

Reel C12,334

Number 8 Bombing and Gunnery School, Lethbridge, Alberta

October 13, 1941 - December 15, 1944

Organization Order #155, Formation of No 8 Bombing and Gunnery School

Information

1. In the development of the joint air training plan, it has become necessary to open an eighth bombing and gunnery school.

2. Intention: It is intended to form No 8 Bombing and Gunnery School at Lethbridge, Alberta.

3. Formation: No 8 Bombing and Gunnery School is to open at Lethbridge, Alberta October 13, 1941 and will receive its first intake of pupils on that date. Forty one wireless operator (air gunner) pupils are to be available to commence training on October 13, 1941.

October 1, 1941

Strength as of first of the month: RCAF officers -14, RCAF airmen - 233, trainees nil, other than RCAF -2, civilians -10.

October 10, 1941

W/C K Gray, Command Armament Officer, visited the school. Starting around 0900 hours a 76 mile gale lashed the Station until well on to midnight. Flying has not started as yet.

October 11, 1941

Initial class of 25 trainees WOAG's (wireless operator/air gunner) reported from No 2 Wireless School, Calgary (Shepherd). Ground instruction school prepared for commencement of course on the thirteenth. Eleven air gunners reported from Central Training School, Trenton.

October 13, 1941

Today is the official opening day of the school and the training of 36 trainees commenced right on schedule. No time off was taken to herald the opening of the school. The construction and various work was carried on without interruption.

October 17, 1941

Five staff pilots under the command of F/O J R Bryan proceeded to Edmonton to ferry five Battle aircraft from No 16 TD to this station. Two Anson aircraft and one Dragon Fly visited the station.

October 19, 1941

Seven Fairy Battles were ferried to this station. One Beaufort aircraft en route to Patricia Bay stopped over for refuelling, check over and to await satisfactory weather for the crossing of the mountains.

October 20, 1941

F/L M.S. Lynch, Padre from No 2 Wireless School, Calgary, visited the Station whilst on visit to four RAF prisoners in the Lethbridge jail. No 2467 Norseman aircraft en route to Calgary stopped over at the Station.

October 31, 1941

Seven Harvards en route to Swift Current and ferried by American Army pilots stopped over. Strength as of 31st of the month: RCAF Officers - 50, RCAF Airmen - 48, trainees 70, other than RCAF - 7, civilians - 61. Total number of flying hours for the month: 242.10. Number of aircraft on charge: 34, type - Fairy Battle. W A Jones W/C, Commanding Officer.

November 8, 1941

Today is a day to record in the history of No 8 B&G School, in-so-far as the official opening took place at 1500 hours and also first graduating class of wireless air gunners and standard air gunners were presented with their wings by A/C Cowley, AOC No 4 Training Command who also opened the Station with an excellent speech. He was assisted by G/C A J Ashton, CO No 2 B&G School, Mossbank, and W/C Jones, CO, who also gave short talks. Other distinguished guests included Senator Buchanan and Mrs Buchanan, Mr and Mrs Elton, W/C James and Mrs James, CO of No 15 SFTS Claresholm and W/C Campbell and Mrs Campbell, CO of No 7 SFTS Macleod and W/C Davidson, No 4 Training Command. Some 5000 people attended and were escorted over the station. A short flying program and a target towing exercise was carried out and a parachute jump was made by Roy Lonheim of High River.

Course No 18 graduated 36 airmen, all RCAF, and postings were 27 to Y Depot, Halifax, and 9 to No 31 OTU attached to Dorval. There were no failures and three graduates were subsequently commissioned.

November 11, 1941

Mr H.G. Randalsom, resident engineer, directed by Command Head Quarters to proceed to 36 SFTS to supervise construction there and return here part time. School supplied a squadron of three flights in connection with Memorial Day Parade to Cenotaph in Lethbridge. W/C Jones placed wreath on Cenotaph on behalf of No 8 B&G School. W/C Jones also assisted Brigadier General Stewart in taking salute at march past.

November 16, 1941

Cases of scarlet fever discovered and 22 personnel placed in quarantine.

November 19, 1941

Several pilots were given instruction in dual Battle in night flying. D Delta aircraft damaged when Battle aircraft at this station taxied into same on line. Maximum possible flying time 9.35 hours.

November 24, 1941

Course No 19 graduated and a wings presentation made by W/C Jones. Course consisted of 34 airmen, 24 RCAF, 2 RAF, 3 Newfoundland, 5 RAAF of which 30 graduated. A wind velocity of 97 miles per hour removed tar and paper from roofs of hangars 4 and 5 and metal roof of garage building number 6. Debris was thrown about the whole station. Station fence was bent over at an angle by the force of the debris blown against it. Heavy wind continued until late in the afternoon. Maximum possible flying time 2.25 hours. Flying washed out at 10 30 hours.

December 16, 1941

Appendix A: Armament Training - Night Bombing

1. (a) This school is in a position to start night bombing at any time but it is not expected that the first class of students will be ready before the first of the new year. (b) A program of pilot training for this work is being carried out. To date, 10 pilots in bombing flight have each had 15 hours night flying on this station. This includes runs on target. (c) The OC Bombing Flight has dropped 16 night bombs. At each time, other pilots have been carried along for instruction. (d) All pilots have successfully used the azimuth bracket. (e) A copper tube intercommunication system has been installed in all bombing aircraft. (f) Flare pots are being used for targets, 15 goose neck flare pots to a target. They are satisfactory. (g) A safety pilot is used at the bombing range with Aldis lamps for signals. (h) Each bombing pilot has received approximately 13 hours Link trainer instruction at this school. (i) All night aircraft are equipped with flares. Radio is installed in three aircraft and is being installed in balance as quickly as possible. (j) A program of instrument flying under the hood in Harvard aircraft has been started. (k) Night practice bombs are being observed satisfactorily but it is noted they set fire to the grass so that with the first few the target flares could not be distinguished. However, once the grass is burned over, the difficulty will be eliminated. A careful watch is being kept to prevent any fire getting out of control.

