



HONOUR, EXCELLENCE, SACRIFICE

Halifax 57 Rescue (Canada)

Registered Charity 84586 5740 RR0001

PROGRESS REPORT No. 59

May 28, 2015

www.57rescuecanada.com

Please see the comments below to all of you in Report 58 which dealt with a surprise invitation last month. A Swedish underwater exploration historic group requested that H57RC should come and help identify a possible Halifax bomber which was located in 50 feet of water in the Baltic Sea near Malmo. See below.

“Today I was invited by a historical group in Sweden to attend the exploration of a newly discovered RCAF 405 Squadron Halifax crash site (no loss of life) in the Baltic Sea as a technical expert and advisor for this expedition. Think of the historical opportunities this discovery could bring to Halifax 57 Rescue if that discovery and recovery could happen. But will this happen?”

Well thanks to you stalwarts who came through with timely donations for our financial appeal in Report 58, we were able to keep the Halifax 57 Rescue operation going.

And because of a select few of our members who did provide this urgently needed funding, not only are we able to keep our heads above water financially with our Halifax main spar rebuild, but I was also able to go to Sweden on May12-17 and be a part of the team that discovered and has now explored a Halifax bomber we believe to be Halifax Mk. II HR871 of RCAF 405 Squadron!

I had a gut feeling I should go and that little voice inside me (to which I listen if my head is on straight - which happens occasionally) told me that this could be a big opportunity to further our aims to save our Halifax history.

Well folks, let me tell you how good it was!

I was warmly welcomed to Sweden by “Havsresan” (“Sea Journey” in English)) which is a dedicated historic sea exploration group sponsored by Lund University of Sweden. I met Kjell Andersson their leader, who is a well known personality all over Sweden and is the enthusiastic equivalent of a Jacques Cousteau of Sweden.

Kjell (pronounced Shell) was very pleased to welcome me as they wanted and needed a technical advisor of Halifax airframes to help their team of divers to explore, identify, and plot all the sections of Halifax we would find. We wasted no time and were within the hour on the water heading out in an 8 meter boat with a diving team, with 3 other diving team’s boats already enroute to the Halifax location.

I did not care that I had little sleep the night before on my flight from Toronto to Copenhagen when I realized we were on to the “real McCoy”, a genuine RCAF Halifax from 1943!

Soon we were on site and the exploration began with our 10 - 15 divers working in shifts, plotting out and finding, on and under the sandy bottom, all the parts of Halifax HR871. Remember, the Baltic Sea in this area of the Halifax location is almost fresh water because of the rivers and freshwater runoff in Sweden.



Our diving boats over the Halifax with red buoy (far left) marking the Halifax, and green arrow showing diver in the water

RCAF Halifax HR871 was from the famous Canadian 405 Squadron of RAF 8 Pathfinder Group during 1943 and this squadron was led during this combat period by none other than Group Captain Johnny Fauquier DSO** and DFC!

The Skipper of HR871 on the night she went down (Aug. 2-3, 1943) was John Alwyn Phillips DFC DFM. All the crew were able to bail out over neutral Sweden after 2 engines had failed on a raid to Hamburg. Alwyn was the last man out of HR871 and he trimmed her to fly out toward the waters off Sweden before jumping. HR871 crashed on the water and Alwyn parachuted onto land, right on top of a cow in the middle of the night! Alwyn was happy but the farmer was not, for the cow was dead and who was going to pay for it? Never the mind, back to our story.



See above the HR871 crew after bailing out over Sweden and being interned , skipper Alwyn Phillips in the back row on the left with his mates McLean, Mainprize, Knight, Andrews, King, and Kohnke with (lower left) a Swedish military person – perhaps a chaperone!

