



Photo by Cristian Schrik

Escort Home

Two Aero L 159 ALCAs (Advanced Light Combat Aircraft) from the Czech Air Force fly off the left wing of a NATO E-3A AWACS Sept. 24 during a flight from Ostrava, Czech Republic, to NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen, Germany.

NATO Ambassadors visit base, gain understanding of Component

By Staff Sgt. R. Michael Longoria

NATO Ambassadors from 13 countries visited the E-3A Component at NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen on Oct. 11.

The ambassadors attended a base tour and flew on an E-3A AWACS to gain a better understanding of the Component's mission and what it offers to NATO commanders.

Upon arriving at the gate early in the morning, the ambassadors were escorted to the E-3A Club, where they were welcomed by the NATO Early Warning & Control Force commander and the Component Commander, Brig. Gen. Andrew Mueller.

"Welcome to a one of a kind, multi-national operation," General Mueller said. "Geilenkirchen is the only air base in NATO operated by 17 nations working in partnership to accomplish

a common goal. As a NATO commander, I operate this installation to support the E-3A Component mission around the world."

Following the general's remarks, the "VIPs" signed the Component's guestbook, a common tradition for all important base visitors. The ambassadors received a two-hour briefing about the Component. The briefing covered everything from the history and future of the Force to the challenges and issues the Component faces on a daily basis.

The ambassadors met with an aircraft commander and a tactical director, who covers the crew step briefing for their flight.

The ambassadors split up and boarded to separate aircraft, one with a crew from Squadron 1 and the other with a crew from Squadron 3. "The flight is a chance for the

ambassadors to get first-hand look at the AWACS and the capabilities it and our air crews provide to NATO," the general said.

The two orientation flights lasted about four hours and included air-

to-air refueling by a KC-135 from the Ohio Air National Guard's 121st Air Refueling Wing.

The ambassadors proceeded to the training wing for a mission debriefing, which was the end of the visit.



Photo by Andrea Hohenforst

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Making lasting impressions at NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen

By Brig. Gen. Andrew Mueller
E-3A Component commander

"Es gibt keine zweite Chance für einen ersten Eindruck" for me translates to "first impressions are lasting impressions" and after my first 90 days back at NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen, I am very impressed with what I have seen here in the E-3A Component.

Everyday I meet outstanding professionals who make an invaluable contribution to the Component and are extremely proud of the job they have in supporting our mission.

My impression of the Component today matches the lasting impression I left with in 1997 – this is a one-of-a-kind multi-national NATO operational unit delivering the most modern AWACS capability to support NATO commanders everywhere. To sustain this impression my initial effort as your Component commander is focused in three areas.

First, I must ensure the Component is able to sustain the operational taskings we have today. Our support to ongoing NATO operations and our readiness commitment to NATO Response Force must be maintained. Be certain, our performance in these operations have made and continue to make a lasting impression on NATO Commanders. Preserving our current capability to meet these taskings is absolutely essential.

Second, I will work to promote opportunities for all of us to share in the rich heritage of all the nations which comprise our Component. The multi-national environment here at NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen is very special. I hope you recognize the opportunities here to develop friendships among fellow members of the Component which are certain to last well beyond your tour at NATO Airbase Geilenkirchen.

Finally, in partnership with Force Command, I will work to set the

course for the Component to enable us to sustain the E-3A capability for NATO for 15 to 20 more years. To be clear, many areas of our operation have evolved since 1997 and it is time to recognize these evolutions and set a sustainable path for the Component for the long-term. This path must include increased efficiency to ensure we are using our nations' resources in the most effective way possible.

My initial effort in this third area will be to support the Force commander in accomplishing a Force Review for the entire NATO Airborne Warning and Control Force. I am keenly aware that this review can create uncertainties within the force. It is my commitment to you to make the information involving this review open to all members of the Component. Equally important, this review offers each of you an opportunity to inject your experience into the future of the Component. I look forward to hearing your ideas regarding areas

within the Component where we can improve our operations. Be certain, the decisions I take resulting from this review will only be made after deliberate discussions to ensure they set the best path for the future of the Component.

I am extremely proud to be the commander of your E-3A Component. Over the last 90 days my goal was to impress upon you the importance of the mission we do today, the unique experience we have here at Geilenkirchen to make lasting friendships among all our families and my desire to use a deliberate and open process to set the course for the future of the Component to preserve our capability for NATO commanders.



BRIG GEN ANDREW M. MUELLER

Fighting Complacency at the Component

By SMSgt. Christopher Daniels

Webster' Dictionary defines complacency as: Self-satisfaction especially when accompanied by unawareness of actual dangers or deficiencies.