December 23, 1941

The Station received a visit from F/L Christie, RAF, attached to Ferry Command, Dorval Quebec who was engaged in ferrying Bolingbroke aircraft to Western Command. We understand this

officer ferried the Atlantic on some fourteen occasions. Eight Bolingbroke aircraft held at Lethbridge on instruction of Chief of the Air Staff.

January 10, 1942

On instructions from No 4 Training Command, this station was requested to provide three Battle aircraft to report to W/C Scragg, Chief Instructor, No 34 SFTS, Medicine Hat, using it as a base for a further search for the missing Harvard aircraft. These three planes took off at dawn. After 2 hours 10 minutes in the air, F/L W.S. Wright 02573 of this Station found the wreckage of the Harvard and duly reported same to Commanding Officer No 34 SFTS. All planes then returned to this Station.

January 13, 1942

A major accident took place to one of the Station aircraft today. Battle No 2067, cause obscure, location 8 miles north east Picture Butte, pilot R125977 Sgt Lawson, D W and students aircrew R109221 LAC Foster W E and R103794 LAC Dewis N W. Extent of damage, totally destroyed. Injuries nil. This plane was doing a routine camera gun schedule when it caught fire.

January 23, 1942

Mr Millar, Mayor of Taber, called at the Station regarding low flying aeroplanes over his town. After some discussion, he stated that there was apparently no trouble from aircraft of this unit as offenders were twin engine aircraft. Most of the day washed out for flying due to exceptionally high winds.

January 27, 1942

Harvard No 954 pilot W H Brooks arrived 1600 hours departed 0950 hours 28/1/42, landed at Medicine Hat. Harvard No 984 pilot E Paschang arrived 1600 hours departed 0950 hours 28/1/42 landed in Havre, Montana. Harvard No 985 pilot N T Cornel arrived 1600 hours, departed 0950 hours 28 1 42 crashed, killed, vicinity Maple Creek. Harvard No 986 pilot E L Carpenter, arrived 1600 hours, departed 0950 hours 28/1/42, landed at Maple Creek, Saskatchewan with little damage. Harvard No 987 pilot H W Moseley, arrived 1600 hours, departed 0950 hours 28 1 42, crashed, killed, vicinity Maple Creek. The above crashes and forced landings are supposedly due to icing conditions.

January 29, 1942

Bolingbroke 9027 piloted by P/O D E Arnold J5107, employing the following personnel: R86424 Sgt Roberts G R as navigator, R53552 Sgt Casselman D J as fitter, R68624 LAC Grace, Norman as wireless operator crashed two miles west of the aerodrome due to a dead port engine and causes which are presently being investigated through a Court of Enquiry. All four occupants of the plane managed to scramble out with only slight injuries but the plane and

contents were totally destroyed by fire. This plane was being ferried by No 8 Bomber Squadron, Sea Island, Vancouver.

February 4, 1942

Turning very cold and snow falling after several weeks of beautiful weather. F/O G S Schafer 06035 held an audition on the Station to select airmen willing to cooperate to form a concert party and visit nearby towns to encourage the sale of Victory Bonds of the new war loan. Some very good talent uncovered and an excellent program arranged. Maximum possible flying time: 6 hours.

February 5, 1942

A/V/M E W Havers, Director General of Equipment, RAF, accompanied by W/C M H Robinson, RAF, Air Force Head Quarter Equipment, visited Station arriving by Trans Canada Airlines. Plane for the east being delayed, they visited on the Station and were shown all operations by the CO, W/C W A Jones. Party remained for lunch and tea and departed by TCA at 1800 hours.

February 7, 1942

Douglas DC-3 aircraft with a crew US Army Air Corp arrived at this station from Alaska departing next day for Washington.

February 12, 1942

A preview of the concert party arranged by this Station in conjunction with Miss Evelyn Dinsmuir (Miss Sunshine) from California to promote Victory Loan Drive was held on the Station Hall. Master of Ceremony F/O G W Schafer 06035 had organized an excellent program and same was enjoyed by 35 Officers and approximately 200 Airmen of the Station personnel. A charge of twenty five cents was made to go toward sport funds of this Station and approximately \$55 was collected.

February 14, 1942

Ian Hunter, movie actor from Hollywood, visiting several Southern Alberta points in conjunction with the promotion of the Victory Loan Drive, visited the Station and lunched at the Officers' Mess. He was introduced to all the Officers. Wings presentation to graduating Air Gunners Course number 25 was conducted by W/C W A Jones, Commanding Officer, at 1500 hours in the Station Drill Hall. This course graduated twenty one pupils, all RCAF, posted to No. 1 "Y" Depot. Four failures were posted to KTS Trenton and thirteen hold-overs were transferred to Course No. 26. This course proved to be the most difficult to train since the Station opened. Considerable trouble was experienced with a number of US enlistments in the RCAF. Maximum flying time 6.45 hours.

March 4, 1942

W/C I B Newbigging, No 4 Training Command CSO, visited the Station in connection with signal facilities. John P White, W G Evans, representing Inspector General, Inspection Board, United Kingdom and Canada, Ottawa, visited the Station in connection with repair facilities and fitting of boots generally.

March 16, 1942

Nursing Sister M M F McCrae C9631 and Nursing Sister E I Dunning C9630 from No 3 SFTS, Calgary, reported on the Station for duty. These are the first nursing sisters to be posted to this Station.

