



WINGS & TAILS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NO. 6 RCAF DUNNVILLE MUSEUM

Telling the stories of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, the No. 6 Service Flying Training School, and the RCAF Veterans, to the Communities of Canada.

The Story of Harvard #2963 Continues

When Leading Aircraftsman (LAC) William Smith crashed into Lake Erie on June 19, 1943, he was one of the 47 casualties from accidents at the No. 6 SFTS. Now, recovering the artifacts from his accident is the focus of a major effort by the Dive Recovery Team of the Canadian Harvard Aircraft Association (CHAA). At the same time, the No. 6 Museum is working to fill out the story of the crash and the background of the 17-year-old pilot.

Details Emerge. Information in the *Dunnville Chronicle*, and from the No. 6 SFTS Daily Log and crash records at the time of the accident is sparse. The June 20, 1943, issue of the *Buffalo Courier Express*, however, had a long article and photos of the crash. The cruise ship for which Smith was doing unauthorized aerobatics was the "Canadiana", carrying 1,000 passengers that fateful day. In the article, a crew member described the scene: "The pilot had circled around the boat seven or eight times. The kids were all waving to him....I guess he suddenly got too low and got scared. I saw the plane

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Museum Plaque Installed on Dunnville Library Memorial

In 1964, No. 6 SFTS veterans overhauled and repainted a Harvard Mark II aircraft (one of the planes actually flown at the No. 6). They received permission to mount it next to the then Town Hall on Chestnut Street as a memorial to the men who trained as pilots at the No. 6 SFTS and those who lost their lives during training. Installed on the memorial pedestal was an explanatory plaque, and two, lighted fountains surrounded the memorial. The memorial was dedicated in a ceremony during the 1964 annual reunion of No. 6 graduates. For more than 50 years, a formal reunion of No. 6 servicemen and women was held every summer that included a ceremony at the memorial.



When the town hall was razed in 1983 to make way for the new Dunnville Public Library, the memorial was retained but the fountains were removed. The memorial has become a landmark in Dunnville. When

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The Story of Harvard #2963 Continues

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raise itself up a little, then it hit the water like a cannon going off. It made a huge splash, and I saw the wings bend and rip off." The U.S. Coast Guard located the plane at 12:30 a.m. the next morning and recovered Smith's remains and the plane's fuselage, which they turned over to Canadian authorities.

The CHAA website includes a detailed article about the event, including, for example, Smith's considerable flight experience. (Go to <http://chaa-recovery.ca>, click on "DIVE RECOVERY TEAM, click on "Shooting Up the Canadiana".) An article in the *Dunnville Chronicle* on June 25, 1943, states that Smith came from Preston, Shiplake-near-Henley, Oxford, England, and his next of kin was his father, J. Smith, who was understood to be an executive in a large British munitions plant.

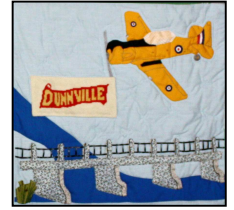
CHAA Presents the Recovery Status. On April 26, Walter Irie, chair of the CHAA Recovery Dive Team spoke at a program hosted by the Dunnville District Heritage Assn. Irie described the effort to retrieve the remaining pieces of Harvard #2963 to an audience of about 85. Irie noted that CHAA is the only group doing underwater aircraft recovery in Canada, so they are breaking new ground with this effort. At the program, Curator Peter Gay demonstrated the delicate process of removing underwater vegetation from recovered parts for onlookers. Recovery of parts will continue this spring.



Dunnville Library Harvard Memorial Gets a New Addition

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the Women's Institutes in the area created a "community quilt" symbolizing aspects of local life for the new library, one of the squares depicted a Harvard flying over the long bridge.



In 1999, the Harvard was loaned to the National War Museum in Ottawa. When it was returned in 2000, a group of dedicated Museum volunteers refurbished it and reinstalled it.

