

# The Breeze



January 21, 1944

No. 24 EFTS, Abbotsford, B.C.

Number 21

## EFTS HUNTS LOST PLANE

### Plane Search Centres From 24 EFTS

#### PLANE DISTRIBUTES HANDBILLS IN WOODED AREA NEAR STAVE LAKE

One of the greatest air searches in BC. history continued Wednesday as reports began to filter in to Squadron Leader M. Gain, chief flying instructor of No. 24 EFTS, Abbotsford, in response to handbills dropped by pilots from No. 24 EFTS Tuesday in the densely-wooded Stave Lake area.

The intensive search activities for an RCAF transport plane lost Sunday enroute to Vancouver from Lethbridge, swung to Abbotsford Tuesday as planes from No. 24 EFTS and bombers from west coast air stations used the Abbotsford airdrome as a base in the widespread hunt on the north side of the Fraser.

First reply to the handbills dropped over all habitations in the Stave Lake district from Cornells Tuesday, came next day from a prospector who reported he heard an aircraft circling at a low altitude near Haney Sunday night.

#### EFTS Ships Hunt

More than a score of pilots from the flying school here took part in the widespread search, carrying student pilots as their observers in their systematic combing of an area within a radius of some 20 miles of the local airport.

The missing aircraft, with its crew of four, was last reported Sunday night "about 25 miles east of Vancouver."

Pilot of the aircraft is believed to be Flying Officer Harry W. Donkersley, DFC and Bar, of Powell River, who returned to Canada recently after outstanding RCAF service overseas.

Since Monday morning, when No. 24 EFTS ships were pressed into the hunt, pilots here have covered a large area acre by acre but without finding a trace of the transport. More than 50 planes were reportedly used in the search.

### EFTS DENTAL CLINIC RUNNING FULL BLAST

#### Dental Officer, Staff Open Permanent Clinic

Now in full operation, No. 24 EFTS dental clinic is making inroads on the myriad extractions and fillings needed by airmen of the Abbotsford school, under the direction of Captain Robert N. Grant, Canadian Army Dental Corps.

Since January 6, when he and his staff arrived at the flying school, the dentist has been engaged in catching up on the dental work which has piled up since the airport opened. Airmen are now being scheduled for regular appointments at the clinic, located in a special building near the canteen.

Continued Overleaf

### 'FIRST SOLO' CARDS APPEAR AT 24 EFTS

#### Two Pilots and Student Work Out Certificate

First solo certificates made their appearance at No. 24 EFTS this week, the combined efforts of P/O Merv Pace and P/O Wy Campbell, flying instructors, and LAC Peter Seabourne, cartoonist for The Breeze and student at the school.

Intended for presentation by instructors to their students after they have made their first solo



flights, the cards are illustrated by Seabourne with a comical "solo bird" and are intended for inclusion in student flying log books.

A pupil pilot's first trip "on his own" is a big event in his life and it was felt by the instructors that some permanent record of that momentous occasion would be a valuable addition to each one's record of flying.

### BUTCH GOES LINE-SHOOTING

## MERRICK TELLS AIRMEN OF FIGHTING THRILLS

More than 100 EFTS airmen and instructors sat on the edges of their seats at the flying school Monday afternoon when F/O. W. H. (Butch) Merrick, DFM, DFC, an operational air gunner now training as pilot, told a few of his hair-raising experiences on bombing raids on Hitler's Fortress Europa.

The talk, arranged as a special feature of the ground school training, met with the hearty approval of the student pilots, as they heard the chubby officer recount in nonchalant fashion those of his escapades which he could safely mention.

For 45 full minutes, the trainees popped questions at the air gunner, whose reputation overseas was that of one of the best trigger-pullers in the business. His answers, in his southern drawl, made light of the difficult situations in which he found himself in combat, but threw orchids to his crewmates.