March 17, 1942

Approximately 1730 hours telephone advice was received from S/L Bailey, Chief Flying Instructor No 31 EFTS De Winton, Alberta, that a Tiger Moth No 5090 pilot LAC Bates had force landed on a ranch three miles west of Diamond City, approximately fifteen miles from Lethbridge, due to shortage of gasoline and oil occasioned by getting off course and bucking high winds. It was requested we proceed to the scene with gas and oil and wither fly the plane back to this Station or place a guard on same for the night. F/O P M Hale C3880 proceeded at once by car and flew the plane back to this Station arriving at approximately 2000 hours. LAC Bates was quartered on the Station. S/L Bailey from No 31 EFTS De Winton was informed by telephone of the completed action taken and he advised planes and pilots would be dispatched to collect aeroplane Tiger Moth 5090 next day.

March 18, 1942

Sgt McCleay D E of 124 Ferry Squadron attached to this Station suffered a fractured pelvis whilst working on Tiger Moth 5090 belonging to No 31 EFTS De Winton, RAF, Alberta. He was adjusting the points of the starboard magneto when the engine back-fired. A Court of Enquiry is being held.

March 20, 1942

Fourteen Stearman planes arrived on the Station ferried by pilots of No 124 Ferry Squadron. These planes are designed for use by No 36 EFTS RAF, Pearce, Alberta.

April 3, 1942

Good Friday. Entire personnel except Duty Watch pool allowed on pass. The 14th Fighter Squadron arrived on this Station from Ottawa, proceeding to Sea Island in Command of S/L B D Russell. Squadron consisted of 12 Kitty Hawks, two Lockheeds, two Harvards.

May 3, 1942

Three American Army planes arrived on the Station at 1330 hours from Alaska, one Douglas and two Hudsons. 15 Officers and men made up the party in charge of Major Duncan.

May 7, 1942

Mr C Lister Curle, Inspector General's Department, Great Britain and Canada, reported on the Station re boots. This is the fourth representative of the Inspector General to visit the Station in connection with boots and repair of same since January 15 of this year.

May 9, 1942

Volume 1, Number 1 "The Chinook" Station paper came off the press today. We are proud of our initial effort, a copy of which is attached as Appendix A.

May 16, 1942

All personnel below the rank of sergeant are confined to barracks until further notice. A slight epidemic of streptococci and flu has spread over the Station. 64 were admitted to the Hospital.

May 18, 1942

At 0830 hours, Ferry Battle 2095 piloted by R125724 Sergeant Stevens A L collided with Ferry Battle 2096 piloted by R125927 Sergeant Koss W G. Pilot misjudged distance. Error in judgement on part of Sergeant Stevens. Aircraft collided. The location of the accident was 10 miles west of aerodrome. Considered a "D" category crash, damage slight. Pilots and occupants of aircraft were all uninjured. These aircraft were doing routine gunnery exercises. The necessary amendments to Station Standing Orders have been made to prevent any further occurrence of this nature. The logbook of Sergeant Stevens has been endorsed.

May 27, 1942

28 Officers (staff pilots), two officers attached to Ferry Command, and nine airmen including four staff pilots, departed from this Station at 1830 hours for No 2 Wireless School, Calgary, Alberta to be interviewed by the United States Army Board for the purpose of transferring to the United States armed forces. All were accepted by the United States authorities.

June 3, 1942

On an inspection trip of air training schools across Canada, three high ranking officials spent a few hours on the School arriving by air at 1500 hours, having dinner in the Officers' Mess, and departing for Vancouver at 2115 hours. The party consisted of G/C G S Oddie of London, England, Deputy Director of Flying for the British Air Ministry, A/M A G E Garrod, British Air

Minister and United Kingdom Air Representative on the Training Council, and A/V/Marshal E Leckie of Ottawa, Canadian Air Representative on the Council. While visiting on the Station, the guests chatted informally with the officers and other officials of Southern Alberta training schools who were present.

June 8, 1942

The first quota of personnel for the Women's Division reported on the Station under Assistant S/O B A Burton and consisted of one sergeant, two corporals and seventeen air women.

June 10, 1942

Personnel being posted to this Station for attachment to No 133 Fighter Squadron commenced arriving this date. Advice was received that the commanding officer of the squadron will be S/L L T Brooks, RAF, being posted from No 39 SFTS, Swift Current reporting 12/6/42.

June 14, 1942

Four Hurricanes for No 133 Fighter Squadron were ferried here by No 124 Ferry Squadron and arrived at 0900 hours with F/L Lee in charge of the party of one officer and two NCO pilots. Three Hurricanes arrived at 1400 hours with the party in charge of WO2 Wheeler.

June 16, 1942

Mr Cook of the Department of Health, Province of Alberta, visited the Station and presented two lectures social diseases, same being accompanied by films, one to the women's division at 1600 hours and one to the airmen at 1900 hours. Approximately 1000 personnel attended these two lectures. This proved another very windy day, exceeding 50 miles per hour velocity.

June 27, 1942

The No 1 International Harvester Tractor Operator's Course was completed. 13 graduates. As a weekend variation, an Airmen's dance was held in the Recreation Hall this Saturday evening. 150 couples participated, 150 Airmen, 50 Air Women and 100 young ladies from Lethbridge. The event was under the auspices of the Jane Megarry Chapter of the IODE whose committee did an excellent job of planning right down to decorating the large hall. A splendid supper was served in the Airmen's Mess before midnight with extras being supplied to the menu by the hostesses. A five piece orchestra, composed of business men from Stavely, Alberta provided music for the evening. This was arranged through the cooperation of Mr W H Kew of the Auxiliary Services. A strong committee of Station personnel assisted in arrangements which culminated in a very successful evening and more such like functions are to be held regularly.

