

# THE LONDON LINK



427 (LONDON) WING — ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION  
2155 CRUMLIN SIDE ROAD | LONDON, ON N5V 3Z9 | 519-455-0430 | [WWW.427WING.COM](http://WWW.427WING.COM)

## Christmas at the Wing



# ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION (RCAFA) MISSION STATEMENT

The RCAFA is a national aerospace and community service organization to:

- Commemorate the noble achievements of the men and women who served as members of Canada's Air Forces since its inception;
- Advocate for a proficient and well equipped Air Force; and,
- Support the Royal Canadian Air Cadet program.

## 427 (LONDON) WING EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (WEC) JULY 1<sup>ST</sup> 2015 – JUNE 30<sup>TH</sup> 2016

President	Terry Rushton	519-472-0268	<a href="mailto:trushton71@bell.net">trushton71@bell.net</a>
Past President	Jack Clark, CD	519-686-1303	<a href="mailto:jackjoanc@gmail.com">jackjoanc@gmail.com</a>
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President			
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President	Howard Johnston	519-657-2499	<a href="mailto:hjohnston@rogers.com">hjohnston@rogers.com</a>
Secretary	Chuck Hardy, CD	519-452-1379	<a href="mailto:chuck.hardy@sympatico.ca">chuck.hardy@sympatico.ca</a>
Treasurer	Liyuan Shi	226-977-6128	<a href="mailto:UPCSLY@gmail.com">UPCSLY@gmail.com</a>

## COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

*Vacant Positions – Food Services, Bar Officer, Entertainment, Sports and Sgt-at-Arms – call Wing for info*

Web-Site			
Housing	Don Clarke	519-455-9350	<a href="mailto:don.clarke@hotmail.com">don.clarke@hotmail.com</a>
Housing Back-Up	Chuck Hardy, CD	519-452-1379	<a href="mailto:chuck.hardy@sympatico.ca">chuck.hardy@sympatico.ca</a>
Membership	Cathy Newman	519-452-1886	<a href="mailto:cathy.newman@rogers.com">cathy.newman@rogers.com</a>
Public Relations			
Wellness/Parkwood Liaison	Brent Elgie, Sam Newman Hilda Smeltzer, Hazil Malone	519-539-5956	<a href="mailto:lgair@execulink.com">lgair@execulink.com</a>
Fundraising			
Kit Shop	Fred Pettit	519 451-0467	<a href="mailto:arrow105@sympatico.ca">arrow105@sympatico.ca</a>
Euchre Club	Don Clarke	519-455-9350	
Museum	Howard Johnston	519-657-2499	<a href="mailto:hjohnston@rogers.com">hjohnston@rogers.com</a>
Air Cadet Liaison	Brad Keeler	519-200-5738	<a href="mailto:bkeeler@rogers.com">bkeeler@rogers.com</a>
Lottery	Mike Ryan	519-455-1668	
Nominations	Jack Clark, CD	519-686-1303	<a href="mailto:jackjoanc@gmail.com">jackjoanc@gmail.com</a>
War Graves, Poppy Fund, Heritage/ History & Veterans' Memorial	David Smith Pablo Calcaterra	519-857-6468 Beating the heat at the Airshow	<a href="mailto:691s@rogers.com">691s@rogers.com</a> <a href="mailto:pablo.calcaterra@outlook.com">pablo.calcaterra@outlook.com</a>
Tours	Armin Grunwald, COM, MSM	519-474-2194	<a href="mailto:wing427tours@rogers.com">wing427tours@rogers.com</a>

## CLUB SERVICES

Bar Officer	Brent Elgie	519-539-5956	<a href="mailto:lgairs@gmail.com">lgairs@gmail.com</a>
Bar Steward/Rentals	Flo Douglas	519-455-0430	
Padre	Frank Mantz	for more info, ask a member of the Executive	
London Link Editor	Cathy Wood		<a href="mailto:cathyrwood@gmail.com">cathyrwood@gmail.com</a>

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## Message from the President

***First, a hearty "Happy New Year!" and a wish for a great 2018.***

If you read this before New Year's Day, however, we invite you to attend our annual New Year Levee, which will be held from 1400 until 1600 hr. (2 to 4 p.m.). Please note that our dress code will be in effect, i.e., blazers and grey slacks or jackets and ties. We usually see many members of London's military community, and with not as many being held as in the past, there may be a few more at ours. Come out for a pleasant get-together.