Here at NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen, complacency is perhaps one of the biggest challenges we face when completing our mission! As a Component we come from diverse backgrounds, we expect things to be a certain way each time

and unless the obvious comes right out and hits us... we can be oblivious to it all. This state of mind can negatively affect many things such as productivity, quality, safety and ultimately mission accomplishment.

Here is an example: Aoccdnrig to a rschearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deosn't mtttaer in waht order the ltteers in a word are, the only iprmoetnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be at the rghit pclae. The rset can be a toatl mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit a porbelm.

This is because the human mind does not read every letter by itself, but the word as a whole.

Many of you probably didn't have much trouble reading that paragraph. It probably took you back at first, but then you were able to zip right through the text and understand the content.

This is an example of how complacency works with our minds. We get used to words starting with certain letters and being a certain

length and we skip right over it "thinking" we know what the word is.

In reading paragraphs it's not a big deal... however when it comes to safety, complacency can be a literal killer on the job. Each moment we are working with hazardous energy, operating aircraft engines, forklifts, drill press, automobiles or even walking from one end of the facility to the other, we must keep focused on the task at hand.

See COMPLACENCY on page 7



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Design reviews completed for upgrade to US, NATO AWACS flight deck



Photo by Andrea Hohenforst

Boeing has successfully completed a system preliminary design review on a flight deck and avionics upgrade to the U.S. and NATO AWACS fleets. The upgraded flight deck will feature five main glass displays, offering the pilot and co-pilot user-friendly and customizable engine, navigation and radar data.

By David Sloan

Two major design reviews were completed last month for the flight deck and avionics upgrade to the U.S. and NATO Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) fleets.

Under a \$368 million engineering, manufacturing and development contract, Boeing will integrate new and existing avionics and communications systems, upgrade one aircraft for each AWACS fleet, flight test and qualify the new systems, develop logistics support data and train flight crews and maintenance personnel.

Boeing, along with 60 representatives for the U.S. Air Force and NATO – and key suppliers Rockwell Collins and Telephonics –

participated in a system preliminary design review in Kent, Wash. The review was completed a month ahead of schedule.

During the preliminary design review, Boeing used an immersive 3-D development environment to provide AWACS pilots and maintainers with a realistic view of the flight deck and electronics bay.

“Our Air Vehicle team’s computer models were integrated with and actual AWACS pilot’s seat,” said Jon Hunsberger, Boeing AWACS program manager.

“A pilot wore a special helmet and 3-D glasses, and by moving his head side to side or up and down he could easily see the flight deck design and evaluate how all the pieces fit together.”

Spanish Policy Makers visit E-3A Component

By Maj. Ignacio Lanzat

As part of US-NATO Program for Policy Makers, a Spanish delegation visited the E-3A Component at NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen on Oct. 4.

The group was composed of Spanish Parliament, Ministry of the Presidency, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Defense representatives.

The group was welcomed at the E-3A Club by the Spanish Senior National Representative and IT Wing Commander Col. Juan Ramón del Río Nieto, who briefed the group on the Component’s mission, structure and the Spanish contribution.

Brig. Gen. Andrew Mueller, Component commander, joined the briefing to welcome the group.

The commander highlighted the multinational character of the Component that provides a highly



Photo by Andrea Hohenforst

visible symbol of Alliance cohesion and solidarity. The briefing was followed by a walkthrough of an E-3A AWACS where the delegation was informed about the jet’s latest

technological capabilities and the roles played by each crew member. The visit was an opportunity to publicize the NAEW&C Programme, and the E-3A as an essential part of

Air Battle Management, reviewing its capabilities such as airborne surveillance, command and control, and communications as well as ongoing operations.

FOB Trapani receives new maintenance equipment



Courtesy photo

A crane moves new maintenance equipment into place at FOB Trapani, Italy.

A project to have the same de-humidifiers and frequency converters used for the maintenance support of the E3A fleet at the MOB Geilenkichen in place at all forward operation bases and locations began in early 2000.

The first de-humidifiers and frequency converters were installed at Ørland, Norway in 2003, and then followed by Konya, Turkey, and Aktion, Greece.

With the hand-over of de-humidifiers and frequency converters to the FOB Trapani, Italy, the project was officially completed in September 2012.

This endeavor started out in March 2012 with the delivery of the de-humidifiers & frequency converters. Due to issues with the power supply and testing, the equipment could not be handed to FOB personnel for use.

In a combined effort by FOB Trapani, Italian Contractor, BwDLZ, E3A-Component and Piller Contractor personnel, the final connection to the power supply was completed, checked and tested.

For testing the full load of the frequency converters, an E3A - aircraft deployed to FOB Trapani to use the on board radar.

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Change in leadership for Flying Squadron 2

By Chief Master Sgt. Niel Passaro

Flying Squadron 2 held an elegant change-of-command ceremony to pay tribute to the outgoing commander and welcome a new commander on Sept. 21.

