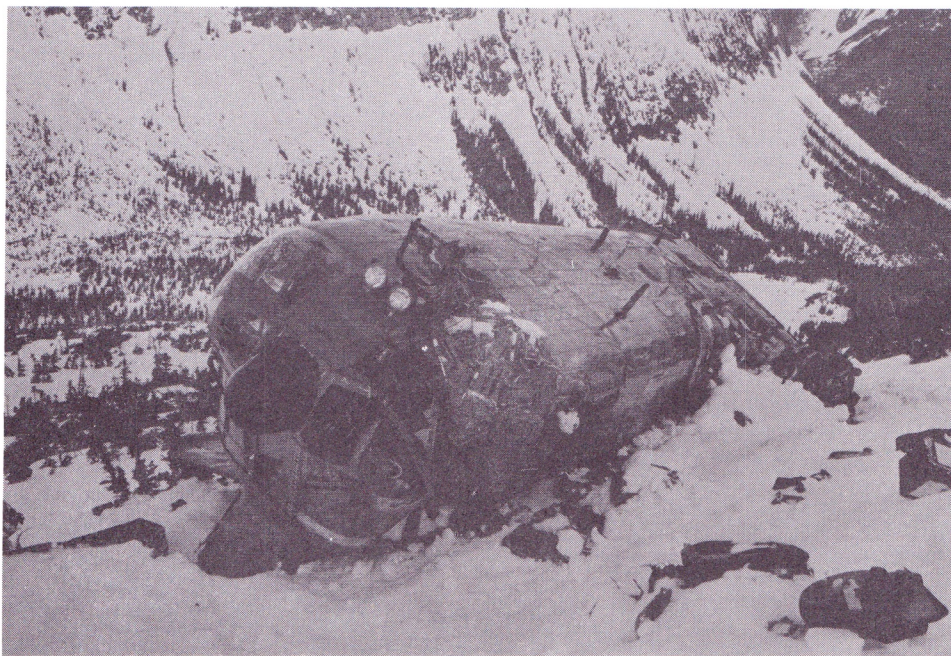


FROM THE INVESTIGATOR L'ENQUÊTEUR VOUS INFORME

(DFS 92/02)

Aircraft Occurrence Summary Résumé d'accident ou incident d'aéronef



Type: Labrador CH11311

Date: 30 Apr 92

Location: 15 NM southeast of Bella Coola, B.C.

Circumstances

The Labrador helicopter was involved in a search effort for two hikers missing in the mountains southeast of Bella Coola, B.C. On the third flight of the day the crew took-off from Bella Coola to conduct a short search flight and to pick up a four men ground

search party. The rendezvous took place on a steep rocky ridge at 5400' ASL. No suitable landing area was available in the immediate area, so it was decided to hoist the search party aboard using the one man down two men up method. The weather in the vicinity was deteriorating rapidly with variable ceilings, intermittent snow showers and strong gusty winds.

The aircraft entered a ground effect hover with the left side toward the slope. On completion of the third hoist a sudden power loss was experienced on one of the engines and the aircraft began to descend rapidly. The pilot immediately initiated a turn downslope to attempt recovery but there was insufficient altitude remaining. The aircraft struck a rocky outcropping with its left stub wing fuel tank and commenced rolling down the slope about its longitudinal axis. After four to six rolls, the aircraft came to rest inverted in deep snow approximately 400 feet downslope from the initial impact. A post crash fire emanating from the right stub wing fuel tank was controlled by the survivors.

Shortly after the initial impact the last person to be hoisted up was thrown from the aircraft. He sustained fatal injuries. Two other crew members were seriously injured and the remainder received a range of minor injuries. The fourth member of the ground search party was under the hovering aircraft when the power loss occurred. The pilots' actions to turn the aircraft downslope spared him any injury.

Another Labrador was in Bella Coola at the time of the incident. When the incident crew failed to respond to a communications check the Labrador departed to investigate. After a short search the downed aircraft was located and the survivors were hoisted aboard and flown to hospital.

Investigation

Detailed examination of the wreckage has not been possible due to hazardous conditions at the site. Investigation into the cause of the power loss will be delayed until conditions improve.

DFS Comments

The poor single engine performance of the CH-113A Labrador is well understood. The nature of the SAR role demands that the aircraft be flown in flight regimes that preclude the option of a single engine fly-out. The aircraft is operated in this role on the statistical improbability of a power loss occurring in such inopportune circumstances. In this instance, the crew had everything going against them; a high density altitude, a large number of personnel on board and no safe landing area.

RAAUZYUW RCCPJS A1002 1251845-UUUU--RCWPGVA.

