



A History
of the
Air Force Officers
Association

1920 - 1993

Past Presidents

1936-37	‡ Sidney Anderson	1964-65	‡ Allan A. Harris
1937-38	‡ J.B.M. Barnus	1965-66	‡ Harry J. Bird
1938-39	‡ A.W. (Nick) Carter	1966-67	‡ T.J. MacKinnon
1939-40	‡ George Dixon	1967-68	‡ Walter A. Orr
1940-41	‡ Urwin Finch	1968-69	W. Alan Davidson
1941-42	‡ S.B. Plummer	1969-70	‡ Ernest A. McNab
1942-43	‡ George P. Kells	1970-71	W.L. Gillespie
1943-44	‡ Clarence R. Fraser	1971-72	Robert J.B. Burns
1944-45	‡ Frank E. Debrisay	1972-73	‡ Marlowe Kennedy
1945-46	‡ Hon. Ralph Campney	1973-74	R.J. Lawlor
1946-47	‡ Sidney A. Anfield	1974-75	Donald T. Bain
1947-48	‡ Victor R. Clerihue	1975-76	Edward A. Allan
1948-49	W. Arthur MacKay	1976-77	‡ D. Gordon Bell-Irving
1949-50	‡ Duncan Bell-Irving	1977-78	R.J. Meek
1950-51	‡ Robert W.R. Day	1978-79	‡ Norman B. Flavin
1951-52	‡ Robert C. Hawkes	1979-80	Hugh A.M. Clee
1952-53	‡ J.I.M. Beddall	1980-81	Ken R. Liss
1953-54	‡ R.E. Mallalue	1981-82	Frank L. Clarke
1954-55	W. Randolph Clerihue	1982-83	William M. Smith
1955-56	‡ H.P. (Hap) Hollingum	1983-84	Harold T. Hope
1956-57	Lloyd Manuel	1984-85	‡ R.G. Stone
1957-58	‡ Dr. Fraser Murray	1985-86	Leslie E. Burrows
1958-59	‡ George W. Woods	1986-87	William M. Marr
1959-60	‡ AVM Leigh F. Stevenson	1987-88	‡ Gordon L. Morrell
1960-61	George Seldon	1988-89	R.A. Conlin
1961-62	‡ A. Hal Wilson	1989-90	Dr. Bernard Riedel
1962-63	William Crawford	1990-91	Newton R. Brydon
1963-64	Roy F. Begg	1991-92	Wm. N. Spratt
		1992-93	James N. Keen

(‡ Deceased)

A History of the Air Force Officers Association

by Frank Smith

The Air Force Officers Association began as an informal group of World War I officers in 1920, long before its official beginning. D.W. (Darold) Davis, one of the few WW I airmen who had survived being shot down to finish the war as a prisoner, wondered to his wife whether there were others like himself about. She suggested he put an advertisement in the paper, which he did, in the Vancouver News Herald.

He was surprised to get thirty responders to his ad, and it was arranged that they should meet for coffee. The place of this initial meeting was the old White Lunch that was on Hastings Street, very near the Woodward's Store, but on the opposite side of the street.

They enjoyed themselves that day, renewing old friendships, talking about the war and their experiences, and decided they should get together more or less regularly.

How often they met is not known. They must have had an organization with elected officers, By-Laws, and a program of events. After the first few gatherings they changed their venue from the noisy, busy, White Lunch to other restaurants where a modicum of privacy could be obtained.

The group grew with other airmen who had not been prisoners of war coming in - men such as Nick Carter, Vic Clerihue, and Don MacLaren, who was the fourth most effective Canadian fighter pilot in the war with forty-eight aircraft and six balloons destroyed. The meetings continued and in 1936-37 they formed into a proper organization called The Royal Air Force Ex-Officers Association.

The original Constitution has been termed a Mexican Constitution, for the membership elected a President who then appointed his officers and his Board of Directors. The provision was for ten directors, to be appointed annually. But the original directors stayed in office, with each incoming President adding more so that by 1947, the year before incorporation, there were forty-one directors.

An interesting provision in this constitution follows.

ARTICLE XII CHARGES

All charges by members of conduct unbecoming a member, or violations of these By-Laws, must be made in writing, together with such evidence as may be at hand, to the Grievance Committee who shall investigate and report their findings to the Board of Directors.

There is no indication what the Board could or should do with such a charge. It was not given any power to expel, reprimand or otherwise penalize a member for unbecoming conduct, which latter, by the way, was not defined.

In this Constitution the provisions were regarded as only "guide lines". The annual dues were set at \$2.00 a year. However, in the year of 1938-39, if a member attended the annual Birthday Dinner on April 1st. one dollar of his admission was recorded as his membership dues for that year. This procedure continued until 1944, when the Association "went in the red" for the first time. Thus, beginning on January 1, 1945, the practice was discontinued and the annual dues became \$3.00

The Constitution provided for admission to membership of all ranks (Commissioned) providing they had " Wartime Flying Certificates" from the first World War or were in training thereof at the end of that war.

The absence of any financial record for the first year precludes the possibility of knowing who were the first members, but the records of the second year 1937-38, which seem complete, list the following as having paid annual dues.

Anderson, Syd.	Garland, A.H.	Shafer, E.G.
Anfield, S.A.	Harper, G.B.	Sinclair, L.R.
Baker, R.P.	Heal, H.H.	Stockton, R.P.
Barnum, J.B.M.	Hollingum, H.J.	Sullivan, H.J.
Beasley, P.	Layfield, H.D.	Symonds, E.G.
Bell-Irving, A.D.	MacDonnell, M.J.R.	Taylor, S.W.
Brown, J.M.	MacKenzie, W.G.	Thompson, J.F.
Carruthurs, W.A.	McKinnon, Wm,	Torrance, J.
Clerihue, V.R.	Marshall, J.L.	Trites, S.B.
Corker, A.F.	Martin, J.B.	West, R.R.
Crozier, A.	Maud, E.L.	Wilson, A.H.
Dixon, G.C.	Maudseley, F.J.	Wintemute, E.S.
Duke, L.deS.	Maywood, C.A.	