2017 has been a great year for 427 Wing, with the Secrets of Radar Museum and the Amateur Radio Club joining our facility. Many members of the latter have also joined the Wing, adding a great deal of energy and enthusiasm to the atmosphere. We have made significant renovations, and hope to do more, which is why we have embarked on a building fund campaign. We have raised over \$3,700 so far, but hope to raise \$20,000 to make much-needed improvements.

Please refer to Page 12 for information on up-coming events.

We look forward to seeing you come out for lunch on Fridays. All are welcome.

*- Terry Rushton - President*

## Notes from the Secretary

The Wing is blessed with so many members who help and care about 427 (London) Wing. Let's take a snap shot.

1. Members from far away, but close to our hearts – communities including St. Thomas, Cambridge, Woodstock, Tara, Arva, St. Marys, Barrie, Komoka, Melbourne, Ilderton, Strathroy, Newcastle, Orleans, Windsor, Mississauga and beautiful downtown Dorchester.

Hope you received the minutes of the General Meeting of November 17th and of course the great editions of the Link. Sorry for missing members who may live in Tobermory, Timmins, Toronto or Tillsonburg.

2. New members – Hazil Malone, Frank Birch, the Rath brothers Doug and Charles, Howard and Bernice Hazzard, Paul Hart, Rob Leroy, Shawn Lewis, Keith Mathyssen, Tom Pillon, Helen Simpson, and others who recently joined the Wing and I missed in this list. (shame on you Chuck). Some folks are members of the London Amateur Radio Club (LARC) who have devoted many hours in renovating the West Side along with our 2nd Vice President Howard Johnston who has spent so many hours at the Wing, he stopped counting sometime ago.

3. It is gratifying that new members and others not as new are stepping up to serve on committees. Hazil for instance helps Sam, Hilda and Brent on the Wellness and Parkwood Hospital Liaison Committee. Brad Keeler has taken over as Air Cadets Liaison Officer and an early task was a weekend in the boonies with one of the London Squadrons. While a small group conducts most Wing business, vacancies continue in such areas as marketing/fundraising, entertainment, communications, Sergeant-At-Arms and more. Please jump in and help – you will not drown, but wet your fingers, it's fun, you will enjoy it. The training is great and of course the reward is satisfaction.

4. A special thanks to Flo, Rene and Howard for their dedication and long hours spent for the benefit of Wing members and the functioning of Wing. We would be in troubled waters without them.

Enjoy the nice weather wherever you live and have a very Safe and happy 2018. See you in the March/April edition of the best newsletter in SW Ontario. Chuck



*-Chuck Hardy  
Secretary*

## *Per Ardua*

In the fall of 1941, as German troops were closing in on Moscow, Colonel Marina Raskova, a pilot in the Russian air force who was dubbed “the Amelia Earhart of the Soviet Union,” lobbied the government to allow women to take a bigger role in the war effort. And so, on October 6, 1941, orders were issued to establish three new air force units - Regiments (Squadrons) #586, comprised of Yak-1 fighters; #587, twin-engine dive bombers; and #588, single-engine night bombers – all to be comprised exclusively of female personnel in their teens and early twenties. Russia became the first nation to allow women to fly combat missions, however, as there were few women trained for mechanical work, male mechanics were required for the fighter and dive bomber regiments, but the personnel of #588 Regiment remained entirely female.