ZNR UUUUU ZOC

R 011500Z MAY 92

FM NDHQ OTTAWA//A/DFS//

TO AIG 2647

AIG 13411

RCCBJQA/DCIEM TORONTO

BT

UNCLAS A/DFS 085

SIC KQA

4 Regular Support Unit
MAY 04 1992
Lancaster Park, Alberta

418
435
CFSTS
4RSU
ACC
440

TRANSIT RECORD

FILE REFERENCE 1011-1

PASSED TO	DATE	INITIALS
CO 418	5.5	RF
UFSO	5/5	9
PA/BF		
COPIES PASSED:		

SUBJ: AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT SYNOPSIS, CH11311 NEAR BELLA COOLA, B.C. 30 APR 92

1. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS PROVIDED FOR FLIGHT SAFETY PURPOSES ONLY AND CONCERNS A CH113A VOYAGEUR AIRCRAFT WHICH CRASHED DURING A SAR MISSION.

2. AT 1715 HRS (B.C TIME), 30 APR 1992 (010015Z MAY 92), RESCUE 311 FROM 442 SQUADRON CFB COMOX, CRASHED WHILE ON A SEARCH SOME 40 KM S.E. OF BELLA COOLA IN THE COAST MOUNTAIN RANGE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA. ON BOARD WERE 11 PEOPLE: EIGHT MILITARY (ONE FATAL INJURY, FOUR SERIOUS INJURIES, TWO MINOR INJURIES AND ONE UNINJURED), ONE RCMP CONSTABLE (SERIOUS INJURY), AND TWO CIVILIAN PERSONNEL (ONE SERIOUS AND ONE MINOR INJURY).

PAGE 2 RCCPJSA1002 UNCLAS

THE PERSONNEL WERE RESCUED BY ANOTHER LABRADOR
HELICOPTER - RESCUE 312.

3. INITIAL REPORTS INDICATE THAT RESCUE 311 WAS IN THE
PROCESS OF HOISTING THE GROUND SEARCH TEAM FOR SAR KOVACS AT
5600 FT ABOVE SEA LEVEL. WINDS WERE EXTREMELY VARIABLE AT THE
TIME. ON THE THIRD HOIST, THE AIRCRAFT EXPERIENCED AN APPARENT
ENGINE FAILURE, THE AC ATTEMPTED TO FLY AWAY HOWEVER THE RIGHT
FUEL TANK CONTACTED A ROCK OUTCROPING AND WAS TORN OFF AND
EXPLODED. THE AIRCRAFT THEN ROLLED DOWN THE SLOPE AND CAME TO
REST ON ITS SIDE. THE SURVIVORS EXTINGUISHED THE FIRE WITH
SNOW AND ERECTED A TENT TO PROTECT THE INJURED PERSONNEL.
RESCUE 312 ARRIVED ON SCENE WHILE A SECOND TENT WAS BEING
ERECTED AND EVACUATE THE SURVIVORS TO THE HOSPITAL IN BELLA COOLA.

4. COMMANDER AIR COMMAND HAS CONVENED A BOARD OF INQUIRY.
THE DIRECTORATE OF FLIGHT SAFETY HAS ASSIGNED TWO
ACCIDENT INVESTIGATORS TO PROCEED IMMEDIATELY TO THE SITE TO
ASSIST IN THE INVESTIGATION.

BT

#1002

PBC152 DELIVERED 1251939 019998

RAAUZYUW RCCROBA0006 1251208-UUUU--RCWPGVA.

ZNR UUUUU ZOC

RUVESLA T CANSUP PETERSON AFB CO

R 011725Z MAY 92

FM ATGHQ TRENTON

TO AIG 2642 *Amu/4RSu/418/440/BOC/CFB/RCC/435*

ZEN/CFB TRENTON//BCOMD//

ZEN/426 SQN TRENTON//CO//

ZEN/RCC TRENTON//OIC//

ZEN/CMCC TRENTON//OIC//

BT

UNCLAS COMD 098

SIC ICL

SUBJ: AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT CH11311 30 APR 92

1. WHILE INVOLVED IN A SEARCH FOR TWO HIKERS IN THE BELLA COOLA AREA OF BC, A LABRADOR HELICOPTER CH11311 FROM 442 SQN COMOX WITH TEN PERSONS ON BOARD CRASHED DURING A HOISTING SEQUENCE FOR THE GROUND SEARCH TEAM. SURVIVORS WERE AIRLIFTED TO THE BELLA COOLA HOSPITAL BY A SECOND 442 SQN CH113. INJURIES VARIED FROM SEVERE TO MINOR BUT ALL SURVIVORS ARE IN STABLE CONDITION

2. CPL YOUNG, A SAR TECH WITH 442 SQN WAS KILLED ON IMPACT AND THE NEXT OF KIN HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED. DETAILS OF THE FUNERAL SERVICE WILL