June 30, 1942

Total number of aircraft on charge this date: Mk I Fairy Battle - 63, Mk II Harvards - 1. Total flying time for the month of June: 1645 hours 50 minutes.

July 3, 1942

Graduating ceremonies were conducted on the parade grounds at 1600 hours when G/C Jones presented wings to the graduates of Course No 33 WOAGs. This course graduated 35 students of a total of 36, the one pupil, RCAF, being sent to No 3 Wireless School, Winnipeg for further training. The leading man in the course was NZ41640 Sgt Meha H M who was presented with an identification bracelet from the Canteen Committee on behalf of the school personnel. Before leaving the School on posting, Sgt Meha received word of his being granted a commission.

July 9, 1942

An extensive mid-summer clean up campaign is in progress with an early weed crop being harvested before ripening. The various gardens on the Station are showing a wonderful growth as the result of almost excessive moisture and all the messes on the Station are benefiting with lettuce, radishes and onions added to the daily diet. Maximum possible flying time: day, 16 hours, night 8 hours.

July 14, 1942

Lt W Tudor of the USA Ferry Squadron arrives to be attached to the Station as officer in charge of USA Air Transport Service through this Station. This School's softball team, known as No 8 B&G Flyers played its third and final playoff game with the Lethbridge Kresades for the right to represent this district in the Southern Alberta softball playoffs against Medicine Hat. Owing to heavy postings in recent weeks, the highly touted Flyers were unable to stand up against the Kresades and dropped this deciding game by a score of seven to four. The Flyers played a very sportsman-like series in this playoff tourney and won the applause of quite large crowds at these games, thus maintaining a good prestige for the RCAF.

July 18, 1942

G/C Jones and all Station personnel are greatly interested in the arrival on the Station of the Hawker Hurricane fighter plane named "March of Dimes", a gift from the people of Canada to the RCAF. This ship has been placed at the disposal of No 133 Fighter Squadron and will be flown by S/L L T Brooks 39932, the OC this squadron.

July 22, 1942

Ten Bolingbroke aircraft arrived from the East for service at this Station. A unique goodwill inspection visit to the Station was held this afternoon when Chiefs of the Blood Indian Tribe were guests for a few hours and had dinner in the Officer's Mess. Chief Shot In Both Sides,

Chief Cross Child and Chief Owns Different Horses, were flown over the air firing and bombing ranges and over their own reserves by GC Jones. Other Chiefs who visited the Station were Fred Tail Feathers, Honourary Chief Mountain Reverend Cannon S.H. Middleton, the principal of St. Paul's Indian School, and Honourary Chief Brave Rock A. MacMillan, Indian Agent from Cardston. Following the air flights, the Chiefs and their guest were entertained at dinner at the Officer's Mess. Prior to dinner and in a very surprise feature, G/C Jones was honoured by the visiting Chiefs with feathered head dress and full regalia and in a befitting ceremony, they named the School's Commanding Officer to be known as Chief Heavy Shields. Chief Shot In Both Sides presided at the ceremony with Chief Percy Creighton acting as interpreter. The honorary title given to G/C Jones is particularly fitting as the original Chief Heavy Shields, who died several years ago, was a great warrior in the early days and took part in many raids. He was an outstanding medicine man of authority and was the owner of several ritualistic charms which have been handed down from the past. He was a kindly Chief of good judgement and was the last of the surviving Chiefs to sign the original Indian treaty. The Chief was a great friend of St. Paul's School and of the white man. It is interesting to note that No 8 B&G School now possesses two honorary Indian Chiefs, A C Russel, the former manager of the Lethbridge Exhibition, having been made an honorary chief some years ago in recognition of his kindly relations with the Indians at this annual exhibition. Pictures of the ceremony were shown in exhibits C and D attached.

July 31, 1942

Total number of aircraft on charge this date: Ansons - 21, Battles - 64, Lysanders - 12, Bolingbrokes - 16, Harvard - 1.

August 19, 1942

The first fatality in the history of flying this School is reported at 1015 hours this date when Fairy Battle aircraft R4000 crashes two and one half miles northwest of the village of Magrath approximately 17 miles from the Station resulting in the following personnel being instantly killed: R100191 Sgt Lowe L R pilot, R119793 LAC Morin G G gunner, R121785 LAC Sandman R B gunner. This crew had completed a routine gunnery exercise and were returning to the aerodrome when engine trouble developed making a forced landing necessary. The pilot lowered the undercarriage but a normal forced landing was not carried out as there was no evidence of a landing run. The Battle aircraft struck the ground heavily. There was no evidence of fire although the oil and fuel tanks were fractured. A Court of Enquiry has been ordered and not until the investigation has been completed will the cause of the accident be known.

Ed: No 124 Ferry Squadron was also based at Lethbridge in mid-1942. It had 25 personnel.

August 31, 1942

Aircraft strength: Cessna Crane - 1, Bolingbroke - 14, Anson - 21, Lysanders - 12, Battles - 61,

Hurricanes - 19, Harvards - 12. Total of 136 aircraft.

September 5, 1942

The Sergeants Mess is the scene of a very pleasant summer formal dance when a large number of visitors joined with Station personnel in a social time for four or five hours. At 1630 hours, Bolingbroke Mk IV aircraft No 9902, powered with Mercury 15 engines port number 2907 and starboard number 2884, piloted by GB958526 Sgt Pilot Waller E G S and carrying GB1127186 Sgt Pilot Williams K B C pilot navigator and R109343 Cpl Rogan J B as passenger, returning from a navigation flight and made a forced landing on the aerodrome. The pilot made a crash landing wheels up due to inability to lower same by means of emergency hydraulic pump. There were no injuries. Category of crash was "B".