The aircraft assigned to #588 Night Bomber Regiment was the Polikarpov Po-2, a small, lightweight, obsolete, open-cockpit biplane designed in 1928 for pilot training and crop dusting. Made of plywood and canvas, it had seats for pilot and navigator who used only maps and compasses for direction, with no radar nor armour for protection and no parachutes for the crew. If the aircraft was hit by tracer bullets from groundfire, it would burst into flame. And despite being highly maneuverable, flying close to the ground, hard to see in the dark of night, and with a top speed of 94 mph which was slower than the stall speed of German fighters, the Po-2 had a very thin margin of safety, and in cold weather the hazard of frostbite for the crews.

Almost every night as many as 40 crews would fly in groups of three until close to their targets when they would separate. Two would fly as decoys to attract searchlights and then maneuver in different directions. The third aircraft, approaching the target, would either set the engine to idle or kill it so it made no noise, then descend to drop the bombs. As the bombing aircraft glided unseen to the target, it made a soft whispering or swooshing sound, leading the German defenders to deem them to be flying broomsticks and to name them “Night Witches.” The women considered this a badge of honour.

Because of the low number of bombs carried, it was necessary that the Night Witches fly 8 or more “harassment” or precision bombing missions each night, on supply depots, encampments, rear base areas and other targets. Multiple missions were common, some crews flew as many as 18 in one night. Their constant raids left German forces feeling so vulnerable and insecure that any German pilot downing a Night Witch was automatically awarded the Iron Cross.

The all-female regiment continued their overnight bombing runs from June 8, 1942 until the end of the war. By that time, the Night Witches had flown approximately 30,000 bombing runs, deployed 23,000 tons of munitions, suffered the loss of 30 crewmembers. Hero of the Soviet Union medals were awarded to 23 members. Regiment #588 was never disbanded, but converted into the 46th Taman Guards Night Bomber Aviation Regiment. The Night Witches have been celebrated in movies, TV, comic strips, books, magazines and a rock band song.

*-Reg Lownie, 1st Vice President*



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## IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL RCAF ACTIVE AND FORMER AIRWOMEN - RCAF AIRWOMEN'S REUNION

The 14th RCAF Airwomens' Reunion is scheduled to take place at the Marriott Hotel  
100 Kent Street, Ottawa, June 7,8 and 9, 2019

Further details on entertainment and excursions which will be announced when available.

If you have ever been out to the Wing for lunch on the 4th Friday of most months of the year, you certainly would have noticed a long table set up in the ballroom, around which about twenty or so ladies are meeting to talk and laugh about the good old days and their good new days as well. These are all former members of the WDs - the RCAF's Womens Division that proudly served their county in peace and war. There are many similar groups of former serving airwomen across Canada. The London Airwomens group meets for lunch on the 4th Friday of the month at the 427 (London) Wing of the RCAF Association. The address is 2155 Crumlin Road, just north of the airport entrance, telephone 519-455-0430.

If you know of any serving or former airwomen, please tell them to email Marilyn Chalk at [almar1@sympatico.ca](mailto:almar1@sympatico.ca). In addition, for former members who have regular get-togethers, meetings and luncheons, the Executive would be pleased to post that information in their newsletter so that ladies in your community can find you. It also lets airwomen travelling in your area know where they can meet up with your group. Any emails received by the 20th of the month can go into the next newsletter.

There are ladies out there who do not have email addresses so we could send them the newsletter. However, if they were to go to the website at [atrcaf\\_airwomen@yahoo.com](mailto:atrcaf_airwomen@yahoo.com) they could read it online. The Airwomens group publishes its newsletter at: [www.rcafairwomen.ca](http://www.rcafairwomen.ca). If you know of someone who has access to a computer through their family or the local library, the newsletter can be read on line.

