

# War service was a pinnacle in woman's life

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air bases, as well as directing war ships in the Atlantic, who were on patrol searching for German U-boats.

Being competent at her job, Bowman (later Burnett) was soon promoted to shift commander of her station and often told family and friends that her time in the service was a pinnacle time in her life.

Among her war mementos, she held onto a telegram she received February 14, 1945, which showed how the close-knit group of wireless operators passed the time.

It originated from Vallville, Ontario, and was addressed to Cpl. Anne Bowman, RCAF Signal Office, Moncton, N.B., arriving at 0301 hrs (3 a.m.)

It read,  
*"Dear Anne,  
 You are the blond, so gay and sweet,  
 That knocks us fellows off our feet,  
 You tap out Morse and boss a shift,  
 You give each downcast sole a lift,  
 You're quite the gal- that's no line,  
 Won't you be our Valentine?"*

Simply signed 'Bob & Ev', Bowman never did know who the senders were.

She often told anecdotes of her and other WDs hopping aboard a flight to



Anne Bowman (right) and a friend at the Moncton RCAF base. (Right) A photo of Anne at 'Petite Cardiac River, near Moncton, N.B. taken by her brother John— "the last day I ever saw him." John Bowman was killed in action June 22, 1944.

Newfoundland, on a liquor run, to pick up some alcohol for the rest of the members of her station, since alcohol was hard to find in New Brunswick, but flowed quite freely in the British colony on 'the Rock'.

Interestingly, because of those numerous 'liquor runs' to Newfoundland and back, Bowman was designated as 'having served in a theatre of war,' since the aircraft she was flying in crossed over the St. Lawrence River; the very place where German U-boats were spotted on numerous occasions during that

time, ready to attack Allied ships leaving Canada, bound for England and Europe with troops and supplies.

She experienced many milestones in her time in the service— both happy and sad. She experienced the jubilation of the war in Europe coming to an end firsthand, as she sat beside the very wireless operator who received the message that the war in Europe was over (Victory in Europe— VE Day), May 8, 1945, when Germany surrendered.

But sadly, she had to endure sadness as her younger brother, Lt. John Bowman



of the Royal Canadian Infantry Corps, was killed in action June 22, 1944, while attached to the Royal Scots Fusiliers. John was buried in the Canadian War Cemetery at Beny-sur-mer, in close proximity to Juno Beach, Normandy.

Bowman remained in service as a WD until November 5, 1945, when she was demobbed and transferred to the RCAF Reserves.

She would marvel at how small the world was during that time. While stationed in Moncton, she had repeatedly corresponded back and forth with another wireless operator in Halifax, named Al, or Alastair Burnett. Al was just a name of a person on the other end of the wire— they had never met in person.

And when she left the service in 1945, they lost touch with each other, as many in the service did.

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