With the E-3A Component Operations Wing Commander, Col. John Backstrom, presiding over the ceremony Lt. Col. Francesco Candian relinquished command of the squadron and Lt. Col. Jose Romero formally accepted his new role as the unit's leader.

Candian commanded Squadron 2 since last year and will assume a new position at the E-3A Standardization & Evaluation Division as a navigator.

Romero, the new Squadron 2 Commander, moved from his role as

a pilot in Flying Squadron 3. He now has the privilege to command one of the three flying squadrons assigned to NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen.

Flying Squadron 2 was formed in September 1982. The fledgling squadron's first-ever deployment was to support Exercise "Maple Flag" with only 23 crewmembers and support personnel. Since then, the squadron has participated in ten different real-world operations. Likewise, this squadron has operated in several deployed locations continuously since January 2011 to support Operation Afghan Assist.

On behalf of Squadron 2, I would like to wish Colonel Candian the best of luck with his new assignment and I would like to welcome Colonel Romero as the new commander of this superb organization.



Photo by Andrea Hohenforst
Lt. Col. Francesco Candian (left) and Lt. Jose Romero shake hands after signing the official transfer of authority certificates with Col. John Backstrom on Sept. 21 at the E-3A Club.



Photo by Andrea Hohenforst

Flying Squadron 3 welcomes new leader

The E-3A Component held a change-of-command ceremony for Flying Squadron 3 on Oct. 8. Col. John Backstrom, Component's Operations Wing commander, presided over the handover of command from Lt. Col. Ekkehard Heinichen to Lt. Col. Daniel Held. Lieutenant Colonel Held is the 11th commander in the squadron's 27 year history.

COMPLACENCY

Continued from page 3

There is much danger in going into "autopilot" when working on the job.

All too often we don't realize how complacent we are until we have a near miss or close call.

These close calls tend to jump start our hearts and focus our attention... at least for a little while. Unfortunately, the line between near miss and catastrophe is razor thin.

This was recently the case in May 2012 at a deployed location, where an E-3A Component member accidentally discharged his firearm in his dormitory.

The bullet exited the room through a side wall and entered an occupied neighboring room. Luckily the only minor injuries were sustained; however, this could easily have been fatal.

One technique found to be effective in battling complacency in your own actions, is to watch the actions of others while they work. This has a dual-fold effect since it

Head of Component safety has a new but familiar face

By Janina Bien

The E-3A Component has a new face of safety and it is a familiar one.

After relinquishing command of Squadron 3, Lt. Col. Ekkehard Heinichen, initially assigned to the Component in April 2002, took over as the chief of the Safety Division on Oct. 9.

"I'm looking forward to my new position, which is giving me a new perspective and a greater vision of the Component's mission," Heinichen said.

"As a squadron commander, my focus was on the daily flying mission but, as the chief of safety, my focus has to be on providing a continuously safe environment for the Component to conduct operations in."

Heinichen added that his experience as the commander of Squadron 3 will be beneficial but there will still be a few challenges.

"I have a very good understanding of what happens on the operational side of the house, but now I have to learn about other facets of the Component's mission such as logistics and maintenance," he said.



Photo by Andrea Hohenforst
Lt. Col. Ekkehard Heinichen.

raises your awareness as you examine the actions of coworkers as they are working and it may raise your coworker's awareness if you share with them some of the observations you made that would allow them to do their job in a safe manner. It can be a win-win for everyone.

As leaders, we must challenge complacency with new ideas. Sometimes, by considering alternative approaches, we can actually confirm the current one is indeed the best. So even if you don't find a better approach, trying to do so can be of great benefit.

"We need to sustain the Component mission without letting complacency creep in to our daily operations," said Brig. Gen. Andrew Mueller, Component commander. "Watch out for each other, take care of each other, be alert and be the professionals that we know we are."

We can do this by being alert at all times to our environment and standing ready to take action at a moments notice. Whether you are a newcomer or seasoned veteran of the Component, complacency must be challenged in all situations, at home, at work and abroad.

Too social or not too social (media)

By Capt Wilko ter Horst

Not so long ago, my wife and I attended one of the many birthday parties our family holds each year. At the last birthday party we launched into a very interesting discussion on youngsters and social media behavior. My brother-in-law asked me, in my capacity as a senior communication advisor, for my opinion on children using social media. He wanted my clear opinion about his statement; "the new generation of pro-social-media youngsters and adolescents are generally dissocialized and antisocial".

Here are some of the arguments that flew across the table faster than an AWACS.

The youngsters: "We are very social; we have so many friends on the internet." The older guys: "But how many of them are real friends that you see and meet?" The youngsters: "I like sharing with my friends, telling them what I do, how I live, what my interests are." The older guys: "What about the risks of sharing everything, all your personal details? So much for privacy."

