

**O.T.U.**



**ABBOTSFORD B.C.**



**R.C.A.F.**

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Ray Don

# FOREWORD

This magazine is issued with the intention of providing you with a permanent reminder of No. 5 O.T.U. Det., Abbotsford, B.C., when at last you have returned to your far-flung homes or are carving out a new home on some strange horizon.

Memory is elusive, and pictures are the quickest way of capturing it, so with that in mind we have decided to make the magazine as pictorial as possible, so that when you sit down in the quiet evenings of the future you can open up this magazine and be carried back to the happy days spent at Abbotsford.

There will be pleasant memories, perhaps a few bitter ones, and—though we wish there hadn't—a few tragic ones. But as time passes, memories mellow with age and we find recalling the pleasant ones fills us with a deep-seated glow of satisfaction and contentment, the bitter ones have lost their sting, and the tragedies that shocked us have taken on a more spiritual value.

The beautiful mountain scenery surrounding Abbotsford Air Station is something all of us will long remember. The soft fir-covered mountains on either side of the station with the majestic rugged peaks rising like sentinels in the background; the trim, well-kept lawns, shrubbery and fir trees of the station itself; the indescribable beauty of the glowing red sun rising over the mountains in the East, and the last rays of the setting sun glistening like shimmering magic on the snow-capped peaks of Mt. Baker.

No. 5 O.T.U. Det., Abbotsford, B. C., is a place to remember.



# THE O. C.

(Officer Commanding)

WING COMMANDER D. J. WILLIAMS, D.S.O., D.F.C.

Graduated as a Sergeant Pilot from No. 3 S.F.T.S., Calgary, in August, 1941. Proceeded directly overseas for advanced training and attached to a Bomber O.T.U. on twin-engined Hampdens, then one of Britain's heavy bombers. Completed his first tour of operations in Hampdens, for the most part operating over Germany.

In August, 1942, he was awarded the D.F.C. for shooting down a German JU. 88 with the single front gun of a Hampden. The award was presented by King George VI at an investiture in Buckingham Palace.

In September, 1942, attached to overseas H.Q. as Senior Operations Officer. Later he was attached to a Mosquito Squadron where he served for a time until he took over as Commanding Officer of a Beaufighter Squadron and received his appointment as Wing Commander. Later the squadron converted to Mosquitoes.

During his service with the Mosquito and Beaufighter Squadrons he completed 47 operational trips on night flying and day intruding over enemy held territory, attacking enemy airdromes, shooting up trains and enemy shipping along the coast.

While serving in the interceptor and intruder squadrons W/C Williams was officially credited with shooting down five enemy planes, bringing his grand total to six destroyed. He was also credited with numerous trains, transports and one enemy "E" boat.

In August, 1944, after one engine of his twin-engined Mosquito had been knocked out by enemy gunfire, W/C Williams bored in and shot down two German Dornier 217s. For this outstanding feat he was awarded the D.S.O.

Returning to Canada on leave W/C Williams officially took over as Officer Commanding of No. 5 O.T.U. Det., Abbotsford, on March 29, 1945.

# MESSAGE OF OFFICER COMMANDING

I am deeply pleased at being given this opportunity to extend a personal message to the personnel of No. 5 O.T.U. Detachment, and hope that in the future I will have the pleasure of meeting many of you on a more intimate basis.

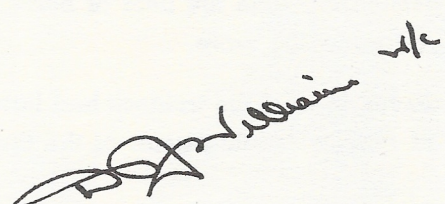
It is indeed a privilege and honour to be the Officer Commanding of such an outstanding unit, the operational training of which is unique in the huge air training scheme in which Canada has played so large a part. The success of the station in fulfilling the plans mapped out for it is due in great part to the unstinted efforts of the personnel, and to them must go most of the credit.

With the war in Europe practically over, we can honestly believe that many of us will soon be returning to civilian life and we can be grateful indeed that our last days of service life were spent in such a beautiful setting as this station is located.

