

# Newsletter



Photo credit: Sea Island Heritage Society per Doug Eastman

## WHAT'S NEW

### REMEMBERING

Remembering wartime and its veterans is especially important given events in the world today. While this issue focuses on those on Sea Island who were part of the war effort during WWII, we remember all who bring peace to the world.

### SIHS MEMBERSHIP

Join us in sharing Sea Island's Heritage by becoming a member. Receive quarterly newsletters, notices about the next reunion, and connect at Coffee Chats and other social events.

2023 membership fees are due in December. More information at end of the newsletter.

### COFFEE CHATS AND WWII

Join us November 17 to learn about workers at the Boeing Canada Plant and others who had wartime roles on Sea Island. And on January 19, learn about the airport's expansions and expropriations over decades of change in the field of aviation. See Coffee Chat information this issue.

*"Sea Island is located within the traditional territory of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-waututh Peoples."*

## President's Message

*"A life not documented is a life that within a generation or two will largely be lost to memory."*



We hope you enjoy this issue of our Newsletter with the focus on "remembering" and "military." Sea Island became home to so many returning World War II veterans, including the RCAF base that figured prominently in our lives during the 1950-60's. Sea Island was also involved in the war effort with the establishment of the Boeing factory in the early 1940's. And many of the first residents of Burkeville were Boeing workers and their families.

As our statement at the top of this page says, "a life not documented is a life that within a generation or two will be lost to memory". The Sea Island Heritage Society feels strongly that it is important to write our family's histories so that their lives will not be lost. Perhaps this sounds daunting, and you don't know where to start - no problem, just let us know, and we will be happy to help you.

We would also like to thank those of you who visit our Facebook page. Some great memories, and photos shared. Mark your calendars for our November Zoom Coffee Chat on Thursday, November 17<sup>th</sup>. More information in the Newsletter.

I'd also like to congratulate Vicky Brkich on completing her collection of memorabilia titled, *"The Lacrosse Girls of Summers Past: A Scrapbook History of Girls and Women's Box Lacrosse in Richmond from 1972-1982"*. Lacrosse wasn't a sport I was familiar with, but there were several Sea Island girls who played the sport and are included in this project.

There are many ways for you to get involved with the Sea Island Heritage Society. We invite everyone interested in Sea Island's heritage to join the Society ([seaislandhome.org](http://seaislandhome.org)). Become a member and support our work collecting, preserving, and sharing Sea Island's past. Membership fees are due annually in December for the following year. Our annual membership fee for 2023 is \$15 per person. We are excited to offer for the first time a **lifetime membership for \$100**. To join, renew or donate to the Sea Island Heritage Society, see details at the end of this newsletter. Your support is appreciated by all of us at SIHS.

*Eunice Hamalock Robinson*

President

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### COFFEE CHATS



Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month, up to and including June, from 10 a.m. to noon - on Zoom. Some in-person meetings may be scheduled at the Sea Island Community Centre.

Join us for the next Zoom Coffee Chat on Thursday, November 17, 2022 as we remember the war time effort on Sea Island.

The December Coffee Chat is about the people behind the names of roads on Sea Island.

Contact Marylin for the Zoom link at [seaisland20@gmail.com](mailto:seaisland20@gmail.com).

## REMEMBERING VETERANS

Howard Robert Samuel Meneice (1918-2006) and Maria Agatha Cornelia Borst (1923-1995)

By Marion Menzies (nee Meneice); Photos courtesy of the Meneice Family Collection

My Dad, Howard Robert Samuel Meneice, was born in Collingwood, Ontario but raised in Armstrong, BC. His dad passed away when he was 12 and because Dad was the eldest of five children, he had to go to work to help support his family. Dad got his certificate to enter high school however this was not to be because of the family situation. Instead, he went to work on Campbell's farm in Revelstoke. This is where he enlisted in the 3rd division of the Canadian army on March 27th, 1941.

Dad was posted to the RCEME (Royal Canadian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers). Prior to enlisting Dad was enrolled in a correspondence course on mechanics. It was because of this experience he was posted to RCEME where he eventually became a Sergeant.