Like Russian Effort For the Russians, "Butch" had

### FR. KANE NAMED R.C. CHAPLAIN AT 24 EFTS

Rev. Father Joseph P. Kane, pastor of St. Ann's Catholic church in Abbotsford and of the Bradner church, has been appointed R.C. padre at No. 24 EFTS, it was announced today by Manager Stewart Mc Kercher.

The new spiritual advisor will say the first Mass to be held on the station next Sunday at 7 a.m., he said today. The services will be held each week at that time in the airmen's canteen, in the absence of a chapel.

Pastor of the Abbotsford church since mid-December, Father Kane was formerly at St. Joseph's in Mission. He has served various parishes since his ordination in 1930, including Ladner, Vernon, Vancouver and Lytton in this province.

#### Was Chaplain Before

For several months in 1942 he was temporary chaplain at a west coast station and gained an insight into the duties of his new position here. Following arrangements, he will be commissioned as an honorary flight lieutenant in the RCAF Chaplain Service.

"I plan to make myself useful," the amiable priest declared when asked his intentions in his new appointment. He will be on the station each Saturday afternoon for confessions, consultations and instruction.

#### Hamilton Native

The appointment was made by Wing Commander E. B. Howard, command chaplain (R.C.) of No. 4 Training Command.

Born in Hamilton, Ont., Fr. Kane was graduated from the University of Toronto in 1926 and thereafter from St. Augustine's Seminary, where he was ordained.

nothing but the highest of praise. "Few people realize," he declared, "the extent of the effort they're making."

Photographs from his personal collection showed bomb damage caused in air raids in which he participated over Germany, Belgium, France and the Netherlands. Pictures of an English church, 30 miles from any munitions plant, were evidence of the Luftwaffe's indiscriminate bombing in the early part of the war.

#### Other Talks Planned

The quality of English air equipment was superb, he said, hinting that much of it is still secret and has not yet seen the light of newspaper.

Another talk for those airmen not able to attend the Monday lecture will be held sometime next week in ground school, it was announced by Hugh Barclay, chief ground instructor, as another of the inside stories of operational experiences being made available to the student pilots.



**EARL DE LA WARR**  
In Canada to learn

who visited Abbotsford for two hours Saturday, lunched and conversed with representative farmers, municipal officials and businessmen, all of whom were greatly impressed by his keen perception and practical knowledge of farming and its principal problems, present and postwar.

### SERVED IN GREAT WAR I; TWO SONS IN WORLD WAR II

Lord De La Warr served on minesweepers, below deck, in the war of 1914-18. At the age of 29 he was appointed Parliamentary Under Secretary of the War Office. Since then he has held several important positions in the government. He is also chairman of the all-party peers' group on postwar agricultural policy in the House of Lords. His eldest son fought in the infantry at El Alamein and is now a paratrooper. A younger son, who is a pilot in the RAF, has been missing for seven months.

His Lordship, who only arrived at the coast on Wednesday, had already visited and spoken publicly twice in Victoria and twice in Vancouver, Thursday and Friday.

## 'Grad' Smoker Acclaimed as Best

Celebrating its graduation from No. 24 EFTS in advance at one of the best student smokers ever held by Abbotsford airmen, the class slated to conclude training here next week conducted its final party in the mess building on Wednesday night.

F/O W. H. (Butch) Merrick, DFM, DFC, was master of ceremonies; it is hardly necessary to mention that the affair was a huge success in the entertainment line under his direction.

After a late start (Butch blamed it on Mr. Graham and the CFI) the class and its guests—instructors and representatives of all sections of the ground staff—sat down to a turkey feed such as has seldom been seen here.

#### Ode to Butch

Butch really kept the party rolling; there were none of those awkward pauses and everybody had a chance to speak. Fred Graham, secretary-treasurer of the Vancouver Air Training Co. Ltd., declared he had been watching the class for a long time, which double-edged remark brought appreciative applause.

S/L Morley Gain, chief flying instructor, stressed discipline at SFTS and wished the course luck in its next assignment, before turning to the lighter side and delivering an "ode to Butch."

