

Royal Canadian Air Force

No 7 Ground Observer Corps

Unit

Newsletter #6



This is the Ground Observer
Corps Wing

Have you earned yours?

No. 7
Royal Canadian Air Force
Ground Observer Corps Unit

NEWSLETTER NO.6

Distribution of Newsletters

Since the first newsletter was produced by 7 Ground Observer Corps Unit for distribution to all civilian volunteers of the Corps in the Unit's area of responsibility our big problem has been distribution. We would like to mail one copy of the newsletter directly to all volunteers, Regional Supervisors, Chief Observers, Official Observers and so on. This is, however, impossible, first because our staff and facilities are not sufficient to mail the approximately 6,000 copies required in individual envelopes and second, because we have been unable to secure names and addresses of all Official Observers in spite of repeated attempts to accomplish this by having our Form 4 (List of Official Observers) forwarded regularly from each Post. We have tried with previous newsletters to accomplish full distribution to Chief Observers and Official Observers through Regional Supervisors with them advising 7 GOBC Unit of number of newsletters required to effect complete distribution to all Chief Observers and Official Observers in their areas, receiving this number from the Unit and forwarding them to Chief Observers in proper quantities to enable Chief Observer to pass one copy to each Official Observer. This system worked very well in the majority of Regional Areas but some Regional Supervisors were unable to find the time to make such distribution and were unable to advise 7 GOBC Unit of number of copies required. In isolated cases, Regional Supervisors were forwarded sufficient newsletters to make distribution to all volunteers in their area but did not forward these to Chief Observers, consequently, we have discovered that many volunteers did not receive previous newsletters and some volunteers have yet to see one.

This problem was discussed at some length at a 7 Ground Observer Corps Unit conference held recently and it was decided that 7 Ground Observer Corps Unit, Halifax would forward newsletters to Technical Advisers, Regional Supervisors and Chief Observers of isolated island lighthouse Posts. The Unit will also forward the newsletters directly to Chief Observers of Observation Posts located in Regional Areas of New Brunswick and the Gaspé Area of Quebec where organization of the area is not completed, that is, there are still Chief Observers to be recruited and Observation Post sites to be selected before the area is turned over to 71 Ground Observer Corps Detachment, Moncton for further organization and training. The Detachments at Truro and Moncton will forward newsletters to Chief Observers of all Observation Posts under their control including ships organized as mobile Observation Posts. The number of copies of the newsletter forwarded each Chief Observer both by 7 GOBC Unit and by the Detachments will be in accordance with the number of Official Observers listed on the GOC Form 4 submitted by the Chief Observer. Where husband and wife or other members of their family residing at one address are listed as Official Observers, one copy of the newsletter for such a group will be forwarded. In the case of Observation Posts, Chief Observers of which have not sent in a Form 4 (as is unfortunately true in the case of too many Posts) one copy only of newsletter will be forwarded together with a covering letter advising that one copy has been forwarded as the Unit or Detachment has no record of the number of Official Observers recruited and requesting the Chief Observer to forward a Form 4 and advise how many additional copies

of newsletter are required to make one available to each Observer. The Detachments will, of course, distribute the newsletter to their Filter Centre volunteers.

It is hoped that the new system of distributing newsletters as outlined above will work out more satisfactorily than the former system of attempting to have Regional Supervisors carry out distribution through their Regional Area. It will mean more work for us but the goal is to have each civilian volunteer of the Ground Observer Corps receive a copy of our newsletter.

A few copies of Newsletters No.4 and No.5 are still available. Should any civilian volunteer receiving this newsletter desire a copy of Newsletters 4 and 5, which contained much valuable information for volunteers, please advise through Chief Observer or Regional Supervisor to the Commanding Officer, No.7 RCAF Ground Observer Corps Unit, Halifax, Nova Scotia. The number of copies required will be forwarded as long as our present stock holds out.

A New Name For The Newsletter

7 Ground Observer Corps Unit newsletters have always been called just that and allotted numbers. We feel it is about time that we gave the newsletter a more glamorous name. The U.S. Air Force Ground Observer Corps magazine is called "The Aircraft Flash" and newsletters published by U.S. Air Force Filter Centres also have been given appropriate names. We would like any of our volunteers who have a creative turn of mind to forward us their suggestion for a name to be given to our newsletter. Such a name should attempt to describe something of the Ground Observer Corps and, if possible, reflect also the Maritime angle. Let's have your suggestions. Forward them either to Detachment Commanders in Truro or Moncton or directly to 7 Ground Observer Corps Unit. The volunteer submitting the name selected will be given credit in the next issue.