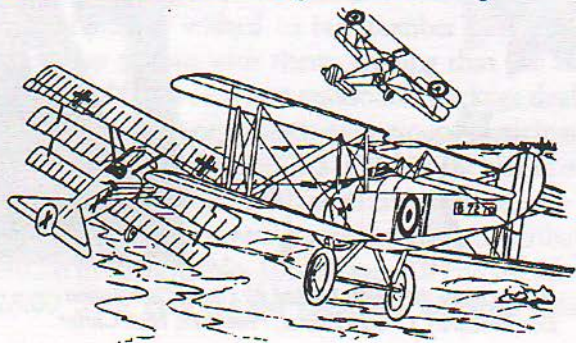
The organization grew, and began to have events. About the earliest of these is still the most popular, the Dawn Patrol. In Roy Begg's memory the first was in 1936, the year they officially formed. It was held in the Spanish Grill of the original Hotel Vancouver. He was then an officer in 111 Squadron, a reserve unit in Vancouver. They used to invite members of the R.A.F.O.A. to their functions, and in return were made Associate Members. The Dawn Patrol has always followed a format symbolic of the World War I dawn patrols, considered the most hazardous duty of a day.

The enemy met them with the sun at his back, giving him a distinct advantage, and casualties were always heavy. Returning to base a pilot would go to the mess and first have a few drinks with his companions. In this uncommonly early Happy Hour he would relive the patrol and its excitement, congratulate himself on his safe return, settle down after a period during which his adrenaline had been running high. Then they would go for breakfast.

The messes were not large in those days, everyone knew everyone and absences were noted. The empty places at the table were sobering, causing regret over the loss of friends, and bringing home to each the deadly nature of the game they played. But being young, healthy, and cocky as fighter pilots always are this sombre mood soon passed, and if duty permitted there was always a bistro near by where there was music, dance, and les girls.

This is the format of the Dawn Patrol - an early Happy Hour - breakfast - a moment of silence in respect for our absent friends - followed by entertainment. A big majority of the members never fail to turn out for the Dawn Patrol, which is, therefore, the one event of the Association that is certain to be profitable.

At early Dawn Patrols the members provided the entertainment. In 1940 the famous dawn patrol of the 77th Squadron, when the great Baron Von Richtofen was shot down by Canadian Roy Brown, was re-enacted in a transcription narrated by Leo Nicholson R.N.A.S. and R.A.F. Those present heard the squadron commander give the orders for the patrol, heard the Camels taking off, roar over enemy lines to be greeted by AA fire, and then engage in combat with Von Richtofen's squadron. Other favorites were, Bayonet Drill, acted by Bill Carr, and the Bomber Squadron Briefing.



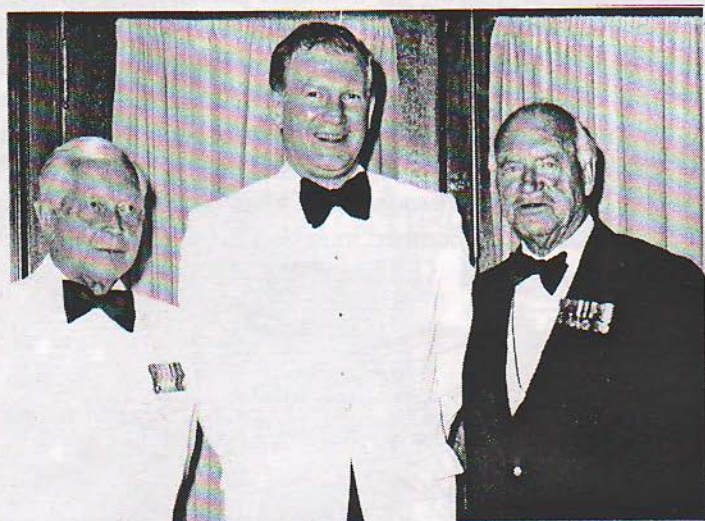
But these acts soon gave way to paid entertainment which, for a number of years, included strippers. There was one at the Georgia Hotel when the stripper insisted on sitting on one time hockey great and current candidate for the office of alderman in the city of Vancouver, Frank Frederickson's knee. With visions of this getting comment in the press he was almost hysterical in his efforts to dissuade her.

Generally the entertainment provided at Dawn Patrols has been good and well received. There have been various young ladies dancing groups. Barney Potts entertained a couple of times, also Gillian Campbell, comedian Johnny Murdoch and in the early days Rolph Harris.

The annual Birthday dinner held on April 1st started in 1937. Its original purpose was to celebrate the birth of the Royal Air Force, and it is semi-formal, the Association's Mess Dinner. As April 1 is also the birthdate of the R.C.A.F., the dinner honours the formation of both services, one beginning in 1918, the other in 1924.

For most of World War I airmen served in either the Royal Flying Corps or the Royal Naval Air Service. On April 1st, 1918 these two groups were amalgamated into the Royal Air Force which then functioned under its own command separate from the army and the navy. Later, when the difference between operations of ground based aircraft and those at sea with the navy was recognized, the Fleet Air Arm came into being.

A Canadian Aviation Corps was formed in 1914. This consisted of a commander, one other officer, and a Burgess-Dunnee biplane, and accompanied the first Canadian troops overseas in October of 1914. Once there the aircraft was neglected and soon became a pile of useless junk. The commander



1975 Digby, NS. 34th Annual Air Cadet Convention
Don McLaren, Charlie Baxter, President, Nick Carter

became discouraged and returned to Canada in 1915. The other officer, Lieut. W.F. Sharpe, went to France for advanced training, and was soon killed. Numbers 1 and 2 Canadian squadrons were formed, saw service through the war and were disbanded in 1920. In the same year a second Canadian Air Force was authorized, and was planned to have a total of 1,340 officers and 3,905 enlisted men. This became the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1924.