"Tonight this school celebrates in a big way," he chortled, "for that dark cloud with the 42-inch waistline that came over us four months ago is now on his way out. He has left a trail such as no student ever has here; each of his many instructors (and there are two in strait jackets now) has vowed to pass him. He has been a strain on the staff, but we are now pleased to announce we're almost ready to graduate Butch."

#### Fun Galore

Best wishes were given the course by F/L Len Milne, ACFI, Chief Ground Instructor Hugh Barclay and a host of other guests at the smoker. Entertainment feature of the evening was

the first performance here of P/O Wally Peters, new instructor and noted banjo artist, ably assisted by LAC Lou Snider at the piano.

LAC Peter Seabourne, cartoonist for The Breeze and a sparkplug of the class, drew lightning cartoons for the gathering and got off several good stories in his RAF manner, while Works and Building Chief Bud Nugent photographed the proceedings of the evening.

F/L Ben Knowles, entertainment committee chairman and OC of the Link section, announced that the dance next Wednesday night has been planned as a graduation affair for the course.

At each place on the groaning table were copies of a special edition of The Breeze prepared for the class. A hearty vote of thanks, played to the tune of \$25, was given the Hut in Abbotsford for its hospitality to the airmen of the class during their stay here.

### EFTS DENTAL CLINIC

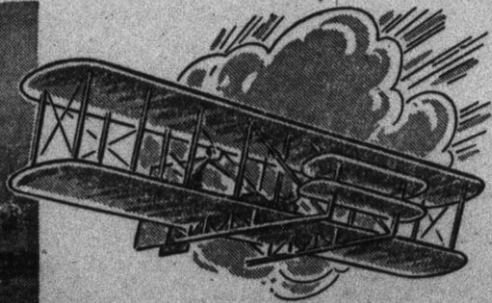
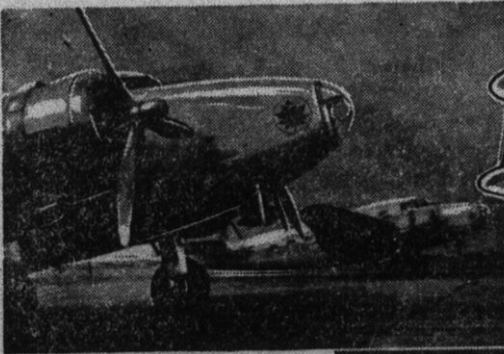
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Sgt. Ray Nelson of Frontier, Sask., a dental assistant, and Cpl. Ted Coney, a Manitoba native, whose trade is that of dental technician, make up the staff. Capt. Grant's home is in Regina, where his wife and three children are living.

#### Cribbage Champion

Known as a highly capable dentist, the captain was formerly at the Regina EFTS, with Sgt. Nelson aiding him there as well. Cpl. Coney was stationed at Calgary RCAF wireless school before his transfer here.

Since the arrival of the dental officer's personal chair last week, patients have been assured of comfort while undergoing treatment. The captain, a duck hunting and fishing fan, is also a cribbage champion and is expected to challenge all comers shortly.



## Forty Years of Flying

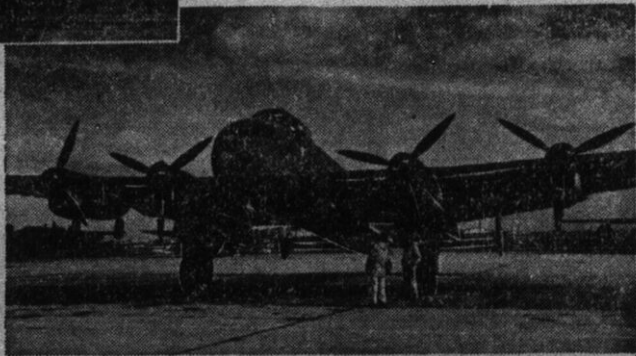
On December 17, 1903, man flew for the first time in history, in a heavier than air power-driven flying machine. The artist's drawing shows the Wright Brothers' famous Kitty Hawk. In the forty years since it soared into the air, flying has made tremendous strides.