Ground Observer Corps Wings

In the last newsletter we reported that the GOBc Wings or Lapel Badges were available. The policy regarding requirements which must be met by volunteers before the Wings can be presented has now been issued. In the case of Regional Supervisors, those who have served 6 months or more, have shown an active interest in their duties and are fully trained in GOBc organization and procedures are now eligible to receive their Wings. The first of these will be presented to Regional Supervisors of Nova Scotia and P.E.I. at a Regional Supervisors Conference being held in Truro 20 and 21 March, about which, more later. In the case of Chief Observers and Official Observers, these volunteers must have attended original three-hour training lecture, must have stood watch at their Observation Post during an aerial exercise and must be able to answer a few simple questions designed to determine whether or not they have absorbed enough of the training lecture to enable them to properly pass Aircraft Flash Messages to the Filter Centre. Filter Centre volunteers must have completed 40 hours training in the Filter Centre, have filled a position on the Operations Room Team during an aerial exercise and be able to answer simple questions designed to determine if they have absorbed enough from their training to enable them to properly fill the position of Plotter in the Filter Centre.

Presentations of Wings will be made by GOBc officers or by other senior Air Force officers. These Wings will always be

presented with appropriate ceremony, in the case of Chief Observers and Official Observers in conjunction with training lectures or other meetings of all volunteers of an Observation Post. Such meetings will also be open to the general public.

Chief Observers are asked to note that one of the requirements for presentations of Wings to themselves and to their Official Observers is that they must have stood watch at their Observation Post during an exercise. We do not have adequate records to show which Chief Observers and Official Observers have actually stood watch during one of our two exercises to date, either "Operation Nova Watch" 24 June, 1953 or "Operation Blue-Spud" 13 December, 1953. All Chief Observers in Nova Scotia and P.E.I. are accordingly asked to notify Detachment Commander, 70 GOBc Detachment, 51½ Inglis Street, Truro, N.S. of names and addresses of all volunteers of their Posts who have to date actually stood watch during one of our two exercises. When this list is received by the Filter Centre in Truro, the Detachment Commander will make arrangements for an officer of the Detachment to proceed to the Post location for a training lecture or meeting and for testing of all qualified volunteers. During such a meeting successful volunteers will be presented with their Wings. It is up to the Chief Observer to send in his list so that he and his Official Observers can receive Wings.

"Operation Blue-Spud"

In our last newsletter some details of the second training exercise for Nova Scotia and the first for P.E.I. were given. This exercise termed, "Operation Blue-Spud" was scheduled for Sunday, 13 December between the hours of 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.

The exercise was held on schedule but not entirely according to original plans. Originally Observers were asked to report only formations of 2 aircraft as all Royal Canadian Air Force and Royal Canadian Navy aircraft taking part were scheduled to travel in pairs. Our first misfortune was that we were unable to secure the services of the Air Force aircraft scheduled to take part. The eight Lancaster aircraft which we expected to have were unexpectedly called away to participate in a search for a missing aircraft lost in Labrador. Search and rescue and saving of lives have priority so "Operation Blue-Spud" suffered. With only the Navy aircraft scheduled to take part, word was sent out to all Regional Supervisors to advise their Chief Observers that all aircraft whether singly or in pairs were to be reported. It is possible that this word did not get to all Chief Observers. Our second misfortune was the weather. Almost until the start of the exercise there was some doubt as to whether or not the weather would be suitable. However, about 7 o'clock Sunday morning the weather forecaster informed us that we had a very good chance of carrying on with the exercise. Because of the extensive arrangements which had been made we were very loath to cancel it. The weather was, however, rather marginal in most areas although in portions of Nova Scotia and P.E.I. it was clear with bright sunshine. Other areas had to contend with rain, fog and low clouds. The weather at Dartmouth Airport where most of the Navy aircraft taking part were based did not improve as rapidly as expected and the first of two sorties of aircraft from there was cancelled. The second sortie of aircraft was able to take off at approximately 3 o'clock in the afternoon and although all tracks laid down could not be covered most flights carried on as scheduled. Due to marginal weather conditions no flying was carried out after 5 p.m. Thus, although "Operation Blue-Spud" entailed activation of Observation Posts for a period of 8 hours the majority of the flying was done in a period of slightly over 2 hours and a great majority

of the Aircraft Flash Messages were received during this period.