Its peak strength between the wars was 177 officers and 729 enlisted men, which, in 1932, was cut back to 103 officers and 591 enlisted men. In 1938 it was made independent of the Army Chief of Staff, and at the outbreak of World War II it had a total strength of 4,061.

During that war the RCAF became the fourth largest airforce, peaking at 215,200 men and women. It trained 131,533 aircrew, put 47 squadrons into the field overseas, and had 41 others operating in Canada. Thousands that it trained served with the RAF. In all, 17,100 lost their lives. At an annual meeting in 1988 Earl Wintemute said there were also 750 Air Cadets who saw overseas service in the R.C.A.F., 300 of whom failed to return.

In addition to the two annual functions the Association had special dinners from time to time. On October 1936 they had one for W/C Hepburn, R.A.A.F., then the Prime Minister of Australia. They had another for Don MacLaren in September 1937, and for Punch Dickens in February 1938. Another was held for A/M Bishop in August of 1939. The association took part in the Guard of Honor when King George VI and his Queen visited Vancouver on May 29, 1939. Between 1939 and 1945 there was another dinner with Bishop, and in 1945 one with AVM Raymond Collishaw.

Collishaw was second only to Bishop as a Canadian fighter pilot ace in World War I. After the war he stayed with the RAF, serving mainly in the Middle East. He retired to West Vancouver and was a member of the Association until his death in 1976.

As soon as World War II started on September 1, 1939 the members, individually and within the Association, became active in support. When an Elementary Flying Training School was established at Sea Island the Association launched a financial drive for funds to be turned over to the government for the purchase of training aircraft. Another Vancouver group had much the same idea, except that it wished to buy bomber aircraft. The Association persuaded this group to join with them, arguing that the sum required for a training aircraft (\$ 8,000) would be a reasonable package deal for large donors.

Eventually fourteen organizations or groups participated in a drive that lasted from June 14 to July 15, 1940. \$ 112,312.00 was raised, of which the Association contributed \$ 46,571.00, or 41.5% of the total.

In the fall of 1940 the members undertook to contribute individually to a fund to maintain the band of No. 1601 Wing, Air Force Cadets. \$ 1,460.00 was raised, \$ 828.00 from Association members and the balance from other

individuals and organizations.

The Air Cadet League of Canada was incorporated in April of 1941, to have its headquarters in Ottawa with provincial committees in each Province. The British Columbia committee was organized by members of the Royal Air Force Ex-Officers Association with A.W. (Nick) Carter taking a leading part. R.E. Standfield, one of our members, was elected chairman. The other offices were filled by the following Association members.

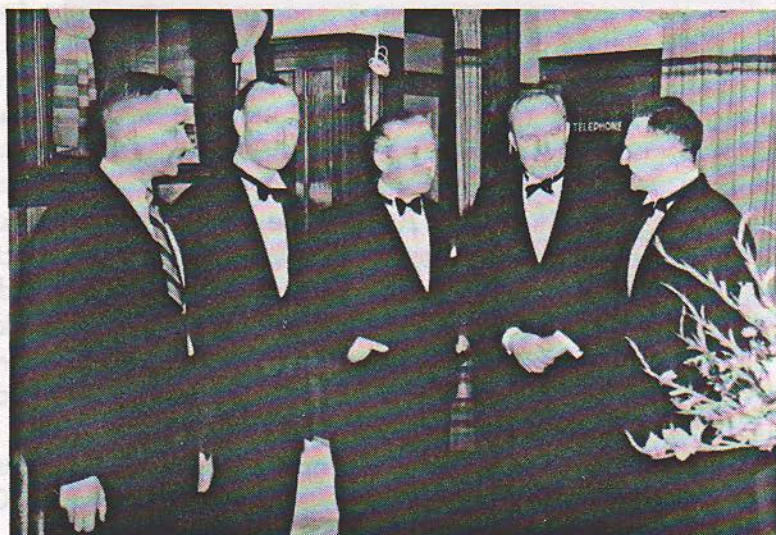
Carter, A.W.
Clerihue, V.R.
Dixon, G.C.

Ker, R.H.B
Manzar, Roy
Plummer, S.B.

Sullivan, H.J.
Thompson, J.F.

Nick Carter also formed and commanded Air Cadet Squadron No. 111, with Earl Wintemute as his adjutant, and when Nick later left Earl took the unit over.

In the fall of 1946 the four Vancouver Air Cadet Squadrons, being a wing for certain administrative purposes, had moved to No. 7 hangar at R.C.A.F. Station Jericho. Considerable work had to be done to partition offices, lecture and other rooms. The Association Directors decided to provide some money for the purchase of needed material and \$ 827.88 was spent for this purpose. In the same year \$ 800.00 was voted and paid for the first year fee at Royal Roads Service College, which was awarded to Cadet George Lowes. Subsequently the same award - paid over two years - was made to Cadet Gordon Read.



Daryl Davis, Nick Carter, Billy Bishop, G.O. Johnson, George Dixon

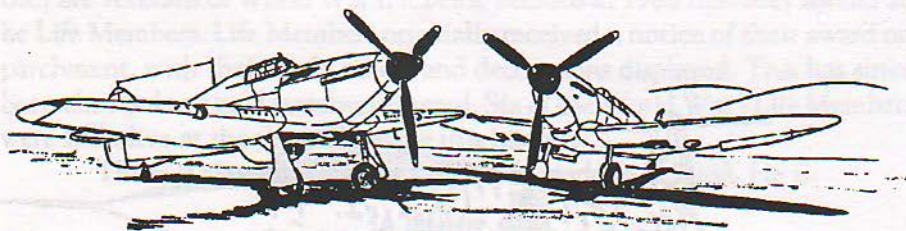
Commencing in the year 1954-55 the Association has voted and paid a sum annually in support of the British Columbia Provincial Committee of the Air Cadet League of Canada. This amount started at \$300.00, and has grown to \$1,000.00 in more recent times. At the 1988 annual meeting W.R. (Ran) Clerihue, then President of the Air Cadet League, stated that the A.F.O.A. has done more to fund the League than any other organization. He also remarked that by 1990 one million young Canadians will have been Air Cadets.

