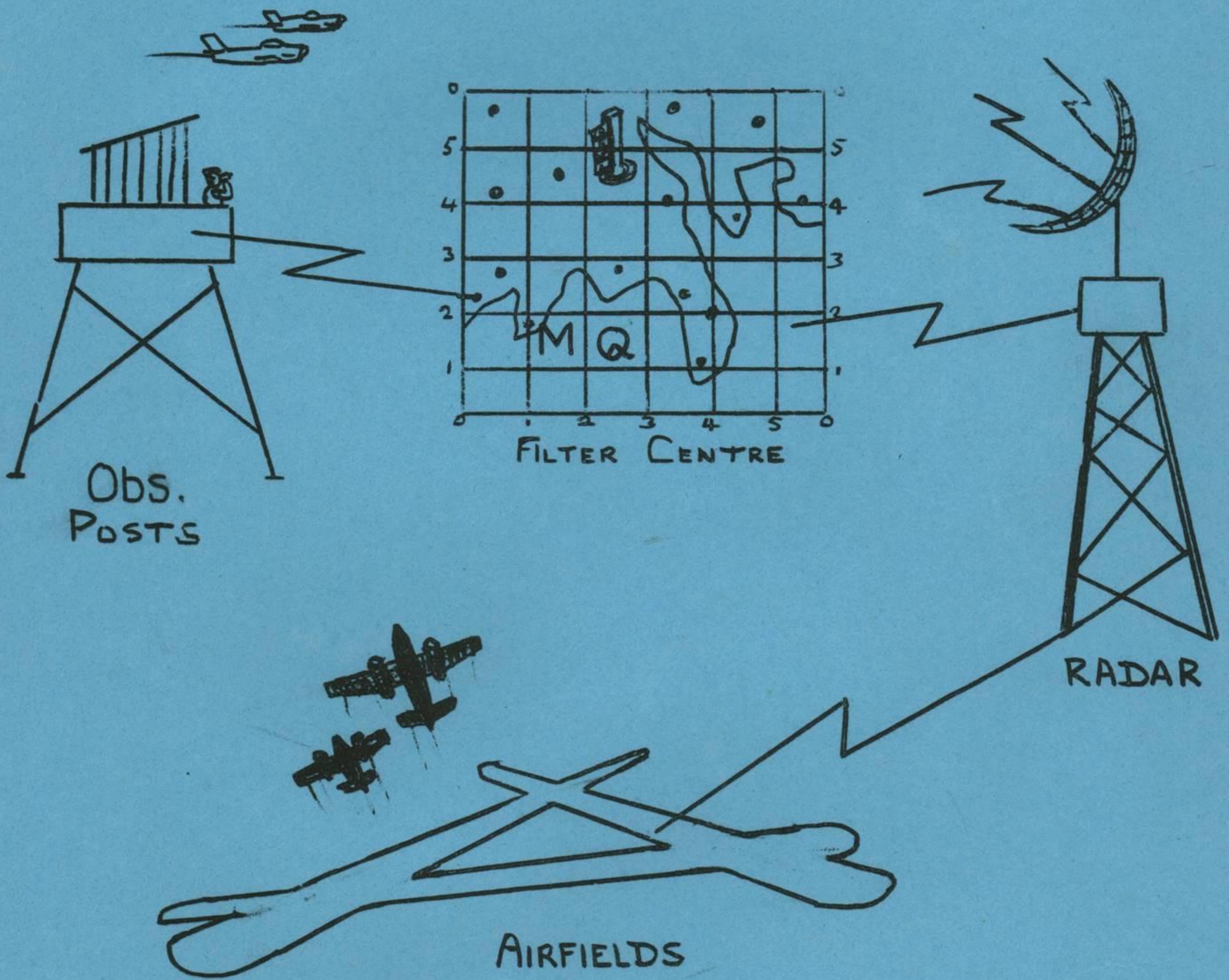


1/23/45

No 7

R.C.A.F.

Ground Observer Corps Unit Newsletter # 4



The Eyes and Ears of
the Air Force!

No.7
Royal Canadian Air Force
Ground Observer Corps Unit

NEWSLETTER NO.4

Explanation of Cover

This Newsletter, we have gone artistic. The cover sketch portrays the steps occurring in an Aircraft Flash call should such a call go to the ultimate conclusion where fighter aircraft are sent aloft to intercept a flight originally reported by a Ground Observer. The first picture is meant to illustrate an Observation Post with an Observer placing an Aircraft Flash call to a Filter Centre diagrammatically represented in the second picture by raid stand on the grid of a plotting table. The next step in processing a typical call is illustrated by the third picture depicting a radar station. The information contained in a Ground Observer Aircraft Flash call is correlated here with that received from radar and used to send aloft fighter interceptors. This stage is shown in the final picture.

Official Opening Truro Filter Centre

No. 70 Ground Observer Detachment Filter Centre Truro was officially opened with interesting and impressive ceremonies on Saturday afternoon 13 June. The Truro Filter Centre is the focal point of the Ground Observer Corps organization for Nova Scotia, P.E.I. and the Magdalen Islands. Reports from the some 425 Observation Posts established or being established in these areas are all passed to the Truro Centre. These Posts include isolated island lighthouses off the coast of Nova Scotia and coastal ships organized as mobile Observation Posts.