## CELEBRATING RCAFA 94th ANNIVERSARY and 427 (London) Wing's 2018 Fund Raising Drive



We have made significant renovations, and hope to do more, which is why we have embarked on a building fund campaign. We have raised over \$3,700 so far, but hope to raise \$20,000 to make much-needed improvements.

Donations may be made by cash, cheque or credit card.

Howard Johnson and Rene McKinnon pick up a snowblower donated by Armin & Judy Grunwald.





The Harvard Table enjoying the Friday lunch on December 1 at the Wing. –Seated from left: Ed Dalgity, Bruce Tapp, ILA Fallowfield. Standing from left: Jack Pettit, Bill Weir, Jackie Vettor, Wayne Chuter, Len Fallowfield



On Friday August 24th, 1928 London entered the big leagues when the new London Airport opened near Lambeth, at the NW corner of what is today Wharncliffe Rd & Wonderland Rd.

This new airport was located on 140 acres of land, had hanger space for 8 planes & 4 runways ranging in length from 1,600 ft to 3,000 ft. It also had two repair shops with the ability to do any kind of plane repair and maintenance work. As part of the official opening of the airport the Federal Government presented two De Haviland Moth planes to the London branch of the Aviation League of Canada. This airport remained in operation until 1945, five years after the next London Airport opened on Crumlin Road in 1940. The Lambeth Aiport was then closed and returned to farm land use.

photo source - August 25th, 1928 edition of the London Free Press via LPL London Microfiche



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# BIRTHDAY BRATS

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## JANUARY HAPPY BIRTHDAY WISHES

*Brent Elgie, Paul Gagnon, Torben Haarbye, Howard Hazzard, David McCarter, Garnet McDiarmid.*

## FEBRUARY HAPPY BIRTHDAY WISHES

*Ralph Askew, Diana Cuthbert, Ed Dalgity, Edward Eglinton, Ray Hutt, Murray MacKay,  
Dave Roper, Bruce Tapp, Fay Timbers, John Tomlinson, Len Truant*

*“The older the fiddler, the sweeter the tune.”*

*~English Proverb*

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### LONDON LINK SUBMISSION DEADLINES:

**January/February: December 18th • March/April: February 15th. May/June: April 17th • July/August: June 17th.  
September/October: August 18th • November/December: October 18th.**

Please forward any articles that you consider of value to the Wing members and we will do our best to get it to print. Sometimes submissions are of such a size that we then make them a two, or three part series.

Looking forward to hearing from you and sharing your photos, stories etc with our members.

(For good reproduction at reasonable size, photos should be fairly high resolution)

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A student became lost during a solo cross-country flight.

While attempting to locate the aircraft on radar, ATC asked, "What was your last known position?"

Student: "When I was number one for takeoff."

**Let our New Year's resolution be this: we will be there for one another as fellow members of humanity, in the finest sense of the word.**

**Goran Persson**

**Read more at: <https://www.brainyquote.com/topics/resolution>**



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## The Canadian Shield Certificate and Pin

Contributed by Sam Newman

Ontario Group first awarded the Unique Award of the Canadian Shield Certificate and pin, at the National Annual General Meeting held in Quebec City in Oct 2011. Our Group Executive made the qualifications pretty simple, i.e. the Award would be given to an Up and Coming member of the RCAF Association, as opposed to an older established member.

The Award consists of a Certificate naming the recipient as "A guardian of the Canadian Shield" and a pin made from the Granite Rock of the Canadian Shield with a maple leaf emblazoned on it. The recipient(s) is/are chosen by the Group President from nominations from across Canada. Here's the story that goes on the Certificate, which will explain the meaning of "Guardian" quite nicely! So ..... with tongue in cheek, we begin!

Many of you have heard the tales of J.A.D. McCurdy, his exploits as a Flying Ace at one time or the other. On the other hand, many of you might know little or nothing about young Rocky McCurdle! A swarthy young Canadian pilot, said to be a distant relative of the more famous J. D. McCurdy. Rocky spent his days flying supplies across the vast Northern Ontario back country to remote outposts along the Hudson's Bay and back towards the cities of Toronto and Ottawa. Rocky, also known as 'Moose' McCurdle is, perhaps best known for a daring feat; single-handedly thwarting a little known German Luftwaffe invasion of Canada in early 1944.