4 Regular Support Unit
 MAY 04 1992
 Lancaster Park, Alberta

TRANSIT RECORD		
FILE REFERENCE <i>1011-1</i>		
PASSED TO	DATE	INITIALS
<i>CO4RSU</i>	<i>4.5</i>	<i>AS</i>
<i>WFSO</i>	<i>4/5</i>	<i>L</i>
<i>CIRC</i>		

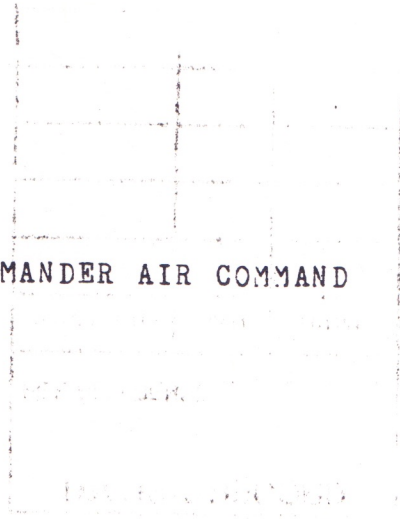
PAGE 2 RCCROBA0006 UNCLAS

BE ANNOUNCED BY THE SQUADRON

3. A BOARD OF INQUIRY HAS BEEN CONVENED BY THE COMMANDER AIR COMMAND
BT

#0006

PBC028 DELIVERED 1251212 015832



PRIORITY

PAAUZYUW RCCROBA0036 1361448-UUUU--RCWPGVA.

ZNR UUUUU ZOC

RUVESLA -T- CANSUP PETERSON AFB CO

P 151136Z MAY 92

FM ATGHQ TRENTON

TO AIG 2642

ZEN/CFB TRENTON//BCOMD//

RCWEFSA/CFB COMOX//BCOMD//

RCCBFMA/CFB NORTH BAY//BCOMD//

ZEN/426 SQN TRENTON//CO//

ZEN/2 IRISH R OF C SUDBURY//CO//

INFO RCWBOCA/AIRCOM WINNIPEG//COMD//

RCCPJSA/NDHQ OTTAWA//CADO//

RCWEWLA/MARPACHQ ESQUIMALT//COMD//

RCECGGA/CFB GREENWOOD//BCOMD//

BT

UNCLAS COMD 103

SUBJ: CRASH CH11311/ DEATH OF CPL YOUNG, 442 SQN SAR TECH

1. THE ATG FAMILY HAS BEEN NUMBED BY THE TRAGIC LOSS OF LABRADOR 311 AND DEEPLY SADDENED BY THE DEATH OF CPL PHIL YOUNG DURING A MOUNTAIN SEARCH MISSION FOR A MISSING CF CAPTAIN AND HIS WIFE.

2. IT HAS BEEN MOST REASSURING TO SEE HOW THE WHOLE SAR COMMUNITY

4 Regular Support Unit

MAY 19 1992

Lancaster Park, Alberta

AMU
4 R54
418
440
BOC
CFB
RCC-
435

TRANSIT RECORD

FILE REFERENCE 1011-1

PASSED TO	DATE	INITIALS
<i>Pine</i>	<i>19/5</i>	<i>efm</i>
PA/BF		
COPIES PASSED:		

PAGE 2 RCCROBA0036 UNCLAS

HAS RALLIED TO SUPPORT MRS. KARI YOUNG, HER FAMILY, THE SURVIVING CREW AND PASSENGERS OF 311 AND ALL THE MEMBERS OF 442 SQN. MOST NOTABLE DURING THIS DIFFICULT AND EXTREMELY STRESSFUL EXPERIENCE HAS BEEN THE TREMENDOUS EFFORT PUT FORTH BY COL MCGEE AND CFB COMOX, LCOL DROVERS STRONG LEADERSHIP AND THE EXEMPLARY PROFESSIONALISM AND RESOLVE OF THE 442 SAR CREWS. DESPITE THE CRASH, THE INJURIES AND DEATH, THE SEARCH CONTINUED AND SAR STANDBY WAS MAINTAINED JUST AS WE HAVE COME TO EXPECT FROM TRUE PROFESSIONALS. I KNOW THOSE WHO ATTENDED THE COMOX MEMORIAL SERVICE WERE COMFORTED BY THE PRESENCE OF SO MANY ACTIVE AND RETIRED SAR PERSONNEL PLUS OUR USAF PARA RESCUE/SAR COMRADES AND THE LARGE CROWD WHO FILLED THE CHAPEL. THE YOUNG FAMILY AND ATG SAR COMMUNITY WERE EQUALLY TOUCHED WITH THE FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS AND SUPPORT PROVIDED BY THE 2ND BATTALION IRISH REGIMENT OF CANADA IN SUDBURY AND THE CFB NORTH BAY CONTINGENT 3. THE CRASH OF LAB 311 AND THE DEATH OF ONE OF OUR OWN IS THE SECOND SUCH TRAGEDY WE HAVE EXPERIENCED IN JUST OVER 6 MONTHS. THE IMMEDIATE SENSE OF LOSS, OF FRUSTRATION AND EVEN ANGER IS UNDERSTANDABLE AND NATURAL IN ANY SUCH ACCIDENT. WE ARE ALL WELL AWARE THAT DESPITE THE ALMOST UNIVERSAL LOVE OF AVIATION AND THE EXCITEMENT OF FLYING, IT IS AN ACTIVITY THAT IS BY ITS VERY NATURE,