September 11, 1942

The RCAF airmen of the bomber crew who assisted in the smashing raid on Saarbrucken, Germany and flew to Canada the next day arrived at the Station at 0910 hours to have a brief visit to the City of Lethbridge. a) The visiting airmen included P/O J B Higham DFC of Assiniboia, Saskatchewan, pilot of the Wellington bomber which blasted Germany; Sgt Don Morrison, Sherbrooke, Quebec, rear gunner; F/Sgt Carl Svenson, Elfross, Saskatchewan wireless operator; F/Sgt S C Lee Minedosa, Manitoba navigator; Sgt Arch Loach, Islington, Ontario, front gunner and bomber. b) F/L T.C. McCall, Chief Public Relations Officer at RCAF Head Quarters in Ottawa, was in charge of the tour. c) Airmen and Air Women from No 8 B&G School formed an Honour Guard with Royal Canadian Mounted Police being a part of the colourful background. d) Rousing cheers and applause greeted the Airmen on their arrival at the court house where the Macleod Air Force Band played throughout the ceremony. Representatives from Air Force Schools, including W/C R F Davenport of Macleod, W/C Walter Kennedy of Claresholm, Lt William Tudor of the United States Air Corps and S/L Gross, Acting Commanding Officer at No 8 B&G School, Lethbridge. e) During the few minutes they were at No 8, the visitors chatted with Mayor Elton, Inspector E D Friat of the RCMP, President Charles MacMillan of the Lethbridge Board of Trade, S/L G R F Gross, Acting Commanding Officer No 8 B&G, other Officers at the local and other Southern Alberta Air Training Centres. The bomber crew departed by plane for Vancouver at 1015 hours.

October 4, 1942

With the exception of the air party conveying aircraft, the personnel of No 133 fighter squadron departed by train from Lethbridge to Vancouver, BC en route to their new posting at Boundary Bay. Movement plans were well organized and successfully carried out and the special train departed at approximately 2350 hours practically on schedule.

October 29, 1942

No 124 Ferry Squadron reports a crash of Kittyhawk No AL136 in the Cypress Hills district south east of Medicine Hat at approximately 1200 hours this date when the pilot flying through

bad weather and a snow storm with visibility very bad was unable to locate bearings and crashed into the ground. The aircraft was a complete wreck and burned and the pilot WO1 Carless was killed. No 34 SFTS Medicine Hat upon being advised of non-arrival of this plane at the expected time of 1240 hours followed up the investigation after learning of the crash.

(Reel ends. No 8 B&G continues on reel number C12 335.)

November 21, 1942

RCAF Bomber hockey club under S/L J M Lees is taking shape and practises daily are bringing the team into condition. Some strong talent has been posted to this school to make a representative team under coach Pete Slobodian. This team plays in Calgary this evening in an exhibition game to meet the Calgary Mustangs. A four team league is announced with Lethbridge, Red Deer and Calgary RCAF and Army teams entered. Twelve home games are assured each team and a busy season of hockey is in prospect.

November 22, 1942

The newly organized station band made the first official appearance with some 16 members present at the church service and under the baton of Mr Milt Moffatt. The band also paraded to the wings ceremony in the drill hall when course number 43 WAGs graduated. The band made a very favourable impression and station officials appreciate the assistance of Lethbridge citizens in bringing the band into service.

November 24, 1942

A/C A Neville CBE, Deputy Chief of Staff for the Royal New Zealand Air Force, accompanied by G/C K W White, Air Liaison Officer and Chief of the New Zealand Air Mission in Canada, visits the station when delayed by TCA traffic for nearly 48 hours. They were guests of the station from Sunday evening to Tuesday morning at 10 00 hours. He expressed real enthusiasm for the progress of the Air Training Plan, real satisfaction with the treatment of New Zealand troops passing through Canada, and his own personal opinion that "The people of Canada are magnificent. The airmen write home and tell how much is being done for them here. New Zealanders here are learning more and more about Canada and the people 'down under' are taking a greater interest in this Dominion. An inevitable accomplishment of this war will be a wider and better understanding by people in the various parts of the British Empire of other Dominions", expressed the Commodore.

November 30, 1942

Total number of aircraft on charge this date: Bolingbroke IV - 26, Anson II - 42, Lysander III - 19, Battle I - 61, Harvard II - 1 for a total of 149. Total flying for the month of November, 1942, 2,647: 05. Signed: W A Jones, Group Captain, Commanding Officer.

December 6, 1942

A wings presentation and station church parade took place at 0900 hours Sunday morning. Squadrons from Headquarters Maintenance Wing and Air Training Wing were formed up on the parade ground where wings were presented to the graduating class of wireless air gunners Number 42B by G/C W A Jones. R133367 Sgt Emerson C P A headed the class and received a gold identity bracelet. Following the ceremony and march past, the squadrons paraded to church. The Protestant service was conducted by Hon F/L W K Batty, 514 officers and other ranks being present. The Catholic parade of 130 officers and men was held prior to wings parade and the service was taken by the new chaplain Hon F/L W J Cassidy. Course 42B WOAGs, which had trained at this station from 9/11/42 to 6/12/42 graduated today and were posted to the following units effective 6/12/42: ten RCAF to No 31 OTU, Debert, Nova Scotia; three RCAF to No 36 OTU, Greenwood, Nova Scotia; seven RCAF retained at station pending posting; one RCAF retained as an instructor; and three, one Australian and two RCAF, to No 4 AOS, London, Ontario.

