

## A FADING SIGNAL?

The passing of our Signal Newsletter Editor Gordon Longmuir has left huge sea boots to be filled and an attempt to continue his work is being made by the undersigned, albeit in flight deck sneakers.

Enough with poor metaphors - Gordon's recent death as well as those of our ship and squadron mates brings home a reality that 20 short years hence any remaining Ventures will be hovering at age one hundred. The few representing us at naval ceremonials will be wheel chaired aboard with oxygen bottles attached. We observed this future at the 80th Anniversary of D-Day on June 6th.

Mind you, one stalwart Veteran paratrooper did jump into the ceremonies.

Realistically a change of our Venture newsletter title to that of "The Fading Signal" is appropriate. A plan is to publish twice yearly - In May for the Battle of the Atlantic and during November for Armistice Day. An annual Remembrance of our gentlemen (and partners) who have passed over the bar will be named in the November Eleventh edition.

What else can we include for posterity?  
What will be our enduring legacy?

Here is a suggestion: At Venture we were trained as - and expected to be - Leaders. One of our guiding papers was "Neptunes Notes". Nowadays it reads almost Victorian - starched collars with studs, and so on. But we did thrive on such literature under the tutelage of Second World War Officers and Staff.

Perhaps our legacy of "Follow Me" could be short stories on the art of leadership. Such "Salty Dips" would be human interest tales from our individual experiences that can inspire and guide Canada's future Naval Officers and NCO's.

Please consider putting pen to paper or fingers to touch pad. We have stellar backgrounds in naval operations/aircrew resource management/civilian corporate business/government appointments/ et cetera...

Be it intimations of glory or lessons from mistakes, such tales can help expand our next 'Fading Signal' edition beyond the simple pages of this first attempt. Let us not be a yearly litany of our dead - we can do them much more honour by telling their stories - our stories - with subtle lessons learned from the Snafu's to the Bravo Zulus.

This first (latest, last?) edition of the Fading Signal carries news from our Executive Council on the Dissolution of the Venture Association. It is a well planned and realistically thought out consideration for your Vote.

At the same time, to quote an old Scot, "Ah'm no deed yet!"

In this Signal you can read of legacy projects that are underway by our classmates: The Venture Cairn for Halifax; and the CANAR (Canadian Naval Air Remembers) Memorial for our Shearwater Aviation Museum.

Yours aye,  
Allan Snowie, Class of 1966  
Fading Signal editor pro tempore  
<[nieuportxi@gmail.com](mailto:nieuportxi@gmail.com)>



## THE FUTURE OF THE VENTURE ASSOCIATION

It has been evident for some time now that we Ventures are a dwindling population as evidenced by the increasingly frequent notices that yet another of us has gone to his just reward. Moreover, sad as it is, our like will not be seen again. We have no natural successors once we cross the bar. So, we need to act with a degree of alacrity in considering our future as an organization.

To that end, the regional Vice Presidents (Matt Durnford in the East, Dick Duffield in the Centre, and Doug McClean and Kim Beardmore in the West) have discussed how best to achieve an orderly dissolution of the Association as the youngest of us will soon be in our 80's – and the clock is ticking for us all. We have some funds which need to be disposed of and concern has been expressed regarding the various Venture artifacts and how they might best be preserved and maintained.

First, the artifacts – we as an association do not in fact own these as they were donated to the RCN, and nor do we have any say regarding their disposal. That said, our stalwart historian, Wilf Lund, has taken on the task, with HMCS Venture staff, of inventorying these, which include the mast, statue, various plaques, trophies and the contents of the WELLAND Room. In this process all artifacts on the campus will be transferred to the base museum with HMCS Venture being the permanent loan holder.

This should ensure the preservation of the Venture Assn donations including the WELLAND Room displays. The Commanding Officer of HMCS Venture has asked Wilf, and he has agreed, to assist in setting up a control system for the Venture “treasures”. This will include setting up historical displays to reflect all the elements of training for which the “new” HMCS Venture is responsible, including marine engineers and leadership of both commissioned and non-commissioned personnel.

So, our Venture Association donations and artifacts will be cared for as part of a larger whole – and this is a good thing!

Now the money, which we do own and may dispose of as we consider appropriate. Approximately \$15,000 remains in our Association fund and numerous ideas were floated regarding how best to dispose of this money following dissolution.

All agreed to the Matt Durnford and Dick Duffield proposal that this money be donated to the Royal Canadian Sea Cadet Education Foundation (RCSCEF) as being both a thoroughly worthwhile cause and the fact that the Foundation was established by a distinguished Venture grad, Rear Admiral H. Timothy Porter, RCN, Class of '58. We also agreed that, with the membership's approval, we would set aside \$2,000 to cover the cost of running the website and publishing *The Signal* twice a year for five years following dissolution.

So, this would see approximately \$13,000 going to the RCSCEF on dissolution, and any funds remaining from the \$2,000 set aside for the continued operation of the Website and *The Signal* would also be donated to the RCSCEF.

In the very near future, voting members will receive an email from the Venture Association Registrar, Ron McLean, with a formal motion for your approval. You will be asked to vote YES or NO to this motion which will propose a dissolution date of 31 March 2025, and disposition of Association funds as outlined above. We are seeking your vote YES/NO, and no further discussion is anticipated unless there is a majority NO vote.