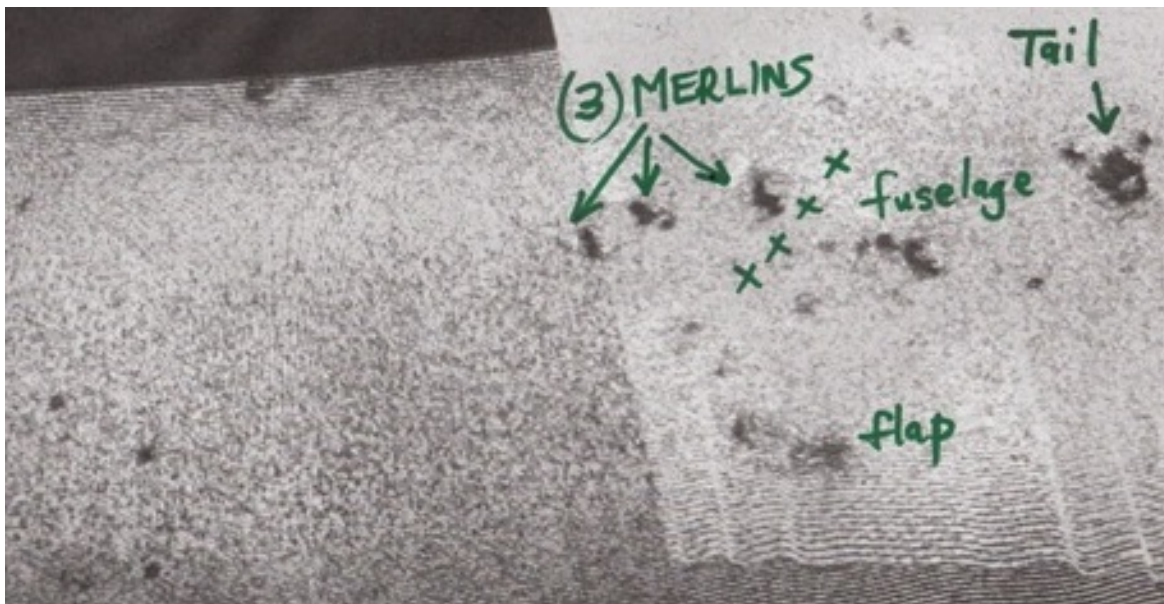
All the crew are now passed away except for Alwyn, who is hale and hearty at 92 living in Hull, England. (I want whatever pills he is taking!) Special thanks to Dr. Jay Pinto in the Hull area for telling me about this Halifax and her pilot who is still alive in Hull. All the while the Swedish dive team were diving (with myself attending) on the Halifax, I was phoning the UK to talk to Alwyn about what we discovered each day we explored HR871.

Alwyn said if we find the cockpit of his Halifax he wants his seat cushion back! He is a short guy and had a special cushion in his cockpit seat to give him some more height and he is demanding that we get it back for him! We will try to help him out, as in this area of the Baltic the water is low in salinity, almost brackish, so we do expect the corrosion levels to be low and artifacts like his precious seat cushion may still be found.

From what I have seen, the more the Halifax has settled in the sandy bottom the better off we will be as far as the condition of aluminium. Pieces inspected by the divers still had the black paint and camouflage bonding to them so this was a good sign.

What we have discovered is 3 of the 4 Merlins, with engine block serial numbers identified. Also we have on the other end of the Halifax site the tail unit which is partially covered in sand. We have found what we believe to be the upper most section of the mid-upper turret which is still attached to the fuselage section , this larger piece is deep in the sand so we do not know how much of this exists until we can move many cubic feet of sand and inspect all we have. But definitely a major find of a Halifax and it is all CANADIAN RCAF!

See below the simple sonar image of the actual layout of all the Halifax HR871 area as we explored it from May 12-17.



Please note that the wing areas are marked by the x-x-x-x but are located under the sand

And for those of you who are asking how much did this cost for your project leader to go to Sweden and stay there for a week supposedly “chasing blonde babes and drinking beer at your expense”- (actually it was 10-12 hour days of planning, diving, and exploring the site) I must tell you the fine generosity of our new Swedish friends of Havresan. They were very kind to me, such that I could not pay for any of my meals and I was able to stay at Robert’s house, the dive leader, all week while the exploration was on. So the week in Sweden cost us, H57RC, the princely sum of less than \$200. including airfare! The things we do for you guys!

My point being that if you are members and supporters I urge you to support us, with new and renewed memberships and donations which some of you have forgotten to do, and we will do perform magic with every dollar, pound, euro, or shekel you donate. H57RC is the best adventure-filled charity in the land but it is like pulling teeth to get people to back us in saving our history.

Halifax 57 Rescue must be willing to pull our own weight in these expeditions and I do not wish to impose on the hospitality of our Swedish comrades again.

I will be going back again to Sweden from (Aug.24 - Sep. 1) when we will have the water pumps and jets to move some sand and explore the Halifax site further.

Do you not see the history making project in front of you, pleading for your support?? Do you understand this is not just talking about history but actually discovering and making history, all in one package!??

Your DONATIONS are all part of the potential success of this expedition so do not procrastinate any longer and help us with RCAF Halifax HR871.

I am presently building some critical support in Ottawa on Parliament Hill as there are several of our MP, Senator, and Ministerial officials who are aware of what we are doing to save history. We need them to go to bat for us with the Swedish officials who control whether or not we can obtain the permission to start an actual salvage and recovery of this RCAF bomber. Without these Canadian officials contacting their Swedish counterparts we cannot move forward beyond the exploration stage.

It is just like the important political support we had in Norway and Belgium on the recoveries of Halifax NA337 and LW682. It is essential that this support be raised NOW and I am on it. So standby as we proceed to maximize our position on the world stage and save some more Halifax history. P.S. send money!