Official opening ceremonies took place between 3 and 5 o'clock the afternoon of Saturday 13 June. A large number of invited guests were in attendance including the majority of our Regional Supervisors in Nova Scotia and P.E.I. and their wives, Ground Observer Corps Technical Advisers of Nova Scotia, P.E.I. and New Brunswick, Mayor of Truro and other prominent civilians of the town, officials of Provincial Government, RCMP, Department of Transport, Telephone & Communications Companies, Department of Public Works, USAF Ground Observer Corps officers and men from the State of Maine, representatives of press and radio throughout Nova Scotia, Queen Annapolis XXI of the Annapolis Valley Apple Blossom Festival together with her Apple Blossom Festival Princesses, Miss Truro of 1953, etc. All in all some 200 invited guests attended for the official opening ceremonies. Upon their arrival at the Filter Centre, they were received by A/C A.D. Ross, GC CBE CD, Air Officer Commanding RCAF Maritime Air Command and Mrs. Ross, W/C J.A. Wiseman, Staff Officer Ground Observer Corps, Air Defence Command Headquarters, St. Hubert P.Q., S/L S.R. Miller, Commanding Officer No. 7 RCAF Ground Observer Corps Unit Halifax and Mrs. Miller, F/O G.M. Gillespie Officer Commanding No. 70 Ground Observer Corps Detachment Truro and Mrs. Gillespie. Following the official reception the guests proceeded to the Operations Room of the Filter Centre where addresses were given and opening ceremonies took place. Short talks were given by F/O G.M. Gillespie, Mayor of Truro, Mr. John G. Glassey, S/L S.R. Miller, Colonel A.W. MacKenzie, Minister of Agriculture and Minister of Lands and Forests of Nova Scotia speaking on behalf of the Provincial Government, Major D.J. Lombardi, State Co-ordinator USAF Ground Observer Corps, Maine, USA, Sheriff Jack Baker of Yarmouth, Regional Supervisor Area T13 speaking on

behalf of civilian members of the Corps and A/C A.D. Ross who declared the Filter Centre officially open by cutting a ribbon stretched across the Operations Room plotting table. A copy of A/C Ross' address is attached to this Newsletter.

Immediately A/C Ross declared the Filter Centre officially opened by cutting the ribbon, a twenty-minute simulated exercise took place on the plotting table. During this exercise the Operations Room was fully manned with plotters, filterers, telephone monitor, radar tellers, etc. Details of the exercise, which simulated bomber attacks on points in Nova Scotia and interception by defending fighter aircraft with all reports received from Ground Observers, were described by F/O W.R. Gibson of No. 7 Ground Observer Corps Unit over a public address system.

An interesting feature of the demonstration was that the various positions in the Operations Room were filled by civilian volunteers, RCAF officers and men from filter centres at Vancouver, Three Rivers, Rimouski and Gander, Newfoundland as well as the regular Truro staff and by USAF Ground Observer Corps officers and men from the USAF filter centre at Bangor, Maine. USAF and RCAF GOBC similarity in organization and procedures was emphasized by the fact that the USAF personnel were able to fit into the simulated exercise on our plotting board using our equipment without further training or explanation.

At the close of the simulated exercise, Queen Annapolis XXI, Queen of the Annapolis Valley Apple Blossom Festival, and 10 of her Princesses signed up as Official Observers in the Ground Observer Corps to serve in Observation Posts in their localities. Regional Supervisors Mr. P.H. Roop of Middleton, Regional Supervisor Area T2 and Colonel C.A. Good of Kentville, Regional Supervisor Area T3 witnessed the young ladies signatures on GOC Form 2 and issued them with Official Ground Observer Corps Identification Cards. Following this, Miss Marjorie Jean Hodge, Miss Truro of 1953 signed up as Filter Centre volunteer with F/O G.M. Gillespie witnessing her signature and issuing her with Identification Card. These short ceremonies were most interesting and impressive. All of the young ladies were extremely beautiful and added a great deal to the Filter Centre opening.

The signing up of these young ladies concluded the official portion of the Filter Centre opening ceremonies in the Operations Room and the guests then returned to the lounge where a most delicious lunch had been prepared by members of the Scotia and Colchester Chapters of the IODE. A great deal of credit for the success of the opening goes to these ladies. While lunch was being served, young girls of the New Glasgow Girls Pipe Band entertained with Highland dancing with bagpipe music being supplied by Pipe Major Fraser Holmes.

During the morning of 13 June, while the guests were arriving at the Filter Centre and during the opening ceremonies, the New Glasgow Girls Pipe Band performed most capably in providing excellent bagpipe music. The performance of these young girls attracted a great deal of favourable comment in Truro and ensured that all of the Truro populace were aware of the opening of their Filter Centre.

At 5 o'clock the Filter Centre portion of the official opening concluded and the guests proceeded to the Club Rooms of No. 102 Colchester Wing of the Royal Canadian Air Force Association. There was no time limit on this portion of the opening and a most pleasant social evening was enjoyed by the majority of invited guests.

The Filter Centre opening ceremonies, speeches and the simulated exercise were recorded by radio station CKCL of Truro and by the CBC Halifax and were broadcast during the evening, again on the following day and during the following week by CBC and Halifax stations.