We were fortunate in the fact that the Vancouver Air Training Co., which operated the Elementary School here previously had transformed the station into "the show station of Canada", and the beautiful mountain scenery on either side of the station is something we can all share in appreciating.

In closing let me say just this:

I am proud to have had the opportunity of serving with you at No. 5 O.T.U. Det., Abbotsford.





General view of station.

# HISTORY

The history of No. 5 O.T.U. Det., Abbotsford, is short and brief. The station was officially opened August 15, 1944, as a Detachment of No. 5 O.T.U., Boundary Bay. The planes used were Liberators—big four-engined heavy bombers weighing some twenty odd tons and carrying eleven-man crews.

The crews first arrived at Boundary Bay, coming from stations all across the country and from all parts of the far-flung British Empire and battle fronts. Most of the pilots were either repats with a tour of operations or more under their belts, or instructors with many hours flying time; their crews were a mixture of repats or fledglings direct from Service Flying School.

The staff aircrew instructors were flyers with hundreds of hours flying time, considerable operational experience gained in the field of battle, and plenty of decorations to show they had been through the mill and knew the score.

However, most of the trainees had flown planes with tail landing gear and the Liberators they were to fly had tricycle landing gear, or the third wheel in the nose. So first the pilots went to Boundary Bay to

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Home to Roost.



▲ Hand-Over W/C McKay, W/C Williams, F/O J. Masson

## HANDING-OVER CEREMONY

No. 5 O.T.U. Detachment, Abbotsford, officially changed Officers Commanding on Thursday morning, March 29, 1945. On the Wing Square, the squadrons moved into formation to the music of an Air Force band. With the B.C. weather at its best, a blue sky and a warm sun, the formalities of handing-over were smoothly and quickly concluded. To the stirring strains of the R.A.F. March Past, the departing O.C., W/C W. A. McKay, led the Wing past the ensign in his last official gesture of command, with his successor, W/C D. J. Williams, taking the salute—and the burdens of leadership.

W/C McKay's last parade in review. ▾





## C. F. I.

(Chief Flying Instructor)

**SQUADRON LEADER D. P. MACINTYRE**  
D.F.C., U.S. D.F.C.

Graduated as a pilot from No. 8 S.F.T.S., Moncton, N.B., in July, 1941. After receiving his advanced training in Scotland he was attached to No. 35 Squadron, R.A.F., one of the first Halifax squadrons operating out of England.

After numerous bombing raids over the European continent he was shot down in April, 1942, while low level bombing the German super-

battleship Tirpitz which lay hiding in Trondheim Fiord, Norway, from where it was to prey on allied shipping in the Atlantic and intercept supplies for Russia. With surviving members of the crew F/O MacIntyre escaped on foot across Norway into Sweden where he was first interned and later returned to Britain as an escaped prisoner-of-war. He was awarded the D.F.C. for his part in this raid.

In September, 1942, he was posted to the Middle East in an R.A.F. Liberator Squadron attached to the U.S. 9th Air Corps, operating from Palestine to Italy.

For his services in the Middle East he was awarded the American D.F.C., having the distinction of being the first Canadian to receive this award in World War II.

S/L MacIntyre returned to Britain in August, 1943, where he served in a Bombing Development Unit until posted to No. 5 O.T.U. Det., Abbotsford, as Chief Flying Instructor.

## C. G. I.

(Chief Ground Instructor)

**FLIGHT LIEUTENANT A. L. PARNALL**

Graduated as a Navigator from No. 1 A.N.S., Rivers, Manitoba, in July, 1941. Took his advanced training in Britain and as his first assignment was handed the job of ferrying aircraft to Cairo early in 1942 just when the British 8th Army were suffering serious setbacks.

Later he was assigned to No. 419 Squadron of Wellingtons based in England and took part in the first 1,000 plane raid on Bremen, the R.A.F.'s third 1,000 plane raid.

One year to the day after receiving his wings F/L Parnall was involved in a crash in England from which only he and one other survived out of a crew of ten.