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NOT WITHOUT HAZARDS. REACTION TIMES ARE OFTEN MEASURED IN A FEW SECONDS AND THE CONSEQUENCE OF AIRCRAFT OR CREW FAILURES CAN SOMETIMES BE CATASTROPHIC. MILITARY AVIATION, DESPITE SIGNIFICANT EQUIPMENT ADVANCES SINCE ITS INCEPTION, PROMPTED BY RELENTLESS EFFORTS TO MAKE IT SAFER, IS ACKNOWLEDGED AS A HIGHER RISK ACTIVITY THAN GENERAL CIVIL AVIATION, BECAUSE OF ITS MANY UNIQUE AND DEMANDING ROLES. SEARCH AND RESCUE FLYING IS ONE OF THOSE ELITE MISSIONS WHICH IS OFTEN CONDUCTED IN THE FACE OF EXTREME ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS AND CHALLENGING OPERATIONAL SITUATIONS. WHILE NONE OF US CONDONE OR ACCEPT THE INEVITABILITY OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENTS OR DEATH IN THE PROSECUTION OF A SAR MISSION, WE ARE ALL TOO PAINFULLY AWARE OF OUR HISTORY AND THE REALITY OF FLYING IN SUCH VAST AND SOMETIMES UNFORGIVING TERRAIN AND IN THE EXTREME CLIMATIC CONDITIONS WHICH PREVAIL IN THE CANADIAN SRRS. DURING 30 YEARS OF SUCCESSFUL RESCUES FAR OUT TO SEA, OVER PITCHING VESSELS OR HEAVY TIMBER, FROM PRECARIOUS MOUNTAIN SIDES AND IN NEAR ZERO VISIBILITY, THE COLLECTIVE AND COMMENDABLE RESPONSE HAS ALWAYS BEEN TO GET THE JOB DONE, QUOTE SO THAT OTHERS MAY LIVE UNQUOTE. IN THE PROCESS WE HAVE LOST IN RECENT YEARS ALL BUT ONE MEMBER OF AN ALBATROSS SAR CREW, 8 OF A C130 SAR CREW, 8 C47 CREW, 8 TWIN OTTER CREW AND NOW ONE OF A LAB CREW -

30 TOO MANY

4. I KNOW THAT A NUMBER OF PERSONNEL FROM TIME TO TIME HAVE EXPRESSED CONCERN WITH THE AIR FORCES RESOLVE TO ADVANCE SAR ISSUES AND MAKE ADDITIONAL CAPABILITY IMPROVEMENTS TO BETTER EXECUTE OUR MISSION. REST ASSURED THAT THE VISIBILITY OF THE SAR AGENDA HAS NEVER BEEN HIGHER AND THE CRASH AND RESCUE OF HERC 322 HAS BEEN A CATALYST FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF A NUMBER OF SAR EQUIPMENT PROCUREMENT PROGRAMMES, IMPROVEMENTS TO PROCEDURES, SURVIVAL GEAR AND CREW TRAINING AND COORDINATION. DESPITE OUR LONG EXPERIENCE WITH THE C130 HERCULES, WE IDENTIFIED, AS A DIRECT RESULT OF THE ALERT CRASH, NUMEROUS THINGS WE COULD DO BETTER - AND WE ARE NOW IN THE PROCESS OF FIXING MANY OF THEM

5. THE CRASH OF LAB 311 WILL UNDOUBTEDLY CAUSE SOME TO QUESTION THE SAFETY OF THE CH113. IN THE IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH OF THE CRASH, IT IS EASY TO FORGET AND GLOSS OVER THE 30 YEAR SAFETY RECORD OF THIS SAR HELICOPTER OPERATING IN DIFFICULT MARITIME, ARCTIC, MOUNTAIN AND WEATHER CONDITIONS, WHICH HAVE CLAIMED MANY CIVIL AIRCRAFT AND CREWS OF LESSER CAPABILITY. IT IS ENTIRELY UNDERSTANDABLE TO FOCUS ON THE SHORTCOMINGS OF ANY EQUIPMENT IN AN ACCIDENT AND FORGET THAT VIRTUALLY ALL AIRCRAFT, CERTAINLY MOST HELICOPTERS, IN A SIMILAR

