invention which was capitalized on by a US entrepreneur. Robert died in 1866 in poverty.

In Sherbrooke, Quebec, my great great uncle, George Sweanor of the Neptune Fog Horn Company invented an improvement of this fog horn and was granted Patent CA 6389 on 04 August 1876. On 24 Sep 1879 he was granted a second patent for a mower/reaper.

I had not known of this uncle nor that he was the first to anglicize our surname from Chouinard to Sweanor, a line I have now traced back to 1650 in Quebec, 1570 in France, and before that in Germany where my paternal family name was Schweinhardt.

To add to the story, Partridge Island was well known to teenage Paul Ellis and his girlfriend.

KIM PHUC PHAN THI: Remember the picture of that 9-year-old naked Vietnamese girl we saw running screaming from an 08 June 1972 USAF napalm bombing that burned over 50% of her body?

After enduring 14 painful months in hospital and numerous operations she started premedical studies in Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon). The government forced her to become a propaganda tool and she was later allowed to study in Cuba where she met her future husband. After a honeymoon in Moscow they were flying back to Cuba which entailed a refueling stop in Gander. They slipped out of the departure lounge and sought asylum.

They now live in Ajax, Ontario, have two sons who love hockey, and operate the KIM Foundation that helps heal the physical and psychological wounds of child victims of war. (Canadian Living, Feb 2008.)

UNDERSTANDING AFGHANISTAN: There are many good articles in *Esprit de Corps* Magazine which do not get the coverage they should because the editor, Scott Taylor, antagonized some Canadian brass with numerous criticisms. Whatever - here is an excerpt from a recent article by George Petrolekas who represented Canada at NATO HQ for Afghanistan and who has made over 30 visits to the country:

In 2003 a Provincial Reconstruction Team thought it would be helpful to install a pump and pipe to bring water a mile up hill to a village thus saving the women the daily chore of fetching it. The team discussed this with all the men in the village who agreed it was a needed project. Months after the installation the team returned to see how well it was working, only to find it destroyed - by the women!

The hours each day spent in fetching water were the only freedom the women had from the relentless domination of the men.

Petrolekas argues the need for more anthropologists to advise on the ethnic and tribal mix.

AIR VICE MARSHALL MURRAY LISTER: A few of us still remember the four years that Murray spent at NORAD here. Born in Edmonton in 1912, he graduated from RMC in 1935 and flew Siskins, Wapitis, and Hurricanes. He was in the UK when war broke out, but was recalled to help build the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, rising to the rank of group captain by 1943. His 1960-64 stint here included briefing President Kennedy but I best remember him for his remark after being chosen to be a judge at a horse show, "we were a bunch of horses' asses judging horses' asses."

After leaving Colorado he commanded ADC with its CF100 and CF101 squadrons. He was outspoken in opposing Paul Hellyer's unification of the Services and putting us all into green uniforms although he did support unifying support services. He was fifth in line for the top RCAF job but took early retirement in 1966, refusing to accept the loss of the RCAF, its ranks, and uniform. I agreed with him completely but my retirement, also in 1966, came from reaching the compulsory aircrew retirement age of 47. Murray became a farmer near Picton, Ontario, with apples, wheat, sheep, and cattle.

He died 07 Jan 2006 at age 94.

SHE SELLS SEA SHELLS BY THE SEASIDE:

Unsung, except for this tongue-twister, Mary Anning at 12 years of age in 1812 in Lyme Regis found and carefully excavated an ichthyosaurus bone. This began a 35-year career of finding and selling fossils along the cliffs of the Devon-Dorset seacoast. It took her 10 years of dangerous and painstaking work with basic tools to carefully excavate a plesiosaurus and a pterodactyl and to provide detailed drawings. Dinosaurs were unknown then so she lived a life of poverty, but today many of her fossils are in museums.

WHO MATTERS? In 1798 Napoleon took 30,000 soldiers and sailors to bring the blessings of French culture to Muslim Egypt. A third of this force died in Egypt having made little impression during the three years of occupation. However, among the 30,000 were 125 scholars who enriched western civilization with Egyptian archaeology, biology, engineering, mathematics, and the Rosetta Stone.