Sergeant Howard Robert Samuel Meneice of the Royal Canadian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (RCEME)



Hat pin of the RCEME

After Dad enlisted, he was sent to Vancouver Island where the troops trained in various locations. While he was there, he and other members of his unit acted as extras in the movie "Commando Strikes at Dawn" starring Paul Muni and Lillian Gish.



Howard Meneice in the movie "Commando Strikes at Dawn".



Also served as a driver in the movie.



Howard Meneice - Tank Corp,  
centre at bottom

In 1942 his unit departed for England. His troop ship disembarked at Greenock, Scotland and then they travelled by train to Aldershot, in Southern England where they continued their training. On June 7, 1944, they left England from South Hampton and arrived on the Normandy Beach later that day. Dad was in Normandy for the second day of the "D" Day invasion. During the war the troops worked their way through France, Belgium, and Holland and on to Germany.



In 1945, Dad was at Queenston Barracks at Bad Zwischenahn near Oldenburg, Germany. He remained here for a year as part of the army occupation. Many German soldiers surrendered there.



Howard Meneice in uniform.



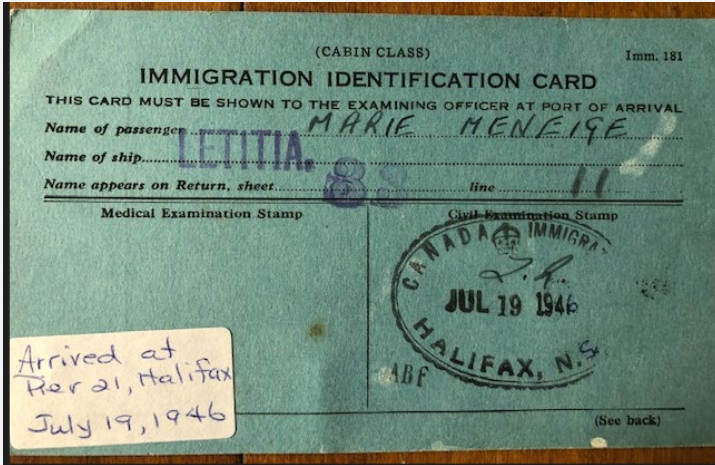
Cfn. Lupasko and Sgt. Meneice discuss a knotty problem in jeep maintenance.

Mom, Maria "Marie" Agatha Cornelia Borst, grew up in Apeldoorn, Holland. Mom and Dad met in Tilburg where Mom was working at her sister and brother-in-law's restaurant. A Canadian officer had acquired a German car and was being transferred back to Canada so he could not take the car with him. He had admired Dad's German pistol and a trade was arranged. Dad was then able to travel back and forth from Germany to visit Mom in Holland.



Marie and Howard Meneice on their wedding day.

Maria Agatha Cornelia Borst and Howard Robert Samuel Meneice were married in Tilburg, Holland on January 15, 1946. Maria took the ship *Letitia* to Pier 21 in Halifax and then travelled by train across Canada to Vancouver.....doing this while she was pregnant with me.



Immigration Identification Card for Marie Meneice stamped on July 19, 1946.



T.S.S. "Letitia" ship

They lived in the old Vancouver Hotel until they moved to 137 Myron Drive on Sea Island in early 1947.



Marie Meneice at the Hotel Vancouver.



The Meneice house at 137 Myron Drive, in the Cora Brown subdivision on Sea Island.

Dad was discharged on July 3rd, 1946. Rumour has it that they moved to a Veterans Land Act subdivision on Sea Island because my Aunt Rhoda\* and Uncle Henry Buckingham had lived on Sea Island.



Our family house was at 137 Myron Drive in Cora Brown. Mom had four more children – Sandy, Yvonne, Bob, and Bev, having all five of us within six years. What a busy time for her as she was also learning a new language in her new home country, Canada.

\*Aunt Rhoda was my grandmother's sister. She and Uncle Henry lived on Sea Island where the current Pacific Gateway Hotel at Vancouver Airport is located now. They were more like our grandparents.

## Fred Hollingshead

by Brian Hollingshead



Fred, with Brian and his grandfather, during a visit to Calgary. Hollingshead Family Photo Collection.