During "Operation Blue-Spud" the Truro Filter Centre received a total of 647 Aircraft Flash Messages. The average time-delay of these calls was 1.83 minutes. Eleven tracks were definitely established from these reports but due to weather conditions several of these were followed for only short periods and then faded out. 165 reports were passed to radar during the exercise.

Although the number of aircraft flying during "Operation Blue-Spud" was much less than that scheduled and desired to give complete coverage and although the weather conditions left much to be desired the exercise in the main accomplished its purpose and proved once again that the Ground Observer Corps as established in Nova Scotia and for the first time it has been demonstrated in P.E.I., will accomplish the task for which it was organized. We realize that many of our Observation Posts which were faithfully manned during the entire 8 hours of the exercise did not see an aircraft and were unable to pass any reports to the Filter Centre. For this we are very sorry and we know that the Observers of such Posts were disappointed. However, we hope you will realize why this happened and that there was nothing we could do about it. During our next exercise, scheduled for sometime during the Spring, we hope to have enough aircraft to give all Posts a chance to pass reports and we hope the weatherman is more kind than during "Operation Blue-Spud." To the volunteers who manned their Posts during "Operation Blue-Spud" our sincere thanks and appreciation.

Mailing Of Aircraft Flash Messages

All Chief Observers have been instructed that Aircraft Flash Message Forms used during periods when their Post is activated are to be mailed to the Filter Centre immediately upon completion of the exercise. Although the majority of our Chief Observers cooperated very well in this after "Operation Blue-Spud", there were too many Posts which passed Aircraft Flash Messages and from which no copies of the form were received. During an exercise each Official Observer on duty is to use a separate Aircraft Flash Message Form. The time of each call is to be entered either in column 9 of the Form or in the margin if column 9 is used for recording information. At the bottom of the Form the Observer is to sign his name and enter the period for which he or she stood watch. Forms completed in this manner are then to be given to the Chief Observer who is to mail them directly to Detachment Commander. All volunteers are asked to remember this, that in future exercises ensure that their Aircraft Flash Message Forms are received promptly by the Filter Centre.

The Oldest Official Observer

A recent issue of the U.S. Air Force Ground Observer Corps magazine "The Aircraft Flash" contained an article about the oldest Ground Observer in the United States. He is Mr. Calvin W. Miller, an Observer at the Atlantic Highland, New Jersey Observation Post. Mr. Miller is 87 years of age. At about the time this appeared in "The Aircraft Flash", F/O D.L. Giggey of 70 GOB C Detachment in Truro reported that he had had the honour and privilege of signing up the oldest Official Observer in 7 Ground Observer Corps Unit and as far as he knew in all Canada. As it turned out, our candidate for the oldest Official Observer in Canada was older than the oldest Observer in the U.S. Ground Observer Corps. We now claim the honour of having the oldest Official Observer of any Ground Observer Corps formation in the world.

Dr. R.J. MacDonald of Observation Post NAN BAKER 22 BLACK, St. Peters, P.E.I., was born at Mount Stewart 16 May, 1858 - 95 years ago. He has been practising at St. Peters since 1888. The first baby he brought into the world is Mr. Jack Mackinnon of St. Peters who is 65 years of age.

Dr. MacDonald is still practising, but not quite as extensively as a few years back. He is very active and prominent in church affairs. He was created a Knight of St. Gregory by Pope Pius XII just recently..

The U.S. Air Force Aircraft Flash Magazine will be carrying an article with a photograph of Dr. MacDonald at an early date and RCAF Air Defence Command Headquarters is planning a nation wide press release about him which should appear in most newspapers in Canada as soon as arrangements can be made to have a RCAF photographer take a picture of Dr. MacDonald.

Congratulations Dr. MacDonald of Observation Post NAN BAKER 22 BLACK, St. Peters, P.E.I. May your membership in the Ground Observer Corps be a long and pleasant one. We are very proud to consider you a member of the Air Defence Team protecting Canada against enemy attack.