Two other commemorative plaques have been added to the pedestal over the years. Last month, the Museum in cooperation with Haldimand County added a plaque directing visitors to the Museum.



One of the new exhibits in the Museum hangar is a scale model of the old Town Hall (formerly the home of the Rolston family) and the Harvard memorial, on loan indefinitely from Haldimand County.

Harvard Memorial shown in model



FL/LT Ken Bain
No. 16 SFTS
1942-1945



W.O. 2 James Bird
No. 6 SFTS Pilot
Grad. Mar. 10, 1944



Honouring Our Vets

As the years pass, we find fewer veterans attending our Annual Veteran's Dinner. During the past 3 years, four World War II veterans and long-time Museum members from the Dunnville area have passed away: Ken Bain, Jim Bird, Ed Carter-Edwards, and Rod Davidge. Our thoughts remain with their families. We are privileged to have known these valiant men and honor their contributions

F/O Ed Carter-Edwards
Ex RCAF POW
Survivor of Buchenwald



FL/LT Rod Davidge
No. 1 Camp Borden
193 Squadron RAF
1942-1945



to the defense of their country. In commemoration of the 150th anniversary of Canada's confederation, banners have been erected in the Dunnville downtown core in recognition of the sacrifices of Dunnville military veterans. Pictures of Bain and Bird can be seen on Queen Street, and that of Davidge on Chestnut Street. If you would like to attend the 2017 Veterans' Dinner on September 30, call Ian Durand at 905-701-8238.

We've Been Busy...



Lynn and Charlie King were among the volunteers who greeted and chatted with visitors to the No. 6 Museum table at the annual Dunnville Lions Home & Garden Show on April 21 & 22. The Museum also had a display table at the annual Selkirk Heritage Day on February 20.

Our country and gospel concert featuring "Over the Hill" on June 4 brought about 100 people out to the Museum. Toes tapped and the audience sang along with familiar tunes. In recognition of Canada's 150th anniversary, the group ended their concert by leading the audience in "O, Canada".



The second annual Yard Sale held on the Museum's opening weekend, May 20-22, was a success! More items were donated than last year and the hangar was full to bursting with all manner of "merchandise". The sale netted the Museum \$3,300. Thanks to the many volunteers who set up the sale, cashiered, and packed up remainders.

Museum Receives Haldimand County Award of Excellence

The Haldimand County Business Excellence Awards is an annual event recognizing outstanding business achievements. The No. 6 Museum was honored to receive the Business Excellence Award for Tourism (January-December 2016) at the annual business breakfast meeting on April 5 at the Caledonia Lions Hall. The Tourism Business Award recognizes businesses and other venues that offer visitors superior tourism experiences and promote Haldimand County as a quality destination.

Museum Hosts Group Visits

A group of Boy Scouts and their leaders slept over at the Museum on April 1, and a group of Cub Scouts and their leaders on April 29. Thanks to Tim Logan for staying over with the Scouts. Residents and staff from Norview Lodge, Simcoe, toured the Museum on May 23, followed by lunch in the meeting room. A tour group from the United Kingdom is scheduled to visit on June 16, and tourism representatives from Haldimand County are scheduled for a short tour on June 22.

2017-1018 Super Draw Tickets Still Available!

Feeling lucky? Call Sandy Murphy at 905-774-3068 for your Super Draw ticket. Tickets are \$50 each.

At each monthly meeting, a \$20 winner is drawn for each week since the last meeting, and one, \$50 winner is drawn for the month. Winning tickets go back in the draw so you can win over and over! The final draw for the \$1,000 prize is held at the Elimination Draw night, which consists of a dinner, entertainment and a silent auction. The Elimination Draw for the 2016-2017 Super Draw will be held on August 26. If you want to see what all the fuss is about, call Sandy—you can join the fun for the cost of your dinner!

Congratulations to Our 50/50 Draw Winner



In April, Judy Culp won \$426 in our first 50/50 draw of the year. Tickets are on sale now for our second 50/50 draw which will be held at the Museum's annual Open House on July 8.