My dad, Fred Hollingshead, joined the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) Special Reserve in 1943.

Following is the text of his welcome into the service.

During the war, my father was stationed at RCAF Station Jericho Beach (Western Air Command) as an air traffic controller. His rank was described as 'Pilot Officer'. Far as I know, he was never a pilot, but that was the rank given to the RCAF air traffic controllers.

At the time, my mother, Pearl (Ina) Hollingshead, my maternal grandfather, and I lived in Calgary, where my dad visited us from time to time. I can't say what if any effect his absence through those years had on my own life. Maybe the fact that I was an only kid, which I'm told is 'a thing' in and of itself.

In 1946, we moved to White Rock where we rented a cottage for six months before coming to Sea Island. Dad was still stationed at Jericho during that time. We then purchased a home at 39 Catalina Crescent in Burkeville upon resumption of civilian life as a family. My father transferred to the Department of Transport (DOT), becoming a civilian air traffic controller at the Vancouver International Airport (YVR). There, four or five of his RCAF colleagues became the backbone of YVR Air Traffic Control, first operating out of a

*George the Sixth, by the Grace of God, of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas, King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India, Vc*

*To Our Trusty and well- beloved Frederick Norman Hollingshead, Greetings.*

*We, reposing especial Trust and Confidence in your Loyalty, Courage and good Conduct, do by these Presents Constitute and Appoint you to be an Officer in Our **Active Air Force** of our Dominion of Canada from the **Thirteenth** day of **December 1943**. You are therefore carefully and diligently to discharge your Duty as such in the Rank of **Pilot Officer** or in such other Rank as We may from time to time hereafter be pleased to promote or appoint you to of which a notification will be made in the Canada Gazette, or in such other manner as may for the time being be presented by Us in Council, and you are in such manner and on such occasions as may be prescribed by Us to exercise and well discipline, both the inferior Officers, and other ranks serving under you and use your best endeavours to keep them in good Order and Discipline. And We do hereby Command them to Obey you as their superior Officer and you to observe and follow such Orders and Directions as from time to time you shall receive from us, or any superior Officer according to the Rules and Discipline of Ward, in pursuance of the Trust hereby reposed in you.*

*In witness Whereof Our Governor General of Our Dominion of Canada hath hereto set his hand and Seal at our Government House in the City of Ottawa this **Third** day of **January** in the Year of our Lord, One Thousand Nine Hundred and **Forty-four** and in the **Eighth** Year of Our Reign.*

*By Command of His Excellency The Governor General*

Pilot Officer Frederick Norman Hollingshead

Royal Canadian Air Force

Special Reserve

loft in the old Trans-Canada Airlines (TCA) hangar. They then moved to the top floor of a DOT building that also housed the Meteorological Department.

My dad didn't talk about what he did in the war. It was like a sealed chapter.

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## James William Hamalock (1917-2011) and Bessie Irene Williams (1920-2005)

By Eunice Robinson (Hamalock). Photos courtesy of the Hamalock Family Collection.

James 'Jim' William Hamalock was born in Shoal Lake, Manitoba. His mother passed away in 1931, and with his father unable to care for the children, placed in the care of the Children's Aid Society. He was fortunate to find a good foster home with the Ferguson family. In 1937, the family moved from Minto, Manitoba to farm in Springwater, Saskatchewan.

Soon the Ferguson family and Jim became part of the Springwater community. He also picked up a lot of skills for making things out of nothing. He was very innovative. He was the electrician for many of the community amateur productions.



### Jim and Ferguson's dog Laddie

About 1942, Jim and a friend, Charlie Hammond, drove to Vancouver in Jim's Chevrolet car. He first worked at Burrard Dry Dock on the bull gang as a carpenter's helper. Later, he took welding courses and became a journeyman welder.

Jim planned to enlist in the Army, but just before he did so, he and Bessie married on March 26, 1943, at Mrs. Johnston's boarding house.

Jim enlisted in the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) Army at the #11 District Depot, Little Mountain Barrack, Queen Elizabeth Park, Vancouver, BC.