Training Course For Regional Supervisors

An important key to successful organization and operation of the Ground Observer Corps is the Regional Supervisor. An efficient Regional Supervisor with a good understanding of GOBC organization and procedures and keenly interested in his duties will have an efficient Regional Area. As Regional Supervisors must have a wide knowledge of all aspects of Ground Observer Corps operations it has been decided to conduct short courses to train Regional Supervisors more fully than has been possible in the past. The first meeting involving all Regional Supervisors in Nova Scotia and P.E.I. will be held in the Truro Filter Centre, 20 and 21 March. Letters have been forwarded to all Regional Supervisors in Nova Scotia and P.E.I. advising them of the meeting and urging their attendance. The response to date has been gratifying with the majority of our Regional Supervisors writing to Commanding Officer, 7 GOBC Unit to advise that they will be in attendance. Regional Supervisors who have not as yet replied signifying their intention to attend are urged to do so at their earliest convenience and are asked to make every effort to be present. All those who attend are assured that knowledge gained will be worth the effort they put forth to come.

During the meeting, qualified Regional Supervisors will be presented with Ground Observer Corps Wings.

A rather humorous aspect of the Regional Supervisors meeting developed Saturday, 20 February when two of our Regional Supervisors arrived at the Filter Centre in Truro for the meetings. They had mis-read the letter asking that they attend the meetings of Saturday, 20 March and Sunday 21 March. As February has 28 days, 20 and 21 February are also Saturday and Sunday. We regret the inconvenience these two Supervisors were caused by making the trip to Truro in vain and we sincerely hope that it will not influence their decision to attend and that we can look forward to meeting them on 20 March.

A meeting of Regional Supervisors of New Brunswick and the Gaspé Area of Quebec will be held in the Moncton Filter Centre when it becomes operational, sometime before the summer.

New Regional Supervisors

In our last newsletter we listed all of the Regional Supervisors appointed in Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and New Brunswick. Since that date there have been two changes where Regional Supervisors were unable to carry on and found it necessary to resign. New Regional Supervisors have been appointed in both cases. The first is Regional Area T6 of Nova Scotia, where the new Regional Supervisor is Mr. Lloyd C. Ripley, River Philip, N.S. The second is in New Brunswick in Regional Area M25, where the new Regional Supervisor is Mr. L. MacMillan Halladay of Black's Harbour, N.B. Welcome to both of you and every success in organization of your Regional Areas.

Honour Roll Observation Posts

From time to time in the past we have made special mention of certain Observation Posts where the organization, facilities provided and spirit displayed are above average. We feel now that the time is appropriate to start an "Honour Roll" of Observation Posts mentioning in each newsletter some detail of Posts efficiently organized and above average. Five such Posts are mentioned in the following paragraphs. These are not the only Posts worthy of mention by any means and in future newsletters we will be telling you about other Posts. Chief Observers who feel that their Post is above average in number of volunteers, efficiency, quarters provided for the Post or for any other reason are urged to write Detachment Commander in Truro for Posts in Nova Scotia and P.E.I. and in Moncton, 10 Alma Street for Posts in New Brunswick and the Gaspé Area of Quebec. Give details of the Post, of the volunteers and any other items of interest and we will be glad to mention Posts in Newsletter. Here are our selections for this issue:

Queen Able 25 Black

Introducing Observation Post Queen Able 25 Black in Cape Breton Island. Here a group of North America's original citizens stand ready to help guard their country from enemy air attack.

On the Indian Reservation at Eskasoni, in Cape Breton Island, Area T-12, a group of Indians form its Observation Post under the guidance of Chief Observer, J.D. MacPherson, who is also the Indian Agent at Eskasoni. This Post has participated in both Operation "Nova Watch" and Operation "Blue-Spud". Chief Observer Joe MacPherson holds special classes to teach the Indians how to spot the "Iron Birds" and using the Telephone. The roster includes Chief Julian of the Mic Mac Tribe.

Love Queen 22 Black

Meet Observation Post Love Queen 22 Black at Hebbville, near Bridgewater, in Area T-16.

Mr. Fred Hebb, who is a former member of the Aircraft Detection Corps, is the Chief Observer and holds special classes in his home from time to time to keep his Observers up to date on GOBC procedures. The Observation Post is situated outside Mr. Hebb's farm house. An extension 'phone has been hooked up and the Orientation Card has been painted in a cement walk by the Post.

This Post recently initiated four Aircraft Flash Message calls to the Truro Filter Centre, reporting a Lancaster Bomber that was circling the town of Bridgewater at 250 feet. This information was passed to other units of the Air Defence System and it was found that the Lancaster was from Greenwood Air Base and was circling the Radio Tower at Bridgewater prior to a Range let down at Greenwood when the traffic thinned out.

Our congratulations to Chief Observer Hebb and his Observers for their alert attitude.