DECISIONS, DECISIONS: It is easy to criticize our politicians. Too often they give in to greed, or expediency, to support regimes that violate our Western principles. But, also, trying to uphold our ideals is often impossible. Chad is one example. Independent from France in 1960, it remains one of the poorest and least stable countries in Africa. France keeps 2,000 troops there to maintain a semblance of peace by supporting a corrupt President Idriss Deby who channels oil revenues to enrich himself and his cronies. He arrests peaceful dissenters. In Feb 2008 the opposition mounted a coup attempt that killed hundreds in Ndjamena and forced 200,000 to flee to Cameroon. President Sarkozy wants to break ties with Deby but the opposition is worse. It is supported by Sudan whose Jinjaweed makes incursions into Chad to continue the persecution of Darfur refugees.

Reluctantly, he and the UN agree that we must support Deby to stem the Darfur slaughter.

TARGET EARTH: 100 tonnes of space objects collide with us daily. Our atmosphere evaporates most while most of those that do survive to impact are at the bottom of seas or erased by plate tectonics, leaving us with a mere 190 craters to explore. Only 5 of these are "recent" - 11,000 BC Northern Ontario, 2,000 BC Argentina, 300 AD Italy, 1908 Siberia, and 1947 Siberia.

In 2005 NASA reduced from 1 kilometre to 140 metres the size of collision-course objects it was trying to detect. Skepticism greeted the report of a crater, 15 Sep 2007 near Carancas, Peru, only 2 metres deep and 13 metres wide. Geologist from Peru, Bolivia, Uruguay, and Canada confirm it was due to a meteorite only a metre wide, but have yet to explain how such a small object survived to impact. They have sparked a hunt for similar craters.

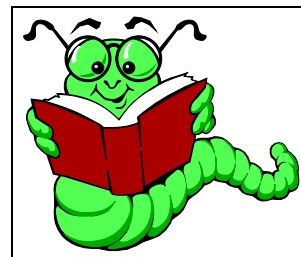
MAYAN DECLINE: The Mayans, obsessed with calendars and cycles and who predicted the cataclysmic end of the current cycle 31 Dec 2012, did not foresee their own demise. Jared Diamond's research, confirmed by NASA studies in 2004, reveal a population that grew beyond the carrying capacity of the land, reaching a density of 1500 per square mile, exceeding that of today's overcrowded Rwanda and Burundi. Weeds had replaced once-dense forests as all the trees were harvested. Hunger and warfare reduced the population 85% around 800 AD. As this was a slow process that took 100 years, rulers failed to take long-term measures to ensure their survival. So, what is new?

Book

Review

THE AGE OF TURBULENCE by ALAN GREENSPAN

The Penguin Press, London, 2007, 531 pages



These 531 pages are most interesting and much too informative to do them justice in a review confined to one page, so pardon a hit-and-miss approach:

The book starts with Greenspan over the Atlantic en route home from Geneva. It was 11 Sep 2001. His aircraft was ordered back to Geneva, even though he urged the pilot to divert to Gander or Halifax.

To understand economics, Greenspan emphasizes the human factor and gives considerable credit to Ayn Rand for opening his eyes (before she died in 1982), to the need to understand individuals and cultures. He describes his own extended family, his Romanian-Hungarian ancestry, and the important role of his mother after his father divorced her and left when he was a young, only child. He goes into detail on his love for music, baseball, and mathematics and the steps along the way to becoming an economist. Due to a suspicion of TB he was not accepted for the military in WWII.

He makes the book interesting with his numerous descriptions of dealings with presidents, diplomats, and economists as well as his dating of Barbara Walters and Andrea Mitchell with the problems of people in the public eye keeping business and personal demands separate.

Competitive free markets, he argues, are a force for good, but competition creates winners and losers. The human factor needs more study. How much free will do we have? Humans everywhere have inbred striving for self esteem and the approval of others with the inbred need to interact. The need for values is also inbred and the basis on which we hold people responsible. Economists need to understand exuberance and fear.

