



**WAR HERO:** Veteran Stan Jones will sign his children's book *A Bad Penny*, which is based on the story of one of his missions. *Star photo: Nick Brancaccio*

# Historic plane buffs gather

## Storm delays Lancaster landing, but reunion party in full swing

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North America's only flying Lancaster bomber — expected to land in Windsor Thursday for a historic reunion — only reached London before being forced to turn back due to bad weather.

But that didn't stop the flood of emotions among about 250 people attending the Lancaster/Warbird Reunion, a two-day event on the grounds of Windsor Airport.

The legendary warplane is expected to return today at 8:45 a.m.

When it does, 81-year-old Lorna Collocott said it will trigger sadness still etched in her heart from more than 60 years ago, when she was a young woman who lived in Kent, England, during the Battle of Britain.

"I will think mostly about all the guys that lost their lives," said Collocott, who came to Windsor in 1946 as a war bride. "This is very emotional. It's a happy day and sad day.

"I still remember standing outside and watching them all take off. It seemed like a thousand on a raid."

The reunion's highlight is the launch of a new children's book called *A Bad Penny* dedicated to Windsor's Bob Upcott — the pilot for one of the first two "test flights" bringing food and supplies to starving Dutch in the final days

### BASH CONTINUES

The reunion continues today from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. at the Canadian Historical Aircraft Association on the grounds of Windsor Airport.

of the Second World War.

Upcott, who died of cancer in 2001 at 78, had to steer his Lancaster and seven-member crew only a few hundred feet over top German gunners who agreed to remain silent.

After they weren't shot down, Lancaster squadrons in Operation Manna dispatched 6,684 tons of food supplies to the Dutch in May 1945.

Stan Jones was among Upcott's gutsy crew on that flight as a wireless operator. He recalled that during this dangerous guinea pig mission the Germans "said they wouldn't shoot, but wouldn't sign any papers."

Jones, originally from London, England, moved to Windsor 24 years ago when he came here to visit Upcott and met his future wife.

He was honoured to be signing copies of the children's book at the reunion.

Jones, 81, served 24 missions in the Lancaster. When the bomber lands today in Windsor, he said, "I shall give it a wink. Indeed I will."