A number of other members were able to serve in the war actively. At the Dawn Patrol of 1943, AVM Leigh Stevenson, then a guest, paid tribute to the members of the Association who, he said, were playing a prominent part in the war effort, either in the Services or as civilians.

A number had administrative jobs in the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan. This had been set up in September 1939, and was to be organized, and run, by Canada. The original agreement was to run until March 31, 1943, later extended to March 31, 1945. It was a formidable task for the R.C.A..F.

At the peak in 1943 there were 73 B.C.A.T.P. schools in Canada, and 24 R.A.F. with 184 ancillary units in operation. A total staff of 104,113 turned out 3,000 trained aircrew a month. Of the total trained 72,835 were Canadian, 42,110 R.A.F., 9,606 R.A.A.F., and 7,002 R.N.Z.A.F. The Plan started to re-trench after February 1944, and the last wings parade was held two days after it ceased operation.

As the war aged strict rationing, notably of liquor, came in effect, and it became difficult to have adequate supplies for such a function as the Dawn Patrol. In the 1944-45 year the members were asked to donate their own liquor rations, and those of their non-drinking secretaries, relatives, and friends, to permit acquiring enough liquid refreshment for November 11.



POST WAR YEARS

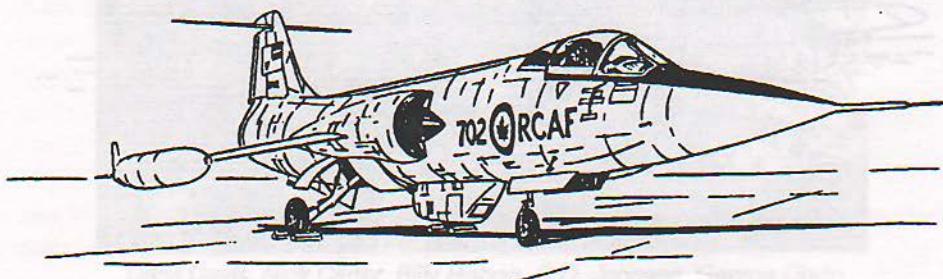
At the Birthday Dinner in 1944 AVM Leigh Stevenson proposed the formation of a club for returning veterans from World War II. Instead the Association changed its name in 1945 to the present Air Force Officers' Association, thereby including these veterans and greatly increasing the total membership. In its beginning in 1936 there were thirty-eight members. This grew to a peak of 376 in 1947-48, and is currently 216.

In 1947-48 the Association also re-wrote its constitution, changing it to provide that the members elect the Directors who then choose the officers from among their number, a provision that still applies. It provided that membership was open only to ex-officers of the Commonwealth and allied air forces. The Association was then incorporated under the Societies Act of British Columbia. For a while it was policy to alternate the Presidents, one term a man who served in World War I, followed by a man from World War II, but this idea was abandoned as the seniors grew aged.

The Association's By-Laws provided that, "Any member in good standing who has rendered long and meritorious service to the Association may, upon recommendation of the Directors, be elected to Life Membership in the Association by extraordinary resolution." The first Life Members were elected at the annual general meeting in May, 1966, and were:

V.R. Clerihue and H.W. Freeman-Smith

Both men had served the Association long and well. Vic Clerihue, a chartered accountant, had been auditor in 1938 and was the Treasurer for eight years from 1939 to 1947. He was also the author of a history of the Association, published in 1966 under the title of *The First Thirty Years*, which history has been the source of much that is written in these pages. H.E. Freeman-Smith, an estate advisor, was the Secretary for fourteen years from 1952 until 1966. He also drafted the Constitution that was adopted in 1948.



Since that time to the present a further twenty-five have been honored. They are, alphabetically:

E.A. (Ted) Allan	WW II
Don T. Bain	WW II
Leslie E. Burrows	WW II
A.W. Carter	WW I
Harry J. Bird	WW I
Walter B. Coates	WW II
Darold W. Davis	WW I
AVM K.M. Guthrie	WW I
R.C. Hawkes	WW I
AVM F. Vernon Heakes	WW I
R.A. (Pop) Lawlor	WW II
Kenneth R. Liss	WW II
Donald R. MacLaren	WW I
Ewart G. MacPherson	WW I
Myron. C. McLeod	WW I
R. Jack Meek	WW II
Alfred E. Mitchel	WW II
W. Keith Muir	WW II
William L.F. Murison	WW I
AVM Kenneth G. Nairn	WW I
Lorne E. Sinclair	WW I
Wm. McK. Smith	WW II
AVM Leigh F. Stevenson	WW I
John G. Thompson	WW I
Earl C. Wintemute	WW I

While the above merit the honor on the basis of work they have done for the Association over a long period of time sixteen are on the list also because they are veterans of World War I, it being decided in 1986 that they should all be Life Members. Life Members originally received a notice of their award on parchment, with their rank, name, and decorations displayed. This has since been changed to a gold membership card. Six of the World War I Life Members were still alive at the time of writing this history.

There is also one Honorary Member, made so in 1988. He is:

AVM John L. Plant CBE. AFC. CD.

Today the functions put on by the Association each year follows a well established format. The year ends with the Annual General Meeting held in the



THIS IS THE WAY SOME OF THE MEMBERS



LOOKED TO JACK BOOTHE BEFORE, DURING OR AFTER



"BUCK" CARTER,
M.B.L., D.S.C.
SQUADRON LEADER
AND 1ST VICE-PRES
OF AIR CADET
LEAGUE OF CANADA
WAS THERE AND
LOOKED VERY
FIT AS USUAL.