Love Baker 44 Red

This Post was recently organized in Prince Edward Island and took part in Operation "Blue-Spud." Although it was a miserable, rainy day, members of this Post stayed on duty throughout the exercise and made a number of Aircraft Flash calls to Truro.

Mr. J.B. MacKay, Chief Observer of the Post has gathered together a mixture of World War I and II vets and High School boys and girls. A duty roster has been drawn up and Mr. MacKay has arranged special classes for further training. The Observers of this Post are looking forward to the next exercise. Their slogan is "Keep Them Flying, Truro."

Because of the speed in which this Observation Post has developed since it was formed three months ago and the efficient manner in which it is run, it has been included here. Coleman is a small village in P.E. Island.

Queen Able 15 Black

Observation Post Queen Able 15 Black, at Iona in Cape Breton Island must not be forgotten when making an Honour Roll of Observation Posts. It has been mentioned in previous Newsletters.

This Post has as its Chief Observer Captain Donald Campbell, who operates the ferry between Grand Narrows and Iona. Some fifty-three Observers make up the compliment of Queen Able 15 Black, besides having a number of junior Observers below the age of 15, who take training instruction with the regular Observers. Captain Campbell and his Observers have taken part in the last two exercises to date.

Because this Observation Post has the interests of the GOBC at heart, and has initiated social evenings to keep interest at a high degree when no exercises are planned, it has been included in the Honour Roll. This Observation Post is one of the top Posts in Canada, mainly because of Captain

Campbell and his assistant, Mr. Jack MacNeil, and the patriotic members who have volunteered to devote their time to defence of their country.

Love Able 40 Red

Observation Post Love Able 40 Red, Hantsport, N.S. is an example of co-operation between the services. Sub/Lieut. Joseph B. Bourne (RCSC) is the Chief Observer of this Post and he is also the Commanding Officer of the Hantsport Sea Cadet Sqn. Sub/Lieut. Bourne has members of his Sea Cadet Unit acting as Official Observers and although there might be a tendency for the boys to slip in the odd nautical term when making Aircraft Flash reports, they have proven to be excellent Observers. Happy landings, er-excuse please, smooth sailing boys.

In our next issue we hope to include some Observation Posts from New Brunswick and Québec in our Honour Roll. Training in those areas is just getting underway and no Posts have as yet been given a chance to prove themselves exceptional.

An Observation Post From the State Of Maine, U.S.A.

S/L S.R. Miller, Commanding Officer, No.7 Ground Observer Corps Unit accompanied by F/O G.M. Gillespie, Detachment Commander of No.70 GOB Detachment, Truro and F/O J.M. Lutes, Detachment Commander, No.71 GOB Detachment, Moncton recently paid a visit to the U.S. Air Force Ground Observer Corps Filter Centre, Bangor, Maine. New Brunswick area, Observation Posts of which will report to the Moncton Filter Centre, borders the area of responsibility of the Bangor Filter Centre and the two Filter Centres will be working in close co-operation when Moncton becomes operational.

In addition to the visit to the Bangor Filter Centre the three Canadian officers mentioned above paid a visit to an Observation Post at Bucksport, Maine. This Observation Post has the code name of GOLF QUEBEC 13 BLACK (the U.S. Ground Observer Corps uses a different phonetic alphabet than we do) - we would call this Post GEORGE QUEEN 13 BLACK. The Post is a wonderful example of what can be accomplished when the citizens of a small community are firmly behind the Ground Observer Corps and willing to do their bit in air defence. Although Bucksport is a small town the Post has 400 active volunteers. The Post is located on a small hill. Observers keep watch from a tower with good sized shelter surrounded by a walk and railing. The shelter consists of one room with four large windows, electrically heated and lighted and equipped with furniture, hotplate, coffee pot, telephone, etc. The tower was built and furnished through the efforts of the volunteers with no money being supplied from military sources. The Post is on 24-hour watch, 7 days per week with from 2 to 5 Observers on duty at all times. During the visit the Canadian officers had an opportunity to talk to two ladies on watch. They stated that they were proud to be members of the Ground Observer Corps and very happy to devote their 2 hours per week to air defence against possible enemy attack. They did not consider their contribution arduous. Many volunteers of this Post live several miles from the Post and all are glad to proceed to the

Post location at their own expense at any hour of the day or night and in all types of weather. The Canadian officers were most impressed with the spirit of this Post and felt that although we do not as yet have a comparable Post, such a spirit also exists in Canada as evidenced in part by the outline of the five Observation Posts given above.