The first flight in Canada took place at Baddeck, N.S., when J. A. D.

McCurdy flew the Silver Dart on February 23, 1909. Now, over routes totalling nearly 5,000 miles, the planes of Trans-Canada Air Lines cover more than 8,000,000 miles a year, carrying passengers, mails and express.

Two of the fleet are shown to the left of the layout. On the right is one of the big Lancasters flown by T.C.A. in the Dominion government's wartime trans-Atlantic service. Passengers on urgent war business, cargo of strategic importance, mails to and from the Canadian troops overseas, are carried across the ocean.

The skies are witness to the miraculous fulfilment of the dreams of Orville and Wilbur Wright two score years ago.



Sage From Years of Service**CHOCK-PULLERS DISCOURSE LEARNEDLY  
ON RELATIVE MERITS OF CORNELLS**

Or: When You Want A Good Laugh,  
Ride A Bus Back From Vancouver

By WOII GEORGE STURGISS

The weekend arrival at No. 24 EFTS of the first of a number of American-made Cornells from the eastern United States occasioned more than one comment as to its similarity with or dissimilarity from, as you will, the Canadian version, but the following choice bits were gleaned from back-fence chatter of a quartet of World War II's ace chock-pullers on the return trip from Vancouver via bus.

One rugged wing-tip man started it off by asking his neighbor if he had seen the American counterpart of the Cornell which had descended into our midst, to which he received an enthusiastic "Yeah" for an answer.

Then, the questions and snappy gatter from the four broke into a rapid-fire staccato as the more occult of the group provided ready answers for every query.

Questions and Answers

"Didja look inside?" one wing-tip holder inquired of another.

"Yeah," was the instantaneous reply.

"Didja find the master switch? I couldn't find it."

"Naw!" was the startling answer, to which he added, "Didja notice that fan-like thing under the motor? Whatzat?"

"Aw, that's a generator. Didn't you know that?"

"No! How doya start it, then? There's starter button!"

"Ya crank it. Didja see the crank?"

"Naw. Isn't it hard to crank?"

"No, it's easy -- just a turn or so starts it! Doya know what my instructor said? He said that if the engine quit at 500 feet you couldn't start it again," the sage advised.

"How 'bout the crank? There's room enuf on the wing for him to get out and crank 'er a coupla times and that'd start'er up!" wise-cracked the mop and broom expert.

"Yeah, and then I s'pose he runs back and climbs in before she hits the ground?" sneered the seer. "My instructor told me to dive it to start it," he continued, "but how couldya get it up to 220 mph with only 500 feet?"

"That's not for me," replied his friend. Say, didya know it was all made of wood -- even the stick?" he went on. "I don't like the idea of a wood stick."

"Aw, you couldn't break that stick if you tried," commented the first dreamer.

"Wanta bet?" inquired the second ditto.

"Sure," was the threatening answer.

With that, the conversation took a different tack, something like this:

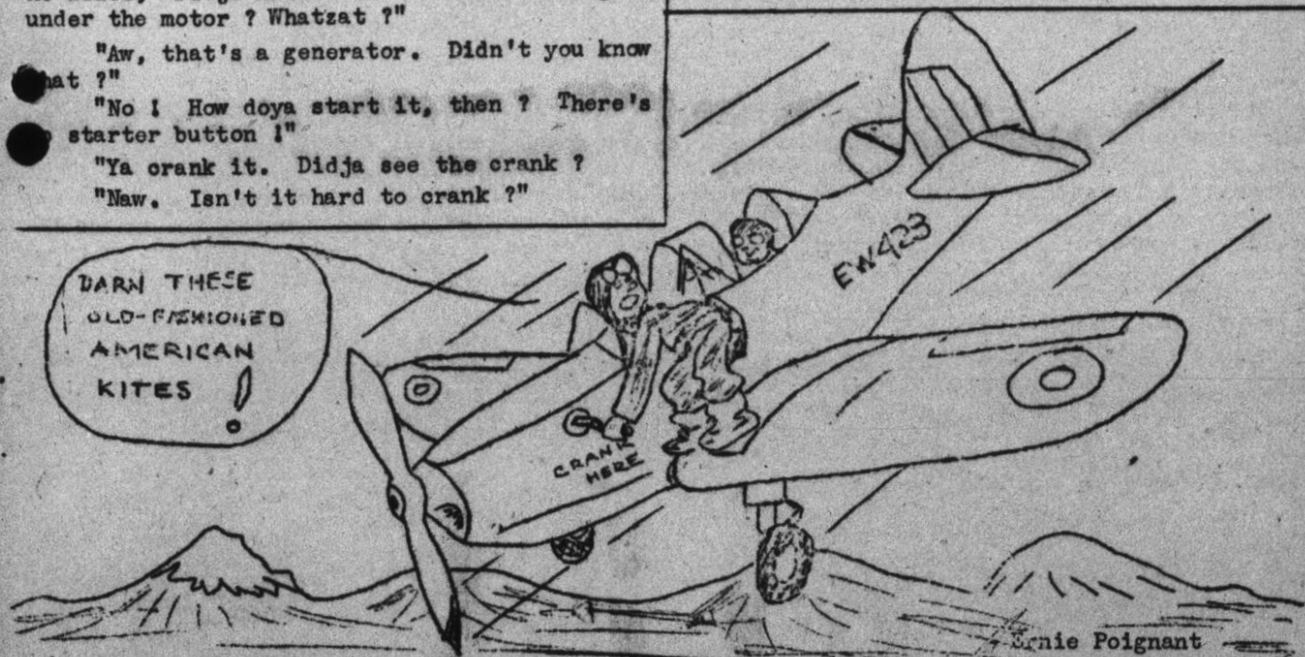
"It's awful light, too. Didja know it's 500 pounds lighter than the Canddian ones -- and faster, too?" asked the more aggressive of the group.

"It probably has a different motor," put in one of the less responsive of the party.

"Say, didja notice it uses 97 or 91 octane gas instead of our 87?" asked another.

"Aw, that's probably just the American version of our 87," concluded still another, which just about closed the discussion.

End (For Facts See Below)

BERTALINO BARES FACTS

For the information of all and sundry, some additional facts were made known about the new Cornell by Chief Engineer Joe Bertalino in a brief session with a Breeze reporter this week. First, the American version is the original trainer, called the PT-19 in the states and the Mark I in Canada. Canadian model (mk. II) has some modifications not on the American aircraft.

Explaining the wood, the engineer said the highly polished wing does allow slightly more speed, but ship weight is actually only 26 lb. less than any ship chosen at random from our hangars. The Canadian model has fabric finish.

Continuing comparison, Joe said some changes would have to be made in the Yank planes, but they are nearly identical, including engines. The US PT-26 has radio intercom, ultraviolet cockpit light, unshielded plugs, heated oil tank.

**STATION DANCE WEDNESDAY  
TO HONOR LATEST GRADUATES**

At a meeting of the entertainment committee in the YMCA office Wednesday night with F/L Ben Knowles presiding, plans were made to hold regular twice-monthly station dances honoring the graduating classes.

Decision to hold class banquets in place of the smokers which heretofore have been the style, together with the graduation parade and the graduation dance all on one day featured the meeting; cooperation of authorities in this regard is being sought, so that one regular social night can be planned for the station.

Informal mixed canteen social nights and the gala Valentines dance were also discussed. Wednesday's dance will be from 8 to 11 in the airmen's mess, with girls invited from Lynden, Mission and Abbotsford as well as the station.

**B.C. OFFICIALS GRANT BUS COMPANY  
RIGHT TO INCREASE LOCAL CHARGES**

New transportation rates between Abbotsford and the station went into effect this week; the new charge is 35 cents round trip, or \$1.80 for a pass good for one week (Monday to Monday) and 14 rides only during that week.