PRES. CLARENCE
FRASER DID A
FINE JOB AS
CHAIRMAN,
1942-43.



AT THE ANNUAL
"AMALGAMATION DAY"
DINNER TO COMMEMORATE
THE 26TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE FORMATION OF
THE R.A.F.-AND BIRTHDAY
PARTY (20TH ANNIVERSARY)
OF THE R.C.A.F.-HELD
IN HOTEL VANCOUVER
BY
EX-RA.F. OFFICERS



GEORGE DIXON,
FAST-PRESENTER,
SHARED
THE RESPONSIBILITIES
OF ARRANGEMENTS

W.E. CHAPMAN,
D.F.M. WAS IN
GOOD MOOD
AND BECAME
A HERO TO
THE ARTIST
WHEN HE SET
UP A PINK.



GROUP CAPT
"CON" FARRELL
D.F.C. WAS
THERE 'TILL
THE LIGHTS
WENT OUT.



"VIC" CLERIHUE
(TREASURE)
WAS A BUSY
MAN ALLEVENING
-AND APPEARED
MOST HAPPY
WHEN THE BOYS
BURST FORTH
WITH SOME OF
THE OLD SONGS



ROYAL
GALT

F.E. DES BRISAY
LOOKED AS IF
HE REALLY ENJOYED
CIGARS



GROUP CAPT. R. HALLEY
OF THE R.A.F. WAS
ELEVATED WHEN
GUEST SPEAKER AIR VICE MARSHALL
L.F. STEVENSON, C.B., A.O.C., M.B.E.
AIR COMMAND MOISTENED HIM TO A CHAIR



AIR COMMANDORE
HENDERSON (A REAL
SKY PILOT) MADE SURE
THAT NO ONE WAS
FORGOTTEN.

AIR COMMODORE
ALLAN MILL REPLIED
TO THE TOAST OF THE
R.C.A.F. IN A MOST
HUMOROUS FASHION.

spring. Thus the first function is the Commanding Officers reception in the summer. At this the retiring President turns the Association over to the incoming administration, and is customarily rewarded for his efforts with the presentation of a silver tray.

The first function of the new administration, held in September, was originally termed a Director's dinner, to which all members were invited. In October there is a dinner honoring the members who are veterans of world war I. Unfortunately only Earl Wintemute is still able to attend meetings.

There has been discussion whether the Association should take part in the annual Battle of Britain dinner, put on by the Fighter Pilots' Association. After consideration it was decided in 1987 not to take part as an Association, but to encourage individual members participation.

November 11th is the Dawn Patrol, previously covered.

Ladies are invited to three functions, the commanding officers reception, the Christmas dinner/dance, and the Valentine function in February. April 1 is the date for the Birthday Dinner, and the season ends with the Annual General Meeting in May. Although additional special events have taken place from time to time the above is the annual activity of the Air Force Officers Association.

The Birthday Dinner of 1957 was a very special occasion, worthy of note. As guests there were twenty of the surviving original officers of the R.C.A.F. Of the sixty-six then commissioned forty-six were believed to be alive in 1957, and all that could be reached were invited. The then Chief of the Air Staff, A/M Roy Slemon, provided an air-lift from eastern Canada to Vancouver, and also joined the party. AVM Allan Hull, a Flying Officer on April 1, 1924, had made the proposal and carried out the considerable task of ascertaining the addresses of the surviving originals.

While the Association has a large Board of Directors the routine work, and the necessary planning of the events is done by the Executive Committee, consisting of the President and his officers. This group meets separately about once a month throughout the fall and winter season. An association is maintained with the Air Force Officers Association on Vancouver Island, which organization, incidentally, had 160 members in 1989, and with the Canadian Museum of Flight and Transportation in Surrey, B.C. Otherwise the organization basically resists becoming involved with other groups, projects, or politics. It's reluctance became quite evident in 1986-87 when William L. Marr was President.

It was suggested that there should be some sort of affiliation with the Canadian Air Force Officers Association, formed in 1932. All active or retired officers of the R.C.A.F., the present Air Command, and Commonwealth or allied Air Forces are eligible for membership. It is a serious organization, concerned with the health and well being of Canada's Defence Forces and

Defence policies, and makes presentations to the Minister of National Defence or the Chief of the Defence Staff. After consideration it was decided they were beyond the scope of the A.F.O.A., which was strictly a social organization, and had never had interest in contributing to defense policy. The consensus was that a merger with the C.A.F.O.A. would weaken the spirit that had held the A.F.O.A. together for fifty years.

However, the Association has, on occasion, risen to challenges. No one could understand why, but for thirty years after the establishment of British air forces as separate services no recognition of that fact was indicated by the flags and ensigns flown from the Cenotaph in Vancouver. This was brought to the attention of the City authorities, who were quite indifferent to the oversight.

Ultimately it was learned that the Royal Canadian Legion made the decision regarding the flags that were flown, and after representation from the Association, the Royal Canadian Air Force ensign was placed on the Cenotaph by the 1st. of April, 1948.

In 1985 there was a considerable reaction against the CBC show, "The Royal Canadian Air Farce", the members feeling that it gave a very unworthy picture of the R.C.A.F., a proud service. Again in 1987 there was correspondence protesting the film "The Kid Who Couldn't Miss", it being felt that it defamed the memory of Billy Bishop, Canada's greatest air ace in World War I. While the ministerial respondents to these protests showed considerable agreement with the Association's points of view nothing was done, the CBC defending its producers. There is also currently an ongoing protest against the television series *The Valour and the Horror*, written and produced by the McKenna brothers and shown by the C.B.C., a protest which to date has had the same success as had its predecessors. It is strongly felt that the McKennas have rewritten history in accordance with their beliefs, and in so doing have defamed all who served in World War II. Strong letters have been written by Jim Keen, Don Bain and Bill Barry, and the matter is not yet ended.