As the story goes, the young McCurdle was cruising high above the Canadian Shield. The day was sunny and the sky a beautiful Air Force blue with a few high altitude clouds above him. McCurdle was putting his nine cylinder Beaver bush-plane through its paces. After a series of barrel rolls and high banking turns, Moose was startled to find a German Luftwaffe Fokker a/c come strafing towards his location with a stream of bullets seeming to want to bit off his tail. Now, being the practical Canadian that he was and not wanting

to damage his little Beaver, he pulled the throttle back and high tailed it out of range. The German followed in hot pursuit. Moose barrel-rolled his Beaver a/c up and to the left and screamed towards the clouds high above. The German seemed eager to give chase. Hoping to evade his pursuer, he took immediate evasive action, dived out of the clouds, pointing his nose down to the expansive grey rocks below.

As he raced from the clouds he was surprised to find the afore-mentioned little Fokker still hot on his tail. Summoning up his two weeks experience in the northern bush of Ontario, he went for broke, increased his speed despite the solid Canadian Shield growing in details before him. As he neared the tops of the trees, he pulled abruptly out of his dive, buzzing through the lush fiery foliage of Canadian maples! Twigs and leaves flying in a whirlwind about the windshield. The 9 - cylinder Beaver engine sputtered as it slowly began to climb, eyeing this tiny Maple Leaf, Rocky paused to remember his aviation brothers fighting for freedom in Europe. Full of patriotism, Rocky yanked the nose back hard, pushed the throttle wide open and just before there seemed like there was no airspace left, he pulled safely into blue sky.

The Fokker a/c following too close behind, realized far too late that he was flummoxed. The swath of whirling leaves that Moose and his Beaver cut through the treetops plastered the German's canopy obscuring his view. The Fokker met his unfortunate demise as his aluminum and wooden craft met abruptly with the granite rock, more commonly known as the Canadian Shield.

What might have been the great German invasion that day was aborted by a Moose and a Beaver! Few people today know of this great feat of aviation, and it is in this great aviator's honour, Rocky "Moose" McCurdle, that the "Guardian of the Canadian Shield" is awarded to worthy recipients throughout our Association



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**Kudos go to  
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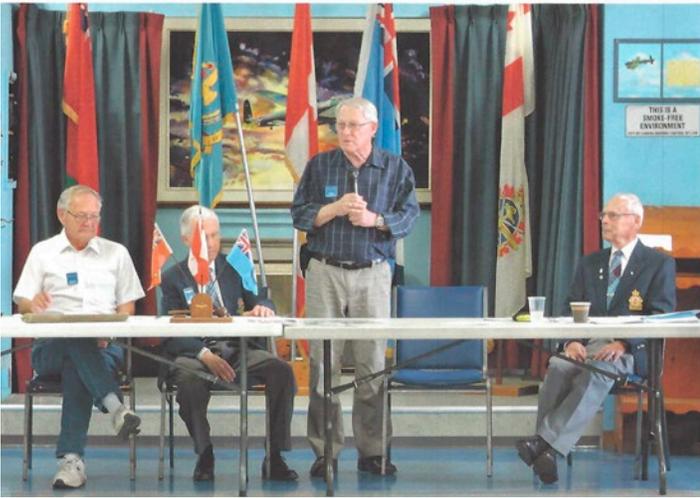
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# WELCOME NEW MEMBERS



President Terry Rushton conducted the swearing-in ceremony for new members (left to right): Allen Mc-Nee, Keith Mathysen, Bob LeRoy, David McCarter, Charles Roth and Helen Simpson. Ceremony took place at the General Meeting on November 17, 2017.