The book is full of comments on world leaders and of particular interest is the invitation of Leonid Abalkin, advisor to Gorbachev to explain capitalism to economists in Moscow where he was surprised at their sophistication and understanding of capitalism even though creatures of a centrally-planned economy. While admitting the US WWII economy was centrally planned, he clearly demonstrates the shortcomings of the Soviet (gos = state) Gosnab that allocated raw materials, Gostrud that set wages and work rules, Goskomsen that set prices, and Gosplan that supervised it all. After WWII, West Germany, under Allied occupation, was suffering from food and merchandise shortages. Ludwig Erhard abruptly announced the removal of price controls. Before Allied powers could intervene, stores started to fill up with highly-inflated prices but they soon abated as supplies increased. East and West Germany are compared. Both had the same people, one with a centrally-planned economy with a “if it still works why change it” mentality, the other with an innovative market economy. West Germany became the powerhouse of Europe while the East languished, so apparent when the wall came down in 1989. Greenspan claims Erhard’s freeing of the economy was much more important than the Marshall Plan in facilitating Europe’s recovery.

Greenspan claims Nixon and Clinton were the most intelligent presidents and, although a Republican, praises Clinton for having the courage to fight a hostile Congress to lower the debt. He describes his meeting with the Queen, Margaret Thatcher, Tony Blair, and Gordon Brown, praising their economic policies. He predicts London will continue to be the financial capital of the world, that continental Europe will lag the UK, that Japan’s productivity has peaked, that Russia will remain formidable due to energy resources but will not be a world-class economy unless it fully restores the rule of law, that India has great potential hampered by a bureaucratic economy, that China, now on the path to political freedoms, will be the major competitor to the US, that inflation will be a problem, and that globalization is transferring power from states to people.

As expected, Greenspan’s book has provoked counter attacks. William A. Fleckenstein (President of a Seattle money-management firm) has published *Greenspan’s Bubbles* (McGraw Hill, 2008) blaming Greenspan for many errors resulting in the mess we are in today such as loss of value of the US dollar and of Middle and Lower Class incomes, as well as shattering one’s faith in the Federal Reserve.

‘Twas ever thus - there are even people who disagree with the profound statements found in these newsletters. But, being 3/4 Irish, your Scribe enjoys a good argument but minus the shillalaha. Give us your assessments!

My good friend, Hank Hayseed from the back 40, who produces our basic foods, asks: “With phalanxes of PhD’s who call themselves politicians and economists and who regulate commerce, why do they allow greed and stupidity to cause so much economic starvation? Spending 3 years on a farm should be a prerequisite for a PhD.”

FACTS

1. Dairy farmers are five times less likely to get lung cancer. Cotton workers get similar safeguards. Our immune system needs the threats of pathogens from childhood to remain on alert.
2. Hippopotomonstrosesquipedaliophobia means “a persistent, abnormal, and unwarranted fear of long words.”
3. In the past 59 years Canada’s average temperature has increased 1.3°C
4. Between 1995 and 2006 use of mass transit in the US has increased 30%.
5. Civil Unrest in Ottawa: An environmental group, to save energy, is using clotheslines at night because of bylaws prohibiting their use.

QUOTES

1. Nature and Nature’s laws lay hid by night. God said: “Let Newton be!” And all was light. Alexander Pope.
2. Politicians take your money promising to satisfy your desires. Prostitutes do the same, but are much more reliable at delivering. Stephen Chapman, Chicago Tribune .
3. Nothing, save a battle lost, is so melancholy as a battle won. Duke of Wellington after Waterloo, 1815.
4. It is important to never stop questioning. Albert Einstein.

DEFINITIONS

Mutawali: meant country bumpkin and was used to put down Lebanese Shiites. Now that Hezbollah has championed the poor and given them new pride, they have adopted the term and use it much like the British adopted the term “Old Contemptibles” when the Kaiser referred to the British Expeditionary Force in WWI as contemptible.

MIKE LEWIS, DFC: With congratulatory messages from the Prime Minister and Governor General, our Wing member celebrated his 90th birthday in Etobicoke, Ontario, 24 March, with 2 sons, 6 grandchildren, 3 great grandchildren, and 6 ex-POW friends and spouses. Mike joined the RAF in 1938, took part in the first Bomber Command raids of the war, earned a DFC for turning German invasion barges into toothpicks with his Hampden bomber, went on to pioneer the Manchester bomber, and was shot down in 1941 on his second tour of operations, enduring close to 4 years as a POW. Remaining in the RCAF after the war, he had tours with 412 Sqn at Uplands and 405 Sqn in Greenwood. He retired in 1965 as a Wing Commander.

