

# ***A BOMBER COMMAND MUSEUM OF CANADA BULLETIN***

2012-05-10



## **MURRAY PEDEN TIGER MOTH PLACED ON STATIC DISPLAY**

We're pleased to announce that the Murray Peden Tiger Moth is now on static display. The aircraft carries the marking "4080," those of the Tiger Moth Murray soloed in at #5EFTS in High River, Alberta in 1942. Over the years he has been a great supporter of our museum and of honouring and commemorating the efforts of Bomber Command.

Murray is the author of the highly regarded "A Thousand Shall Fall." The Canadian Historical Review referred to it as "The best book any Canadian has written about his war experiences."

Please see <http://www.bombercommandmuseum.ca/s,murraypeden.html>  
<http://www.bombercommandmuseum.ca/tigermoth.html>

The aircraft will be restored to flyable status as funds permit.



## HALIFAX LW682

**-F/O Wilbur Bentz' 426 Squadron RCAF Halifax was shot down in 1944, forgotten for 53 years, and then recovered in 1997. Its aluminum was acquired by the Bomber Command Museum of Canada and has become the ceiling of London's Bomber Command Memorial.**

P/O Wilbur "Wib" Bentz was born in North Bend, B.C. and received his wings at Brantford, Ontario in April, 1943. On the evening of 12 May 1944, P/O Bentz piloted 426 Squadron Halifax LW682 (OW-M) on a raid to Leuven, Belgium.

The aircraft was attacked by a fighter and crashed into a marsh killing all eight aboard. Because of the boggy ground, it was difficult to reach the aircraft and only five bodies were located. Within 24 hours the remains of the Halifax with the other crewmembers sank into the marsh.

In 1984 Wib's nephew, Jay Hammond, came across his uncle's letters and made contact with a student in Leuven. He was able to find small parts of the aircraft at the crash site.

Jay visited the site in 1996 and realized that his uncle's remains were right below his feet. A friend working with the Belgian Aviation History Association thought it might be possible to excavate the aircraft.

In 1997, under the sponsorship of 426 Sqd. Association, Karl Kjarsgaard of Canada's Halifax 57 Rescue recovered the bomber with manpower and resources provided by a Belgian recovery group. The marsh had to be drained and some of the parts were 8 m. below the surface.

The team recovered the remains of the three Canadians that were still in the aircraft, P/O Bentz, Sgt. J.W. Summerhayes, and Sgt. F. Roach.

The families were notified and attended the formal burial of the airmen next to their five crewmates.

The recovered aircraft parts were flown to Canada and some were used in the restoration of Halifax NA337 currently on display at Trenton, Ontario. The unused aluminum was melted down into ingots for historic and memorial purposes in the future.



*Wib Bentz during training*



*Jay Hammond with aluminum from his uncle's aircraft*

The ingots from P/O Bentz's Halifax bomber were acquired by the Bomber Command Museum of Canada, the location of Canada's Bomber Command Memorial. They were placed in storage to be used in the future for Air Force Memorials, plaques, and statues.

In 2011 the museum offered the ingots to the Bomber Command Association and Chief Architect Liam O'Connor as a contribution to the massive Memorial that they were designing.

The museum delivered 850 pounds of the aluminum to Lethbridge and loaded it onto a 429 Squadron RCAF C-17 transport that flew the ingots to Trenton and then to the U.K.

Liam O'Connor's inspiration for the ceiling design of the 8.5 metre tall pavilion, the focal point of the Memorial, came from the unique geodetic construction of the Wellington bomber. The panels that cover the geodetic supports were formed from the aluminum from P/O Bentz' RCAF Halifax that was provided by the Bomber Command Museum of Canada.

The Bomber Command Memorial will be Dedicated by the Queen on 28 June to honour the airmen of Bomber Command, 55,573 of whom lost their lives. Over 10,000 of them were Canadians.



*The focal point of the Bomber Command Memorial*



*Museum president Rob Pedersen with an ingot from Halifax LW682*



*Karl Kjarsgaard loading the ingots onto the RCAF C-17*



*The names of the 10,670 Canadians who were killed are listed on Canada's Bomber Command Memorial.*