

War Memories across Canada Conversation Kit:

Roar of Engines Bomber Command Museum, Nanton, Alberta Vintage Wings of Canada, Gatineau, Quebec



Avro Lancaster silhouetted against flares, smoke and explosions during an attack (1943) - © IWM (C 3371)

During the Second World War, Britain's Royal Air Force (RAF) created a specialized unit called Bomber Command. The RAF's mission was to conduct nighttime air attacks on enemy targets in occupied Europe. One-third of RAF Bomber Command pilots were Canadian. In 1942, the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) launched its own Bomber Command group, based in England.

Discussion Questions:

In your opinion, what are the differences between war memorials for the army, navy and air force? Do you think these differences change how society commemorates the fallen in the 21st century? If yes, how so?

What do you think the difference in your emotions would be when encountering a 'working' aircraft versus one that is a static and on display?

We commemorate and learn about the important roles Canadians played. Yet, how do you think we should commemorate the civilians who suffered as a result of the bombings?

Activities:

Summer air shows provide an opportunity to see some of the old aircraft in flight. See if you can find events near you.

Air museums provide a great opportunity to get up close and learn about aircraft and are often looking for volunteers to help with running the facility.



Bibliothèque et Archives Canada – Library and Archives Canada/PA-136915

If possible visit the Bomber Command Museum of Canada in Nanton, Alberta, or Vintage Wings of Canada in Gatineau, Quebec. Alternatively, visit another aviation museum. What types of aircraft does the museum have? How do those aircraft compare to the bombers used during the Second World War?

Resources:

Websites

Bomber Command Museum of Canada
<http://www.bombercommandmuseum.ca>
A wealth of information about the aircraft, the people, and the history of RCAF Bomber Command. Also there is a link to the Bomber Command Memorial Wall.

Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum
<http://www.warplane.com/>

RCAF Bomber Squadrons Overseas - Juno Beach Centre
<https://www.junobeach.org/canada-in-wwii/articles/rcaf-bomber-squadrons-overseas/>
An overview of the missions, the people, and the contributions of Canada's Bomber Command squadrons. Available in [French](#).

Vintage Wings of Canada
<http://www.vintagewings.ca/>
Details and photographs of aircraft used during the Second World War. Available in [French](#).

Videos:

Bomber Command Museum of Canada's YouTube Channel
<https://www.youtube.com/user/bombercommandmuseum>

Target Berlin – Canadian Army Newsreel No. 23 (1943), Library and Archives Canada
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ifP8r5hCjn0>
A bombing run by a Lancaster squadron (beginning at 4:05 minutes).

Warriors of the night. Nightfighters Production, 2003 (3 videodiscs).

Books

No prouder place: Canadians and the Bomber Command experience, 1939-1945, by David L. Bashow. Vanwell Publishing, 2005.

Soldiers blue: How Bomber Command and area bombing helped win the Second World War, by David Bashow. Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2011.

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