

RCN JETS TESTED

Six "Banshee" jet-fighters of the Royal Canadian Navy, armed with "Sidewinder" missiles, convincingly demonstrated their destructive power by shooting down five target-aircraft in an exercise designed to test the effectiveness of the "Banshee" - "Sidewinder" combination.

The firings took place last November over the sea on the missile range of the Royal Aircraft Establishment at Aberporth, Wales. The targets were "Firefly" VIII aircraft, flown by remote control. Six missiles were fired at as many targets and five of the drone aircraft were splashed.

The operation was carried out by aircraft of Fighter Squadron 870, when the Squadron was temporarily detached from HMCS "Bonaventure" during the carrier's participation in NATO winter exercises in European waters.

When not engaged in carrier operations, VF 870 is based at HMCS "Shearwater", the naval air station near Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.

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PSYCHIATRIC NURSING COURSE

Patients being treated for mental illness in Alberta's provincial hospitals are nursed by fully qualified psychiatric nurses. A comprehensive training programme to help provide such trained personnel has been underwritten since 1930 by the Alberta Department of Public Health.

The training or "educational" programme has grown from one course initially offered at the Ponoka Hospital, to four distinct courses available at Ponoka and two courses offered at the Provincial Mental Institute, Edmonton.

Since the inception of the plan, more than 2,000 men and women have been graduated from the two schools. Many graduates remain on staff and ultimately become supervisors or instructors. The alumni list includes many nurses who have risen to responsible positions in the psychiatric nursing field throughout North America.

The senior course available in Alberta is a four-year training programme preparing young women, and men, to give complete nursing care to patients whose illness may have either an emotional or a physical basis.

At the end of the four-year term, students are eligible to write examinations to become registered nurses in general and psychiatric nursing. During the four-year period, candidates spend the first 16 months at the Provincial Mental Hospital, Ponoka, and the next two years at either the Calgary General Hospital, Royal Alexandra or the University Hospitals at Edmonton. Nurses subsequently return to the provincial mental hospital for seven months of advanced psychiatric training.

A three-year course leading to certification in psychiatric nursing and eligibility for membership in the Alberta Psychiatric

Nurses' Association is available at Ponoka and the Provincial Mental Institute at Edmonton. The Ponoka course of studies is restricted to men while both sexes are admitted to the Institute.

During the three-year "in-service" training period, students are considered as staff and are paid a substantial salary that increases upon completion of each term. Course subject matter includes nursing arts, medical and surgical nursing, psychiatry, psychology and nursing psychotherapy.

A six-month post-graduate course in psychiatric nursing is offered at the Ponoka Hospital to graduate general nurses who want to further their knowledge of psychiatric nursing. Candidates receive instruction in nursing psychotherapy, group discussion, and psycho-pharmacology.

The fourth training plan is an eight-week affiliation course that is compulsory for students of recognized schools of nursing in Alberta. The Provincial Mental Institute serves students from nursing schools in northern Alberta while southern Alberta students take their course at Ponoka.

The affiliation programme is considered to be one of the most progressive steps taken in recent years in psychiatric nursing. As a result of the plan, all nurses have the opportunity to work under actual mental hospital conditions. They are given theory and planned clinical experience during the eight weeks thus broadening their insight and understanding of the mentally ill.

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MASTER MARINERS MEET

Twenty-one ships' captains, masters of the Department of Transport's Canadian Marine Service vessels, wound up a three-day conference in Ottawa on March 17 at which they discussed with headquarters officials problems relating to the operations of the departmental fleet.

One of the major subjects of discussion was the 1960 Arctic re-supply operation, in which the Department's vessels would carry supplies to the Joint Arctic Weather Stations, defence installations, trading settlements and Eskimo communities throughout both the Eastern and Western Arctic. Last year the Transport Department fleet delivered more than 100,000 tons of supplies to nearly 50 ports of call, with 17 icebreakers and special Arctic supply craft, as well as 26 chartered vessels, doing the job.

Apart from the Far Northern operations, the captains discussed the Department's work in the Great Lakes, St. Lawrence River, and eastern and western coastal waters. They were welcomed at the opening of the conference by Gordon Stead, Assistant Deputy Minister, Marine. Heading the discussions were Captain E.S. Brand, Director, Marine Operations, and J.R. Strang, Director, Shipbuilding Branch.