

# **RECORD OF DISCUSSION SWORDFISH ASSOCIATION MEETING HELD AT THE VPI BUILDING GREENWOOD 1030 ON 23 JANUARY 2019**

Chairperson Chris Henneberry (President)  
Jack Backstrom (Vice-President)  
Bill Brown (Treasurer)  
Jeff McBean (Membership) regrets – report filed  
Al Harvey (Museum Liaison)  
Bert Campbell (Web Manager)  
Reid McBride (Kit Shop) regrets – report filed  
Rick Anscomb (VPI Liaison)  
Dwight Estey (Social Media) regrets – report filed  
Jim Lambie (Member)  
Bernie Thorne (CO 415)  
Keith Fugger (Sqn Rep) regrets – report filed  
Pat Henry (Member) regrets

1. The Chairman welcomed all participants. He noted the good turnout for the meeting and the reports received from Executive members unable to attend the deliberations. He thanked the Squadron's CO for taking the time to attend the meeting. He also noted that Neils Roggenkemp, the former Squadron Historian had been posted to 19 Wing Comox during the 2018 APS. The CO noted that given current manpower restrictions, he was unable to assign the Squadron Historian duties at this time. The CO planned to take full advantage of potential Officer Cadets assigned to the Squadron during the summer months. Some of their efforts will be directed to historical related projects.

2. The Chairman also noted that it had been some time since the last Association meeting. He noted that over the past twelve months a number of articles have been written, a significant number of queries have been answered concerning former Squadron members and the website has been updated regularly. He especially thanked Bert Campbell for all his time and effort to keep the Association website updated. Given the large number of site visits (over 50,000 in 2018), the website is being used and given the response of many is very much appreciated.

3. The proposed Agenda for the meeting was reviewed and accepted as presented.

4. The Record of Discussion of the 12 January 2018 meeting was reviewed and accepted as promulgated. The review confirmed that necessary action has been taken or is underway to meet stated objectives.

5. **Membership Report.** The Membership Coordinator filed a report and provided an updated Alumni List, which now includes 140 members. He noted that there were four new memberships in 2018.

6. **Treasurer Report.** The Treasurer provided a written report on recent account activity. He noted that as of 31 December 2018 the account balance was \$3308.45. The account balance has remained relatively steady over the past year. It was noted that in July 2018 a payment was made to the Squadron to help defray the cost of moving the "Inspiration Stone" to the Squadron spaces. It was also noted that the gift of \$100 to the Veteran's Wing had not yet been processed.

7. **Charitable Affiliation.** Once again Al Harvey represented the Association participating in the joint visit to the Veteran's Wing at Soldier's Memorial Hospital. This year six members of the Squadron and Association toured the facility and visited the Veterans. A gift of \$300 was presented to the Veteran's social coordinator, of which the Association contributed \$100. This year's gift will be used to periodically purchase special meals for the Veterans. A photograph and short summary of the event have been placed on the Association website.

8. **Kit Shop Report.** The Chairman noted that the Coordinator had forwarded a report, which indicated that a total of \$355.00 in sales was realized in 2018. Additional Squadron Coins and Squadron History CDs have been sent to the Kit Shop.

9. **East Moor 2018.** A delegation of ten attended the Annual East Moor Ceremony. An article concerning their participation was written by Maj Keith Fugger the Squadron DCO, a copy of which will soon be placed on the Association website. The large contingent was possible because the activity was tied to the 2018 TRINAT meeting in the UK. Very favourable comments concerning the Squadron's participation were received from the organizing group in Sutton-on-the-Forest. The 415 CO stated that he and a small contingent are planning to attend the 2019 Ceremony, which is scheduled for Saturday 18 May 2019. It is expected that 429 Squadron will also be represented.

10. **Thorney Island 2018.** While there were no active or past Swordfish present at the Ceremony, there was a significant incident to report. LCol Chris Barnard, an RCAF member of the Directing Staff at JSCSC Shriveham UK, attended the Ceremony. He reports that a son and granddaughter of a 415 crew member, P/O Clyde Ezra Coons, were in attendance. P/O Coons died in a crash near Thorney Island on 9 September 1943 and was buried at St Nicholas Cemetery. There are 16 Swordfish buried in this cemetery. LCol Barnard wrote an article recounting this year's ceremony, a copy of which can be found on the Association website. For general interest, this Ceremony takes place each year on Battle of Britain Sunday in September. LCol Barnard has advised his intent to be at the 2019 Ceremony.

11. **Website Update.** As reported in past Records of Discussion, it is apparent that keeping the website up to date and introducing new material has a very positive effect on the number of views. Bert Campbell reported that there were over 50,000 visits in 2018. He advised that a link to the FACEBOOK CP140 Group had been added to the website's Home Page as well as the Membership Form is now available in both PDF and Word formats. He noted that the Domain Name renewal was due at a cost of \$50.48. Further the website manager fee was due in September at a cost of \$239.88 for two years. In the past the Squadron has offered \$100 to help defray the cost of these renewals. The CO 415 will determine whether or not this level of support will be possible in 2019.

12. **Social Media Coordination.** Dwight Estey has reported that there are now 116 members of the "415 Swordfish" FACEBOOK Group of which 89 are currently active.