Jim did his basic training (March, April, and May) in Vernon, BC, his advance training in Calgary, Alberta (June, July & August), his signal training in Barryfield, Kingston, Ontario (September & October), his field training in Debert, Nova Scotia, then on furlough to Truro, Nova Scotia before shipping overseas.



Bess and Jim Hamalock's wedding photo

#### Jim in uniform - basic training

Jim sailed on the *Isle de France* when his regiment was sent to Britain in 1944, landing in Greenock, Scotland. The voyage was rough, ensuring Jim's long-enduring avoidance of boats. His regiment was first based at Aldershot, England in December 1944, January, and



February 1945. They were then on ground patrol of the empty houses around Brighton during the Battle of Dunkirk, as well as Dover and Folkstone.

Bessie moved around a lot while Jim was overseas, staying with her parents and her sisters, helping out with the farm work - running binders and other equipment, or babysitting nieces and nephews.

Jim and Bessie exchanged many letters during these years. In one letter, Jim described his meeting with his brother Adam who served with the Fort Garry Horse Tank Corp. Jim and Adam had a very brief meeting in France, and soon parted to their respective jobs. In August 1944, while Bessie was living with her sister in Lipton, Saskatchewan, she received a telegram advising of Trooper Adam Michael Hamalock's death.

June 6, 1944, marshaled in Plymouth, England boarding for the Invasion of Europe, landing on Juno Beach at 6:30 am. Jim was part of the action of "D" Day and fought at Caen, with his signal corps (S.D.G. - Stormont Dundas Glengarry Highlanders) coming in after the Saskatchewan Rifles as part of the BEF (British Expeditionary Force) as the regimental signaler.

August 4, 1944, while in Utrecht, Holland, sent to England to hospital to recover from jaundice. Later spent the winter in hospital in Nijmegen, Holland for mumps.

Jim recalls that they were to guard the Leopold Canal from the Germans. Another story Jim relates is as he and other members of the signal corps were walking along a road at night, Jim notices a lot of tiny bright lights. Being a country boy, he thought they were fireflies and remarked to his companions. One of the fellows grabbed his arm and dragged him to the ground. These weren't fireflies, but heat-seeking bullets.



Taken January 12, 1945 - somewhere in Holland - MacMurray (our stretcher bearer), Sgt. Halliday (better known as "Slim"), Jack Forbes (our carrier driver) & Jim Hamalock (better known as Hammy) atop a Universal Carrier.



Jim on the left with his army buddies.

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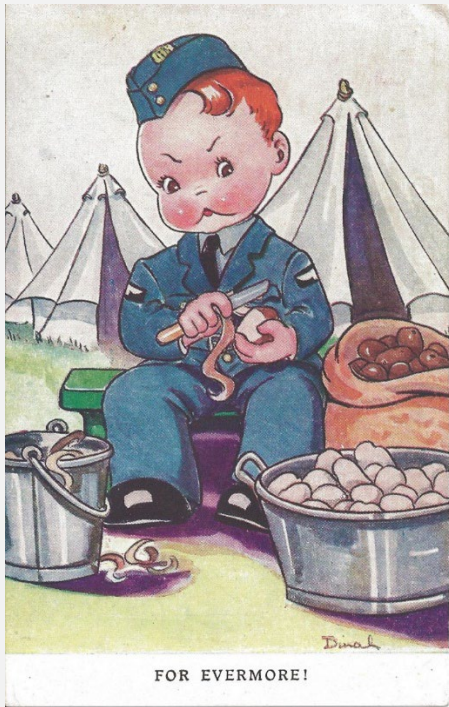
Jim with Andy Morrith (company signaler & comrade) in Ghent, May 1, 1945.

Jim grew a mustache in-order-to make himself look older.



Photo taken in Glasgow, Scotland, February 1, 1945, returned to Nijon on February 9. Spring offensive began February 10 in Germany, Cravenburg, Cleve-Udem.

Jim kept in touch with Bess, as well as his parents-in-law, and sisters & brother-in-law. He also wrote to his niece Margery and nephew Bobbie. His letters were always chatty and welcome. But he sent postcards too. While in England, he travelled to Liverpool to visit the family of his mother-in-law.



FOR EVERMORE!