We will also be invoking NATO procedure for this vote, which will see a non-response registered as a YES vote. The results will be tabulated by the Registrar and published in the subsequent issue of *The Signal*.

We look forward to your vote.  
Fair winds and following seas.

The foregoing is submitted on behalf of all the Regional VPs.

Yours aye,  
Doug McClean  
Kim Beardmore

## The VENTURE (54-68) Legacy Committee

Background on the legacy committee: Bob Lancashire commented to me in a conversation about a VENTURE legacy. This struck a chord in my mind. At this juncture in the history of VENTURE, with our aging and diminishing membership, it was time to think of our legacy to the Navy, Air Force and to Canada. I asked four other Ventures to join me in the VENTURE (1954-1968) Legacy Committee. Our committee represents a wide span of years and all branches who trained in VENTURE: Bob Lancashire (56) (Executive Branch), Don Uhrich (57) (Supply Branch), Roger Chiasson (62), (Engineering Branch), John Cody (64) (Naval Air), myself, Matt Durnford (65) (Supply Branch).

A very special thank you to Dick Duffield (62) (Supply Branch), VP Central Region (Ottawa) for his advice, support and encouragement for the project.

We launched a very successful fund raising campaign. Corresponding with so many Ventures and their families during the fund raising was a distinct pleasure. We received contributions from Ventures who graduated, from families of Ventures who have passed and from those who did not complete the program and did not graduate. VENTURE has impacted individuals on many levels.

The Ventures who contributed were most generous, so generous, that the legacy fund will be in a surplus position after the installation of the cairn. We sought a meaningful legacy for HMCS VENTURE (54-68), the cairn was one. The realization that we might have surplus funds led us to seek the blessing of those who had contributed, and to our decision to donate any surplus funds to the Royal Canadian Sea Cadet Education Fund (RCSCEF).

Subsequently, we proposed to the Executive that if the Association is to be dissolved that we donate excess funds of the Association to the RCSCEF also. This is noted and expanded upon in the enclosed article in the Signal regarding dissolution.

Funds from HMCS VENTURE (54-68) Legacy Fund combined with the funds from the VENTURE Association will support a scholarship program for young Canadians in the Royal Canadian Sea Cadets. A fitting legacy.

The cairn is on order and we are planning the installation for mid Sept. 2024. The cairn will be installed at the Naval Museum location in CFB Halifax. Addition information and an invitation to attend the dedication will be sent to all Ventures once the final plans are in place.

We, the committee, are grateful for the opportunity to work on this project. The cairn, and the Cadet education fund will remain to ensure our legacy lives on.

Yours Aye,

Matt Durnford(65) VP Eastern Region

VENTURE(54-68) Legacy Committee



## **Canadian Naval Air Remembers (CANAR)**

The CANAR project was established for the purposes of remembering and honouring Canada's naval aviation personnel who were lost during war and peace in the service of Canada – and to tell of their legacy for all who continue in the mission of sea-going aviation today.

The memorial project is the brainchild of former navy pilot Grant Smith who created an Ontario county War Memorial from his writing "Norfolk Remembers, the Great War 1914 - 1918".

Similarly, a CANAR book is the resource for a permanent Memorial that will be mounted and displayed in the Shearwater Aviation Museum at 12 Wing, Royal Canadian Air Force, Nova Scotia.

**Chapter One – The First World War** contains images and accounts of the 208 Canadian members of the Royal Naval Air Service who died during and shortly after the Great War of 1914 - 1918.

It stands as a companion document to naval aviator Allan Snowie's book "Collishaw & Company" which provides an account, in chronological order, of all 943 Canadians who served in the RNAS.

**Chapter Two – The Second World War** presents the Canadian Naval Air personnel who died during the 1939 - 1945 War.

Information was sourced from a list of some 260 who flew with the Royal Navy's Fleet Air Arm - and 38 Casualties are recognized.

Compiled by navy pilots Scottie Grant and Bob Murray at the Canadian Aviation and Space Museum in Ottawa, their endeavor offers a glimpse of the heroic legacy left by our Naval Airmen during that conflict.

**Chapter Three – RCN Air Branch 1945 to 1968** covers the heady years of HMCS aircraft carriers with photographs and narrative of 105 Canadians who perished in naval air service following World War Two up until the Unification of the Army, Navy and Air Force in 1968.

**Chapter Four – 1968 to Present Day** is the Canadian Armed Forces period leading into 2011 and continuing with the sea-going Wings of today's Royal Canadian Air Force.

An overall primary reference for this Memorial project comes from the book "Canada's Naval Aviators" researched and written by John MacFarlane and the late naval airman Robbie Hughes. Jointly published by the Maritime Museum of British Columbia and the Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation (SAMF) it records that altogether 2,225 aviators served in Canadian Naval Air from 1914 to 1997.

That figure is approaching 3,000 in 2024.  
Overall losses number Four Hundred and One.

**The CANAR Memorial** is a work in progress and as such seeks assistance from any family members or researchers in locating missing photos or new information on our 401 aviators who died in naval air service during the past 110 years.

If you have any stories or photos of those who were lost during this period, we would greatly appreciate your assistance in sharing such memories. Please contact the CANAR Committee through the office of the Curator, Shearwater Aviation Museum.

<curator@shearwateraviationmuseum.ns.ca>

CANAR Team

In addition to those mentioned above, we have Christine Hines, Jack McGee, John Orr and David Cramton.