I'm always very careful about giving my opinion on paper, but this discussion was very interesting and so were the arguments. Why?

First of all let me state that my opinion comes from both a professional and a personal view on social media. I use social media not only within my job but also in my private life, and I encourage my children to make 'responsible use' of social media. That is my parental responsibility.

Our way of communicating has changed tremendously in recent years. But didn't it also change when Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone in 1878? Just imagine the impact it must have had. No need for long-distance travel, but simply dialing a few numbers and talking

to people that you hadn't spoken for many, many years. The world became a lot smaller from that moment on. And people probably had the same discussions as we are now having: "Why do you call me, instead of coming by to see me?" In that changing world, were people regarded antisocial when they used the telephone?

I don't think that our youngsters (or should I call them 'the social media generation?') are a dissocialized and generally antisocial generation. No, they just have a different way of socializing and communicating. They use different means of connecting to people. On the other hand, how many of us 'grown ups' use social media? Do we keep the right balance between what we think is socially acceptable and what is too much.....?

The internet has drastically changed our world and the way we communicate. And the youngsters have grown up in this changing internet world. And yes, we, the older generation, sometimes find it difficult to see our youngsters sharing their whole life on Facebook and Twitter and being unable to live without their smartphone. It is their way of being social. Is it always the correct way?

I wouldn't call this antisocial, but rather as being social in a different way. And keep in mind in Europe and North America more than 75% of all young people use these means of communication. They use it at school (for e-learning) and to communicate with friends, sharing the things they do and being social in their world. Taking away their smartphone is also taking away their social life! They use social media as tools to communicate and share their lives with others. Could you live without your mobile (smart)phone?

Social media are a key aspect of the new landscape, the new environment in which our youngsters are working



through the process of becoming autonomous adults, and we need to support them as they do so. I do believe that our job as parents is to help them manage all this wisely, to understand and where possible to avoid some of the special dangers and consequences of making mistakes in these media. After all, sharing your life on social media is not without risks.

So the discussion lasted till late in the evening, and I guess at the end we found a good balance between the older and the younger members of the group. We all agreed that social media are a fact of life and an important communication tool. I guess this all has to do with finding the balance between our older generation's opinion on social behavior and how our youngsters behave socially nowadays.

Social media is watching you!

As I stated before, sharing your life on social media is not without risks. Every time you press 'enter' your information is out on the internet. Is it definite? Yes..... It is an irreversible action.

In a military organization we have to be even more careful with the

(operational) information we share on social media. I know.....the picture of the BBQ in MeS was super and you really wanted to share it via Facebook. But did all other colleagues in the picture as well? Be restrictive with operational pictures and remarks especially when your colleagues or the Component is involved.

Realize that it is not only you that uploads information on the internet. It is watching and being watched. With every deployment and air show people will share your actions as AWACS crew on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

We are past the time that big brother alone was watching you. We arrived in a new era and literally the whole world is watching you now.

Use common sense when sharing pictures, videos and information as a Component member on your social media. Check with colleagues if they mind and when in doubt, don't share it.

New Component guidelines for the use of social media are being prepared and will provide guidance for military use of social media. More on that in the next Skywatch.



Smile, you are on radar, camera, video, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, etc.

For the cure

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. R. Michael Longoria

A group of non-commission officers, Geilenkirchen's Team 5/6, held their third annual "Tri-Border 5k Fun Run/Walk" on Oct. 12 at NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen, Germany, to raise money for Breast Cancer Awareness Month (BCAM).

BCAM is an annual international health campaign, which takes place

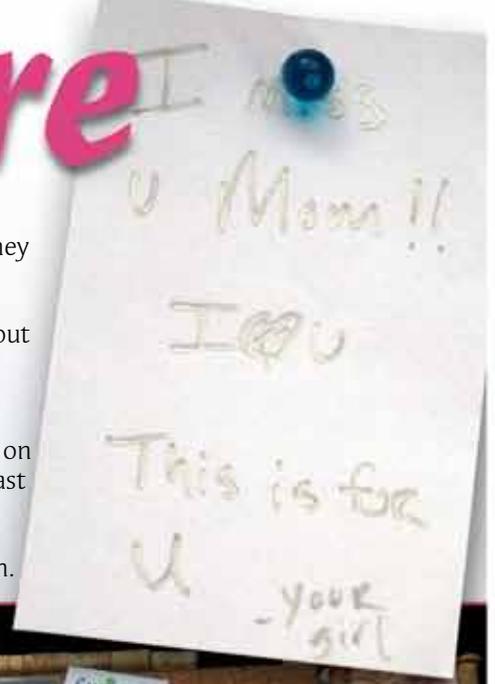
every October with events are held around the world to raise awareness of the disease and to collect funds for research into its cause, preventions, diagnosis, treat and cure as well as offering information and support to those affected by breast cancer.