13. **Status Report on remaining 2016 Project:**

(1) Argus Crews 1961-1970, OPI Chris Henneberry, Status: 100%

Update: The capture of additional crew information and crew pictures will be a long process. Work on assembling WWII crews has proven that from this point forwarded changes will be iterative and is wholly dependent on inputs from families and interested historical groups. For the purpose of records, this project is now considered complete.

14. **Status Report on 2017 Projects:**

(1) Squadron Historical Reports, OPI Squadron Historian, Status: 60%

Update: The Association now has copies of all the annual reports except for the period 1970 to 1985. Unfortunately these Historical Reports are still classified and must be parsed and redacted before parts of the reports can be distributed openly. To move this project along, a member of the Association with a valid security clearance will need to take a specialist course to declassify portions of the Reports in question. Al Harvey (who still holds a Secret security classification), will investigate what steps must next be taken to move this project along. Bert Campbell confirmed that no Squadron Historical Reports are held by the Greenwood Military Aviation Museum.

(3) Argus Crews 1971-1981, OPI Chris Henneberry, Status: 30%

Update: While conducting research related to compiling a list of Argus crews from the sixties, a significant amount of information and crew photos were obtained for the period 71 to 81. This information is now being compiled in a similar fashion to that used for the period 61 to 70. It is hoped that an initial release of this information can be placed on the Association website by May 2019.

#### 15. Status Report on 2018 Projects:

(1) Swordfish Tales, OPI Jack Backstrom, Status: 10%

Update: Jack is researching whether or not copies of Swordfish Tales are held at the Summerside Library or in some other facility. Apparently a limited number of Swordfish Tales can be found in the Squadron albums. Jack will also ascertain what percentage of the Swordfish tales that are held by the Aurora Newspaper are in digital format. He expects that this work should be completed by September 2018.

(2) Refurbishment of Bennett Painting – Argus 737, OPI Chris Henneberry, Status: 30%

Update: To date a search for a compatible frame has not been fruitful. Once a suitable frame is found and the art work refurbished, the painting will be presented to the Squadron becoming part of its collection. In 2018 up to \$150 was authorized to complete the refurbishment (including frame). It is now planned to have this project completed by June 2019.

#### 16. Proposed Projects for 2019:

(1) Continue efforts to complete outstanding projects, of which there are four.

(2) Squadron History Version #3

Scope: It was generally agreed that a Version #3 should be developed. It was acknowledged by all that this project will require a high level of coordination between the Squadron and the Association and that the Squadron should have the final sign-off. It was suggested that a target date for release could be the Squadron's 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – Fall of 2021. A first step is to develop an outline for the period 2005 to 2021. The Association will attempt to complete an outline by May 2019. Association Records of Discussion and Squadron Historical Reports for the years 2015 to 2020 will be the primary sources used to gather data.

(3) 415 Squadron Roll of Honour.

Scope: It was noted that 405 Squadron had recently published a refurbished Roll of Honour. It was agreed that the Association should take on a similar project. In the past Chris Larsen advised that the Honour Roll published in the Squadron History book contained many errors – misspelled names,

missing initials, incorrect rank, etc. While preparing the second edition an amended Honour Roll was developed and subsequently published. This revision did not include the Swordfish who were lost in the crash of Argus 737. Bill Brown has agreed to look into this matter and reach out to 405 Squadron and Chris Larsen for advice. He hopes to propose a way ahead for this project before the summer.

#### 17. Other.

- (1) Commanding Officer's Remarks – LCol Bernie Thorne thanked the Association for the continued support the Squadron and the many contributions which have been made to preserve and enhance the historical record of 415 Squadron. He stated the Squadron wished to continue building this joint relationship and to share resources when and where possible. He noted that Block III completion is now expected in the April timeframe. The assembly of the Block IV prototype will immediately follow.

The CO advised that the Squadron Change of Command will occur on Thursday 25 July and the new CO will be LCol Ross Freeman. Sometime in the May/Jun timeframe the Squadron will host a special event (Industry Day?) with a social activity – in due course the Association will be apprised of the date. The next ground training day is not expected until sometime in the Fall of 2019. He then invited those attending this meeting to join with available Squadron members at the Annapolis Mess at 1430.

- (2) Welcome Message – Chris Henneberry agreed to update the Welcome Message on the Association Website.
- (3) 415 (LRPFD) Social List – Any Association member can have their name placed on the Squadron's Social List by contacting MCpl Kim Mira at [Mira.kim@forces.gc.ca](mailto:Mira.kim@forces.gc.ca) or by calling 902-765-1494 ext 3196. By doing so they will receive alerting messages to special events and open social activities.
- (4) Wurtele Artifacts – Bert Campbell acknowledged the receipt of multiple photographs and a letter from David Wurtele Eaves, the executor of the estate of his aunt Jean Wurtele, a sister of Wally Wurtele. These photos have been added to the collection held on the website, many of which had already been archived. There were also two RCAF Emergency Maps that are believed to be those held by P/O F.H. Mahn and crew, when the crashed at sea. These may be used to develop a story for the website but in due course will be handed over to the Squadron.
- (5) Atlantic International Airshow – Jack Backstrom advised that the 2019 event would be held on Labour Day weekend at Greenwood. The Blue Angels will be performing.

18. **Closing.** All agreed that this had been a most worthwhile meeting. Members agreed to stay in contact and work on various projects outlined in this report. The next meeting is tentatively set for the Fall of 2019.

Chris Henneberry  
President  
January 2019