The Filter Centre was opened to the general public at 6 o'clock in the evening. Attractive displays of several items of RCAF armament, radar and safety equipment were on view in the lounge of the Filter Centre and attracted a great deal of attention as they did during the afternoon. Visitors were free to inspect the whole of the Filter Centre accommodation but the main point of interest was the Operations Room where the simulated exercise which had been given during the afternoon was repeated at half-hourly intervals until 10 p.m. when the Filter Centre was closed. The commentary was again capably given by F/O Gibson of Halifax.

Operation "Nova Watch"

In our last Newsletter we reported plans which had been made to hold our first full scale test exercise of the Ground Observer Corps in Nova Scotia. This exercise was called Operation "Nova Watch" and was the first full scale Ground Observer Corps exercise to be held anywhere in Canada. This speaks well for the patriotism of Nova Scotians and the hard work done not only by Air Force officers and men of 7 GOB Unit but by our civilian volunteers, especially Regional Supervisors and Chief Observers. A great deal of credit for the fact that we were able to hold Operation "Nova Watch" when we did also goes to the Maritime Telegraph & Telephone Co. Ltd. People of this Company worked very hard in completing installation of the Filter Centre equipment and instructing all of their operators in procedures to be used in passing Aircraft Flash Messages.

Operation "Nova Watch" took place between 4 and 8 p.m. Atlantic Daylight Saving Time Wednesday afternoon 24 June. During the exercise approximately 300 Observation Posts in Nova Scotia including 32 island lighthouse Posts off the coast of Nova Scotia were alerted and manned by civilian volunteer observers and Chief Observers. Approximately 25 aircraft of the RCAF and RCNAS flew patterns across Nova Scotia designed to give all Observation Posts at least one sighting and as many sightings as possible to each Post.

Operation "Nova Watch" was an outstanding success, more so than the most optimistic of us has hoped for. A total of 916 Aircraft Flash calls were received in the Filter Centre during the 4-hour period of the exercise. Officers on duty wrote down information from as many calls as possible but due to the rapid rate at which these calls arrived at the Filter Centre they were able to record only about one-third of the messages received by the plotters and plotted on the plotting table.

The approximately 300 calls written down came from 247 different Observation Posts. The quadrant breakdown is as follows:

Avon	-	58 posts
Belmar	-	77 posts
Cotton	-	71 posts
Dusty	-	41 posts

The average time delay for the Aircraft Flash Messages recorded was most encouraging. The over-all average delay was only two minutes with the breakdown by quadrants as follows:

Avon - 1.6 min.
Belmar - 1.8 min.
Cotton - 2.3 min.
Dusty - 2.5 min.

The method in which the calls were passed by Observers and the accuracy of information was, on the whole, very good. There were, however, a few exceptions indicating the need for some further training and a better understanding of procedures on the part of Observers. Some of our plotters, too, need further training to correct the few instances where they did not follow laid-down procedures exactly.

The proper procedure to be used in passing an Aircraft Flash Message to the Filter Centre and the proper way to contact local operators has been given in detail in training lectures and is written down in copy of training lecture given to all Chief Observers. As a refresher the following is a further example: Observation Post code name, Peter Able 21 Red, located at Forestville in Quadrant "Cotton" with telephone number of Observation Post telephone, Forestville 18. The Observer contacts Forestville telephone operator and says "AIRCRAFT FLASH - COTTON - FORESTVILLE 18." That is all that is necessary for the Observer to say to his telephone operator, it is not necessary for him to say anything more until he hears the plotter in the Filter Centre say "AIR DEFENCE - GO AHEAD PLEASE." He then says "AIRCRAFT FLASH", does not give quadrant "Cotton" but goes ahead with his Aircraft Flash Message as, for example: "FEW - MULTI MOTOR - LOW -- DELAY TWO MINUTES -- PETER ABLE 21 RED -- OVERHEAD - FLYING SOUTH EAST." We wonder if all Observers who took part in Operation "Nova Watch" when reading the above will think back and realize that they did make some errors when passing their Aircraft Flash Messages. The following are some of the errors on the part of Observers noted by officers in the Filter Centre during Operation "Nova Watch":

- (a) Observers gave quadrant identification to plotter in the Filter Centre. This is not necessary.
- (b) Observers gave Post code name and number before starting Aircraft Flash Message instead of in proper place in item 5 of the Message.
- (c) Observers gave direction of aircraft from Observation Post and distance from Post in items 6 and 7 of Aircraft Flash Message instead of combining these and reporting all aircraft as overhead as they had been instructed to do.
- (d) Observers reported aircraft altitude as medium. Instructions were issued that this item of Flash Message had been changed and aircraft are to be reported as one of : "very low, low, high, very high, or unknown."
- (e) Observers would give one item of Aircraft Flash Message then wait for acknowledgement from plotter before proceeding. At least one Observer gave item one, then said "Did you get that?" and did not proceed until he had been assured by plotter that item one had been received. Then the Observer gave item 2, again said "Did you get that?" and so on, waiting to receive assurance that plotter had "got that" for each individual item of the Message.
- (f) Observers were confused about item 8 of Aircraft

Flash Message in direction aircraft were flying. Some Observers gave direction from which aircraft came, not direction they were going.

