

WWII Pilot Officer Stanley Aikens R77762

RCAF 432 Squadron



Recently, Marsh Aikens who lives in Collingwood met with our Branch 147 Historian to share the story of his Dad's time in the Canadian military during WWII. His Dad, Stan Aikens from Calgary had arrived for training at Camp Borden in 1941. While stationed in Simcoe County, he met and married Lenore Lambert of Barrie in October 1941. Lenore and Stan took up residence at 164 Bradford Street.

Marsh was just 4 days old when his Dad finished all his Canadian training and left Barrie in March 1944 to continue training in England.

From his Flying Log Book, we see that Flight/Sgt. Aikens flew 9 missions in November 1944 and another 7 in December as the Air Bomber. On his second mission in 1945, his Halifax MkVII Bomber, NP759 was hit by enemy fire near Hanover, Germany. He, along with 4 others in the crew had to parachute out of the burning craft. Two of the crew were unable to get out and were buried in Germany.

In the papers that Marsh showed Branch Historian Glover, was Stan's Prisoner of War Registration Document dated January 18, 1945. This document contains two "mug shot" photos and Stan's fingerprint. When the guards for the POW camp abandoned their posts before the Soviet army arrived in May 1945, Stan was able to liberate this document from the Camp office files.



Stan returned to Canada and in July 1945 got to see and hold his son 16 months later from the last time he held him. Stan remained in Barrie where he lived and worked. He was a longtime member of Burton Ave. United Church, an avid golfer playing at Shanty Bay and a member of the Barrie Curling Club.

We are grateful to Marsh Aikens for sharing this story and so many great photos. Because he parachuted from his burning plane, Stan was accorded membership in the Caterpillar Club.