FROM PAUL ELLIS IN THE HEAD SHED: “Spring has sprung...the grass is riz...I wonder where the birdies is?” Probably buried in snow. It’s been a somewhat long winter to state the obvious, but it is Colorado! It, of course, was at least broken up by our usual late Xmas get-together, hosted in January by the Lew and Judy Lomas and the annual forces formal dinner. I was pleased we were invited to what was billed as the “Canadian Spring Mixed Dining-In” and that a number of our Wing members were able to attend. Gen. Bouchard reminded those in attendance that we also traditionally celebrate the anniversary of the Royal Canadian Air Force in conjunction with this annual formal occasion. A humorous and often enlightening speech given Mr. Dale Eisler, the Denver based Canadian Consul General put an excellent cap to the evening.

Now to the mundane, it’s time to “fess up” and send in your annual dues, if you haven’t already done so. We haven’t changed our dues from \$60 but if you can throw in an extra “fiver” it will help to make up for the tremendous appreciation of the Canadian dollar. We will certainly have to visit a formal dues increase at our next general meeting.

The NORAD 50th Anniversary will be celebrated at the Broadmoor on 12 May 2008. At time of writing, I am expecting a number of wing members, many with significant NORAD background and experience, will be in attendance. This is being made possible in most part by the thoughtful sponsorship of ENT Federal Credit Union, a long time friend to 971 Wing and the Canadian Military in Colorado Springs.

Finally, special congratulations are due to the 971 Wingers hockey team, spirited by Gary Thompson, who have taken the League Trophy once again. Well done!

RAPIDLY SHRINKING ICE: The 28 Mar-13 Apr 2008 snowmobile patrol between Eureka and Alert took along scientists, reporters, and the US consul general from Calgary. It witnessed the break-up into 3 sections of the Ward Hunt ice sheet north of Ellesmere Island, the largest remaining in the northern hemisphere.

MERCHANT SEAMEN have always lived with danger. Take a moment to remember a crew of Palestinians, 3300 years ago, who paid little attention to their Semite, Hyksos, Hittite, and Egyptian ancestry as they melted into the Phoenician fleet of adventurers who took pride in mastering not only the Mediterranean but in keeping abreast of the ever-changing friendly and hostile forces. Their sea vessel was 50 feet long with a sail, 16 oars, and 24 stone anchors. Many appreciated the trade they brought but there were also many who put greed and jealousy first like those Myceneans who had plundered the great civilization of the Cretans after their navy had been destroyed by the tsunamis resulting from the volcanic eruptions on Thera. And of course there were the repeated incursions of King Suppiluliumas and his Hittites.

Returning with Egyptian and Nubian products to Sidon and Tyre, they had a short shore leave before supervising the loading of a varied cargo that included bronze weapons and tools, tin and glass ingots, ivory, tortoise shells, gold and silver jewelry and 150 ceramic jars containing glass beads, olives, pomegranates, wine, and terebinth resin so valued for incense and perfume. Merchants, whose cargo was now on board, made sure the crew had a thorough briefing on all the known current threats.

It was a smooth and easy row and sail to Cyprus where they added 6 tonnes of copper and off-loaded a few sold items; then off to Rhodes, the eastern Aegean islands, and Troy, avoiding Mycenaean-controlled areas.

Rhodes was another profitable stop but several hours out to sea, nearing the rocky and treacherous southwest coast of Anatolia, they spotted two Mycenaean warships so decided to double back and hide along the north coast of Rhodes. An adverse wind sprang up, the waves were high, and they hit a submerged rock, and sank.

Much later, in 1984, a sponge diver discovered the sunken ship in 165-foot-deep water. It took ten years of careful work to recover the cargo. The crew was long gone.