December 12, 1942

A crash occurred at approximately 1400 hours 4/12/42 of Fairey Battle aircraft No 2070 four miles east of the aerodrome. The aircraft was carrying our routine camera gun exercises when it caught fire. The pilot commenced a forced landing but the flames spread rapidly as the aircraft neared the ground causing the pilot to lose control. As a result of the crash GB1314535 Sgt Williams E L instructor who was piloting the aircraft at the time was seriously injured. R122006 LAC Aitkins E T WOAG was killed instantly and R143303 LAC Armstrong E W was slightly injured.

December 14, 1942

Owing to sudden changes in weather conditions in the southern part of the province, it was considered advisable for the health of the personnel to improvise a plan whereby winter dress regulations might be adapted to existing outdoor temperatures from day to day. Pennants are flown from two barrack blocks to indicate when great coats are considered necessary by the senior medical officer.

December 20, 1942

Bolingbroke No 9898 crashed at noon on the bombing range taking the lives of P/O G H Brasier J20200 instructor air gunner; R105922 F/S Dalglish N J pilot; R131732 LAC Bohushe E WAG student, and AUS414952 LAC Palmer S L WAG student. A Christmas party for children of the married personnel of the station and their parents was held in the Recreation Hall Sunday

afternoon. The program included a short movie in Technicolour. Presentations of gifts by Santa Clause to approximately 110 children followed by refreshments.

December 23, 1942

A funeral service was held at Martin Brothers Funeral Home for P/O G H Brasier, F/S Dalgleish N J, LAC Bohushe E and LAC Palmer S L. Following the service the funeral parade formed up in two parts, one half following the gun carriage supporting the remains of P/O G H Brasier, F/S Dalgleish N J to the station from which point they were sent by rail to Mayronne, Saskatchewan and Grande Prairie respectively for interment. The remains of LAC Bohushe E were sent to Calgary on 22/12/42 for interment. The other half of the parade escorted the body of LAC Palmer S L to the cemetery where final military honours were accorded to the deceased.

January 12, 1943

A fire occurred on the Indian reserve four miles southwest of the RCAF bombing range at 1400 hours 12 January 43. Driven by a strong westerly wind, the fire assumed considerable size. At 1800 hours a crew and crash tender were sent out to assist in preventing destruction to a Royal Oil Company well in the path of the fire. At 0200 hours the fire was nearing a small Indian settlement and also a wooden bridge built across the St Mary's River by the RCAF. Twenty men and equipment were sent to the scene and the fire was brought under control. It has definitely been established that the blaze was started on the reserve by Indians and no blame is attached to the RCAF.

January 21, 1943

A minimum temperature of minus 40.6 degrees was recorded at TCA control tower at 0630 hours. The mercury rose comparatively little throughout the day.

January 26, 1943

A very successful dance and presentation was held in the Officers' Mess Tuesday evening in honour of G/C and Mrs W A Jones on the occasion of his departure to take up a new post at Western Air Command after sixteen months as Commanding Officer of this station. Word was received that F/L S A Cheesman (C2001) who had held the position of OC Flying from November, 1941 to April 1942, prior to his posting to an OTU in Eastern Air Command, was reported "missing" on an Atlantic patrol.

January 28, 1943

A station parade was held this afternoon on the occasion of the official handing over ceremony when G/C W A Jones relinquishes command of No 8 B&G School to S/L R F Gross C182, who will act temporarily as commanding officer of the station until the arrival of G/C M D Lister C168 from Mountainview. F/L S A Cheesman and his crew have been located at a point on the Labrador coast. Supplies are being dropped to them by plane until such time as a rescue can be

affected.

Item from the Lethbridge Herald, March 2, 1943

Canada's Ace In Lethbridge Meets Boyhood Pal Sgt Bill Wade at Number 8 B&G School

FO George F "Buzz" Buerling, DSO, DFC, DFM and Bar meets G/C Murray Lister, commanding officer No 8 Bombing and Gunnery School on his visit here Tuesday on a Trans-Canada tour of Canada's air schools.

April 7, 1943

A letter was received by the commanding officer from the principal of the Barons Consolidated School in appreciation of the cooperation given in arranging for an RCAF plane to fly over the town and drop a flag as a salute to the school showing the distinction of winning the war savings drive in the month of March.

April 8, 1943

Twelve Anson aircraft of navigation flight from No 2 AOS Edmonton landed at this field at midnight for refuelling and returned again to their home unit.

April 15, 1943

On Thursday evening, a radio broadcast was made from this station over radio station CJOC when a short variety program starring airmen and airwomen of this unit was staged in the Recreation Hall under the direction of two sergeants of No 4 Training Command loaned from Air Force Head Quarters for special services work in connection with entertainment and publicity. The broadcast was an outstanding success and was later transmitted over CBC from recording made during the program.

April 21, 1943

The RCASC supply depot has been disbanded at this unit and Lt J Bert-Johns transferred to the headquarters staff at the internment camp in the vicinity of Lethbridge from which main supply depot No 8 B&G School will in future draw necessary rations, daily.

April 24, 1943

The Air Officer Commanding No 4 Training Command A/V/M G R Housam MC, accompanied by W/C C G Beveridge C1384, and S/L T W O'Brian C2271, arrived at this unit at 1400 hours Saturday afternoon in Lockheed aircraft No 7649 from Calgary. Together with the Commanding Officer and the Victory Loan committee, Col L Ponton de Arce and other American officers who arrived from Great Falls, Montana in a famous Flying Fortress aircraft (B-17), the first ever to land at this field, proceeded to Lethbridge to take part in a ceremony before the City Hall in

which this community and its citizens pledged themselves to whole hearted support of the Victory Loan drive.

May 5, 1943

By order of A/V/M G R Housam MC, AOC No 4 TC, the detail of officers mentioned below assembled at No 8 B&G School at 1000 hours 5 May for the purpose of trying the accused, P/O P Wagner GB818061 by District Court Marshall on the following charges: "WOAS is charged with an act to the prejudice of good order and Air Force discipline in that one, on the 13th day of April did negligently fly one of His Majesty's aircraft in such a manner that it came into contact with an object on the ground thereby causing damage to the aircraft to the amount of \$39.75".