Through the years the meeting places where dinners and the Dawn Patrol were held has varied considerably. Pre, and during World War II the Pacific Athletic Club was used for dinners and meetings, and the Hotel Georgia for the Dawn Patrol. The Faculty Club at the University of British Columbia has been used, also the Vancouver Lawn Tennis Club, the Point Grey Golf Club, and, on one occasion, the Spurraway Garden Estates in West Vancouver. The Dawn Patrol has been held at the Georgia Hotel, the Bayshore Inn, the Point Grey Golf Club, Canyon Gardens for some years, and since that closed, at the Vancouver Masonic Temple at 1495 West 8th Ave.

For a number of years the Association was able to use the Jericho Officers mess for its dinner meetings. This was the old Spencer Estate, and an ideal site. The rooms were richly panelled, richly furnished, richly carpeted, and of ample size. The Association was very happy there, but unfortunately the



AIR FORCE OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION

President: Air Commodore Robert J.B. Burns

You and your Lady are cordially invited to a
Degustation of Fine French Wines and Cheeses

in the Wardroom Mess

H.M.C.S. DISCOVERY, STANLEY PARK

on

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13th, 1972

from

5:30 to 7:30

THE CO-OPERATION OF THE
TRADE COMMISSIONER AND MRS
BERNARD GUILLEMIN
TO MAKE THIS EVENT POSSIBLE
IS GREATLY APPRECIATED

PRICE: \$2.50 Per Person



The B.C. Provincial Committee of
The Air Cadet League of Canada
invite you to be present at a
Ceremonial Wing Parade

of the
Royal Canadian Air Cadets of Lower Mainland Squadron
to be held at
Seaforth Armoury, Sunday, April 21, 1972 at 2 p.m.
The Honourable Walter S. Owen, Q.C.
will take the Salute

RECEPTION FOLLOWING
OFFICERS MESS
CANADIAN FORCES
4050 W. 4TH AVE
VANCOUVER
3-5 P.M.

R.S.V.P. REGRETS ONLY
SECRETARY, AIR CADET LEAGUE OF CANADA
B.C. COMMITTEE
4050 W. 4TH AVENUE
VANCOUVER, B.C. V6R 1P4
PHONE 733-3412

Air Force Officers' Association

Frollic Pour Les Dames

FRIDAY, 4th MARCH, 1966

*

\$3.00 per couple

No. 25

AIR FORCE OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION



The Consul of Portugal, Dr. J. C. Valadas
requests the pleasure of your company

at a

Reception and Tasting of Wine

in honour of

Air Force Officers' Association of Vancouver

on Wednesday, July 25th, 1973 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Cecil Green Park
Vancouver, B.C.

Dress: Informal



50th Anniversary of
THE ROYAL AIR FORCE

*

HOTEL VANCOUVER

Monday, April 1st, 1968

building was turned over to the Point Grey Ratepayers Association and could no longer be used.

Dinners and meetings were then held at the Point Grey Golf Club until the Association was able to make use of the Joint Services Mess at 4050 West 4th Ave. This has been, since 1985, the site of all activities except the Dawn Patrol, it not being of sufficient size for that purpose. The Mess serves the Association very well.

While the Dawn Patrol is always well attended the participation of members at other events has been a continuing cause of concern. As an example the Annual General Meeting of 1981 was attended by only twenty-four members, seventeen of whom were directors, and at the 1985 AGM there were but twenty-nine members. In both years the total membership exceeded 190.

When AVM Leigh Stevenson was President in 1959-60 a questionnaire was drawn up and sent to the 208 members of that time. Obviously it was an effort to improve the participation, for it asked questions on the number of, time, and dress at functions, on whether the Association should continue, and on who should control it. Slightly less than half of the members responded, and their opinions varied so widely that any change seemed inappropriate. The only question with a unanimous answer was that the Association should continue.

Some felt that the Constitution and By-Laws contributed to this poor attendance, as it was made quite clear that all business except that done at the AGM would be handled by the Directors, and in 1985 these documents, untouched since 1948, and in some respects not followed, were revised. Certain statements no longer appropriate, such as reference to a British Empire that no longer existed in the preamble, and the provision that only officers who had served in a time of war were eligible, were deleted. Thus officers from Canada's peace time Defense Forces could join. The re-write also spelled out the duties of officers, which had been omitted in the original, and additional officers were added such as the Membership Secretary, the Protocol Officer, and the Visiting Officer. The Secretary, not allowed to vote in the original, could now express his preference like any other member.

The first Membership Secretary was W. Keith Muir, taking the office in the year 1983-84. His efforts on the membership list, and the use of callers who each would call all members prior to a function greatly improved attendance to a more acceptable level.

In 1987 Charles Steacy, who was knowledgeable on computers and had one of his own, became the Membership Secretary. He did a lot of work setting up, and putting in, all membership data into his computer, revising and making the task of keeping in touch with members simpler and cheaper. The Association no longer had to use The Letter Shop, originally owned by member Hap Hollingum, for sending out mail, for address plates were no longer required. A computer was purchased for the Association, at a cost of \$450.00 Big savings in

the routine task of communicating with the members resulted. In 1988 Steacy was awarded an honorarium of \$100.00 for his work.

For many years the Association has paid an annual honorarium of \$ 300.00 each to the Treasurer and Secretary for they, really, are the two officers who have to do most of the work. Keeping the membership list current with new members added and deletions properly made when others leave from death or disinterest, and preparing annually a corrected list with all address and telephone number changes made, is obviously a time consuming job, even when made easier by having all data in a computer memory bank. The job also changed when the computer was purchased, for the Membership Secretary required the skill necessary to run the machine, and this has forced modification of By-Law rules.