After operating the franchise for three months at a rate suggested by the EFTS company, the bus firm found it could not continue under those conditions and sought in Victoria the right to raise its charges; this was allowed by provincial officials, who have full jurisdiction over such tariffs.

The bus company has announced that evidence furnished the B.C. government to the effect that it was impossible to break even under the former setup was allowed, and the rates raised. The firm has assured its patrons, however, that it will improve its service to the station so that two busses will be run during rush hours.

**AIRMANSHIP QUIZ LIVENS  
INSTRUCTORS' MEETING**

With two flights pitting their instructors against the other, the pace of Instructors' Discussion Club meetings - held fortnightly in the officers' dining room - quickened yesterday into almost enjoyable routine.

In Yesterday's battle of wits, D flight, captained by F/O Frank Grant, went down to ignominious defeat before the mighty mental onslaughts of a team of giants (H flight) headed by F/O Jim Murphy. Prizes were a pair of gold wings, well wrapped, for Murphy and a box of fruit salts, similarly well wrapped, for Grant.

S/L M. Gain, CFI, conducted the war of wisdom, with F/L Len Milne, CFI, F/O Floyd Glass and F/O Ralph Burton, squadron commanders acting as judges.

With all flying instructors present, the session opened with a reading of the minutes of the last meeting, after which F/L Milne spoke on methods of instruction in various sequences. A discussion period was then held. The quiz programs will be held regularly, matching the various flights against the others until a champion is found; purpose is to generate a knowledge of airmanship untouched elsewhere.

**THE WEEKLY BREEZE**

Published Each Friday for the Personnel of 24 EFT Abbotsford, B.C. No. 21 January 21, 1944

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**BURTON NAMED TO HEAD**

**NO. TWO SQUADRON**

Grant, Boutwell Also Promoted to New Jobs

F/O Ralph A.J. Burton, formerly deputy squadron commander in No. 1 squadron, has been appointed to the position of squadron commander left vacant with the posting of F/L W.E. Benn to Regina, it was announced by S/L M. Gain, CFI. F/O Frank Grant, formerly A flight commander, steps up into Burton's former place, while F/O Don Boutwell transfers to A flight as its new leader.

**ARTISTS, WRITERS CHALLENGED  
IN TWO CONTESTS NOW OPEN**

The RCAF's first art contest is under way and a literary competition to unearth good short stories is soon to close, Y Supervisor Harvey Orr announced today. The genial Y man has just returned from two weeks of illness at Shaughnessy hospital in Vancouver.

Entries in the art contest from here will number at least one, for LAC R.H. Rouda is on the job, says Supervisor Orr. All competing works must be in the Y office by Feb. 25. The literary contest closes Feb. 4; information on both can be secured from the Y office.

**SOCIAL CALENDAR**

TONIGHT - Movie here: "Saps at Sea," with Laurel and Hardy; Red Cross dance in Matsqui (bus arranged; see posters).

SATURDAY - Dance at Abbotsford Hut.

TUESDAY - Movie here: "This Gun for Hire," with Veronica Lake, Alan Ladd, Laird Cregar.

WEDNESDAY - GRADUATION DANCE in Airmen's Mess; station band, lots of gals. Party for 45 airmen in Langley.

FRIDAY - Movie here: "The Falcon's Brother," with George Sanders, Tom Conway, Jane Randolph. (See The Breeze for further events)

**BITS OF THE BREEZE**

CO's suggestion boxes netted only two suggestions in as many months, but one is already adopted - individual mouthpieces. The other one was rather revolutionary - about smoke pots.

Dances in Lynden and Mission entertained more than 60 of our lads this week. Good stuff.

Bro-Rec classes in the town gym are open to instructors and their wives Thursday nights.

H.S. Andrews, chairman of the Abbotsford Hut committee, thanks the grads for their \$25 gift. (SWAMPED WITH NEWS THIS WEEK; TAKE IT EASY, KIDS)