May 18, 1943

A fatal accident occurred Tuesday morning when Air Cobra aircraft being ferried north by an American Army Air Corps Officer took off from this field in company with another aircraft and while travelling in normal flight suddenly dived into Keho Lake, about 16 miles from this unit and disappeared from sight in the water. The pilot of the other aircraft returned to this unit for assistance of unit officers and equipment. The cause of the accident is not known and the matter is being dealt with by American Army officials.

July 3, 1943

At 2315 hours, Anson aircraft 8263 developed motor trouble over target 3 on the range and was forced to make a belly landing 25 miles southwest of the aerodrome on the auxiliary field at Standoff. The pilot was F/S Walton B A. Student was LAC Wilson. Neither of the occupants was injured and very little damage resulted. The aircraft was repaired and flown back to this unit the next day. Bolingbroke No 9906 crashed at 0850 hours near Welling, Alberta, taking the lives of F/O J D Heacock J9670, R86936 Cpl Newell W A, R159426 LAC Wise C L and R172494 AC1 Pattison H M. The cause of the accident is unknown. The aircraft and crew were wiped out by the explosion and flames.

July 25, 1943

The regular morning church services were held. Mrs S Wright, wife of F/L G S Wright, Works and Building Officer, added to the Protestant church service by singing "Lord How Lovely Are Thy Dwellings". F/L Dodgson's sermon was in connection with works and buildings. The padre is taking the various sections of the station and applying the work they do to our job in life. It is very interesting.

July 29, 1943

F/L G S Wright C8898 was presented at noon today with a beautiful silver tray before leaving for his new station, No 37 SFTS, Calgary, Alberta. Also, some very humorous photographs

taken of him dressed up in his brilliant red sash and numerous valuable (?) medals. F/L Wright who was Works and Buildings Officer laid the attractive stone fireplace in the Officers Mess by himself.

September 8, 1943

A warm day today with visibility and ceiling unlimited. Italy surrenders. This important capitulation was celebrated by the screech of fire engine and ambulance sirens, the shooting off of flares, a general salute and a high feeling amongst the men and women on this station.

September 30, 1943

Radared, the new station mascot, a four year old Great Dane was formally introduced this morning on the CO's parade. He is a beautiful large grey dog and W/C G R F Grose had the honor (?) of being pulled through the ranks as the CO inspected the HQ Squadron.

December 17, 1943

It is unheard of, December 17 and as warm a day as could be found in mid summer. A light wind blowing up causing the weather to be really bumpy upstairs.

December 18, 1943

Today has been very tragic. Four men, one pilot and three students, were fatally injured in Bolingbroke No 10181 which crashed approximately 4 1/2 miles away from the aerodrome. The cause for this aircraft to burst into flames and crash is unknown. The names of those who lost their lives were J27028 P/O W R Parks, AUS435377 LAC Cook T J, AUS431088 LAC Carroll D J, R194972 LAC Dunlop D V. The aircraft was a total loss. Last evening a 72 mile an hour wind blew up and bowled over two aircraft (American), one onto its back the other left leaning at a precarious angle. All our aircraft had been roped securely. The wind calmed down considerable and today has been bright, reasonable warm and windy. The airmen held a Christmas dance in the Drill Hall last evening. Fir trees and Christmas lights added much to the enjoyment of the evening. A well known band from town provided excellent music.

December 30, 1943

A "red letter" day today as work was considerably lightened owing to the assistance of the New Zealand officers' recently posted to this station. Prior to the commencement of their course they are making themselves generally useful (as this is written by one of them, better not put a question mark after that word) by removing loads of worry and responsibility from our shoulders. We will now be able to face the last evening of the year 1943 completely relaxed in mind and spirit (which type it is not necessary to mention here). Weather sunny and quite warm, cloudless sky, little wind. Even the NZ folk consider the weather quite good.

This from the Lethbridge Herald:

Dam Buster Graduate Number 8 to Macleod

One young American airman who received his air gunners wings here on November 7, 1941 with the first class to graduate from No 8 Bombing and Gunnery School returned to Lethbridge to tell personnel of the station of his experiences overseas during two years and to pass on knowledge which he gained in completing two full tours of operations and then 250 hours as a gunner in night fighters. The airman is F/O W T Merrick DFC DFM of Summerville, Indiana. He was awarded the decorations after shooting down three German fighters, going on the famous Mohne Dam busting expedition and other raids. F/O Merrick has just completed his elementary flying at Abbotsford, B C having remustered some time ago to become a pilot. He has been posted to No 7 Service Flying Training School at Macleod for his next phase of flying training. Before going to Macleod, the officer was assigned to speak to personnel at the bombing and gunnery schools here and at Mossbank, Saskatchewan and to impart some of his valuable knowledge to trainees. During his talk here this afternoon, the officer showed numerous pictures of damage inflicted on churches and civilians in Britain by Germany's Luftwaffe. He also showed many pictures of the destruction rained down on military targets in Germany and Nazi occupied lands.

January, 1944, The Lethbridge Herald

Flight Lieutenant Borgal to take Pilot's Course

F/L Borgal, officer commanding the air bomber section at No 8 Bombing and Gunnery School, and before his enlistment a popular member of the teaching staff at the Lethbridge Collegiate Institute, has remustered for aircrew and leaves shortly for No 4 Initial Flying Training School at Edmonton to start his pilot's course. While on the staff of the Collegiate, he was an officer with the Reserve Army here but resigned his commission to join the Air Force. After completing various courses, he was appointed Armament Officer on the staff of No 4 Training Command. He was posted to the local station on March 17, 1943.

