

ISLAND GIRL HAPPY IN HER CAREER WITH THE R.C.A.F.

If you were to ask her if she would go back to teaching she'd probably look very serious and say, slowly, "No—I wasn't very happy as a teacher." Then, with a shy smile, "besides, I'm quite content with this work." And you would believe her, too, if you watched her work as a Professional Photographer at RCAF Station Summerside, for she has a vocation that extends into her after duty hours as a hobby. Picture-taking, developing, enlarging, printing. They are the tasks that she enjoys in a trade she learned in the RCAF.

Two years ago Thelma was teaching at the same school at Cape Wolfe, P.E.I., that she herself attended a few short years before. Life was easy with long walks along the shoreline, church socials and a happy family life with her mother, father, brother and three sisters. On Saturdays she'd help her father prepare for his daily trip on the straits where the cod and lobster yielded to the experience of fisherman Fulton Cook. Later, she would help her mother with the baking and house-keeping. And so the year passed pleasantly, if not purposefully, between classroom and home.

When the school year ended in 1951 Thelma came to Summerside and visited the recruiting centre to find out what the Air Force was like. When she returned that evening to Cape Wolfe it was to say good-bye to folks and friends before leaving for St. John's, Quebec where she received her basic training as an Air Woman. "The first thing that impressed me, and still does, was the comradeship a-



Her mother's chocolate cakes are the only things Thelma has missed since enlisting in the R.C.A.F. over a year ago.

and family, is truly her "home station." For a photographer, whose duties may require her to photograph some Island area from 12,000 feet in the morning and capture on film the rather prosaic sight of a wornout camshaft in the afternoon, no two days are alike. Normally, however, they start at 7 a.m. when, without benefit of alarm clock she wakes up and turns on the radio. "It's a good thing we sleep two to a room or there might be some hollering from those who don't like western music because my roommate and I always listen to Al Nickelson from CJRW."

Breakfast, the quietest meal of the day, is always over by 7:45 and the working day for AW Cook begins shortly afterwards. With only a small staff in the photo section work doesn't always end for dinner or even for supper. For Thelma, whose hobby is photography, the hours of work seldom matter as she spends many of her evenings working on her own camera projects. At least once during the evening she can be found engaging in something entirely feminine... a gossip fest with girls from other sections.

A quiet girl, she doesn't accept dates... there's a boy in Greenwood who writes every day and a return letter also takes time each evening. The station theatre and sports activities receive some of her attention, but not too much. The photo album is never up to date and if a photographer can't keep her own album in first class shape, who can?

With home so close every free week-end is spent at Cape Wolfe with the family that is so proud of its own girl in blue. So the Saturdays and Sundays haven't changed. The little white motor boat still goes out to the fishing grounds, the neighbors drop in for a chat, church on Sunday morning and her mother still bakes those wonderful chocolate cakes... the only thing she misses in the Air Force.

If you ask this girl who joined the Air Force "to see what it was like" what it really is like, she'll tell you, "I like it."

The tank was first used in warfare by the British Army on the Somme in France in September, 1916.



Aerial photography is one of the many assignments handled by Airwoman Thelma Cook, former school teacher at Cape Wolfe, P.E.I. shown above leaving an Expeditor Aircraft at R.C.A.F. Station, Summerside.



Overseas or at home mail is always welcome. Sybil Jobe, Glacé Bay, N.S., shares a letter from home with Thelma and Yvonne Mailloux, Windsor, Ontario.

Among the girls, I wasn't homesick but I did miss home those first few days. I guess we all did and that drew us together." The days flew by at the Manning Depot, days filled with lectures, drill, sports and parades. Thelma admits that she didn't take to parades too well. "At home if I got tired of doing a job I just stopped. That's not done on parade." The biggest day of all at St. Jean's came when her class attended the Personnel Selection Centre. Although the average recruit states a preference for a certain trade, all too often he, or she, has little of what the trade of his choice actually entails. By means of in-

terviews and tests each Airman and Airwoman is selected for training in a trade commensurate with his education and aptitude. And so it was that a school teacher from Cape Wolfe was selected to attend the R. C. A. F.'s School of Photography at Camp Borden, Ont. Before attending the course Thelma was posted to Greenwood, N.S., for contact training in the Photographic Section. At the big Maritime base she had the opportunity to see what her future trade would require of her and to gain some practical knowledge of the work before "hitting the books" at school. Her training at Camp Borden was intense, interesting and practical. Class room lectures were followed by practical picture taking sessions and later, developing

and printing. When she graduated, Airwoman Thelma Cook was a professional photographer and not just a little keen to be transferred to a station where her know-how could be used daily. That station is as is the case wherever RCAF commitments permit, close to her home. Because she had an Islander's love for her home Province she wasn't disappointed at not being transferred to far away places. So station Summerside, less than fifty miles from her home

RCAF AIR FORCE DAY
SATURDAY SEPT. 19TH

AIR SECURITY NATIONAL SECURITY
VISIT YOUR NEAREST AIR FORCE STATION
GEO. T. CLARKE JEWELLER

RCAF AIR FORCE DAY
SATURDAY SEPT. 19TH
VISIT YOUR NEAREST AIR FORCE STATION
AIR SECURITY NATIONAL SECURITY
ISLAND EQUIPMENT CO. LTD. SUMMERSIDE

RCAF AIR SECURITY NATIONAL SECURITY
AIR FORCE DAY
SATURDAY SEPT. 19
THE READ STUDIO
D. W. SEARS, Prop. Water St. Summerside

AIR SECURITY NATIONAL SECURITY
RCAF AIR FORCE DAY
SAT. SEPT. 19
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SUMMERSIDE HARDWARE CO.

Andy's Sea Foods
Summerside, P. E. I.
Proudly Salutes the
RCAF
AIR FORCE DAY
SAT. SEPT. 19TH
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AIR SECURITY NATIONAL SECURITY

TOWN OF SUMMERSIDE
HENRY W. WEDGE, Mayor.
Proudly Salutes the
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AIR FORCE DAY
SAT. SEPT. 19TH
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AIR SECURITY NATIONAL SECURITY

Smallman's Ltd.
Proudly pays Tribute to the
RCAF
on
AIR FORCE DAY
SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 19
VISIT YOUR R.C.A.F. AIR FORCE STATION SUMMERSIDE
AIR SECURITY NATIONAL SECURITY

HOLMAN'S
Proudly pays Tribute to the
RCAF
AIR FORCE DAY
SAT. SEPT. 19
AIR SECURITY NATIONAL SECURITY
VISIT YOUR NEAREST AIR FORCE STATION

VISIT YOUR NEAREST AIR FORCE STATION
RCAF AIR FORCE DAY
SAT. SEPTEMBER 19
AIR SECURITY NATIONAL SECURITY
CROCKETTS QUALITY JEWELLERS
Summerside

MAURICE MILL
MEN'S WEAR
Proudly pays Tribute to the
RCAF
AIR FORCE DAY
SATURDAY SEPT. 19TH
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AIR SECURITY NATIONAL SECURITY

AIR SECURITY NATIONAL SECURITY
RCAF AIR FORCE DAY
SAT. SEPT. 19TH
CHANS RESTAURANT
Your Good Food Host