Mark Your Calendar!



Station Dance - 1943 Style

Below is an edited excerpt from the January 1943 "Skywriter".

Under the gaily colored streamers and soft lights of the Drill Hall at No. 6 S.F.T.S., the officers, airmen, airwomen and their friends danced to the rhythm of Morgan Thomas and his band on Tuesday evening, Jan. 12th. In spite of the zero weather, a number of girls from St. Catharines breezed in to add color to the festivities, as well as those from Dunnville.

The decorations of the Drill Hall, under the capable supervision of Flying Officer R. G. Foley, were bright and colorful and lent a festive air to the occasion. A delicious supper was served later in the evening.

Pilot Officer Summerville surprised us with his excellent voice. And Flying Officer Underhill played the trumpet (for old time's sake) and very good playing it was. A civilian girl with a real beautiful voice sang several songs.

Like Cinderella, the St. Kitts girls had to run at twelve, with many a backward glance, and memories of one of the most pleasant dances at No. 6.

It may be generally observed from the enthusiasm of the crowd still lingering at one o'clock, that the dance was a great success. And the sentiments expressed by one lad—"We should have a dance like this every month" were echoed in the hearts of all those present.

NO. 6 RCAF DUNNVILLE MUSEUM

Location: 536 Port Maitland Rd.
(former Dunnville Airport, Hangar 1)

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 232, Dunnville, ON N1A 2X5

Phone: 905-701-7223

Website: www.rcafmuseum.org

Visit the website for photos, upcoming events, and more. If you don't have internet access, visit your local library. Also visit our Facebook page!

Hours: Victoria Day weekend through Labour Day weekend: Saturdays & Holidays, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., and Sundays 1 - 5 p.m. Tuesdays, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m., year round. Remembrance Day, noon - 4 p.m. To arrange for a tour, call 905-701-7223.

2015-2017 EXECUTIVE

Officers

Don Oatman, President
Peter Gay, 1st Vice Pres.
Frank Phillips, 2nd Vice Pres.
Tim Logan, Secretary
Joanne Villeneuve, Treasurer

Directors: Lynda Bain, April Cormaci, George Cowell, Arnold Link, Don Messner, Jack Murphy, Paul Segui

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Building/Grounds - Jack Murphy
Fundscrip - Rick Pleasance
Lottery - Sandy Murphy
Membership - Joanne Villeneuve
Merchandise - Lynn King
Museum - Peter Gay
Newsletter - April Cormaci
Website - Ian Durand

Annual Open House

Sat., July 8, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Historical exhibits, crafters & vendors, penny sale, Dunnville Cruisers Car Club, Museum tours, Memorial Service at Memorial Garden. **Invite your friends and family!**

Annual Chicken BBQ

Sat., July 8, 4-6 p.m.

Tickets \$15. *Advance tickets required.* Call 905-774-3068 or purchase at Art Service Office Supply, Dunnville.

Dunnville Agricultural Fair

Fri. & Sat., Aug. 18 & 19

Friday: Gates open at 3:00 p.m.
Demolition derby at 8:00 p.m.

Saturday: Full day of activities including home craft competitions & displays, miniature horse show, baby show, rabbit show, petting zoo, kid's games & activities, entertainment, vendors, food and midway! Southern Ontario Truck and Tractor Pull starts at 6:00 p.m.

The Museum will be open for tours.

Elimination Draw & Silent Auction

Sat., Aug. 26

Doors open at 5:30 p.m., dinner at 6 p.m.

Veterans' Dinner

Sat., September 30 ← **NEW DATE**

Dunnville Golf & Country Club. Ticket price to be determined. Tickets available from Museum members or by calling the Museum.

Monthly General Meetings & Lunch **NEW DATE**

July 15, Aug. 12, Sept. 9, Oct. 14, Nov. 18, Dec. 9.
Museum Meeting Room, 10 a.m.

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