- (g) Some Observers in giving Aircraft Flash Message would say: "column 1, number of aircraft - few, column 2, type of aircraft - multi motor, column 3 - altitude of aircraft - low" and so on. This is most time consuming and it is not necessary to state column numbers and heading of columns. Just go through the Message exactly as outlined in the example above.
- (h) Some Observers left out Post code name entirely and had to be asked for this by the plotter. Others left out other items of the Aircraft Flash Message and had to be asked for the information by the plotter.
- (j) In spite of the stress which was placed on the necessity of all Observers keeping watch only from the Observation Post site and placing calls from the Post phone, too many Observers reported from their own homes or from a telephone not listed as the official Observation Post telephone. In future exercises all telephone operators will refuse to accept Aircraft Flash Messages from other than authorized Observation Post telephones.
- (k) One telephone party-line sometimes serves more than one Observation Post and during the Operation a plotter in the Filter Centre often found 2 Observers from 2 different Posts trying to pass a message at the same time. In a case of this nature it will be necessary for one of the Observers to wait his turn. When 2 Observers both insist on trying to pass a message at the same time, the result is that neither get through.

There were other isolated instances of errors made, some of which were very humorous but we feel that the list given above is perhaps sufficient to show you where mistakes can be made, in fact where they were made, and points to watch for in future exercises. Our plotters, too, made mistakes but that is one purpose for which the exercise was held, to find out where mistakes would be made and correct these in future exercises.

We hope all those taking part in Operation "Nova Watch" got as big kick out of it as we in the Air Force did. We feel that the time and money expended on it was very well spent. Above all, it did prove that the Ground Observer Corps as we have organized it in the Maritime Provinces really works. Should it ever be needed in actual war, it will certainly play its part in the air defence system.

Observation Post Queen Able 15 Black

In our last Newsletter we reported on activities of Captain H.G. Kaiser in organizing his Observation Post. From time to time in these Newsletters we like to report such incidents where one of our Posts is exceptional or above the average in their organization or methods of recruiting Observers. Observation Post Queen Able 15 Black under Chief Observer Captain Donald Campbell is located at Iona Cape Breton and we feel that it falls into the

classification of an above average Post.

S/L S.R. Miller, Commanding Officer No. 7 Ground Observer Corps Unit accompanied by Captain J.M. Wilson, Regional Supervisor Area T12, visited the Post at Iona on the evening of 8 July to take part in a meeting called by the Chief Observer and his assistant Mr. Jack McNeil to interest the people of the communities of Iona and Grand Narrows in the Ground Observer Corps.

Squadron Leader Miller was very impressed with the turnout at the meeting which was held in the Canadian Legion Hall at Iona and at the keenness displayed by all civilian volunteers of Queen Able 15 Black as well as by those who attended the meeting to learn about the Ground Observer Corps. Although an Indian Handicrafts Bazaar on the Eskasoni Reservation was running strong competition to the Ground Observer Corps on the evening of 8 July there were a total of 92 people from Iona, Grand Narrows and surrounding districts arrived for the meeting. Talks were given by Captain Wilson, Captain Campbell, Mr. McNeil and S/L Miller who outlined the need for Ground Observer Corps volunteers, explained briefly its organization and procedures and the requirements for further civilian volunteers. Through the courtesy of the National Film Board, Captain Wilson had arranged the screening of the film, "Royal Tour" in colour. All addresses and the film were very well received by the audience. Following the film 17 of those attending signed up as Official Observers giving the Post a total of 34 Observers, a rather amazing figure considering the small size of the communities involved. Many of our Posts with much larger populations to draw from have not done nearly as well. Captain Campbell stated that their objective was at least 60 Observers for his Post and that they would be able to recruit this number without difficulty.

Captain Campbell and Mr. McNeil are a great team. They have the interests of the Ground Observer Corps at heart and have some excellent ideas for organization of their Post, training of Observers and for keeping up interest during periods when no exercises are planned.

The Post plans to hold monthly meetings with the next one to take place early in August and limited to the 34 Official Observers now appointed. A further meeting, again open to the general public to recruit more volunteers, is planned for September. Subsequent meetings will be held approximately once a month. These meetings are being held on a social basis as well as instructional. Sound films are planned for each meeting and where possible a Ground Observer Corps officer will attend.

Youths of the communities surrounding Captain Campbell's Post have also shown a great deal of interest in the Ground Observer Corps and a large number of them have volunteered to serve. As a result, a Junior Ground Observer Corps is being formed for the Post and all the boys and girls below the age 15 volunteering will be assigned to this junior branch. They will be eligible to attend meetings and will be allowed to come to the Post during exercises. However, they will not be used as Official Observers during exercises until they reach the age of 15. At this time they will be given full status as an Observer and will be able to act as Official Observers during periods when the Post is alerted. This procedure is thought to be an excellent one worthy of adoption by other Posts as are other ideas used by the Chief Observer of this Post and his assistant.

There is no doubt but that Observation Post Queen Able 15 Black will be one of the top GOBC Posts in Canada. A great deal of credit goes to the Chief Observer, his assistant, and the pat-

riotic citizens who have volunteered to devote their time to the Corps.