Not everyone is handy with a typewriter, and fewer have mastered the intricacies of the computer. Keith Muir is able, is, in 1992- 93, the Membership Secretary, and possesses the Association computer. Since the chosen Secretary did not have the necessary skills he resigned the office, and Keith is also the Secretary.

In 1989 another committee was empowered to review the Constitution and By-Laws and make proposals for change where required. This committee was chaired by George Laing, and its members were Major General Roy Sturgess, Michael Zrymiak, Don Bain, and Keith Muir. Their work produced further refinement in the document.

In any organization Constitutional review is an ongoing commitment, for it must reflect present and hopefully future needs in a changing world. However, the Association has resisted proposals for change in the Constitution that might encourage an evolution into a different kind of society. The objects of the Society, as laid down in Article 2 of the Constitution are firmly endorsed. They are:

- (a) To perpetuate the glorious traditions of the Flying Services of the British Commonwealth, and to preserve the spirit of Unity and Service which inspired the Airmen of these Services in war, and that they may find translation in time of peace to the making of a greater and better Canada.
- (b) To honour the memory of fallen comrades.
- (c) To render assistance to any ex-officer of the Air Forces of the British Commonwealth who may stand in need thereof.
- (d) To stand ready to render aid at any time in support of constituted Law and Order.

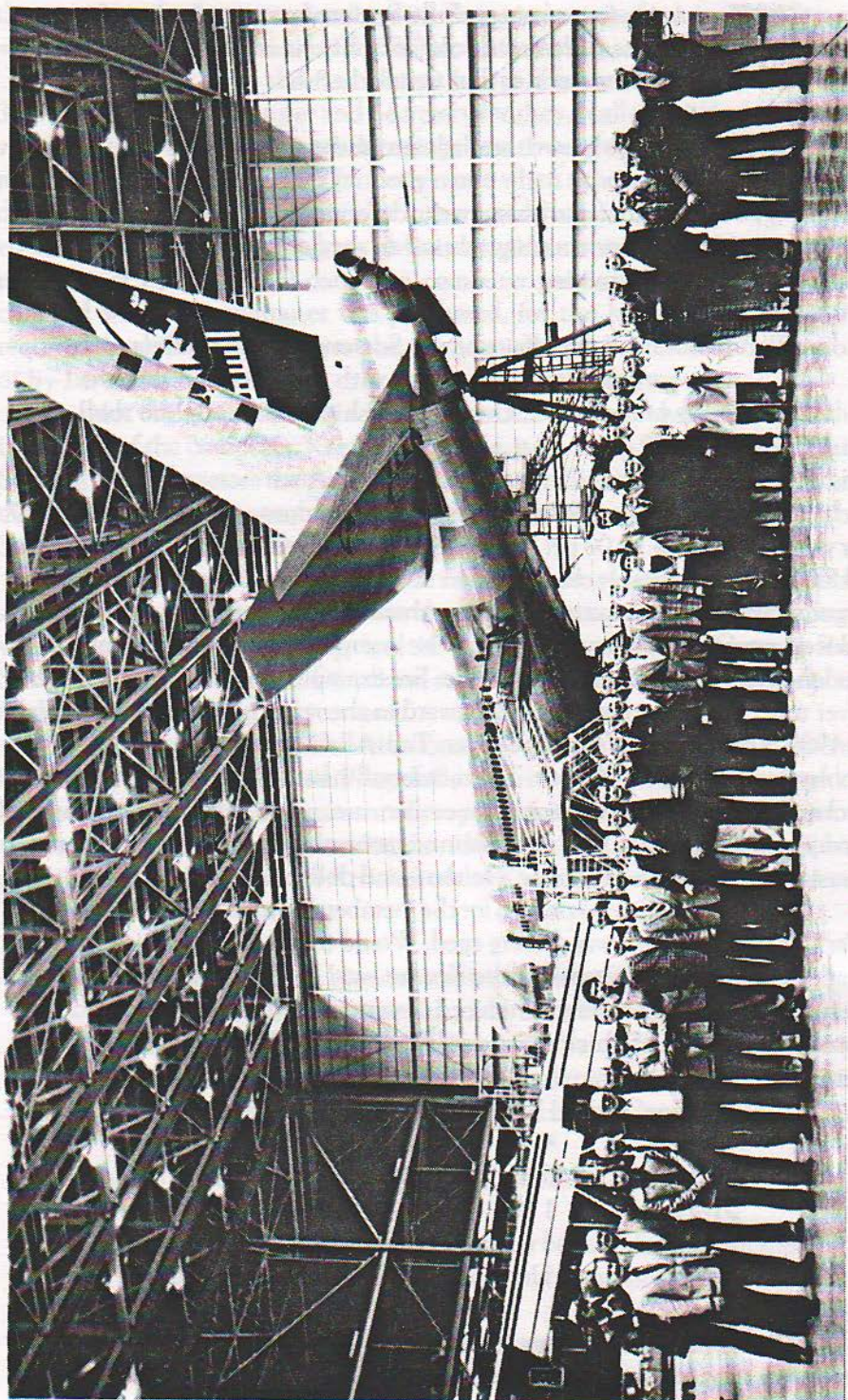
- (e) To provide for meetings of the Society from time to time for the purpose of renewing old associations and keeping alive the service memories that we all cherish.
- (f) To foster the growth and advancement of aviation.
- (g) To grant financial assistance to deserving individuals for their education or training in civil or service aviation or allied studies or training.
- (h) To conduct the affairs of the Society along non-sectarian, non-partisan lines, and always with the intention that the Spirit of Devotion, Good Fellowship, and Discipline shall prevail.

Steadily rising costs have forced the annual dues up from a start of \$2.00 per year in 1936 to \$ 10.00 per year in 1982. In that year they were increased to \$ 15.00, and, remarkably, have held at that figure since. In part this is due to larger attendance at functions, making them more self supporting, in part to reduced secretarial expenses through the computer, and through continued prudence and economy in expenditure. For example, the Association needs a silver tray each year to present as an award to the retiring President. In March of 1989 Trustee and Visiting Officer Ted Allan bought ten of these at a wholesale price of \$ 50.00 each. The membership lists, since 1985 an attractive pocket booklet provided to each member, are, with the computerization, produced very cheaply. The Association is solvent, not wealthy, but has each year an audited worth of four or five thousand dollars.

