

## **Simplified Publishing of Military Research for Distribution to the Family**

Many of us have in our possession irreplaceable artifacts, information, and stories of a loved one's military career. If these stories are to be preserved for future generations, it is important to share this information with family and military museums. Since producing a book to honour my uncle who was killed in WWII, many people have requested my guidance to help them publish their own military research in a convenient, easy-to-read format. Through trial and error, I found a method that worked for me and it may help others to produce their own family military history books.

I wrote the book to honour my late uncle's service and sacrifice as a member of 405 Pathfinder Squadron in the Second World War. I produced the book using my word processing software, Microsoft Word, although other word-processing software brands have similar features. My uncle's flying log book and copies of his military personnel file provided a great deal of information about his schooling, his family, military training, and operational assignments. The dates of events from these two sources were incorporated into a timeline in an MS Word table, which, when sorted by date, helped to put all of the details into perspective. The timeline also helped with additional research in military history books and with my research on the Internet, which led me to further information about his squadrons and the taskings for the operational sorties in which he took part.

In designing the layout of the book, I first decided which fonts, attributes and sizes I would use throughout the book for text and titles. I then used "section breaks" to set up separate chapters in the book with alternating headers and footers, etc. on odd and even pages. If you are not familiar with advanced formatting of documents, it can be quickly learned with the assistance of the "help" menu in your word processing software.

There was a treasure in photographs and documents in my mother's and grandmother's photo albums. I fine-tuned the book by inserting scanned copies of military and family photographs, maps and any other documents that would be of interest to the reader. I inserted scanned copies of each page of the operational segment of his flying log book together with the portion of the timeline for that month of flying to make the information more readable. These were followed by excerpts from the Royal Air Force Bomber Command 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary web site that had contained Campaign Diary and Squadron Operations Record Books for each month to show the actual taskings and the results of each raid, plus the losses that were incurred. The war diaries may be accessed by the Bomber Command link below.

If you are not comfortable with inserting text boxes, a simple way to add photographs, maps, scanned documents etc. is through the use of tables. At the point in the book where you would like to add a photograph and a caption, insert a table with two columns and one row. Place your cursor in one column and select "insert photograph". Select the photo from the scanned photos in your computer files. To adjust the size, click on the photo to select it and drag one of the corners until it fits the desired space on the page. Type the caption or background information in the other column. Larger documents may be placed in a one-column table with two rows so that the caption appears below the item. To remove the border of the table, select "format" "borders

and shading” “borders” and choose “none”.

Since the book was for restricted distribution to relatives and was not sold for profit, it was possible to include some small excerpts of copyright material. This material is properly referenced for sources. Details of living persons such as full date of birth should be removed for privacy if the book is to be donated to an archive, or museum.

### **Publishing Techniques**

I am fortunate to have a good printer that produces excellent quality results at a fairly low price per page, so I printed the book at home on good quality “bright white” paper and had it bound with wireless binding and a clear cover at Staples. Other printing firms offer similar services.

If you are not able to self-publish, you may have your book printed professionally. You could save money by having the book printed in black and white on “bright white” paper. Grayscale photographs are reproduced with amazing clarity. To add interest, you may wish to include at the back of the book a photo album with coloured pictures or maps etc. on high quality back-to-back paper.

I hope that these hints may help you in sharing your military research with your families.

Norma O’Toole, Comox Valley, British Columbia

### **Some Useful Web Addresses for Military Research:**

<b><u>Internet Site Title</u></b>	<b><u>Internet Site Address</u></b>
Canadian Military History Gateway	<a href="http://www.cmhg.gc.ca/html/wn-qdn/index-eng.asp?t=1">http://www.cmhg.gc.ca/html/wn-qdn/index-eng.asp?t=1</a>
Canadian War Museum	<a href="http://www.warmuseum.ca/cwm/home">http://www.warmuseum.ca/cwm/home</a>
Commonwealth War Graves Commission	<a href="http://www.cwgc.org/">http://www.cwgc.org/</a>
Cyndi’s List – Canada - Military	<a href="http://www.cyndislist.com/milcan.htm">http://www.cyndislist.com/milcan.htm</a>
Juneau Beach Centre	<a href="http://www.junobeach.org/">http://www.junobeach.org/</a>
Library and Archives Canada	<a href="http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/Pages/military-heritage.aspx">http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/Pages/military-heritage.aspx</a>
Bomber Command Museum of Canada	<a href="http://www.bombercommandmuseum.ca/">http://www.bombercommandmuseum.ca/</a>
RAF Bomber Command – Squadron Operations Record Books	<a href="http://web.archive.org/web/20050417074741/http://www.raf.mod.uk/bombercommand/">http://web.archive.org/web/20050417074741/http://www.raf.mod.uk/bombercommand/</a>
United Kingdom National Archives	<a href="http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/">http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/</a>
Veterans Affairs Canada	<a href="http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/remembers/sub.cfm?source=collections/virtualmem">http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/remembers/sub.cfm?source=collections/virtualmem</a>