MASS EXTINCTIONS and BIOMARKERS: As we are well on our way to the 7th mass extinction of plant and animal life on this globe we should ponder the other 6. Only the one that ended the Cretaceous period 65 million years ago (mya) can be attributed to an asteroid impact. All the others are due to global warming and the return of the earth to its original bacteria and archaea that survived when plants and animals did not. Warming is most pronounced in the polar regions, lessening the global gap in temperatures, thus curtailing the air currents that mix oxygen into the seas. As the seas become stagnant, H₂S builds up, poisoning marine life, then exploding onto the land to kill plant life. The mass extinction of 251 mya that ended the Permian killed 95% of all marine life and 85% of land life except for bacteria that sailed on through. It was 10 million years before plants and animals returned.

Chemical paleontology is a relatively new science that originated in the search for oil. Biological molecules, subjected to heating and pressures in sedimentary deposits, break down into compounds that are stable for billions of years. These compounds are specific to groups of microbes, plants, and animals and are now defining the causes of the mass extinctions that ended the PreCambrian 542 mya, the Ordovician 444 mya, the Devonian 359 mya, the Permian 251 mya, and the Triassic 199 mya. We can blame these five on such activities as volcanoes. #7 will be due to humans.

DINS AND THE ECONOMY: Europeans have 6 weeks per year more leisure time than United Statesians who permit 70% of mothers with school-age children to join the outside-the-home workforce, double the 1970 number. In fact a new species has arisen known as DINS. Parents alternate in going out to work, hence Double Income No Sex. Yet consumer debt has passed the \$2.5 trillion mark. I vividly remember the Depression years when pennies were scarce and stress high. Now dollars are plentiful but stress remains high.

JULIE and ERNIE DILL: Julie reports "We have been traveling extensively: South Pacific cruise last Fall; six-week motor home trip over the holidays, including Green Turtle Cay, Bahamas, for New Year's; and most recently a month-long trip to South America/Antarctic land and cruise adventure."

ASKING FOR TROUBLE: Of course, Russia, Georgia, and the Ukraine all rightfully belong in the European Union, but to entice Georgia and the Ukraine into the NATO military Alliance and to build missile bases in Russia's backyard is akin to China wooing Vancouver Island, Russia controlling Newfoundland, and Cuba taking Florida. Could we not benefit from using a little sensitivity, and common sense, in our foreign relations?

GENES AND NEWSLETTERS: I tried to warn her, but she went ahead anyway. My youngest daughter, Linda, who, among other things, is president of the Wild Felid Research and Management Association, that is concerned with wild cats of all species, thought it would be great to edit a newsletter. I warned her that it would be a lot of work, that promised inputs seldom materialize, that feedbacks are scarce, that attempts to provoke discussions usually fail, and that much goes unread. Now, she has produced an impressive 28-page newsletter with inputs from specialists in Brazil, Indonesia, Mexico, Paraguay, the UK, Alberta, British Columbia, Ontario, Arizona, California, Idaho, Maine, Minnesota, Montana, New Mexico, New York, Utah, Washington, as well as several from Colorado.

I guess it does take a generation to mature newsletter editors.

HARRY'S HURRICANE

This story by Ted Douglas comes to us via Bob Tracy. Ted left his Saskatchewan farm to enlist in the RCAF in 1943 as a machinist, serving at Winnipeg, Yorkton, and Suffield. After the war he worked for Trans Canada Airlines and airline firms in California before returning to the farm in 1958. He obtained a private pilot's license in 1987. He writes:

"I first met Harry Whereatt about 30 years ago when I heard that he had a yard full of old airplanes, so with several friends we flew down to his farm at Assiniboia, Saskatchewan, next to the old RCAF #25 Elementary Flying Training School that flew Tiger Moths. Harry, a boy at the time, was fascinated watching all the flying. After the war, when the government was selling surplus aircraft, Harry bought several and later he travelled around the country buying up more aircraft from farmers who bought them just to get the gasoline and antifreeze they contained. Harry both bought and sold and ended up with a nice collection. When we arrived, the yard contained, if I remember rightly, one Bolingbroke several Lysander's, a Barkley Grow, a Lockheed Hudson, a Tiger Moth, a couple of Harvard's, numerous parts of Avro Ansons and other World War II training aircraft including a rather derelict Hawker Hurricane. Harry restored a Tiger Moth and got the Harvards flying, became a commercial pilot and ran a flying school along with an aerial spraying operation using the old airbase. His wife, Ann, also learned to fly and they would take the Tiger Moth or Harvard to various air shows, while all this was going on, he also took time to operate the family farm. About 30 years ago Harry decided to restore the Hurricane and a Lysander. He had to scrounge the country to find serviceable parts and a rebuilt Merlin engine. While waiting for parts he would work on the Lysander. I made a habit of stopping by whenever in the area to watch the progress, they always kept aviation fuel so we would land at the old airbase and taxi across the road to their farm and fuel up. I took numerous pictures. Several years ago there was a breakfast fly-in at the old base. After 27 years Harry got the hurricane finished and flew it several times, bending the propeller tips once, which cost \$10,000 dollars to fix plus the old Merlin burned a lot of gasoline, Harry decided that perhaps he should sell, so set the price at \$1 million and it sold for that amount. We saw it disassembled and wrapped in layers of plastic on a big flatbed truck, on its way to a collector in Quebec. We went out to the farm to see how Harry was dealing with no Hurricane in the hanger. He was in the shop working on an old model T Ford, the first car he had ever driven, I asked how he was dealing with the sale. He said, "This morning when I woke up I was Glad there was \$1 million dollars in the bank, then I was Sad that the Hurricane was gone, and then I was Mad when I remembered I had to send the government \$250,000 in capital gains tax, so today it goes around and around in my head, Glad, Sad, and Mad." He never flew the Lysander. It was a beautiful job of restoration but he didn't trust the old Bristol Mercury engine, it had been overhauled and in storage since World War II. That aircraft has now gone to the same collector in Quebec. In the back of one of his hangers I saw an old RCAF Cornell with the wings off, and a flyable Tiger Moth along with a number of engines and various airplane parts. Out in the yard most of the old aircraft are now gone to various museums for rebuilding. We took a tour around the yard and various buildings to look at his stuff and I'm sure he has enough work to last 100 years. Harry always had a lot of help from his wife and family who had to learn the skills of the aircraft re-builder. You can learn more about Harry Whereatt by asking Google."

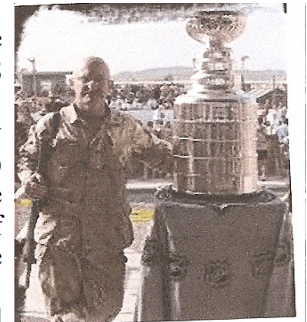
STANLEY CUP CONNECTION TO 971 WING, BY DARRELL LEVITT

Little did Frank Fraser or his son MCpl Paul Fraser know that Afghanistan would provide a link to either them or to the wing. MCpl Paul Fraser a Canadian Forces Air Defence Tech stationed at CFB North Bay began his connection last year when he volunteered for a tour in Afghanistan. But, I must regress for just a moment. Paul originally joined the Canadian Forces in the navy (we try not to hold that against him). After several years of being seasick, he transferred to the Canadian Air Force and followed in the footsteps of his father as an Air Defence Tech. After initial trades training he was posted to CFB North Bay in order to maintain the Fraser presence.

In late 2007 Paul volunteered and was accepted for months of workups and training with none other the PPCLI. He was then whisked away to beautiful downtown Afghanistan in February 2008 for a six-month tour of duty.

Enter the Stanley Cup connection. Shortly after arriving at the Canadian Forces holiday resort location in Kandahar, the NHL Oldtimers were playing the Canadian Forces (Afghanistan) team. The CF team, not wanting to make the NHL Oldtimers feel bad, ensured that they lost the game. Unbeknownst to the members of the CF, the Oldtimers had brought with them an icon of Canada's second national sport the STANLEY CUP. This photo is of MCpl Paul Fraser and the Stanley Cup surrounded by not ICE, but SAND. Notice that Paul is not wearing skates.

On a more serious note, I know that all members of 971 Wing are proud of Paul Fraser and his comrades-in-arms for their selfless act of patriotism and wish him and all Canadian Forces brothers-in-arms a successful mission and a safe return home. **YOU ARE ALL HEROES. PER ARDUA AD ASTRA**



CANADA'S NEWEST AND LARGEST NATIONAL PARK: 10 million hectares NE of Great Slave Lake, the size of 5 Prince Edward Islands or 11 Yellowstone Parks, off limits to industrial development. Home of a large caribou herd. Spectacular views and the continent's deepest water.