PAGE 5 RCCROBA0036 UNCLAS

CRITICAL FLIGHT REGIME - IN THE HOVER, HOISTING AT HIGHER ALTITUDE, MIGHT MEET THE SAME FATE FACED WITH A MAJOR POWER LOSS AND VERY LITTLE TIME TO REACT OR ROOM FOR MANOEUVER

6. THE LIMITATIONS OF THE LABRADOR AND MANY OTHER AIRCRAFT HAVE BEEN WELL DOCUMENTED OVER THE YEARS AND ATG HAS FORMALLY RESTATED THOSE DEFICIENCIES AS RECENTLY AS A FEW MONTHS AGO. WHILE WE WOULD ALL LIKE TO HAVE MORE MODERN AND MORE CAPABLE EQUIPMENT, NOT ONLY FOR SAR, BUT FOR MOST ATG ROLES AND MISSIONS, THE FISCAL REALITY IS THAT WE CANNOT AFFORD EVERYTHING THAT WE WANT AND THAT WE HAVE BEEN REPEATEDLY FORCED TO MAKE SOME HARD CHOICES. A NUMBER OF IMPROVEMENTS WERE MADE TO THE CH113 WITH SARCUP YET EVEN THEN ITEMS HAD TO BE PARED FROM THE PROGRAMME BECAUSE OF BUDGET CONSTRAINTS OF THE DAY. WITH THE PROSPECT OF AN IMMIMENT NSA/NSH DECISION, THE DEPARTMENT IS HUSBANDING ITS VERY LIMITED CAPITAL RESOURCES TO FUND THIS MAJOR AIRCRAFT REPLACEMENT PROGRAMME WHICH WILL PROVIDE A MODERN STATE OF THE ART HELICOPTER FOR OUR ASW AND SAR FORCES. DESPITE THE FACT THAT SEVERAL NEW FRIGATES ARE ALREADY IN THE WATER, THE NSH WILL BE DELIVERED BEFORE THE NSA BECAUSE OF THE PRIORITY ASSIGNED TO SAR IN THIS PROGRAMME

7. I KNOW THIS IS NO CONSOLATION TO THOSE OF YOU WHO WILL CONTINUE

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TO FLY THE SAR MISSION UNTIL THE NSH ARRIVES. CONCEDING THAT THE POSSIBILITY OF A 200 PLUS MILLION DOLLAR ENGINE/TRANSMISSION UPGRADE OF THE CH113 IS LIKELY UNACHIEVABLE IN TODAYS FINANCIAL CLIMATE, MY ONLY OPTION IS TO RESTRICT OPERATIONS WHERE POSSIBLE. WITH INPUTS SOLICITED FROM ATG CH113 UNITS, ATG STAFF ARE CURRENTLY REVIEWING ALL FACTORS AND MORE EXPLICIT DIRECTIONS WILL BE ISSUED SHORTLY CONCERNING THE CONDUCT OF CH113 OPERATIONS AND TRAINING. INCREASING PERFORMANCE LIMITS OF THE T58-8F ENGINES, AIRCRAFT WEIGHT REDUCTION OPTIONS AND CHANGES TO SAR PROCEDURES ARE SOME OF THE ITEMS BEING CONSIDERED ON A PRIORITY BASIS

BT

#0036

PBC111 DELIVERED 1361459 422373

DATE	YEAR 92	MONTH 04	DAY 30	AIRCRAFT TYPE LABRADOR	MK BK	FILE NO.							
ACCIDENT NUMBER	AIRCRAFT NO. 11311			UNIT 442 SQN	PLACE COMOX								
CAT A	TYPE OF FLYING HOVER HOISTING			D 14 944	COMMAND AIR								
STAGE OF FLIGHT HOVER	AERODROME			ENGINES 1 2 3 4	MANUFACTURER	MODEL	R.C.A.F. NO.	MFGR'S. NO.					
ASSESSMENTS	PLACE 40KM SE OF BELLA COOLA, B.C.												
STATUS OF PERSONNEL	OUT AIRCRAFT		IN AIRCRAFT				LIGHT CONDITIONS		COSTING				
R. C. A. F. REGULAR	R		K	M	(S)	U	TOTAL	1715 LCL 010015 Z					
R. C. A. F. RESERVES								OTHER AIRCRAFT					
OTHER CANADIAN FORCES								A/C	A/C NO.				
ALLIED FORCES								UNIT	COMMAND				
CIVILIANS								NUMBER OF FATALITIES	CATEGORY				
TOTAL								CASUALTY INFORMATION					
NUMBER	RANK	NAME & INITIALS		STATUS	FUNCTION	TOTAL HOURS		ON TYPE INVOLVED		LAST SIX MONTHS			
						ALL AIRCRAFT	INSTR.	DUAL	1ST PILOT	IND PILOT	TOTAL	ON TYPE	NIGHT
	MAJ	JOEL CLARKSTON			PLT								
	CAPT	GABRIEL RINGUETTE			PLT								
STAGE	NUMBER	ACTIONED BY	CHECKED BY	PERSONEL INVOLVED				NOTES:					
				FUNCTION	NO.	I	F	CREW: M/CPL GREG LEWIS (F.E.) M/CPL AL BURLEY M/CPL RON LANGEVIN CPL AL BANKY CPL PHIL YOUNG (SAR) CIVILIANS: ANDY SCHMIOT DOUG BAKER ROGER HARRIS					
T. 87				PILOTS	2	2							
				NAVIGATORS									
D. 14				RADIO									
				F. E.	2	2							
CODED				CREWMEN									
				SAR TECH			1						
PUNCHED				PASSENGERS									
				OTHER									