Telephone Party Lines

The old problem of party lines serving Observation Posts is still with us. In our training lectures, in previous Newsletters, in publicity, etc. we have stressed the problems of party lines serving Observation Posts. The problem is not an easy one to overcome and Chief Observers have been asked to contact all subscribers on party lines and ask them to release the line to allow an Aircraft Flash Message to go through should any subscriber be holding a conversation when an Observer has to pass a message to the Filter Centre. As a result of Operation "Nova Watch" reports, on the whole, indicated that subscribers of party lines were cooperating to the extent that they would terminate their conversation to allow Observers to place Aircraft Flash calls. However, that is apparently not enough. Mainly out of curiosity, we feel, and a desire to hear what an Aircraft Flash call sounds like, many Posts have reported that when they get access to a line and start to place an Aircraft Flash call, all of the subscribers on the line lift up their receivers to listen in. The information in an Aircraft Flash Message is such that we don't mind it being overheard but when a number of people on a party line lift up their receivers to listen in, this cuts down the volume to an extent that the Observer is unable to hear the plotter in the Filter Centre and the plotter in the Filter Centre is unable to hear the Observer. Consequently, Chief Observers whose Posts are served by party lines are asked to contact other subscribers on the line, point out the importance of Aircraft Flash Messages and ask subscribers to please not pick up their receivers to listen in to an Aircraft Flash call, not because the information is secret but because this cuts down the volume to the extent that the call will not go through.

Certificates of Appointment - Official Observers

Ground Observer Corps Certificates of Appointment have been forwarded to Technical Advisers, Regional Supervisors, and Chief Observers of the Corps when they are appointed. In the past few months Official Observers who have been appointed have also been forwarded these Certificates, names and addresses of recipients being obtained by 7 Ground Observer Corps Unit from GOC Forms 4 (list of Official Observers) submitted by Chief Observers. It has been very difficult to get an up-to-date Form 4 from all Chief Observers even though they have been reminded of the requirement through newsletters and by our Regional Supervisors. Further, with the number of Official Observers now recruited in excess of 3,000 the task of preparing these Certificates and mailing them out to each Observer has become too big. Although the decision was made with regret it has been a necessary one and Certificates of Appointment will no longer be issued to Official Observers of the Ground Observer Corps. This does not mean that we have no further requirement for GOC Form 4. This is still needed to enable the RCAF to compile statistics as to numbers of Official Observers appointed and how many Observers each Post has so that we can classify Posts according to numbers of Observers available. Official Observers will still receive official Ground Observer Corps Identification Cards establishing their membership in the Corps and at a later date when they qualify, will receive the Ground Observer Corps Wing. More news of this Wing will be given in a later Newsletter.

Training Lectures - Nova Scotia

During the months of May and June officers of No. 70 Ground Observer Corps Detachment Truro concentrated on training and prior to Operation "Nova Watch" Chief Observers and Official Observers of 241 Observation Posts in Nova Scotia had received training lectures. Three Hundred and twenty-four Observation Posts had been inspected and approved by Ground Observer Corps officers with Chief Observers appointed in each case. This left 83 Posts still requiring training lectures at the end of June.

Training of the large number of Posts mentioned above in the short time available required a lot travelling and hard work. To cut down as much as possible the number of lectures given, Regional Supervisors were requested to gather volunteers for as many Posts as possible together in one central location. An example of this procedure was when Chief Observers and Official Observers for 11 Observation Posts in Regional Area T18 received their training lecture in Halifax at the RCAF Recreation Hall, Gorsebrook. Gathering volunteers of several Posts together in one spot was necessitated by the fact that it was necessary to train people of as many Posts as possible prior to Operation "Nova Watch."

Now that the pressure is off, it has been decided that in future individual training lectures will be given to one Post at a time unless Chief Observers can ensure that all of their Observers can attend a combined lecture for 2 or more Posts. Consequently, Regional Supervisors are asked to organize for training lectures for all of their Observation Posts not previously receiving training. As many of the Posts trained did not have all of their Official Observers recruited at the time original training lecture was given and as many Posts which had been listed as trained were unable to have all of their Observers attend the lecture, it will be necessary for these Posts to receive another lecture. Chief Observers of all such Observation Posts are asked to complete recruiting of all their Official Observers as soon as possible and arrange through their Regional Supervisors for a second training lecture when all of their Observers can attend.

We plan another full scale Ground Observer Corps test exercise for Nova Scotia and P.E.I. in October. We are most anxious to have all Posts approved and all Chief Observers and Official Observers fully trained prior to this Operation, more details of which will be given in our next newsletter.

An interesting side light of our training was a trip by F/O W.R. Gibson to the Observation Post at Betty Island. This Post had not been trained at the time other island lighthouse Posts had received a training visit. As we wished to use this Post in Operation "Nova Watch", F/O Gibson chose the most rapid means possible of visiting it. With the kind co-operation of the Royal Canadian Navy, he travelled via helicopter. He got to the Post without difficulty but unfortunately no one was home and in fact, the whole island was deserted. Consequently, F/O Gibson signalled the helicopter to pick him up again, he was returned to a rooftop in close proximity to the Headquarters of the Ground Observer Corps and was back in the office within half an hour after leaving. He had made a trip that by other means of transportation would have taken a whole day. F/O Gibson is, as a result, sold on helicopter transportation and in fact, we have seriously considered changing his name from "Bill" to "Rotor-head."

