



THE SALVATION ARMY HERITAGE CENTRE & ARCHIVES
TE RUA MAHARA O TE OPE WHAKAORA

MARCH 2022

REVELATIONS

NEWSLETTER OF THE SALVATION ARMY HERITAGE CENTRE & ARCHIVES IN NEW ZEALAND

RNZAF TRAINING IN CANADA

New Zealand Salvationists Train in the Snow

SALVATIONIST MILITARY SERVICE

Your Family's Story

BILL HAWKINS

Mustang and Spitfire Pilot

LT-COLONEL LAWRENCE WEGGERY

Spitfire Pilot

LAWRENCE (LAURIE) LUXTON

Bomber Command

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- 2) Print |'actual size'| A3 double-sided | flip on short edge | then, if you wish, fold as illustrated.



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The Heritage Centre and Archives also has a webpage on which you can find information and articles of interest:

<https://archives.salvationarmy.org.nz/>

ISSN 2624-179X (Print) ISSN 2624-1803 (Online)

WELCOME

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► Gregory Jennings comes to us with a background in Archives and Records Management, both in **New Zealand and overseas**. For the past 11 years he has been the Manager of the Bahrain Historical Archives in the Kingdom of Bahrain and before that he was the Context Control Unit Manager at Archives New Zealand in Wellington.

He has been very much involved in the search for **new methods & techniques** in making archives accessible to clients and new customers. Through the **proper digitisation of archives and exploration of metadata** ("the data about data") he has been working to carefully preserve the physical artifacts for their use into the future.

His specialization during his Archives & Library training was in Rare Books and Archives and he is looking forward to "getting hands on" with the **wealth of material and artifacts** held at The Salvation Army Archives and to **sharing their stories with the wider world**.

Stephen McGann, Actor & 'National Archive Explore Your Archive' ambassador has said "The word 'archive' – like the word 'love' or 'family' – conceals its true treasure beneath an unassuming simplicity. Only by exploring and cherishing these things do we discover their true value."

Gregory Jennings | Team Leader - Archivist ◀

If you'd like to visit our Facebook Page Salvation Army Archives NZFT: <https://www.facebook.com/SalvationArmyArchivesNZFT/>



RNZAF TRAINING IN CANADA

New Zealand Salvationists Train in the Snow

► In 1939 the British Commonwealth **Air Training Plan** was agreed to by Great Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. On 29 April 1940, the first Canadian training course officially commenced.

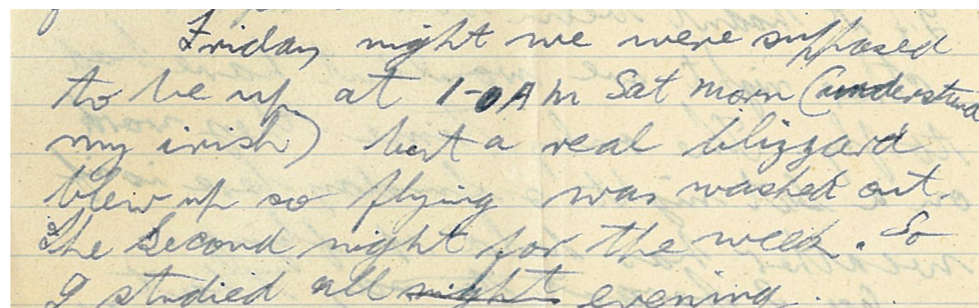
During the war, the **RNZAF contributed 2,743 fully trained pilots** to serve with the RAF in Europe, the Middle East, and Far East. Another 1,521 pilots who

Royal Canadian Air Force wing patch for a crew member designated the 'bomber'.



completed their training in

New Zealand were retained in country; either as instructors, staff pilots, or manning operational squadrons formed during the latter half of the war. In 1940, before the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan was fully developed, New Zealand also trained 183 observers and 395 air gunners for the RAF. From 1943 onwards, **the training of wireless operator/air gunners, and navigators was carried on in New Zealand for Pacific operations**. In addition, some 2,910 pilots were trained to elementary standards and sent to Canada to continue their training. More than 2,700 wireless operator/air-gunners, 1,800 navigators, and 500 bombardiers passed through the Initial Training Wing before proceeding to Canada. Of the 131,000 trainees who graduated in Canada under the Commonwealth Air Training Plan, **New Zealanders formed 5.3%**. ◀



In a letter written by Lawrence Luxton, from Ottawa 18-02-1944, to his wife Alice, there was reference to the Canadian weather.

SALVATIONIST MILITARY SERVICE

Your Family's Story

We would love to know your family's story connected to men and women in military service, and please consider donating pertinent material to Archives.



THE SALT OF GOD'S WORD IN AN AERODROME.—An incident of the present war. A pilot officer reads from the New Testament to his fellow-pilots as they are waiting for the word to take the air for the night's operations.

The War Cry 27 March 1943 pg3.



Lawrence Luxton's training group in Canada c1944.