The base's BCAM event, which included a bake sale, had more than 134 participants. Team 5/6 was able to collect 1,333 euro to give to Breast

Cancer Aid and Research Institute, which gives 99 percent of the money donated directly to the cause.

More than 45 volunteers came out to help make the event successful.

The Geilenkirchen U.S. Air Force Health Promotions office was also on hand at the event to hand out breast cancer education material to all participants and encourage exams for early detections and prevention.



Danish community celebrates Air Force's 62nd Anniversary

By Janina Bien

The Danish Senior National Representative (SNR), Lt. Col. Mikael V. Nielsen, together with the Danish community on base gathered at the E-3A Club on Oct. 11 for a special celebration, the Royal Danish Air Force's 62 Anniversary.

"Despite the fact that we are a relatively young service, we do like traditions," remarked the Danish SNR. "The first tradition is to start the celebration with a toast. I would therefore invite you to join me in a toast for Margrethe the second Queen of Denmark."

The Royal Danish Air Force was established on Oct. 1, 1950. However, this year is special for the Royal Danish Air Force as it is the celebration of the 100th anniversary of military aviation in Denmark. In 1912, Denmark introduced its very first military aircraft, a Henry-Farman biplane called 'Glenten' on a small military air field just outside of Copenhagen. In those days military aviation was in support of the naval operations and the first Danish flying school was also established in a naval framework.

Today the Danish Air Force is considerable more powerful and has demonstrated the true value of being an independent but integrated component of the Danish Armed Forces on numerous occasions. Because of this independence, the Danish Air Force military aviation has

developed itself and is today capable of embracing all disciplines within modern air power.

Nielsen proudly honored his comrades by stressing that "the true foundation of the Royal Danish Air Force is its personnel - dedicated, well trained and educated and most of all loyal and flexible. They make things happen. For example when we need to deploy a C-130, a F-16 or a mobile air control unit to places in the world, where we thought it would not be possible. In Denmark, we proudly claim that small is beautiful. But despite the fact that we are a small air force our contribution to global peace and security is significant."

Some recent examples are the Danish F-16 contribution to NATO's Operation Baltic Air Policing that is still ongoing. Furthermore, on several occasions during 2011 and 2012 Danish C-130 supported ISAF embedded in the British Expeditionary Air Wing 904 or the Danish participation of six F-16 aircraft from Fighter Wing Skrydstrup from Denmark to assist in maintaining the no-fly zone over Libya as part of the 2011 coalition intervention in Libya last year in March. Finally, the Danish Air Control Wing deployed their Mobile Air Control Centre to Afghanistan claiming full mission capable on Feb. 29, 2012.

"Although our Air Force is small, all our efforts must be seen in a multinational context," Nielsen



Courtesy Photo

Members of the E-3A Component's Danish community sip from their glasses after toasting to their Queen while celebrating the Royal Danish Air Force's 62nd Anniversary.

stated. "The most important multinational organization for Denmark is NATO and this is why we are able to celebrate this birthday today here in GK together. It is a privilege for all the Danes here to serve and fight together with our NATO allies and friends. We are still engaged in Operation Afghan Assist, Operation Active Endeavour and I am sure we still think back with great pride on our contribution to the liberation of Libya."

He further stressed that "NATO AWACS and my Air Force share the same general challenges but also aspirations. We are both faced with reduced resources within manpower and budgets, but so far without corresponding reductions in the level of ambition. But despite of this, both organizations continue to support

missions worldwide and at the same time striving to become ever more expeditionary. Being part of NATO operations definitely is a great source of inspiration and experience for all Danish Component members."

After the official opening words and the presentation of two well deserved national medals for participating in OAA and OUP were awarded to OR-7 Claus Bindslev, all guests were invited to join in a Danish birthday tradition.

"Whenever we celebrate a birthday we always shout three 'hurrahs' to wish good faith for the birthday child," explained the SNR before all guests saluted the Royal Danish Air Force and all guests and family members of the Danish contingency were invited for a BBQ.

Local police officers bike through GK

By Janina Bien

On Sept. 28, about 50 policemen and women on bicycles arrived at NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen to take a break from a 55 kilometer ride.

The police officers are part of the Fietstocht Euregio, an association of Belgian, Dutch and German bicycle policemen and women, who met this year for the 20th time.

"We are colleagues from different cities of the Euregio and every year we do a bicycle tour together," explains the biker policeman Roy Boreas from Sittard, Netherlands.

"People have the choice of two routes varying between 55 and 95 km in total."

This year, one of the bike tour routes led to the E-3A Component.

This particular route started in Sittard and bikers rode through the German Selfkant area in the direction of Geilenkirchen. Thereafter they headed back to the Netherlands using the Component's West Gate in order to continue toward Schinnen and back to Sittard.