Mobile Observation Posts

No doubt many of the Captains of coastal ships who volunteered as Chief Observers with their crews acting as Observers have wondered what has happened to the Ground Observer Corps. Due to the pressure of work and the large amount of organization and training required for our land Observation Posts it was unfortunately impossible for us to complete organization of coastal shipping as mobile Observation Posts in time for these to take part in Operation "Nova Watch." We were regretfully forced to postpone organization and training of these until later. Now, however, F/O J.H. Waugh of 70 GOB Detachment, Truro is again working on completing of organization and training for our 45 ships whose Captains have, to date, agreed to serve as Chief Observers. F/O Waugh will be devoting his full effort to organization and training of mobile Observation Posts until 15 August when he is required back in Truro for further duties there. Prior to that date he hopes to contact all ship-captain Chief Observers, visit as many of their ships as possible and give a training lecture to the captain and as many of his crew as can attend.

Organization of and training of ships is a difficult task as they spend a great portion of their time at sea and when in port the majority of the time of the captain and his crew is taken up with other duties. Consequently, it will probably not be possible for F/O Waugh to personally visit every mobile Observation Post before 15 August. He hopes, however, to at least write all of them and visit most of them and will try and visit those he misses during the latter part of September. We hope to use the mobile Posts in our fall exercise.

Ground Observer Corps in New Brunswick and the Moncton Filter Centre

Ground Observer Corps organization in the province of New Brunswick has progressed rapidly since our last newsletter. Two of our officers, F/O's J.M. Lutes and F.B. Little, have just recently returned from a three-week trip throughout New Brunswick during which they contacted all Regional Supervisors and assisted each of them in organization of their Regional Area. Approximately 150 Observation Posts have now been inspected and approved in New Brunswick and Chief Observers of all of these will be appointed and issued with Certificates and Identification Cards at an early date.

X
The location for our Filter Centre for New Brunswick has now been approved. It will be located in a portion of the Lounsbury Building, corner of Main and Alma Streets in Moncton. This was the old YMCA Building which was damaged by fire some years ago. The Filter Centre will occupy what was the gymnasium of the building, this portion not being damaged by the fire. The gymnasium has a 21-foot ceiling which will provide an excellent Operations Room. The portion of the gymnasium not being used for the Operations Room will be divided into 2 floors. The administrative offices, wash-rooms, cloak rooms and ladies lounge will occupy the top floor. The first floor will have large Lecture Room, lounge, kitchen, and reception office. The Operations Room extends through the two floors. A door from the offices leads onto the balcony of the Operations Room and doors from the lounge and Lecture Room lead on to the floor of the Operations Room.

Blueprints have been drawn up for Moncton Filter Centre

and construction and alterations are getting under way. We feel that when completed, this Filter Centre will be the finest in Canada, or anywhere else for that matter. If all goes well it should be ready for occupancy and activation approximately 1 November.

Every effort will be made to complete organization and training in New Brunswick prior to the end of November, to recruit and train at least one team for the Filter Centre, and if these goals are reached providing, of course, our Filter Centre is completed, we plan our first full scale exercise for New Brunswick before 1 December. If we all work hard, civilian volunteers included, we should be able to meet this date.

The Officer Commanding the Filter Centre in Moncton will be F/O J.M. Lutes presently a valuable member of the staff in Truro. He and F/O F.B. Little, also an important member of the Truro team, have been notified of their transfer to Moncton. A third officer who will be moving to Moncton is F/O G.E. Murray presently located at the Filter Centre in Rimouski, Quebec. F/O Murray is familiar to many of you for he got his start in the Ground Observer Corps in Halifax with 7 GOB Unit. He moved to Rimouski last October and his return to the Maritimes will be a valuable addition to our officers. With the loss of F/O's Little and Lutes from Truro, partial replacement is being provided in the person of F/O W.E. Whitford who is coming to Truro from the Filter Centre at St Jerome, Quebec. Truro will require an additional officer and Moncton will require two to bring them up to strength but as yet we have no word as to when these officers will arrive or who they will be.

In our last newsletter we reported that Mr. Joseph Cyr of Edmundston, New Brunswick had found it necessary to resign as Regional Supervisor of Area M6. Mr. Cyr has now reconsidered this and has decided it will be possible for him to carry on with the help of an assistant Regional Supervisor. Mr. H. Paillard is being appointed in this capacity.

Progress in P.E.I.

As of the date of writing, no Observation Posts have as yet been approved in P.E.I. and no Chief Observers have been appointed. However, F/O D.L. Giggey of Truro is proceeding to P.E.I. 3 August. While there he will visit each Regional Supervisor, inspect Observation Posts proposed, and instruct Chief Observers in procedures to be followed on setting up a Post. We know that some of the Regional Supervisors in P.E.I. have made a start in organizing their areas and have some Posts proposed for F/O Giggey to visit. In our next newsletter we hope to be able to report substantial progress in P.E.I. Training will start there as soon as all posts are approved.

