

## Sharing a Childhood Passion for Aircraft Brings Two South Marysburgh Men Together to Get Their Hands Dirty

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10 aircraft that served the beginning of its life in war-torn Europe.

This Lancaster which bears the serial number KB882 is being restored as a part of the RCAF's postwar history. The restoration is targeted for completion by April 2024 for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the RCAF. Once completed, the museum will display it along with other notable aircraft including a fully restored Handley Page Halifax bomber. The Trenton museum will be the only location in the world where visitors will be able to see both of these famed aircraft, the Lancaster and the Halifax, in their fully restored state.

Of the two South Marysburgh residents, Peter Wollenberg, now retired on South Bay's County Road 13, has the longest history with the restoration, spanning nearly a decade. As a kid of 8 or 9, growing up in Germany, he became enthralled with aircraft. He collected photos, built model airplanes and hung out at airports absorbing everything aviation.

"When it came time to go to university, I wanted to be an aeronautical engineer but job prospects were scarce. Instead, I became a mining

engineer and as it happened, travelled all over the world on fixed wing, bush and float planes, and helicopters. Even though I was in mining, I was flying all the time," Peter says.

As part of his work, Peter lived in Canada from 1980 to 1998. After work assignments in various parts of the world, he and his wife returned to Canada for good in 2003. They settled at South Bay.

The other half of this volunteer restoration duo who also settled with his wife at South Bay spent his career years in corporate board rooms advising large companies on financial capital markets. But his formative years growing up as a yard hand in his father's business – buying and selling used aircraft and parts – at what was then called Terrebonne near Montreal, left an indelible mark on his youth. At 16, he acquired a private pilots license but soon after left that world behind as his newly established career in finance took hold and flourished.

Now these two men are friends who share a common mission. Every Wednesday, they head to Trenton to get their hands dirty.

"This is like restoring a

classic car, only a lot bigger," Don says. "To do what you need to do, much of the original fuselage and other parts have to be deconstructed before repair and reconstruction can take place." Peter noted that some 700,000 rivets will be required in the restoration.

NAFMC, a self-funded



Lancaster KB882 now being restored at NAFMC at Trenton.

special interest organization, is fundraising to cover the cost of the Lancaster Project.

Currently, over 55,000 volunteer hours have been contributed to the project since KB882 arrived at Trenton in April 2017. By the time the plane is fully restored, it is estimated some 340,000 volunteer hours will have been invested.

"The real heroes of this endeavour," Don says, "are the other volunteers who

head this project. They are aircraft engineers, technicians and mechanics who know what they're doing. We're following their lead."

At present, the Lancaster pieces are in the Aerospace Telecommunications and Engineering Support Squadron paint shop on the base, awaiting the face lift to re-

store it to its postwar paint configuration.

"It was in terrible shape when the museum acquired it," Don says. It had previously lived out the last years in Edmundston, New Brunswick where, according to Peter, it had been stripped of parts and equipment to keep a few other restored Lancasters in flying order. One of these is at the Warplane Heritage Museum at Hamilton, Ontario.

There are 13 others in the

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