He later converted to Halifaxes, taking over as Squadron Navigation Officer, in which capacity he served until his return to Canada and subsequent posting to No. 5 O.T.U. Det. as Chief Ground Instructor.







Briefing Room.

# NAVIGATION

The navigator of a Liberator has a tough job in store for him, for the big bomber which he will direct is used mostly on long range bombing and long-hour patrols over the trackless ocean. He must be capable of finding an obscure target in difficult weather conditions and arriving at the target within one minute of the prescribed time after a flight of some five hours or more.

It is the problem of the Navigation Section to train navigators who will fulfil these qualifications. Navigation requires long hours of concentrated work. The mental fatigue of navigation on a long trip is extreme, and the navigator, to make rapid calculations and decisions after twelve hours or more in the air and still maintain a high degree of accuracy, must know his job thoroughly.

The transition from Air Navigational School to operational navigation is greater than most navigators realize. This school attempts to bridge the gap, and it is gratifying to all instructors to hear from pupils of previous courses and learn that they have had no difficulty in measuring up to the navigation standards of their squadrons.

# NAVIGATION CROSS COUNTRY BRIEFINGS AT No. 5 O.T.U. DET.

Cross-country briefings at Abbotsford are carried out to conform as nearly as possible to operational briefings overseas.

The W.A.G.s, A.G.s, Navigators

and Air Bombers are briefed separately by their section leaders at least one half hour before main briefing. Any information which applies particularly to the trade concerned is given at this pre-briefing. Section Commanders, Intelligence, and Flying Control complete briefing pro formas which are handed to the Flight Commander before main briefing time. These pro formas contain specialist information which is of interest to all crew members.

Main briefing is held in the main briefing room at least two hours before take-off time to allow for careful crew planning and complete preparation for the trip. The aircrew are seated at tables, as crews, facing a large map covering practically the entire wall. On this map the route to be followed is marked by coloured tape, the outward and return legs designated by different coloured tape or by arrows. On this map also are marked the target for the trip, defended areas (simulated), M/F stations, H/F stations, radio beacons and radio ranges.