Regular Visits to Regional Supervisors, Chief Observers and Official Observers

It has always been Ground Observer Corps policy to pay personal visits to Regional Supervisors and Chief Observers as frequently as possible and to give follow-up and refresher lectures to Official Observers of Observation Posts as often as arrangements can be made. In the past due to shortages of staff and the large volume of work to be carried out visits have not been made as frequently as they should have been. This subject was discussed at a recent conference and a definite policy regarding field visits by GOBC officers was agreed upon. The goal for which we are now shooting is as follows:

- (a) All Regional Supervisors are to be visited by a GOBC officer at least once every 2 months. During such visits problems in organization are to be discussed, procedures explained and arrangements made for training visits to new Observation Posts, replacements of Chief Observers, change of Post location, etc.
- (b) All Chief Observers are to be visited by a GOBC officer at least once every 3 months. During such visits Chief Observers are to be checked to ensure they are following proper procedures, that they have recruited all possible volunteers, that they are well aware of procedures, that they are forwarding Form 4 to Detachments and that they are distributing newsletters to their volunteers. At the same time arrangements can be made for additional training lectures if these are required.
- (c) All volunteers of every Observation Post are to have a training lecture at least once every 6 months to refresh their minds regarding procedures, train new volunteers, etc.

It may not be possible to carry out visits and give lectures quite as frequently as outlined in the above paragraphs, however, the policy is included here so that all volunteers will know what we are trying to accomplish and will be prepared for such visits and for additional lectures.

Recruiting of Official Observers

Many of our Chief Observers have reported that they have encountered difficulty in recruiting a sufficient number of Official Observers. To assist in overcoming this problem, large posters have now been prepared for display throughout a community where a GOBC officer is scheduled to give a lecture or conduct a meeting. These posters will be forwarded to Chief Observers of Observation Posts prior to meetings or lectures where a GOBC officer will attend. The posters advertise the lecture and the fact that a motion picture film will be shown and invites

attendance of all members of the community. Lectures or talks given by Ground Observer Corps officers will be made as interesting as possible and will be designed to convince those in attendance that they should offer their services to the Ground Observer Corps. If the Chief Observers receiving the posters ensure that they are prominently displayed, a good turnout at meetings should result and from then on it will be up to the Air Force to convince those present that they can and should contribute a small amount of their time to assisting the RCAF in a vital problem of air defence of Canada. The posters will be available within a week and Detachment Commanders will be forwarding several to each Chief Observer prior to lectures or meetings where a Detachment officer will be present.

News From The Filter Centres

As outlined in Newsletter No.5 our two Filter Centres in Truro and Moncton submit for each newsletter items from their point of view. Following are the contribution this time from both Truro and Moncton:

70 GOBC Detachment Filter Centre, Truro

Since Newsletter No.5 went to press the Truro Filter Centre volunteers have organized two social affairs which turned out to be very successful. Attendance could have been larger at both but those who attended made up in enthusiasm what they lacked in numbers.

The first of these took place on the 17th of December and was designated as the official Christmas party. It was realized that many volunteers could not possibly be here such a short time before the holiday but "Operation Blue-Spud" on the 13th prevented arrangements for an earlier date. At any rate the affair took on a gala air as it started out in the form of a turkey dinner at which the Detachment Commander thanked those in attendance and reminded them that the Filter Centre was still far from being fully staffed. He urged them to sell the GOBC to their friends and build up the Filter Centre staff to full strength. Following this, the lounge, which had been beautifully decorated for the occasion, was converted into a party room. Rugs had been removed and a record player provided music for dancing. Games were then introduced and amid much advice and laughter people tried to find on which end of the donkey the tail should be attached. Sad to relate, a few competitors oriented themselves by feeling the edge of the bulletin board to which the "critter" had been pinned. Later the Detachment Commander played Santa Claus by distributing gifts from what must have been the second largest tree in Truro (the largest being that on the lawn in front of the Academy and sponsored by the town.) These presents had been contributed by those who attended and were strictly limited in price. Originality was the keynote and much fun was experienced while gifts were opened. The night ended with ice cream and cake.

The second event was the result of the big storm of the winter. Truro was snowed under and a sleigh ride which had been discussed for some time suddenly became a reality. A sleigh loaded with straw was chartered - beans were in the oven - and a huge carton of strictly fresh brown bread put in an appearance. It looked like enough food for the whole Air Force. But did you ever see people eat after a noisy ride in zero weather? The rush to the kitchen turned into a stampede and, from comments and observation it can truthfully be said that no meal was more appreciated. Those who didn't show up missed a wonderful evening.

