



Sabretache

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF
THE CALGARY MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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May 2013



On 5 May 1944, the 367th Bomb Squadron of the 306th Bomb Group received a new Boeing Seattle-built B-17G Flying Fortress, with serial number 42-102547. It was assigned to care Crew Chief Master Sergeant Edward S. Gregory, from Salt Lake City, the birth city of the bomb group.

In mid-May of 1944, the B-17G received her first nose art name – *Princess Elizabeth* – painted in red block letters by Ed Gregory and Assistant Crew Chief Mark Madsen. The nose art had been requested by the first flight crew. The B17 proceeded to fly 13 combat missions. At that time the word “Elizabeth” was removed and the plane became known as “The Princess”

The name change was due to the possibility the plane could be shot down over German held territory and the Nazi Propaganda machine would have a field day.

In early June of 1944, rumour went around the base that the Royal Family, including 18 year old, Princess

Elizabeth would be coming to the American Airbase at RAF Thurleigh. It was then that M/Sgt Gregory had the idea of having the Princess christen the B-17. that carried her name. The idea moved slowly up through military hierarchy and finally got to King George VI. He approved the idea but did not want the Princess name on it. His Majesty the King picked the new nose art name – *Rose of York*.

Before his accession to the throne in December 1936 (due to the abdication of his brother King Edward VIII), King George VI was the Duke of York and his wife [the Queen Mother] was the Duchess of York, thus his daughter, became “his” – **Rose of York**.

In late June, the B-17G was scrubbed clean by M/Sgt. Gregory and his ground crew. The nose art name and bomb silhouette mission marks were removed, which had recorded 13 missions as *Princess Elizabeth* and *The Princess*. The new nose art names, with a large white rose, were painted on each side of the aircraft nose by an enlisted man from the 367th Squadron whose name is still unknown.

The big day arrived on 6 July 1944, when Lt. Gen. James H. Doolittle, King George VI, Queen Elizabeth and Princess Elizabeth arrived in a formal motorcade of big black Daimler cars. M/Sgt. Ed Gregory presented Princess Elizabeth with twenty-four white roses to begin the ceremony. The Princess then swung a bottle of English cider against a striking plate attached to the gun barrels of the chin turret and the *Rose of York* was officially named in honour of Princess Elizabeth. During the ceremony, the B-17G's crew was standing in a row, five on each side of the bomber nose. Princess Elizabeth was then introduced to each of the crew members.

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CMHS Meeting

The next CMHS meeting will be held on

**Tuesday,
May 21st.
2013**

7:00 pm

At the
Petty Officers' Mess
HCMS Tecumseh

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CALGARY MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The
CALGARY MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

is a non-profit registered society
which fosters the study of the
military and the police, and the heritage of
Canada, the British Empire, and the world
as well as the preservation of military
artifacts and records.

The CMHS meets once every calendar month
at:

Petty Officers' Mess
HMCS Tecumseh
1820 - 24th Street SW
Calgary AB T2T 0G6

All are welcome to attend
OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

Notice of Next Meeting

The next CMHS meeting will be held on

Tuesday, May 21, 2013

19:00 (7:00 pm)

At the Petty Officers' Mess, HMCS Tecumseh.

Members are reminded that an offering of foodstuffs for the Legion Food Bank is considered your unofficial entrance fee to our regular scheduled meetings.

The unofficial agenda of this meeting will be:

- Introduction of guests, Minutes of last meeting
- Correspondence, Membership report
- Treasurer's report, Old business / New business
- Break, Show & Tell

The President, David S would like to invite everyone to remain after the meeting for an informal time of fellowship.



the flat board-like device attached to the chin turret's twin machine gun barrels which was used as a striker plate for the bottle of English cider used to christen the Fortress.

Minutes of the last meeting

Meeting called to order at 7:10 PM by President David S. 20 members present and no guests.

President passes on condolences to Member Stuart E. on the passing of his wife.

Minutes of last meeting approved. Motion by Mike C and Barry E. to accept. Approved

Treasures Report given by the tall Brian H. Motion to accept report by Treasurer. Unanimous.

Membership Report given by Brian H. 47 members

Old Business

Gun Show. Great show and congratulations to member Allan Mc. For winning “outstanding show”

Allen Mc.—Frank McCall, son of WW1 Ace who was discussed at last meeting has passed away.

Mike C—renewed last months discussion on Club Project. History week at City Hall and a possible display. More information will be gathered.

David G- should club sponsor a show?

David L— Military Museum space?

Discussion of various things that the club could do.

Mervin J.— reports on previous news about veteran law suit that has been settled out of court.

New Business.

President David S. - I ‘ve been spammed and I am mad. Working on problems.

Break.

Auction of book and military script donated by Member Mike C.

Show and Tell

Gary.— Storey on relative. Boer War Book of Remembrance had misnamed his relative and he has gotten it changed.

James B.-Picture of Currie Barracks and soldiers. Purchased at show.

Darrel K— Badges of former regiment. Newsletter available “The Glen”

David L— WW2 Nazi Chaplain finds at show. Also Italian chaplain badges. Writing kit from Princess Mary Christmas gift, Plate and insignia from Afghanistan.

Mike C.—Royal Humanitarian Society medal for gallantry. Sea Gallantry medal from 1851 to Joseph Taylor.

Bruce —Brigade patch for battalions from 427 NATO

Martin— Book from Smithsonian. In 1963.

American Military Insignia 1800-1851

Barry E. WW1 trench art “Vimy Ridge” shell dated.

Floyd S.— New book on US Army Paratroops.

Don S. Wellington Book “information on supply” B17 named after Princess Elizabeth.

David S.—Book Some died at Ortona.

David G. —WW1 picture surfaces twice with different headlines.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 Motion by Floyd S. and Barry E.



The 18-year-old and very composed Princess Elizabeth chats with famed U.S. Army Air Force General James Doolittle at the beginning of the *Rose of York* christening event. Photo via 306th Bomb Group website



A grainy but nice close-up of the Rose of York nose art with the Princess and the King. Two things are evident here – the nose art was very professionally done and the Princess was a very beautiful young lady at 18 years.

After an official luncheon and hundreds more photographs, the Rose of York and her crew went back to the job that was assigned to them. On 3 February 1945, the famous *Rose of York* was one of 35 B-17 Fortress bombers of the 306th Bomb Group that attacked Berlin. This was mission number 50 for *Rose of York*, mission 63 for the B-17G bomber in all her titles. For this special occasion, the famous reporter, Guy Byam flew as a passenger. He was making a broadcast recording on the BBC midget recording device, meant to be heard on his 9 p.m. BBC evening program. In a last radio report from *Rose of York*, pilot Capt. Vernon Daley Jr. stated he was leaving the French coast with two engines out but with the aircraft still under control. The B-17G *Rose of York*, her crew and Guy Byam were never seen again.



A photograph of a *Rose of York* crew bomber jacket at the 8th Air Force Museum in Pooler, Georgia. This jacket depicts *Rose of York* as she was on the day of the christening

The Rose of York lives again. On the 65th anniversary of the christening of the original plane, the New Hampshire Air National Guard named a Boeing KC-135R aerial refuelling tanker in honour of the original B-17 crew