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CODE	PER. SONNEL	CONTROL	
		1ST	2ND
P			
UA			
E			
U			
A			
X			
W			
SR			
FIRE			

DFS RECOMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS:

DISCIP. ACTION 11311

Injured military nurse helps others after rescue chopper crashes

EDM JOURNAL
02 MAY 92

MARK HUME
Vancouver Sun

Vancouver

With an injured backbone and blood streaming from head wounds, nurse Andy Schmidt scrambled out of the burning wreckage of a Canadian Forces helicopter and did what he was trained to do.

Schmidt helped others to safety — then started to fight the fire spreading through the wreck of the huge Labrador, where it lay crumpled on the edge of a 1,500-metre drop.

"We were afraid the whole thing was going to go up in a ball of flame," said the civilian survivor of a military search and rescue mission that turned into a disaster.

"I knew I was hurt bad but I was fairly mobile," Schmidt said. "The worst hurt guys just sat in the snow."

Schmidt, a registered nurse and provincial emergency program volunteer, dug up one survivor who was partially buried. When he was safe, Schmidt turned to join others fighting the blaze.

It was only later he realized he was so seriously injured he shouldn't have been able to move.

The crash — which killed search and rescue technician Cpl. Phil Young and injured nine others — left Schmidt with a painful back from two crushed vertebrae, bruises over his entire body and cuts on his scalp and face.

"It's no big deal," he said in a hospital bed interview, Friday. "I was pumped so full of adrenalin it was no problem at the time. Trying to move now is a major task."

Schmidt, 29, a nurse at Bella Coola General Hospital; B.C. forest service worker Doug Baker; and Young, were part of a four-man ground search team looking for two missing skiers, Robert Kovacs, 33, and Jennie Kovacs, 24, of Burnaby, high in the rugged mountains south of Bella Coola.

The three men had just been loaded on to the hovering Labrador — with a fourth man waiting to be cabled up — when the machine crashed without warning, Thursday night.

"It fell like a sack of potatoes ... like if you were in an elevator and someone cut the cable," Schmidt said. "It just fell."

"I have to compliment the pilot. His reactions were incredible. He tried to pull it out ... it just fell too fast and one of the rotors hit a rock outcropping."

The huge Labrador, a twin-engine machine from 442 Transport and Rescue Squadron of CFB Comox, burst into flame on impact.

"We just exploded and tumbled. One engine was ripped off. We rolled nine times.

"We were lucky. It was darn steep there. We rolled off the rocks and rolled a few times in the snow. The snow stopped us. It we'd gone another 30 feet we'd have gone on tumbling a long time because it dropped right off into the valley."

Schmidt said he and the others in the chopper, including aircraft commander Maj. Joel Clarkston and co-pilot Capt. Gabriel Ringuette, scrambled out of the wreck as soon as it came to a stop. (Military officials say it is not yet clear who was flying the aircraft because the pilot and co-pilot often switch roles.)

Schmidt said that after he emerged from the burning helicopter, a quick head count showed Young was missing.

"We didn't know where Phil was. We were calling for him. I looked up and there was a big streak of blood down the snow above us. One of the guys went over and came back shaking his head."

Schmidt said that after the flames were doused, rescue gear was pulled from the wreck and some of the men started to put up a tent. That's when Schmidt finally slumped to the ground.

"All of a sudden I just seized up. It was incredible that I could be moving one minute and then feel myself going the next."

Schmidt said he had to be dragged into the tent.

Military survivors are Greg Lewis, Al Burley and Ron Langevin, all master corporals, and Cpl. Al Banky.

A Bella Coola RCMP officer who was on the search, Roger Harris, was treated and released from hospital, Thursday.

Maj. Nora Bottomley said injuries to the military personnel range from minor to a possible broken pelvis.

Baker, a provincial emergency program volunteer working with Schmidt, suffered minor injuries and was at home resting in Bella Coola on Friday. He declined to be interviewed.

About two hours after the crash, the survivors were picked up by a second military helicopter searching in the area. The search for the missing skiers continues.

