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Course 5811



RCAF STATION PENHOLD

JULY 30, 1959



A MESSAGE FROM—

THE COMMANDING OFFICER

G/C D. E. GALLOWAY

M.B.E., C.D.

It is with great pleasure that I take this opportunity to wish each and every member of Course 5811 who successfully graduated from 4FTS Penhold, the very best of luck in your future flying training.

You have done well and there is no reason to believe that you cannot continue to make steady progress in your future advanced training.

On behalf of RCAF Station Penhold I wish graduating course 5811 continued success.

COURSE DIRECTOR

5811

F/O J. CARSCADDEN



COURSE HISTORY

It was towards the beginning of August 1958, when Southern Ontario is at its humid best when a number of young men from all corners of Canada began arriving at RCAF Station Crumlin, just out of London, Ontario. The purpose of this congregation was to face what to them seemed a very formidable battery of tests and interviews. There were the tests which sought out and measured their officer potential and then there were those that segregated them into the two aircrew categories: pilots and observers. Needless to say of all that assembled, there were many who were found unsuitable and were returned to their various homes. The remainder, proud and feeling a definite sense of accomplishment became the members of Course 5811 and went eagerly on to face the rigors of aircrew training.

By August 21st all members of Course 5811 had arrived at RCAF Station Centralia. Here they were greeted by F/L Ayres who was to be their course director for the next 12 weeks. At this time they also met F/O Sinel who for 12 weeks was to be their deputy course director and who later in basic flying training became their course director. This was the beginning.

Without further adieu everyone began bringing himself up to the standard that would be acceptable. First came the rooms which had to be spotless, and the beds ! ! they had to be made to perfection — not to mention the rugs which proved to be the undoing of many a cadet. A great deal of attention was paid to personal dress and especially to the booties which received loving care and attention every evening. All this if done with a will at times won for the Course the much coveted 48-hour pass. On the other hand if the results of weekly inspections showed a lack of appreciation there was always the loving game of "tag the commissioner at the gate at six in the morning" or a tour on a snapping turtle. All this at first seemed strange but it was not long before everyone was well into the routine of things.

The main part of basic training was devoted to academic study. Subjects taken consisted mainly of those required to start us on our way to becoming officers and pilots or observers. A great deal of the success realized by the cadets may be attributed to the high calibre of instruction that they received. Not only that, but the cadets met many instructors of whom they learned to think a great deal of and will always remember.

Towards the middle of November Basic Training terminated and a time of parting arrived. Those who were to become observers went on to Winnipeg for further training and the remainder—our group—stayed for their second phase of training, basic flying training.

As our group began flying training it was strengthened by the addition of five European students, three Danes, one Norwegian and a Dutchman. This was the group that was destined to stay together for the rest of the training.

Just as in basic training the first stages of flying training were a novelty and thus there was the transition period during which everyone fitted themselves to the new routine. To begin with discipline was somewhat relaxed and things in general made life somewhat easier. The studies also were not as intensive or demanding.

As might be expected of a new group embarking on a new experience, flying did not go off without its small incidents. All the cadets will remember F/C Kirk as the Cape Canaveral Kid who at the very first believed the Chipmunk should climb like an Atlas or a Jupiter or F/C Diss's specialty, rough-running engines—primer trouble. In fact at first very few knew exactly what to expect and as a result felt a real sense of accomplishment when at the end of five weeks they all graduated from Basic Flying.

December 19th found the cadets had finished their basic phase and their stay at Centralia. After a two-week leave they were to report at RCAF Station Penhold (Alberta) where once again they were to become the juniors and suffer the traditional stigma attached to that position. For many, here began or was strengthened, the fear of the "Yellow Beast." The greatest cause for this was the difference in size between the Chipmunk and the Harvard as well as the fuller instrument panel. The tales told by the senior courses did by no means tend to lessen this fear. It was only overcome by actual experience gained as training progressed. However one anxiety always remained and that was "Will I or will I not master this beast?"

Besides flying at Penhold there was the ever-present curriculum of study. For success here as in flying again a great deal of credit is due to the instructors who were always willing to help those in need of it. More closely connected with the course were its two course directors. Up until mid-term leave F/O Walton had this position and was afterwards succeeded by F/O Carscadden. To both of these men the cadets owe a good deal for the guidance they received.

To all the cadets of 5811 the story of Penhold will be a memorable one. For it is here that they actually learned to fly. It is here that they shared in the good fellowship with others who were in the same position as themselves. They will remember such incidents as F/C Diss's short-of-the-field landing or F/C Kuzmaniuk's finger trouble in the circuit. These are just to mention a few. Then there was always the spontaneous and the planned functions in the mess. At some, all would gather and never seem to tire of the stories their instructors had to tell, or discuss and question what might lie before them.

Such is the short story of Course 5811.



HARVEY KUSZMANIUK, RCAF

Gilbert Plains, Manitoba can be proud of its native son, who is now the proud possessor of a Bachelor of Science degree. Besides this he has managed to master the yellow terror! Kiddled a lot and sometimes soaked he did not mind being joked. We remember his fierce choice of words and friendly pat on the back. Good luck in the future, Harv!

Gilbert Plains, Manitoba

MIKE DISS, RCAF

Mike, who was born in Winnipeg but now makes his home in Port Credit, Ontario, is the aviation bug of Course 5811. We guess he figured he had better get into the business right up to his arm-pits, and that's a long way up for Mike who stands a long lean 6' 3". Mike just doesn't seem happy unless he's making a model aeroplane or writing a letter. The majority of his thoughts are devoted to a certain schoolmarm. Best of luck to you, Mike.

131 Donnelly Dr., Port Credit, Ont.



MIKE DAVIDSON, RCAF

A former Toronto hood turned aircrew. Known as the 'fat boy' until he got too small for his uniform. He is very interested in sports and is also keen on flying. He entered the service with 40 hrs. and his P.F.L. Every Saturday morning he slips quietly out of his room while his buddies are asleep (he thinks) to get what he calls a civilian meal; but we have other ideas about what he is up to. What's she like, Mike?

128 Downsview Ave., Downsview, Ontario

TRIGVIE ASKHAM, RDAF

Native of the Faroes Islands, who joined our course at P.F.T.S. He has the distinction of being the only member of Course 5811 who owns a motorcycle. He also helps those who are trying to get their mind off their work by his guitar playing. Faroes can be proud of its contribution to the NATO.

Hoydalsvegur 20, Thorshavn, Faroes