BILL HAWKINS

Mustang and Spitfire Pilot



▶ Bill Hawkins, Wellington City Corps bandsman, enlisted in the RNZAF in February 1941 and went to Canada for pilot training in May. He completed training on 1 Sept and embarked for the UK on 15 Sept where he was attached to the RAF. He flew 60 missions, logging 814 flying hours in Spitfires and Mustangs with the RAF. It was reported in the New Zealand press that Bill was one of the first two fighter pilots to fly over the German frontier, "They flew Mustangs to within a few miles of Bremen, shooting up an enemy camp, a factory, a gasometer, and barges on the Dortmund-Ems canal. The whole flight covered a journey of over 700 miles." ◀



Hawkins' cornet - donated by the family to cornet soloist Ray Atherfold.



A Mustang flown by Hawkins.

Brigadier and Mrs. J. Hawkins, with their daughter, Joyce, and son, Beverley, attended a private investiture at Government House, at which decorations for bravery were posthumously awarded. The Governor-General and Lady Cyril Newall, realising that the ceremony would touch tender chords of love and sorrow, arranged for it to be in separate family parties. Their Excellencies spent ten minutes in conversation with parents and children of each family, making their personal expression of sympathy individual to each one. In presenting to the Brigadier the Distinguished Flying Cross medal awarded to his son, Bill, Sir Cyril read the citation, and added that the decoration was much more than a recognition of duty done; it denoted the accomplishing of some outstanding achievement. The gracious kindly sympathy of their Excellencies was as a balm to the bereaved.

A report by RAF Fighter Command (27 September 1943) says, "Mustang I AP254 - took off at 0620 with one other and failed to return. The two Mustangs attacked five E-boats off the island of Terschelling and when returning 40 miles west of Den Helder were intercepted by two enemy fighters. During the engagement AP254 was shot down into the sea. The pilot is commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial." That pilot was Bill Hawkins. Only the previous day the Squadron received official word that Hawkins had been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.



LT-COLONEL LAWRENCE WEGGERY

Spitfire Pilot

▶ Sydney Lawrence Emil Weggery enlisted for military service in June 1940. After passing through the New Zealand Air Crew training system Lawrence started his flying career as a Flying Officer flying Harvards in Canada. While waiting for an operational posting in England he volunteered to serve in India against the Japanese. 'Anywhere that was warmer and had more food than England sounded good!' Initially flying Hurricanes, Lawrence had his first experience of flying the Spitfire on 11 October 1943. It immediately made an impression. 'I enjoyed a smooth powerful takeoff, much more kick-in-the-back than the old Hurricane.'



The Spitfire proved a beautiful plane to fly. The two Spitfires that Lawrence flew were both named 'Verna June', named after his sister Verna. It was while flying Verna June that he was given the nickname 'One Leg Weg' because during a take-off one of his tyres went flying past him; he radioed the base explaining his predicament and by the time he had lined himself up to land the fire trucks and ambulance were waiting for him, all expecting the worst upon landing. However, he was able to hold her steady and land on one wheel. From then on, to the ground crew he was known as 'One Leg Weg'!

Lawrence was hospitalised on 19 May 1944 with malaria. Convalescing at the 47th British Military Hospital in Calcutta. He never flew operationally again. Earlier, in 1943, he was invited to join a serviceman's band run by The Salvation Army. The Salvation Army became his spiritual home. It was in Calcutta that he met Enid (his wife to be), the daughter of Danish Salvation Army Officers on missionary service in India They were commissioned as Salvation Army Officers on 7 February 1946 and gave 39 years of active officer service! ◀

LAWRENCE (LAURIE) LUXTON

Bomber Command

▶ Lawrence Luxton was a soldier and bandsman of The Salvation Army Waimate Corps.

He went into military service in 1942. After preparation in New Zealand he went for advanced training in Canada during 1943 and 1944. Some mail was addressed to Ottawa, while others went to Paulsen, northwest of Winnipeg. Most of the trainees went across Canada by train. By the time destinations were confirmed enroute, some of these locations had already been passed. Many had more days of rail travel going back to their correct training destination.

Laurie and his wife Alice corresponded more than 250 times during Laurie's time



Flight Officer Lawrence Luxton.



Laurie's Royal New Zealand Air Force cap badge.



WWII Royal New Zealand Air Force shoulder patch.

away in military service. This included while training in Canada and when later he was based in the United Kingdom.

Laurie was trained as a bomber, but because he arrived in the war arena late in the war, many of his flights to Europe involved the repatriation or evacuation of prisoners of war, repatriation of refugees, supply drops etc.

After the war, in 1955, Laurie & Alice moved to Sydenham Corps where they remained in service as Salvationists. ◀



Flight Officer Luxton's 'Member's Pass' - available in the UK.

In November 1894 The Salvation Army began the Naval and Military League to communicate with Salvationist sailors and soldiers. Services expanded over the years to include facilities and buildings.

During World War II, in the UK, it was known as the Naval, Military and Air Force League. By this time the services provided by The Salvation Army came under the Red Shield banner.

Consequently, in 1947, the name changed to Red Shield Services League.