It was well past midnight before the last people departed. It was well that the planners were foresighted. Within a few hours the temperature had risen; rain was falling; and all that white stuff was going fast. Many thanks are due to "Dot" Moore and all those who worked with her for grasping an opportunity when it presented itself.

Recovery from the holiday season has been fairly slow. Classes are once more being held on four nights a week with new faces appearing fairly regularly. The newcomers are being prepared for Operations Room work as quickly as they can be put through, depending mostly on when they can be available. The service staff, as usual, is prepared to be on hand whenever they are required but exchange commitments with 21 AC & W Squadron, which have been in effect since 4 January, have helped to keep the number of personal to a minimum. At this writing, three officers, F/O G.M. Gillespie, F/O J.H. Waugh and F/O D.L. Giggey have each completed a two-week tour at the radar station with F/O W.E. Whitford completing his tour on 6 March. On his return, F/O G.R. Lees will be departing for his visit. F/O Lees is a newcomer to GOB operations. He is a native of Ontario who saw Nova Scotia very briefly when he was on his way overseas during the war. He is a very welcome addition to the staff of Truro Filter Centre and will be a big help in both Filter Centre and Field training.

With training and organization laid on as it is right now, the staff will have its hands full keeping schedules, and the fullest co-operation is requested from all volunteers. A real effort will be made during the coming months to contact as many field personnel as possible. This can only be done if Chief Observers and Official Observers will do their best to keep appointments. It is realized that individual problems will sometimes prevent 100% attendance at any class or lecture but you are urgently requested to do your very best to help out. Any personal effort will be more than appreciated.

Colonel C.A. Good, Regional Supervisor of Area T-3, visited the Filter Centre on 29 January. He reported that during his visit to Col. Good's area last fall, F/O Whitford had done a "marvelous job". Those were the Colonel's exact words and it is the kind of remark that those engaged in field training like to hear. We all try hard and any words of praise are very acceptable. F/O Gillespie would welcome Regional Supervisor's comments on the performance of the Filter Centre staff and any such statement as that mentioned makes the person referred to feel that the effort has been worth while. Do not think that only praise should be given. Should grounds for criticism exist, this also should be reported. Constructive criticism will help in correcting faults which may not have been noticed.

Chief Observers are urged to note the following statement which appeared in a recent issue of "The Aircraft Flash", Official U.S.A.F. GOC magazine, and not make the same mistake.--

"At a certain filter centre, the following call came in: "Aircraft Flash: 63 multimotors - 129 bi's - 46 unknowns" --by this time the plotter was about to push the panic button, thinking an actual attack on the U.S.A. was in progress.

The military took over the call and, after much sweat, finally ascertained that the observer had very conscientiously observed the skies, logged all airplanes and

called them in once a month.

71 GOBc Detachment Filter Centre, Moncton

Filter Centre The long, slow process of establishing a new Filter Centre in Moncton is nearly over. Officers and staff of 71 GOBc Detachment moved into their new quarters March 3rd. They are very proud of their accommodation. The rooms are attractively decorated and laid out in a fashion which will lend to efficiency when Civilian Volunteers are trained for Filter Centre work. The Lounsbury Company, owners of the building, have employed the latest in colour engineering. The contrast in floor coverings and wall colour schemes lend an attractive and eye-catching spectacle. It is hoped that in the months to come, every Official Observer will have an opportunity to drop in and see exactly how a Filter Centre operates.

The Operations Room contract has not as yet been awarded. This is a Department of Public Works matter, and as near as is known at the time this goes to Press, it is expected that the contract will be awarded sometime within the next two weeks. Once the assignment is given to a local contractor, the construction should not take too long. Our Operations table is nearing completion, and the N.B. Telephone Company have already commenced to bring in their huge cables and begin the complicated task of setting up the intricate wiring system. With no further set-backs, we see no reason why the Filter Centre will not be completely ready and officially opened in June. We give that as an outside date, hoping that we might be able to advance it considerably. However, when it is ready, remember, that it is your right, as an Official Observer to drop in at any time, show your Identification Card and any staff member will be more than pleased to show you through the building.