During their hour break on base, Chief Master Sgt. Roel Slot from the Electronic Maintenance Squadron

used the opportunity to present the police officers with a briefing on the Component's various mission and tasks.

The group of visitors are from various regions in the local area including Aachen and Heinsberg (Germany), Eupen, Luik, Bilzen and Maaseik (Belgium) as well as from Heerlen, Kerkrade, Maastricht and Sittard (the Netherlands).



Photos Andrea Hohenforst

(Above) Local police officers bike through the front gate.

(Left) Policers officers from the Euregio Fietstocht pose for a group photo while taking a break at NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen from their 55 kilometer bike ride.

Check this out: TF Committee raises €16,767.07 for cancer research

By Sgt. Randy Dowden

On behalf of the Geilenkirchen Terry Fox Committee, Lt. Col. Douglas Fairly and Maj. Sullivan presented a check for 16.767,07 euros to the German Cancer Society (Deutsche Krebshilfe) on Oct. 4.

The money was raised by the committee during August and September through various fundraisers such as a car wash and the TF Run on NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen.

The presentation ceremony was attended by students and teachers at the Städtische Realschule, the Terry Fox Committee members and several personnel from the Canadian Contingent NATO Airborne Early Warning Forces and the Canadian Forces Support Unit Europe.

This year marked the 32nd anniversary of the Terry Fox "Marathon of Hope" and 31 years since the Geilenkirchen Terry Fox Campaign was started.

To date the committee has donated more than €280,758.60 directly to the German Cancer Society, helping them to continue their quest in search of a cure for cancer.

On behalf of the Terry Fox Foundation and as chairperson of the 2012 Geilenkirchen Terry Fox Committee, I wish to express my deepest gratitude to everyone who participated in this year's TF campaign and to all who donated generously.

I want to say thank you very much, well done, you made it all possible.



Photo by MCpl Stephen Harper.

Members of the Terry Fox Committee wait patiently on stage to present the German Cancer Society with a large check to help with cancer research.

Canadians wear poppies, remember fallen comrades

By Capt. Calogero Cumbo

You may soon notice a red spot on the uniform of Canadian Forces (CF) military members as they go about their business on base. It's a poppy.

For the period leading up to Nov. 11, which for us is Remembrance Day, the CF has authorized its members to wear a poppy.

In May of 1915, in anguish over the loss of his friend, LCol John McCrae wrote a poem. He was inspired by the wild poppies growing among the

wooden crosses marking makeshift graves in Flanders Fields, Belgium, where he was stationed. The poppy then became a popular symbol for soldiers who died in battle.

Three years later an American, Moina Michael, was working in a New York City YMCA canteen when she started wearing a poppy in memory of the millions who died on the battlefield.

During a 1920 visit to the United States, a French woman, Madame Guerin, learned of the custom.

On her return to France she decided to use handmade poppies to raise money for the destitute children in war-torn areas of the country.

In November, 1921, the first poppies were distributed in Canada. So, the poppies we wear hearken back to McCrae's poem.

We remember all those who paid the ultimate price in service to their country. Much has been written about the wars of the past, about their causes and the culpability of various parties to those aggressions. But one thing is undeniable: soldiers served their country and surrendered the rest of their lives in so doing.

The poppy is our reminder of this fact. We wear it to remember those who came before us and paid that ultimate price. We wear it to honor their memory, lest we forget.



In Flanders Fields

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow
between the crosses, row on row,
that mark our place;
and in the sky the larks,
still bravely singing,
fly scarce heard
amid the guns below.*

*We are the Dead. Short days ago
we lived, felt dawn,
saw sunset glow,
loved and were loved,
and now we lie
in Flanders fields.*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
the torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
we shall not sleep,
though poppies grow
in Flanders fields.*

Photo Andrea Hohenforst



End of an Era

By Patricia Limpinsel-Stoots

Recently, the time came to bid farewell to the last three Italian Security Forces Members assigned to the E-3A Component's Base Security Branch.

Sadly, (from right to left) OR-9 Nicola Innaro, OR-9 Alessandro Verardi and OR-6 Federico Ercole were transferred back to Italy this summer.

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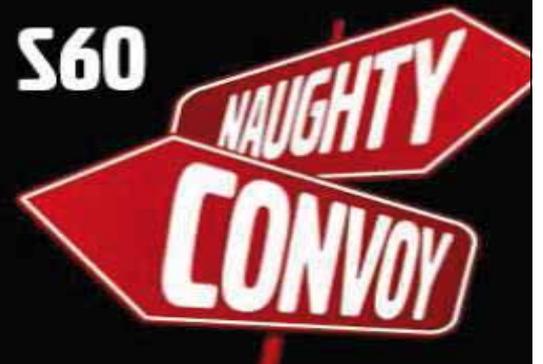


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Photo courtesy of www.winterland.be

Visit the Winterland Hasselt

The city of Hasselt organizes the Winterland event at the Kolonel Dusartplein, Hasselt, Belgium each year. From November 17 to January 6, there will be a Christmas market with more than 100 exhibitors, the largest tri-border ice skating ring, Christmas rides, a merry-go-round and the House of Santa Claus. For more information, check the website www.winterland.be.