Postcards

Jim's regiment was also based in a brick factory to guard a bridge at Utrecht for the Americans and parachute landing British troops.



Brighton, England - July 13, 1944, actually Jim sent this postcard from France.

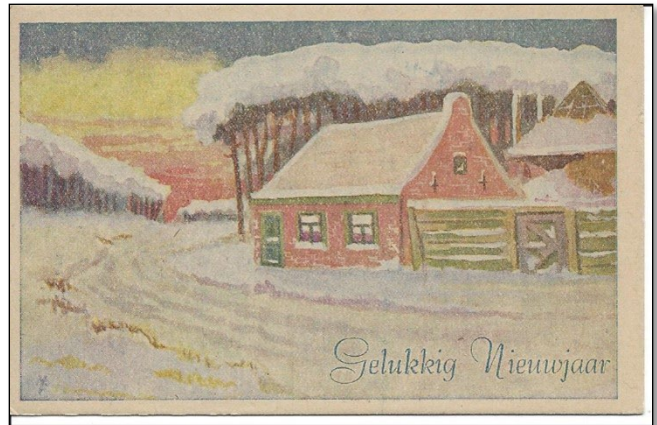
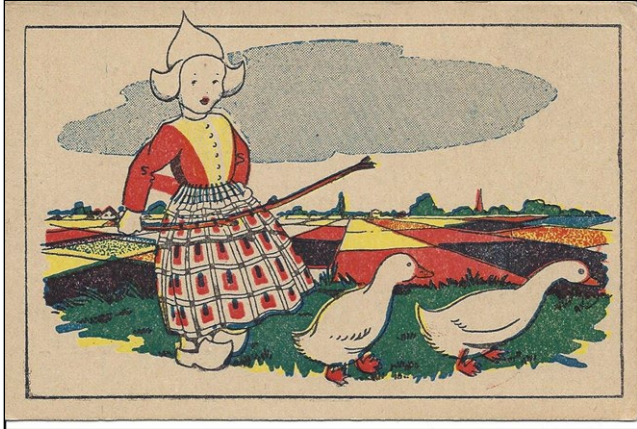


Photo taken at the No. 1 Rehab Trade School, Bordon, England on January 2, 1946.

On March 12, 1946, Jim was discharged in Regina, Saskatchewan. According to his Discharge Certificate, he received the 1939-45 Star, France & Germany Star, Canadian Volunteer Service Medal & Clasp.



Jim sailed home on the *"Queen Elizabeth II"*.

Once Jim and Bess returned to Vancouver, they lived in a rooming house in Vancouver. This apartment had 2 rooms, a bedroom and a living room. They had a hotplate in their suite and shared a bathroom. Their furniture consisted of a bed chesterfield and two trunks. They then moved to a house on Main Street, then to a house on William Street. While there they added their dining room furniture to their possessions.

Jim applied to the Veterans Land Act Administration (VLA), and on December 2, 1946, Bess and Jim moved into their new home at 129 Myron Drive, Cora Brown Subdivision, Sea Island, BC



Photo taken on November 11, 1946 on one of Bess & Jim's first visits to their house.

"Jim started his digging then". Bess said, "our front light, etc. were not on then".

Right photo - Jim & Bess in front of the house - shortly after they moved in December 1946.



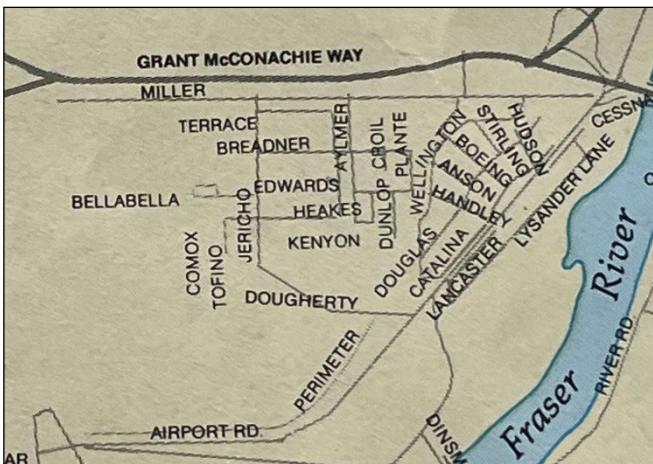


House on Sea Island

Jim and Bess had 4 children: Eunice, Laretta, Muriel and Doug. They lived in this house until they were expropriated in 1974, when they relocated to Lulu Island on Steveston Highway.