TIME DOESN'T CHANGE THE MEANING OF HEROISM

By MCpl Al Banky

On the night of 12 Jun 1944, a Lancaster bomber, returning from a bombing raid in France was attacked by enemy fighters. With two of the aircraft's four engines out and flames racing through the cabin, the captain ordered the crew to abandon the aircraft. As one of the gunners, P/O Andrew C. Mynarski, prepared to follow the rest of the crew out of the plane he spotted Sgt Pat Brophy, the rear gunner, trapped in his turret. Without hesitation Mynarski made his way through the flames in an attempt to free his trapped comrade.

The flames eventually ignited Mynarski's clothing and parachute. When Brophy indicated that there was no more he could do, Mynarski reluctantly left him. In a final gesture he stood to attention and saluted Brophy before jumping out of the escape hatch, his parachute and clothing ablaze. In a strange twist, Brophy miraculously survived the crash when the turret was thrown free upon ground impact; Mynarski died of his injuries. For his actions, Mynarski was posthumously awarded the highest decoration for valour in the British Empire, the Victoria Cross. He was one of only two members of the RCAF to receive the award during WWII.



Cairn built by crew members of Rescue 311 and 312 at crash site of Rescue 311. Standing, L to R are: Cpl Denis Reid, 19 Wing construction engineer, MCpl Greg Lewis, 311 flight engineer, Sgt Ron Langevin, 311 team leader, MCpl Al Burley, 411 flight engineer and Maj Joel Clarkston, 311 aircraft commander. Kneeling, L to R are: WO Paul Beattie, 312 team leader, MCpl Tony Isaacs, ground search party team leader and MCpl Don Harper, 312 team member (Photo by MCpl Conrad Wilson)

In recognition of Mynarski's life saving efforts, a trophy was donated in his name by former members of the Polish Air Force to the RCAF Association. The Mynarski Trophy is presented annually by the Association in recognition of acts of selfless heroism by members of the Canadian air search and rescue community.

The event that was recognized this year when the Mynarski Trophy was awarded during the Association's Annual General Meeting in Winnipeg on 16 Sep 1993 was similar to that of Mynarski's. At the awards banquet to accept the trophy presented by Stephanie Holowaty, sister of the late Andrew Mynarski, were members of 442 Transport and Rescue Sqn based at 19 Wing Comox, BC.



Although time since the crash of "Rescue 311" has dulled some of the memories, many of the events are still vivid in the minds of those involved. Rescue 311 was a 442 Sqn CH-113A Labrador helicopter that crashed during a search for two missing hikers in mountains near Bella Coola, BC. At the time of the crash, the helicopter was in the process of hoisting a combined search and rescue technician (SAR Tech) / Provincial Emergency Programme (PEP) ground search team off the side of a mountain.

I will never forget the sound of the engine winding down; the pilots, Maj Joel Clarkston and Capt Gab Ringuette, used all their skills to keep the helicopter in the air. When the left-hand fuel tank crushed against a rock outcropping, the skin of the aircraft was torn away and fuel began to spill out across the white snow surface. As the helicopter started its side-wards roll down the mountainside, MCpls



The crumpled and burnt wreck of Rescue 311 lays where it stopped following its 500-foot roll down a mountainside. The photo does not reveal the steepness of the slope which necessitated the use of ropes to move about during the recovery operation (Photo courtesy of Air Detachment, RCMP)

Al Burly and Greg Lewis, our flight engineers, reached forward and pulled me back from the open door from which I had been hoisting. It always seems strange how the military can train someone to override their own survival instincts in favour of helping those for who they are responsible.

EMERGENCY

I remember flashes of green, grey and white as we tumbled down the mountainside inside the battered fuselage. When it came to a stop, we saw thick black smoke curling in through the door and down the cabin. When I flipped myself outside through one of the emergency exits, I found myself on the downhill side of the wreck beside my team leader, MCpl (now Sgt) Ron Langevin. As I followed Ron around the nose, we began to appreciate the extent of what had just happened. Half way up the slope were the remains of our left-hand fuel tanks. Above and below it were pieces, large and small, of the rotor blades. The entire slope was covered with pieces of red and yellow metal which had broken loose from the fuselage during the roll.

What had minutes before been a



proud flying machine was now a heap of twisted metal and fibreglass. Flames were jumping from the overturned right fuel tank which was laying against the snow on the up-slope side of the wreck. As we looked up the slope, MCpl Tony Isaacs, the ground search team leader, stood up on the ledge above which we had been hovering. The look on his face was one of amazement, not amazement at what had just happened, but amazement that there were people actually clambering out of a helicopter that had just rolled five hundred feet down the side of a mountain in a ball of flames!

There is a reason that SAR Techs are trained the way they are. Ron Langevin, with no regard for his dislocated shoulder, began to organize the crew. Greg Lewis was pinned under the front door as the right fuel tank fire burned toward him. Al Burly lay in a fetal position close beside him. Those of us who could walk stood against the uphill side of the wreck and tried desperately to push it off of Greg; it was a futile gesture. At this time the crew split in two. I'm not sure exactly who did what; those involved in rescuing Greg stayed in the cloud of smoke and flames and dug and pried until they managed to pull him out from under the frame and clear of the wreckage.