By 1980 there was concern for the membership, mostly men with World War I or II experience, was getting aged. Would the A.F.O.A. perish with the death of the youngest veteran of the Korean war? In 1986 Gordon Newhouse, then Membership Secretary, produced a very comprehensive report on the membership in part of which they were listed according to their age. The results were:

40-45	4	66-70	60
46-50	6	71-75	22
51-55	1	76-80	4
56-60	4	81-	4
61-65	51		

It is encouraging to note from this that 66 members could definitely not have seen service in either of the two world wars, which indicates that the



Members visit the Boeing Factory at Everett

Association does have at least some appeal to persons who left the Air Force later and will not necessarily die out with its founders.

It seems to fill a need. Military experience is unique, unlike anything a person encounters in his later civilian life, and among former military men there is often a fond memory of the life they once had in the Service, and a regret that it is no longer available. They miss the comradeship. The Air Force Officers Association provides the opportunity of recapturing this in part, of spending social evenings with others who were also officers in Canada's Air Force. It is hoped the Association will continue to recruit younger men and have a long future.

Aviation, military and civil, has long passed the early days when aircraft were built of stick and wire, and brave airmen fought their battles above the mud and trenches of World War I. Perhaps the Dawn Patrol and the Birthday Dinner will have little appeal to those whose Service records recall memories of Mach 2 aircraft and peace keeping missions in far parts of the world. Perhaps not. The traditions that build strong military units that endure are largely symbolic, not related to current experience. As are the traditions celebrated every year in the Air Force Officers Association.

In his "The First Thirty Years" Vic Clerihue paid tribute to some members who have given the Association long service as officers and directors, mentioning specifically J.F. Thompson, with 21 years, and H.E. Freeman-Smith and Hap Hollingum with 20 years each. He could also have included himself, for few have done more. Such people, who have an abiding interest, and a concern, are the ones who make an organization work.

There are others who have followed who also thus deserve special mention. Ted Allan, who remains on the executive committee as the Trustee, keeper of the Associations artifacts, and as the Visiting Officer, has also been a President, and was the Secretary for a good number of years.

In 1973 the Association's flags and its Cenotaph, used at Dawn Patrols and at the Birthday dinner, were lost. Ted bought a piece of plywood, and with Norman Flavin's help, built a new Cenotaph. They painted it white, added Don Bain's service cap, and a wreath from the Legion to complete the job. To replace the flags Ted sent out a call for donations from the members. The first, an Australian flag, came from Lorne Sinclair. Watson Turner offered an Australian flag. Ewart McPherson gave an R.C.A.F. Ensign. Dr. Norman Jacques offered to buy any flag that was needed. The last of seven came from Archie Vanhee. It was a Belgian flag, and some members objected to it because they thought it was the German flag.

Ran Clerihue, the son of Vic, has also been a President, the auditor, and was the Treasurer for seven years prior to 1966. Walter B. Coates was Treasurer for a long time. Donald T. Bain, President in 1974-75, has since spent many years as the Protocol Officer and chief parliamentarian of the Association.

There are few who have done the Association as much service as has Don Bain.

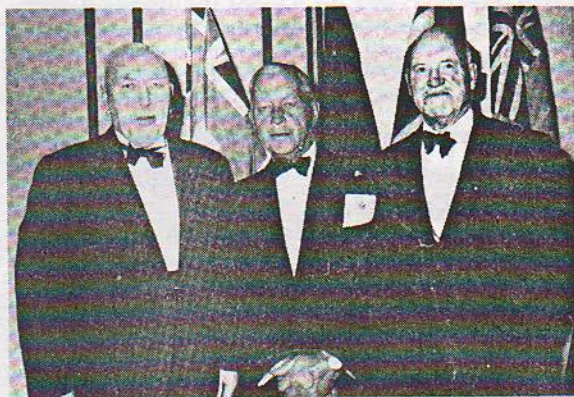
Pop Lawlor has done yeoman service as an almost perpetual auditor. W. Keith Muir, the first Membership Chairman, followed that office by several years as the Secretary, and, as related, is still the Secretary.

While he believes strongly that officers should not remain indefinitely in office, for change is needed for freshness and innovation, this organization also has great need for continuity, and owes a great debt to these few who have been so dedicated to it. There is a need for conservatism, the reasons that brought the original members together to form the Association are still with us, and must never be obscured by conflicting innovations, nor forgotten. There is really no better way of stating this, and no better way of concluding this history, than by repeating the last two paragraphs of *The First Thirty Years*. Vic Clerihue wrote:

"This Association can claim a longer continuous life than any other group of ex-air force officers in Canada. It has had its foundation, its life spirit and tradition in the Dawn Patrol and the Birthday Party. These have been the regular "communions" that have re-united and re-dedicated the members, by the comradeship of the occasions, to carry on with the purpose for which the Association was founded. The spirit of these occasions has proved infinitely more valuable and enduring than red leather upholstery.

Therefore, let no one tamper with the sure foundation on which this structure - this monument to its founders - has been built. "

End.



"Old Timers" Re-United

Three famous officers pose for the camera at the 1 April re-union in Vancouver. They are: (L to R) — A/V/M Raymond Collishaw C.B., D.S.O., O.B.E., D.S.C., D.F.C., (RNAS and RAF); Don R. MacLaren, D.S.O., M.C., D.F.C., and A.W.; "Nick" Carter, D.S.C., O.B.E., M.B.E., (RNAS and RCAF).

VIC CLERIHUE

on his 101st Birthday



*A Founding Member
First Life Member
Author of "The First Thirty Years"*