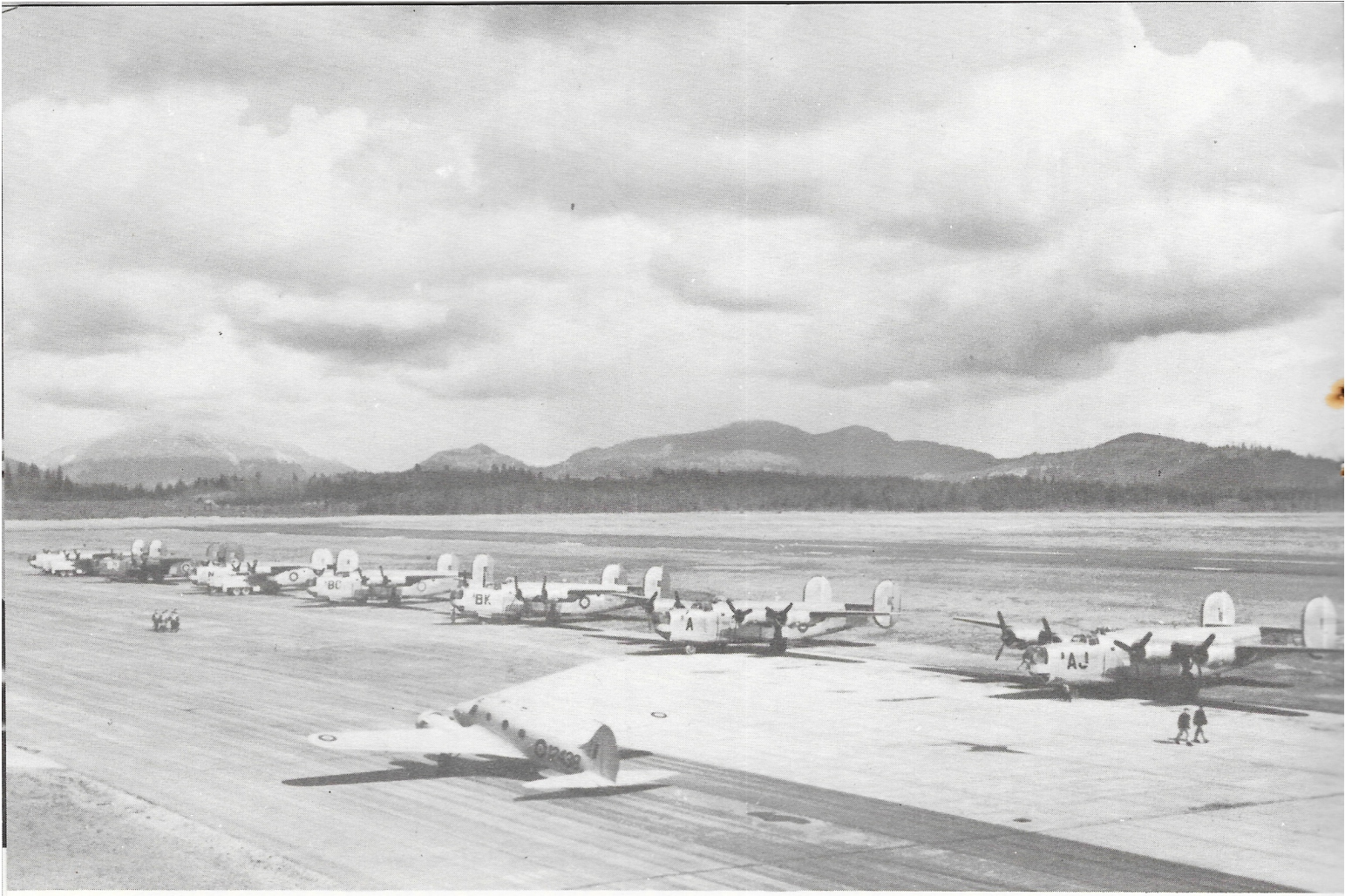
The flight commander takes the main briefing using the information supplied by the specialist pro formas as a guide. He first calls the Met. officer to give an outline of the weather expected to be encountered on the trip and to give the latest navigational winds. A large synoptic chart is displayed on the wall for all to see and also a cross section of any cloud expected on the trip complete with freezing level and temperatures for different altitudes. All aircrew are thus acquainted with the complete weather picture. The briefing officer then goes through the trip, generally, using the information supplied to him on the pro formas for the details. He stresses the importance of being fully and warmly equipped, a careful check on the aircraft by all crew members, adherence to take-off time, etc. He gives the runway in use, wind conditions and aerodrome control information. He goes through the trip from take-off, climbing, setting course, cruising and let-down to the landing.

At the conclusion of the briefing, questions may be asked of any of the crew members to ensure that all have been giving their undivided attention to the instructions given by the briefing officer. Crews may also clear up points on which they may be uncertain by asking questions of the specialist officers who are in attendance.