FLAMES


Those not involved in freeing Greg worked at smothering the fire. The contents of a fire extinguisher was emptied

onto the flames; the fire died quickly and just as quickly flashed up again. Broken pieces of the windscreen were used to scoop up snow and pile it on the flames until the fire was finally out.

All fliers in the Canadian Forces are taught a survival sequence during their basic land survival course. The sequence is: first aid, fire, shelter, signals and food. To begin first aid we first had to account for all the members of the crew. Following a head counts, we came to the realization that Cpl Phil Young, the second SAR Tech from the ground search team had not been accounted for; we began a frantic search for him. When Phil's body was discovered, word of his fate spread quietly. He had been thrown clear of the helicopter but flying debris had caused fatal injuries.

I have been informed that our post-crash survival technique is already being used by some of the instructors at the Canadian Forces Survival Training School in Edmonton as an example of "the way it should be done." Our survival gear was organized as first-aid was being given to those who needed it. Each able member of the crew was given a job under the direction of Ron Langevin and Tony Isaacs. When Rescue 312, a second 442 Sqn Labrador arrived to rescue us, one tent had already been set up and a second was almost ready. The injured had been given initial treatment and were ready for evacuation.

The 10 survivors of Rescue 311, pilots Maj Joel Clarkston and Capt Gab Ringuette, SAR Techs Sgt Ron Langevin and MCpl Tony Isaacs, flight engineers MCpls Al Burly and Greg Lewis, PEP searchers Andy Schmidt and Doug Baker, RCMP Constable Roger Harris and myself, each owe part of their survival to the teamwork shown before, during and after the crash.

A stone cairn, built by the survivors, now stands at the spot where Rescue 311 crashed. It is dedicated to Cpl Phil Young. Like the Mynarski Trophy, it stands as testimony to the costs involved in saving lives. 

(Ed note: The author, a 442 Sqn SAR Tech, was one of the injured survivors of Rescue 311. A photograph of this year's Mynarski Trophy presentation ceremony appears on page 31.)

In Memory of Cpl Philip Young

By WO Paul Beattie

On 30 April 1992, Rescue 311, a 442 Squadron Labrador helicopter engaged in a SAR mission, crashed and tumbled approximately 500 feet down the side of a mountain near Bella Coola, B.C. Although the eleven men aboard sustained a wide variety of serious physical injuries, there was only one fatality, SAR Tech Cpl Phil Young.

A second squadron helicopter, Rescue 312 also participating in this mission, came to the aid of the survivors and, in severe winter conditions, carried out a dramatic rescue.

During the month of July 93, the 442 Squadron SAR Techs organized a SAR training exercise with the objective of building a cairn at the site of the crash to honour the memory of their friend and comrade Phil Young.

The group consisted of WO Paul Beattie and MCpl Don Harper, the SAR Techs who carried out the rescue, Sgt Ron Langevin, MCpl Tony Isaacs and flight engineer MCpl Al Burney, who were in the crash, as well as Cpl

Dennis Reid of the Base CE Section who volunteered to accompany the group and lend his technical expertise in the construction of the cairn.

The only other SAR Tech in the crash, MCpl Al Banky, was unavailable to participate in this

forms for the cairn prefabricated in advance by Cpl Reid, were off-loaded. The next three days were spent constructing the cairn and carrying out various climbing and mountain rescue exercises.

The morning of the 8th the equipment was packed up, the site cleaned and a final addition, a brass plaque, was firmly bolted to the cairn. On completion of the cairn, Maj Joel Clarkston and MCpl Greg Lewis, the pilot and flight engineer of the helicopter that crashed, arrived to pick up the ground party. Again a delicate mountain landing was carried out, followed by an uneventful trip to Bella Coola for fuel before returning to Comox.

The scene was revisited, many emotions and memories were revived by the survivors and rescuers of Rescue 311 and, although I believe we have now closed a chapter of our lives, the memory of Cpl Phil Young will live on for ever as we carry on with our lives and pursue the SAR Tech motto: This we do "That Others May Live."



project due to a career course.

On 5 July a Labrador helicopter, piloted by Maj Ron Greenaway, the pilot of Rescue 312, carried out a precision landing at the same site as the crash, and all personnel, their equipment, 12 bags of cement and the



Cairn forms were prefabricated at Comox



Rescue mission accomplished, 442 Labrador helicopter lifts off from the site at Bella Coola, where 442 SAR Techs built a cairn for Cpl Philip Young. Story and pictures on page 9.

The Cairn



photos by WO Paul Beattie

Pouring the Mix



Assembly Crew