## SEA ISLAND STREET NAMES FROM WWII







### Air Marshals and Royal Canadian Air Force Base Street Names



Streets of RCAF Base and Burkeville on Sea Island.

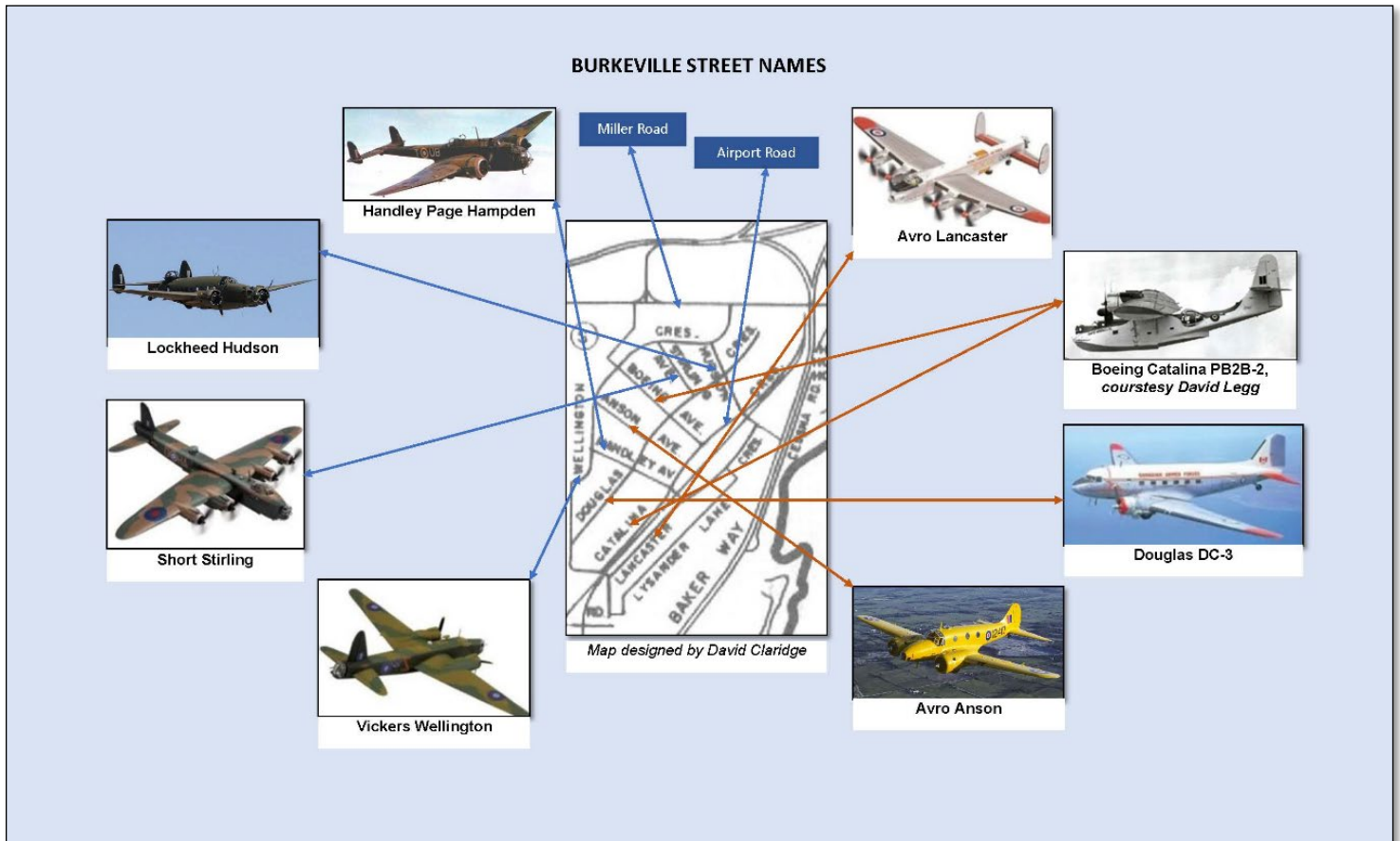
Section taken from of Map of Greater Vancouver by Alcomaps, North Vancouver, B.C.