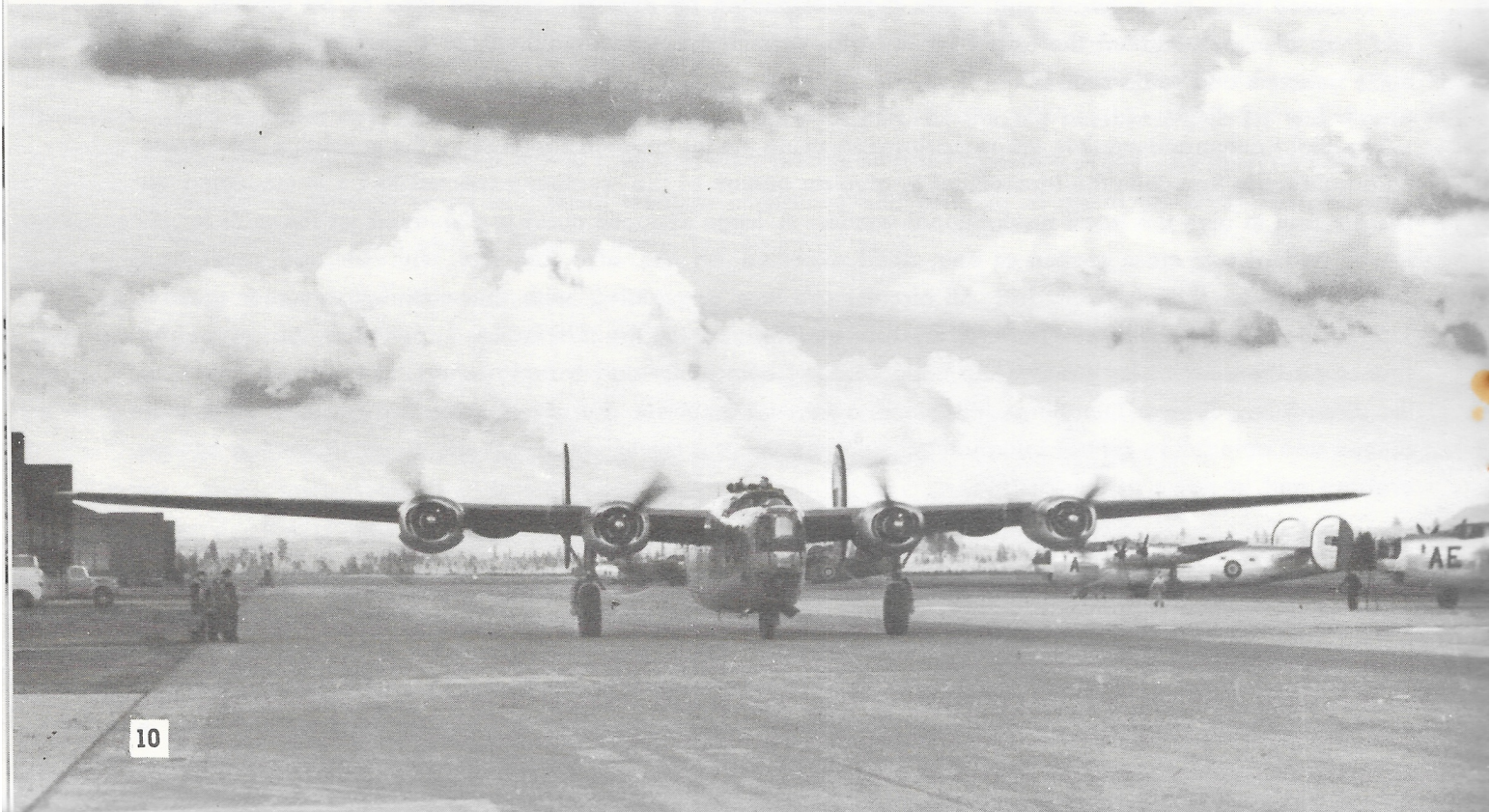
Intelligence Room.

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▲ View of planes on tarmac.

Liberator taxi-ing down apron for take-off. ▼





Control Tower, outside.