Status of Civilian Volunteers - Military Service

Some civilians, when hearing about the Ground Observer Corps and its need for volunteers have expressed the thought that anyone signing up as a volunteer in the Corps would be liable for military call-up in the event of hostilities. This, fortunately, is not a prevalent thought but where it does exist, it does untold damage. Nothing could be further from the truth. A civilian GOB volunteer is not subject to military call-up as a result of his offer of service to the Corps no more than any

other civilian who has never heard of the Corps. A volunteer in the Ground Observer Corps is a free agent able to resign from the Corps at any time if he so desires. His signature on any GOBC form certainly does not make him liable to being called up in any military service. We would ask that any who are volunteers and who hear such rumours take action to counteract them immediately. If any of you are aware of people spreading such information deliberately, it would be appreciated if their name and address could be passed to the Commanding Officer 7 GOBC Unit.

Truro Filter Centre News

The Truro Filter Centre is a busy place these days with continuous training being carried out and new volunteers signing up almost daily. The Centre is now manned and operational 24 hours daily 7 days a week so that any time an Aircraft Flash call is placed by an Observer there will always be someone at the Filter Centre to receive it. This is particularly important as our Observers have been asked to place an Aircraft Flash Message if they see an aircraft definitely in distress. This function will be an important duty of the Ground Observer Corps during peacetime.

The following is news from the Truro Filter Centre which the Officer Commanding has asked to have included in this newsletter:

Interest in the Filter Centre has been fairly good, considering the season, and many people have come in. The majority of volunteers have been unable to be present for very many lectures and exercises during the holiday months but have indicated their willingness to co-operate after Labor Day. When recruiting of volunteers began, several young boys who were very keen were signed up. Experience has shown that this was not a successful venture and at present a policy has been established which sets a minimum age for volunteers at 16 years. This move has depleted the Filter Centre ranks somewhat but with the arrival of cooler weather these losses will be more than overcome. A campaign has been started under which all the larger business establishments in Truro have been invited to investigate the needs of the Filter Centre and ask their employees to volunteer for service. Local theatres are arranging through their booking office to run the GOBC film "One Plane - One Bomb - One City" on suitable dates during the latter part of August.

Although more than one hundred volunteers have now been registered by the Filter Centre, only fifty-five have received sufficient training to be of value during operations, while the others have each received a small amount of training. Here again it was found that during this time of year many of the more proficient volunteers have found it inconvenient to stay in town and have moved, with their families, to the beach. In all cases, they have promised to be back after Labor Day and, by word of mouth, to promote the cause of the GOBC among their friends and acquaintances. This, together with the recruiting action mentioned above, should produce very satisfying results during the early fall.

For those Regional Supervisors who feel that a public showing of the GOBC film "One Plane, One Bomb, One City" in their local theatres would assist in recruiting Official Observers in their Regional Areas, a .35 mm print of this is now available on request. Of course it can be in only one place at a time so it

is suggested that dates for showing the film should be arranged as far in advance as possible, and that requests for it be sent to Officer Commanding, #70 RCAF Ground Observer Corps Detachment, 51½ Inglis Street, Truro. Requests will be handled on a priority basis and if it cannot be delivered on the suggested date, due to a previous engagement, a subsequent date will be arranged to suit the Regional Supervisor involved.

Reporting Aircraft in Distress

As mentioned above one important peacetime task of the Ground Observer Corps is reporting aircraft in distress. Instructions have been issued previously to the procedure to be followed in reporting aircraft in distress and the information required in cases of this nature. All Aircraft Flash calls are to be placed from Observation Post Post telephones only and telephone operators have been instructed to accept such calls only from authorized Post phones. In the case of Observers witnessing aircraft in distress incidents, they normally will not be at the Observation Post site and may, in fact, be some distance from it. If this occurs the information should be telephoned to the Chief Observer or someone else located at the Post phone with the request that it be passed to the Filter Centre as an Aircraft Flash call. If it is impossible to locate anyone at the Observation Post the only alternative will be for the Observer to contact the operator directly, explain the circumstances and request that the call be placed as an Aircraft Flash Message even though it is not originating from recognized Observation Post telephone.

GOBC Radio Broadcasts

On the 27 of May the CBC Maritime Network carried a Ground Observer Corps radio program. This program was produced by the CBC in Halifax and dramatically described the GOBC organization, procedures followed, and the purpose of the Corps. The program was well produced and most interesting. It closes with a very tuneful, musical selection "Keep Your Eyes on the Skies", a number dealing with the Ground Observer Corps and the need for volunteers. This program was rebroadcast over CKCL, Truro prior to the official opening of the Truro Filter Centre and was broadcast over CFNB, Fredericton New Brunswick following its airing by the CBC Maritime Network. No doubt many of you heard this broadcast. For those of you who did not and to further interest the general public in the Ground Observer Corps and secure more volunteers, all Regional Supervisors in the Maritimes who have radio stations located within their Regional Areas have been asked to try and arrange for broadcast of the Ground Observer Corps program at their local station. Some of the Supervisors have made such arrangements at the date of this writing and it is expected that others will do so within a few days. Consequently, you may be hearing about the Ground Observer Corps over your local radio station in the near future. The program is the same as that broadcast by the CBC on 27 May except that the short address by S/L S.R. Miller, Commanding Officer 7 GOBC Unit has been changed and brought up to date.

Conclusion

As the period between Newsletter No. 3 and this Newsletter has been longer than normal and as so much has happened to the

Ground Observer Corps in the interval, this Newsletter is longer than we like to make them. For that we apologize and we hope that you have all been able to stay with it to the end. We promise to shorten future Newsletters and bring them out more frequently.