On to business, here are the Hali-facts:

We are working on the processing of the deep water sonar data collected by the Marine Institute in early April looking for RCAF Halifax LW170 off the coast of Ireland. We have an assurance by a university group to re-process and sift through the Gigabytes of sonar data just collected to look for the old and new sonar targets that could be contained in all the data we have collected so far. It is a giant puzzle (5 miles by 5 miles) in over 6000 feet of water. But the holy grail of RCAF and Bomber Command history, Halifax LW170, is worth it and so standby for more on this as we sift and search the data and report back to you.

The propeller parts that I am moaning and groaning about (their rarity and my looking all over heck's half-acre to find) has not been solved yet. BUT I did find a museum in Europe who are willing to trade or sell one of these units which is the exact unit, used on Halifaxes Mk. III and later with Hercules engines. When this surprise find and expedition to go to Sweden came to the front burner I had to put the props search on hold. But this will be rectified once the summer season priorities have been addressed and I can get back to the UK.

The Halifax main spar rebuild is going on as we speak in Ottawa by Knox Tech Inc. (no matter which "Halifax house" you are going to build you will always need a "foundation" and you can see all the George and Scott are doing by going to FACEBOOK at:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Rebuildshop/1533756926866315?fref=ts>

or if you want to see great videos of the Halifax main spar rebuild just go to YOUTUBE and put in:

NAS The ReBuild Shop - Season 3 Program 1

You can also do a YOUTUBE search and put in the following to find:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dik_K1ZqSaw

It is fun to see the building up of a heart of a Halifax, this warbird construction that cannot be matched anywhere in the world, as H57RC is the only group attempting this type of from-the-ground-up rebuild of a British heavy bomber. Keep watching us as we build her up while continuing on to find more Halifaxes around the world.



See above our Halifax main spar coming to life at Knox Tech in Ottawa

REMEMBER, we do not bring Halifaxes back to Canada because it is a cute looking bomber aircraft, we bring Halifaxes back to Canada because over 70% of the 10,659 Canadians killed-in-action in Bomber Command were flying the Halifax bomber when they sacrificed their lives for our Freedom.

Let me address the situation with the Halifax HR980 with her missing crew that is located in the German swamp, which was our focus last year and is still our focus this year. I must tell you that our joint group proposal of LAO and H57RC must still find a technical solution for going down 20 Feet (7 Meters) into the swamp mud to find the 3 missing crew. The freezing method to do this has been suggested but we have been unable to find a company willing or able to do this type of excavation to get to the aircraft and her crew but we are still trying.

On top of this the officials of the UK, Australia, and Canada will NOT provide support or finances to help this type of recovery as they do not have funds set aside to recover missing airmen of WW2 (who gave up their lives to give us our Freedom)! Do not get me started on this pitiful but true situation where WE must do all the rescue ourselves and then must share it with those who do not support us.

I will be checking with my counterparts this month in Australia, the UK, Germany, and officials in Canada as there is a window of opportunity to continue the rescue of Halifax HR980 and her missing crew in August 2015. My heart goes out to the families of these Australian, Canadian, and UK missing airmen as our governments continue to stone wall us on HR980. We must continue our efforts in this project!

Let us continue in good faith and with renewed energy for we know we are doing the right thing here with saving bomber crews, their history, and Halifaxes in their honoured memory.

It is up to you to keep us rolling financially! So I will review with you now HOW you can support us.

) Donate funds to Halifax 57 Rescue (Canada) via the postal services – see our 2 addresses available at the end of this report. Make cheques out to “Halifax 57 Rescue (Canada)”.

2) Try our New PAYPAL internet payment method for all who have purchased or contributed online (via your PAYPAL account) to our worthy and honourable charity. Go to our website www.57rescuecanada.com and see the golden “DONATE” button which immediately donates these funds to our cause from anywhere in the world (if you have a PAYPAL account!)

3) Donate your unused stocks, bonds, and securities to our Halifax 57 Rescue - Royal Bank Discount Brokerage account and receive a “full market value” tax receipt credit for the donation of these securities. You will NOT have to pay income tax on the profit portion side of this transfer and donation. You receive full tax deductible credit for said donation. It is a win-win for all concerned.

4) Purchase a beautiful limited-edition signed print of our Halifax LW170 “INVINCIBLE ITEM” for (\$165.00 including postage) or an unsigned print for (\$60.00 including postage). This has to be one of the finest prints of a combat Halifax that has ever been produced. We still have half of the 500 signed prints available to all you Halifax fans. See www.57rescuecanada.com for all our Halifax print info.

Remember, WE LEAVE NO HALIFAX BEHIND!

Sincerely,

Karl Kjarsgaard - Project Manager

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