Locations nearby for real-life history lessons: Henri-Chapelle and Bastogne

Story and photos by Leon Koolen

If you are looking for a day trip in the local area for a day when the weather is not that great, here are a few suggestions:

Take a look at the American World War II military cemetery in Henri-Chapelle, Belgium, and see the impressive number of more than 8,000 graves. You will also notice how respectful the United States honors its soldiers who died in combat.

Inside the memorial building there is a small chapel and a small museum with large wall maps showing the major battles in North-West Europe. Here you can find a free brochure with some guidance for visitors.

The self-guide brochure provides facts and figures about the cemetery such as: in 33 cases, two brothers are buried side by side; one family even lost three sons: you can find the graves of the Tester brothers in row B14/18-19-20. The grave of William Nellis – a fighter pilot after whom Nellis Air Force Base is named – can be found in row G8/34.

Details

Henri Chapelle is only about 40 minutes away from Geilenkirchen. The parking lot is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Address

Rue du Mémorial Américain, 159
4852 Hombourg, Belgium

Interested in more WWII history? Then just drive another hour south to Bastogne, Belgium. Bastogne became the center of some severe fighting which took place around Christmas 1944. The battle is known as the 'Battle of the Bulge', and was the last German offensive. On the main square (Place Général McAuliffe), you can see an American Sherman tank and a statue of General McAuliffe, commander of the U.S. 101st Airborne Division.

About 700 meters down the road from the main street (near the church), there is a temporary WWII exhibition called "J'avais 20 ans en 1945" (I was 20 years old in 1945). Explanations are also given in English. One particularly interesting part of this exhibition is the mirror room, which gives visitors the impression of standing in a war cemetery. In front of the graves, there is a computer monitor showing digital images of the soldiers whose names are on the graves. A nice way to put a face with the name.

Address

Ancien Séminaire, Place Saint Pierre
6600 Bastogne, Belgium
Web site: www.bastogne.be



Opening hours

Oct. 1 to Dec. 31, 2011
Open every day, except on Fridays
from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (you can enter
until 5 p.m.)

Entrance fee

Adults: €6.50
Children under 8 years: €5
Children over 8 years: free

The next stop on your trip could be the Bastogne Historical Center, about 10 minutes outside the village. Although the historical center is currently closed for renovation (until April 2012), it is still worthwhile taking a look at the nearby "Mardasson", the huge, impressive war monument commemorating the Ardennes Offensive.

Address

Colline du Mardasson, 6600 Bastogne
Web site:
www.bastognehistoricalcenter.be

An interesting detail: On the road leading to the Bastogne historical

center, you will find a kind of border pole with the inscription "1147".

This is actually the last of 1,147 concrete poles which mark the "Voie de la Liberté", the route of the 3rd U.S. Army after the landing in Normandy, one pole for every kilometer. Definitely worth a photo! The first pole with the number "00" is located at one of the landing sites in Normandy, Utah Beach.



MWA INFORMATION November

Visit the Services Branch WSS Web Page for the latest programme information and upcoming events.

Oct. 26 – Whisky Tasting

Andy Holmes will present a "Nosing and Tasting" of five great malt whisky's from Scotland on Oct. 26 at 7:30 p.m. at the E-3A Club. The cost for MWA card holders is 19,90 euro, which includes finger foods. Available seating is limited, so get your tickets now. For more information, call Rene Peeters at ext. 4990.

Oct. 27 – Annual Tri-Border Halloween Bash

A Halloween Bash will be held at Brunssum's International Conference Center on Oct. 27 at 9 p.m. Tickets for the event cost 25 euro and include all you can eat food and beer, dancing, games and a costume contest with prizes for first, second and third place. Also included with the ticket purchase is a souvenir Bat Coin. On-site lodging and designated drivers are also available. For more information or to purchase a ticket, call Staff Sgt. Chelsea Hermon at +49 (0)2451-99-3345 or Staff Sgt. Brandon Bilger at bbilger@e3a.nato.int.

Oct. 30 – IYA Swimming Classes

Swimming classes for beginners and advanced beginners for children ages 4 and up starts on Oct. 30 at the Hallenbad Geilenkirchen. Classes

will be held Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:45 to 5:45 p.m. The certified instructors speak English and German. The cost for 12 lessons is 78,50 euro or 55 euro with a valid MWA card. For more information or to register, call the IYA Office at ext. 4955.