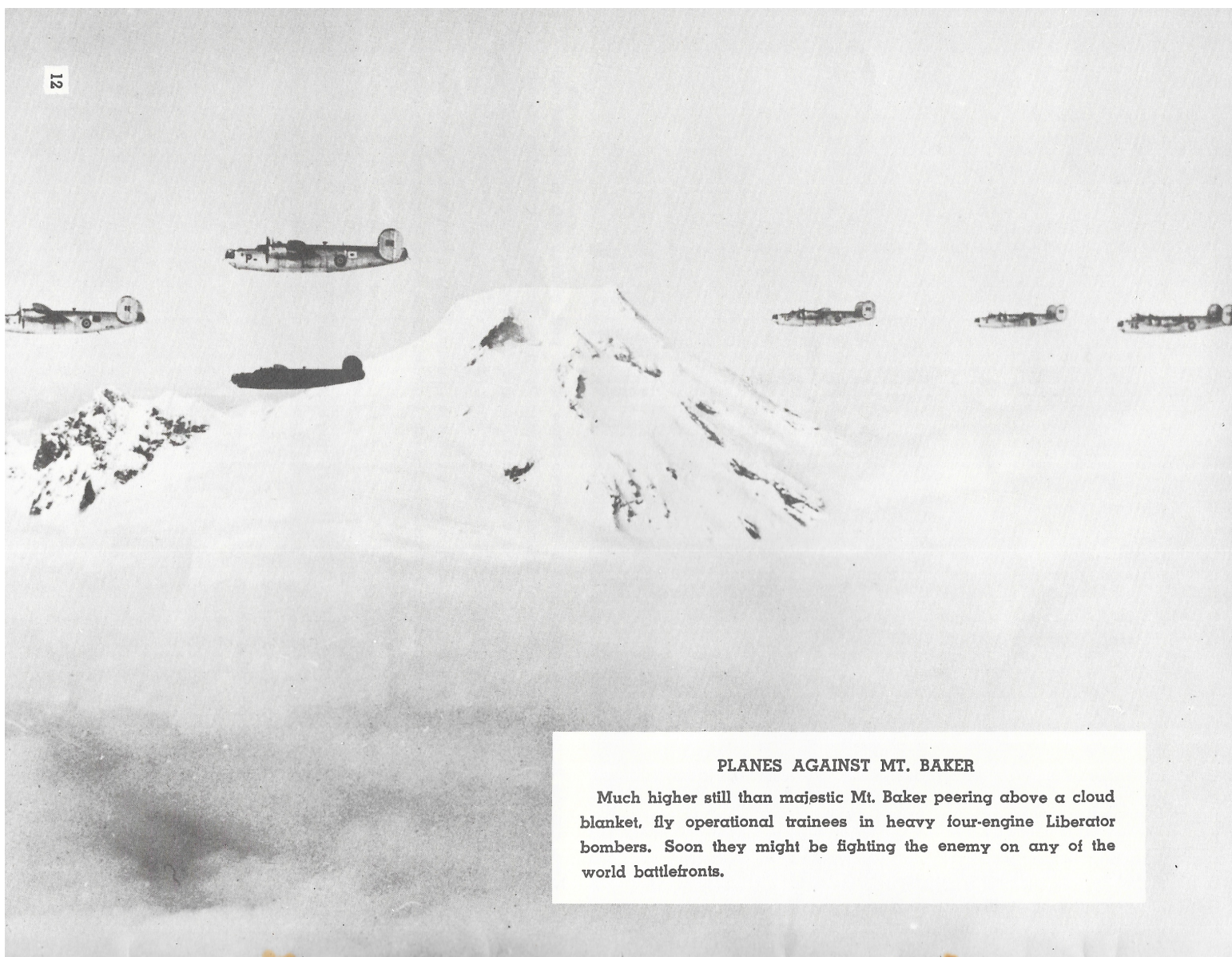
# CONTROL TOWER

Here, despite its penthouse appearance, is the nerve-centre of the port, guiding with an efficient and dexterous hand all the aerial activity at Abbotsford. Although its prime purpose is to regulate the air traffic on the station and ensure each pilot a hazardless take-off and landing, the control power conducts many other complementary services—all with a view to a safer sky.

All aircraft leaving the station are directed in taxi-ing from the parking line to a position for takeoff from the tower, and the reverse is true for any aircraft coming into the field. In the event of poor visibility over the 'drome, the tower can radio the navigator of an approaching plane the information to enable him to determine accurately his height above the "deck". Should an aircraft in difficulty attempt a landing, there is the brilliantly checkered control truck ready for this, or any other emergency, to direct the pilot from closer range; and when a safe landing can no longer be effected, all other traffic is warned by the firing of a red signal cartridge, and the crash truck, fire truck and ambulance will race to the spot to give final assistance.

Control Tower, inside.





#### PLANES AGAINST MT. BAKER

Much higher still than majestic Mt. Baker peering above a cloud blanket, fly operational trainees in heavy four-engine Liberator bombers. Soon they might be fighting the enemy on any of the world battlefronts.