Field Organization The work of the officers in the field never ceases. Each week, new Posts are visited and approved and we are steadily climbing toward our ultimate objective. Weather during the months of January and February has been something of a barrier in that it has made it difficult to visit and approve Posts on secondary roads. Many of them have been next to impassable for long periods of time. However, it is possible to see the end in sight and even now, plans are being made for the commencement of training during March. Those lectures and training films which you have been looking forward to, will be arriving sooner than you think. We realize you have been very patient and that the wait has been somewhat lengthy. But the work of "basic organization" has been tremendous, and while we have not seen some of the Chief Observers as often as we would have liked, nevertheless we feel that once all Posts are trained, regular visits will follow and regular lectures, on subjects which we know will be of interest to each and everyone of you, will be given. Meanwhile, our officers keep reporting the warm receptions which they are accorded in all New Brunswick areas. This makes the work pleasant and future visits are always looked forward to with keen anticipation.

Newsy Notes We have always considered that the Ground Observer Corps Officer in the Field must be a "jack of all trades." He should be qualified first of all as a mechanic and car-operator; he must be a lecturer and a film projectionist; he must be a diplomat; he must be an administrator and a thousand and one things. Our Flying Officer Frank Little has qualified for all of these and now he has one more to add to the list. During that heavy January snowfall and subsequent cold snap, Frank was selling his wares up along the Shippegan coast. There are, undoubtedly, warmer places.

However, Regional Supervisor Reg Burbridge at Lower Caraquet, wasn't the least concerned as he saw the snow pile drift upon drift around Little's brand new '53 Ford. He only lives there, so he knew just about how many days should elapse between the storm and the appearance of the snow plow. If it was a bad storm, and it was necessary to get out in a hurry, Reg simply phoned the plow - and the genial government worker would barge his way in and Reg would barge his way out. Little had an awful yen to get out of there. So he lifted the phone - and the line was dead. No question about it - the line was down. The storm had ceased and that 20 below cold snap had settled well in. Undaunted, Flying Officer Little bundled up warm and started out on a two mile hike to find the break and repair it. He knew as much about that as we do about the migrating habits of the African ant-eater. It wasn't easy. He found the break, and with a piece of spare wire and Herculean strength pulled the broken members together and spliced the line--result--phone was connected and the plow was in - Little was out - quickly. He had one small problem. After repairing the line, he had to walk the two miles back with a strong twenty below zero wind at his back. Little drove his car out stand up.....

Did you ever wonder what type of shoe the early Canadian settlers wore when they first arrived in New Brunswick? Or did you ever see the pitch-fork which loaded the first hay in this Province back in 1600? What do you know about old Indian arrowheads, money, kitchen utensils, plows, hats, shoes and a thousand items which are today museum pieces. Many a museum would pay plenty for the rare items which Harvey R. Duplessis has tucked away in his huge house and barn. Jig Able O5 Red at Mouth of Keswick will probably try to get the first Aircraft Flash call in during our trial exercise for no other reason than to keep the Aircraft Flash sheet. In years to come, he will point out that it was on this form that the first Ground Observer Corps call in the Province of New Brunswick was made from his particular post. One of our Officers spent most of an entire day at that post viewing the thousands upon thousands of oddities and rare specimens in the collection of items used in centuries past. This is only a hobby - Harvey has a huge farm which takes plenty of his time, but with all of this, he still finds time to help the Ground Observer Corps and keep an active post spotting aircraft.

We have noted with pride that Russell Bishop, our Regional Supervisor up Chipman way is the new Legion prexy for the Chipman Branch. Congratulations Russell!

A few miles beyond a little place called Letete, about 15 miles from St. George, Mrs. Kathleen Holmes looks after her three handsome sons and a delightful little daughter. Her husband is a fisherman and his work takes him away for periods of time that often run into a week or so. Mrs. Holmes has plenty to do with a healthy family like that. But she's an ex-CWAC - one of a large family of service men and women, and could readily see the need for an Air Defence System like the Ground Observer Corps. She is now recruiting Official Observers and in short order, she will have her post ready for training.

There are so many interesting and delightful people in New Brunswick, that we could fill a book on this province alone. From time to time, we'll introduce you to a few of them. Maybe you'll know them or maybe sometime in the future you'll get to know each other. Who knows? Next issue, we hope to have bigger and better news on our work.

No.7 RCAF Ground Observer Corps Unit
Halifax, Nova Scotia.

5 March, 1954.

Canadian RCAF No7 Ground
Observer Corps Unit Newsletter 6

\$15 NW