Once again we would like to request that Chief Observers and Regional Supervisors send in items for inclusion in Newsletters. Let us have newsy items from Posts or Regional Areas outstanding volunteers, humorous incidents, etc. Who is the oldest civilian volunteer we have? The USAF Ground Observer Corps has reported an active Observer 87 years of age. Let's hear from some of our Chief Observers or Regional Supervisors. We'd like to report on the oldest volunteer in the 7 GOBC Unit area. Perhaps we can beat the rest of Canada in this respect.

No. 7 RCAF Ground Observer Corps Unit
Maritime Air Command, RCAF
17 South Street
Halifax, N.S.

3 August, 1953.

ADDRESS BY AIR COMMODORE A.D. ROSS, GC, CBE, CD
ON OPENING OF GROUND OBSERVER CORPS FILTER CENTRE
TRURO, NOVA SCOTIA JUNE 13th, 1953

During the present period of international tension, world-wide unrest and cold war, no free nation can afford to relax and assume that, because of its geographical location, its armed forces strength or the strength of its allies that it is free from attack. Canada is a growing and expanding nation with vast resources and natural wealth. It is rapidly becoming one of the major industrial nations of the world, in addition to its past and present capability as a vast food producer. For these reasons, and the fact that Canada is geographically located across the shortest route between our potential enemy and our great neighbour to the south, we must be ever alert, vigilant and prepared to protect ourselves from aggression.

The Royal Canadian Air Force is responsible for the defence of Canada and for protection of our cities, towns and industrial areas from devastating aerial attack. At one time, we were protected from an attack of this nature by the vast oceans and the large expanse of thinly populated and unfriendly terrain of our north land. This geographical protection no longer exists. Fast long-range, high-flying aircraft can now attack this country from bases of our potential enemy. One atomic bomb can destroy a city or industrial area where formerly tens of thousands of tons of conventional bombs were required.

Canada would indeed be a rich prize for our enemies. We know they have the means of attacking us, the aircraft, the bombs. We cannot then afford to be complacent, we must be alert.

Because of the vast extent of this country, we cannot provide sufficient fighter aircraft or anti-aircraft gun defences to maintain continuous vigilance over the areas from which attacking aircraft could come. The modern concept of air defence is to provide early warning to defending forces of the approach of an enemy. With sufficient early warning, our fighter aircraft flying close to the speed of sound can intercept attackers before they reach their target. You are no doubt familiar with the fact that we, together with the United States of America, have established a network of radar stations to provide early warning. However, radar is not enough. It cannot detect low-flying aircraft and like any other mechanical device, it is subject to some mechanical weaknesses. To plug the gaps in our radar screen, we must have something else. That something else is civilian volunteer observers organized to pass reports of visual sightings of aircraft to a central location, where such reports are plotted, evaluated and passed on to other Units in the Air Defence system. Such an organization has been considered a necessity by the Chiefs of Staff of our Military Forces and by our Government leaders. It has been named the Ground Observer Corps, and the RCAF has been vested with the responsibility for its organization and operation. However, the Corps as it is constituted depends mainly, not upon the RCAF officers and men assigned to it, but upon the volunteer service of patriotic civilians. In the final analysis, it is the civilian member of the Corps, the Regional Supervisor, the Chief Observer and the Official Observer, the Plotter in the Filter Centre, the Filterer and the Radar Teller who will make the Corps the efficient and smoothly-operating organization which it must be to fulfill its purpose.

Here in Nova Scotia, we have been most fortunate in the response received from our civilian volunteers. They have worked hard in co-operation with our Air Force staff to bring the Corps to its present state. Some 350 Observation Posts have been organized and training of the Observers to man these posts is well advanced.

The Ground Observer Corps in Nova Scotia is now ready to provide early warning to our Air Defence forces of the movement of aircraft over this Province and its approaches. The first test exercise to assess capabilities of this mighty force of civilians will be held in ten days time. Reports from these posts established in farm yards, on roof tops and in the country, in the towns, in the cities and on lonely island outposts, from Yarmouth to Cape North, from Seal Island to Bird Rock, from Amherst to Sydney, will be received here in this Filter Centre. They will be plotted on the large table you see before you. Reports from one post will be correlated with reports received from other posts. Within seconds, information will be displayed on this table which, when passed to Air Defence Control Centres to be tied in with reports from radar, will enable speedy defending fighter aircraft to wing their way at correct altitudes to a point of interception known to controlling officers and passed to the fighter pilots by means of high frequency radio. In the event of a war, a report received from a lonely Ground Observer Corps Observation Post could well be instrumental in saving an entire city from horrible destruction. Thousands of lives could be saved because a patriotic citizen of this Province has done his part in the Ground Observer Corps. It is not a front-line job, there is not much glory attached to it, but the contribution made is a vital one.

This Filter Centre is the focal point of our vast network of Ground Observer Corps Observation Posts in Nova Scotia. Its establishment and development to its present stage has been a long and arduous task. It is now ready to accept "Aircraft Flash Message" reports from our Observation Posts. The manner in which these reports are handled and the way in which the information is displayed will be demonstrated and explained to you in a simulated attack in a few moments.

I now declare Number 70 Ground Observer Corps Detachment Filter Centre, Truro, officially open and ready to assume its place in the Air Defence system protecting our country from attack.