February 19, 1944

Today has been a gala day. Miss Kay Frances, Mr Reginald Gardner, Miss Marsha Hunt and three starlets were the guests of No 8 B&G School this afternoon and evening. The officers wives held a tea at 1600 hours. There is no doubt about it, stars come and go, but many present still consider Miss Frances the first lady of the screen. A wild windy day.

February 22, 1944

The ferry squadron has been kept busy transferring aircraft from east to west and vice versa. No 8 B&G School is indeed the crossroads of aviation. America aircraft flying to Edmonton,

Whitehorse, Dawson from far eastern points. Canadian aircraft and Trans Canada Airlines from east to west.

March 19, 1944

(The day of the editor's birth, and in the same town) Another very quiet day. Maintenance are moving right along. Lovely day, really piling in the flying hours. Possible flying hours day 7:10, hours carried out 7:10. Night nil.

April 2, 1944

"The flowers that bloom in the spring tra la, tra la" (what flowers). Nothing here but prairie. Never-the-less, spring or whatever it is is definitely floating around. Actually it is more like summer it is so hot. The digging bug has hit the station anyway and the ground is stirring again. Looks as if we will be getting our vegetable garden going soon.

April 4, 1944

The Commanding Officer kicked off the rugby ball at 1845 hours on the station field last evening thereby opening up the season for outdoor sports and the two teams really fought it out. The Kiwi's (Newzees) finally came out on top over the Kangaroos (the Aussies). Flying was washed out at 1602 hours due to a high wind but this warm weather still continues. Storm windows off today, another good sign.

April 7, 1944

Good Friday and a station holiday for all except for those on duty watch and in essential duties. A Protestant service was held this morning at 0900 hours. A great deal of American and Russian aircraft have gone overhead today. Two were reported missing later in the day. A spring day but windy. No flying during the day or night.

April 8, 1944

The report is in of the two aircraft missing yesterday. Both crashed near Brooks, Alberta, one pilot killed, one injured.

April 19, 1944

The station riding club featuring horses purchased with non-public funds has created a great deal of enthusiasm. The sport of kings and cowboys is going to be a major interest on the station during the coming summer. Purchased primarily for the use of airmen and airwomen the horses are at present taking a course of training from officers and senior NCOs who will later act as instructors for the uninitiated among the other ranks. The steeds are being quartered near the city

where any aspiring Sir Galahad, Buffalo Bill or Lady Godiva will be able to rent them for a very small fee. An airmen's dance in the Drill Hall from Magrath, Alberta and was largely attended.

April 22, 1944

A day of beautiful flying weather with half the station on 48 hour passes, both planes from the station and horses from the riding club are ranging far and wide.

May 6, 1944

Flying washed out due to smoke. Course 101 air bombers who completed their course yesterday left the station today after their graduation ceremony. Out of 51, there were 48 graduates, three being failures for academic reasons. There were 19 perfect papers and Aldus. The course had difficulty with aircraft recognition due to the fact that in Australia and New Zealand the course of study in this subject is different to Canada. Of the graduates, 18 were from Australia, 15 from New Zealand, 11 from United Kingdom and 4 from Canada. 22 were posted to No 5 AOS at Winnipeg and 26 to No 2 AOS at Edmonton. LAC Sherry J B of Wishaw, Lanarshire, Scotland was the best bomb aimer with a score of 88 percent. He was awarded the miniature bomb. New Zealand PO J B Goscoigne was presented with a silver bracelet for having made the highest academic mark of 89.2 percent. The graduation date for wireless air gunners course No 77 was set forward to today from Monday. 27 men received their wings of whom 2 were Canadians and 25 Australians. Both Canadians were posted to No 1 "Y" Depot, five of the RAAF proceeded to No 111 OTU, eight to No 32 OTU, five to No 4 AOS, two to No 2 AOS, and five to No 1 "Y" Depot. Australian LAC Duncan J M won the silver bracelet given for the highest academic marks. He obtained an average of 87.1 percent. Australian LAC Bird K J won the silver bullet with the best gunnery score of 4.6. LAC Duncan J M was also the top student at wireless school and bombing and gunnery school combined with an average of 78.5. The class got a high average rating.

June 6, 1944

D Day, the Allies have struck and landed on the shores of Normandy. The weather is clear temporarily and full flying has been carried on. Strangely enough there is so much activity in Europe today in contrast work is quiet here and quite routine.

October 24, 1944

A very dull, windy day. G/C R H Foss resumes command of No 8 B&G on expiration of leave. G/C Foss and hunting party had quite a trip. From the number of stories related at the monthly mess dinner it seems that S/L Borgal was fortunate to have his life after wounding a grizzly. The wounded grizzly and one cub both charged at the same time, a terrifying experience. The grizzly finally pounced on S/L Borgal's foot as he was trying to dodge over a windfall and fell.

After a great struggle, S/L Borgal managed to pull his revolver and managed to pump five shots into Mr Bear's chest. S/L Borgal survived the ordeal with a badly injured toe. G/C W A Dicks from No 4 Training Command was a visitor at the monthly mess dinner.

December 15, 1944

Nice winter day, warm and sunny. Today is the official closing day of No 8 Bombing and Gunnery School but owing to everyone being so busy with posting and clearances, there was no official closing ceremony. Within the next two or three days everyone but the personnel left with the rear party will be cleared from the station.

This draft copy of excerpts from the Daily Diary of No 8 Bombing and Gunnery School, Lethbridge, Alberta was prepared by:

Tim Johnston
JATP Publishing
244 Prestwick Estate Way SE
Calgary, Alberta T2Z 4H2
bcatp@hotmail.com

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