Oct. 31 – "Trunk or Treat" Halloween

"Trunk or Treat" Halloween will be held at Schinnen on Oct. 31 from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Entry costs \$3 or 2 euro and includes the "Trunk or Treat" Trail, a haunted house and other children's activities in the Community Activity Center. The event is open to U.S. and NATO identification card holders. Dutch guest can register by calling +31 (0)46-443-7331.

Be sure to reserve a table or a space for your car on the "Trunk or Treat" trail by stopping by the USAGE Schinnen Fitness Center or calling +31 (0)46-443-7561. You are required to supply 400 individually

wrapped pieces of candy. If you run out, FMWR will backfill your table or trunk with additional treats.

Nov. 9 – Parent's Night Out

Enjoy a night out while the CYSS at JFC Brunssum takes care of your children on Nov. 9 from 6:30 to 11:30 p.m. Children must be registered with the CYSS. Care, which includes a light dinner, is \$20 for one child and \$18 for each additional sibling. AFC benefits can be used. To sign up, call Parent Central Services at +31 (0)45-526-3121 or visit JFC Building H-505 to make reservations. Fees are non-refundable. A minimum of nine children must be enrolled for the CYSS to offer the event. If not enough people sign up, cancellation of the event will occur by close of business on Nov. 8.

Nov. 21 – Thanksgiving Lunch

A Thanksgiving-style lunch will be served at the Rotodome on Nov. 21. The menu will consist of pumpkin

soup, ham with pineapple sauce, turkey with gravy, mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes, stuffing, green beans and corn, salad bar and apple pie. The price for the lunch will be 10 euro or 7 euro with a valid MWA card. Both serving lines will be used for this special meal.

Nov. 23 – Bavarian Breakfast

A Bavarian Breakfast will be held at the Rotodome on Nov. 23 from 7 to 10:45 a.m. The breakfast will include a warm breakfast with weisswurst, sweet mustard and a Brezel. The price of the breakfast is 5 euro for MWA card holders. Weizen beer (Trüb, Dark or Alc. free) will also be available for 1,70 euro with an MWA card.

Dec. 1 – IYA Christmas Market Trip to Trier

The IYA will host a trip to the Trier Christmas Market on Dec. 1 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. The market offers various Christmas booths set up on the medieval streets and squares of the oldest city in Germany. For 22 euro, or 15 euro with a valid MWA card, you can enjoy Roman sights, great shopping and wonderful places to eat and drink. For more information or to register, call the IYA Office at ext. 4955.

New Special Editions of NATO AWACS E-3A Component watch

The artwork for two new editions of NATO AWACS wristwatches featuring the E-3A Component logo were on display during the Component's 30 Year Jubilee. The opportunity to get one of the specially designed watches is now.

One of the new models is a sporty, stylish quartz watch suitable for any wearer, male or female. This pilot watch is waterproof and designed to show the time very clearly, so it is easy to use. A special feature is the availability of interchangeable wristbands in ten different colors: black, yellow, white, orange, red, purple, blue, transparent, green and dark blue. The basic watch is of modular design so that a wristband with click fastening can be easily fitted or removed.

Each Special Edition Fortis watch featuring the NATO AWACS E-3A Component logo will cost €138. This price also includes one colored wristband. Each additional colored

wristband costs €40. To enable production of this version to start soon, firm orders for at least 80 watches of this type are needed, so the watches can be delivered in December.

The second new model is a classic mechanical automatic chronograph similar to the well-known 25th Anniversary Limited Edition Fortis Flieger Chronograph.

This new model is based on the Fortis Pilot Professional Chronograph. The price, depending on specification, starts at approx. €1,490. To enable production of this mechanical chronograph to start soon, at least 20 firm orders are needed.

For orders contact Rene M. Peeters, E-3A Club manager, by phone at +49 (0) 2451-63-4990 or by e-mail at rpeeters@e3a.nato.int.



IWC festivities start off with splash of fall fashion

By Barb Toscano

The International Wives Club started this year's schedule with a bang, literally, during the September meeting of the ladies. The drums rolled and the cymbals crashed as the ladies of the IWC were wowed with a Fall Fashion Show courtesy of the NATEX.

The fun didn't end there on this first evening of the 2012-13 year. After a great nosh, Chris Sauser opened the microphone for vocal regalia and blunders by the ladies.

The Spanish ladies treated the crowd to La Bamba and many others showcased their talent or lack thereof. Fun and smiles were shared by all 10 countries as the evening wound to a close.

The next meeting will take place on Oct. 30 at 9:30 a.m. for a "Coffee Morning."

Everyone is encouraged to bring their kids for a small costume contest while you snuggle with friends and a warm cup of joe (coffee). See you there soon!

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