It is always interesting to find out where the street names come from in a town, village, city, and that is no different to the streets that existed on the RCAF Base on Sea Island. So, researching into this historical aspect of Sea Island, we discover that many of these streets were named after Air Marshals and Air Vice-Marshals of the Royal Canadian Air Force. Here are a few of them.

Breadner Street		Croil Avenue	
	<p>Air Chief Marshal Lloyd Samuel Breadner: second Chief of the Air Staff</p> <p><a href="https://bit.ly/3N66sCU">https://bit.ly/3N66sCU</a> <a href="https://bit.ly/3gpd42K">https://bit.ly/3gpd42K</a></p>		<p>Air Marshal George Mitchell Croil: first Chief of the Air Staff of the Royal Canadian Air Force</p> <p><a href="https://bit.ly/3VXPqdW">https://bit.ly/3VXPqdW</a> <a href="https://bit.ly/3szSVd7">https://bit.ly/3szSVd7</a></p>
Dunlap Avenue		Edwards Street	
	<p>Air Marshal Clarence Rupert Dunlap</p> <p><a href="https://bit.ly/3D0uQ47">https://bit.ly/3D0uQ47</a></p>		<p>Air Marshal Harold (Gus) Edwards</p> <p><a href="https://bit.ly/3DuCC7Y">https://bit.ly/3DuCC7Y</a></p>
Guthrie Avenue		Heakes Street	
 <small>A/V/M Ken Guthrie</small>	<p>Air Vice-Marshal Kenneth McGregor Guthrie</p> <p><a href="https://bit.ly/3F7wMug">https://bit.ly/3F7wMug</a> <a href="https://bit.ly/3TEBXqb">https://bit.ly/3TEBXqb</a></p>		<p>Air Vice-Marshal Francis Vernon Heakes</p> <p><a href="https://bit.ly/3TRxDDz">https://bit.ly/3TRxDDz</a></p>

## Burkeville Street Names with WWII Aircraft

The streets of Burkeville were named after various aircraft types and manufacturers. Shown below are the names of the streets, along with the aircraft type. The map of Burkeville was designed by Derek Claridge and we use it with his permission.



## DID YOU KNOW...?

- There is a plaque at the crash site on Cypress Mountain that commemorates the loss of two Royal Canadian Navy pilots from Pat Bay who were on a RCAF Sea Island training exercise.

- The midsection of the B-29 aircraft was manufactured on Sea Island, but as a fully functioning aircraft only appeared twice in Vancouver. So, the workers who built the midsection only got to see the finished product in real life two times!
- There were Army barrack hutments on Sea Island in Camps #1 (McDonald Road) and Camp#2, (East & West Boulevards off Doherty Road).
- In 1939 there was an army tent camp Kit Inspection by DND (see photo at <https://www.seaislandhome.org/sea-island-military.html>.)
- Don Gordon recalled that the Canadian Navy had a crew of about five or six who bunked in one of the old Japanese Houses on Sea Island during WWII and that Navy guns were located west of the Vancouver Cannery.
- Morley Davidson remembered when the Army used to march down to the Dinsmore Island and shoot into the slough (c1947). At low tide, the neighbourhood kids would collect the spent shells and cartridges. The school principal had to write a note to parents asking that the boys not bring them to school as sometimes they couldn't tell spent shells from live ones!



## 86 YEARS

Nov. 11th is Grant Thompson's 86th birthday. Happy birthday to Sea Island's wonderful 'artifact' and a founding member of SHIS. So much interesting history of Sea Island continues to be passed on to us through Grant.

## CONTACT US

If you have questions, comments, or want to share your memories and photos, we would love to hear from you.

To submit a letter, documents, photos, or a cheque for your membership or donation via snail mail:

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