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First Row - Lorne Spicer, Jim Purvis, JR (Jack) Weekes and Eric Tallman.,  
Second Row- Hilda Smeltzer, a Parkwood co-ordinator, Hazil Malone.  
Back Row- Sam Newman.



427 (London) Wing member Mel Hymers at the Remembrance Day ceremony at Parkwood Hospital November 2017. Mel has a 100th Birthday in July!

Photos by Hilda Smeltzer.

## RCAFA Ambassador's Fund



The RCAFA Association has created an Ambassadors' Fund, the purpose of which will be to help provide financial support to RCAFA Association members who give of their time and

energy tremendously each year, but who also give of their personal funds covering costs incurred while performing activities consistent with the RCAFA Association's mission. Your donation will qualify for a tax receipt, and will also help our leading members - those who step forward time and again to give to their local community and region.

Each year RCAFA Association members volunteer their time and energy to local and regional activities and events that underscore the association's mission. Wouldn't it be great if someone was working every day to tell Canadians of the important contributions made by the men and women in the Canadian Forces and the air force in particular? That's what we do. Wouldn't it be great if someone was there to encourage young Canadians to become interested in an aerospace career, civilian or military? That's what we do. Wouldn't it be great if someone were striving every day to inform Canadians just how vital is our country's aerospace industry? That's what we do. Your donation helps offset transportation costs incurred by any RCAFA Association member while performing these mission-critical activities. If you believe in the power of advocacy, please consider a donation. If you believe in the value of nurturing young aspiring Canadian aviators, please consider a donation. If you believe in confidence-building that comes with caring for air force veterans contemplating their own lifetime contributions to Canada's air force, please consider a donation. Your contributions will earn you a tax receipt, and will help us keep Canada's air force on the minds of all caring Canadians. Each year a portion of your accumulating donations will be distributed to/ shared with Group leaders for further distribution down to those members who may wish to submit travel claims for eligible travel costs, thereby optimizing use of your designated donations.

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**NOTICE OF INTENTION  
427 (LONDON) WING RCAFA  
NEW BYLAWS  
MOTION AT GENERAL MEETING  
Friday January 26**

MOTION BY CHUCK HARDY AND SECONDED  
BY CATHY NEWMAN THAT THE  
NEW BYLAWS REPLACE AND REPEAL THE  
427 (LONDON) WING, RCAFA 2007 WING  
BYLAWS AS AMENDED.

**New Year Levee**

**2 to 4 p.m**

**427 (London) Wing**

Please note that our dress code will be in effect, i.e., blazers and grey slacks or jackets and ties. We usually see many members of London's military community, and with not as many being held as in the past, there may be a few more at ours. Come out for a pleasant get-together.

**JOIN US FOR NEW YEAR'S DAY LEVEE 2pm**



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- London Audiology Consultants has been providing hearing care for over 27 years.
- We help Londoners to hear better.
- If you are unable to come in to us, we provide house calls.
- We are a VAC registered provider.
- Please call for an appointment.

# January 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b> LEVEE	<b>2</b> EUCHRE RAA	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> LARC	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> EUCHRE 1:15	<b>10</b> BCC	<b>11</b> WT	<b>12</b> LUNCH WEC	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> EUCHRE 1:15	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> LUNCH	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> EUCHRE FO	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> LUNCH WDs / GM	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> EUCHRE 1:15	<b>31</b>			

# February 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				<b>1</b> LARC	<b>2</b> LUNCH	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> EUCHRE 1:15 RAA	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> WT	<b>9</b> LUNCH WEC	<b>10</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> EUCHRE 1:15	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> LUNCH	<b>17</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> EUCHRE 1:15	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> LUNCH GM	<b>24</b>
<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> EUCHRE 1:15 FO	<b>28</b>			

**AGM** Annual General Meeting, 1pm  
**BBQ** Bar-b-que lunch, last lunch until August  
**BCC** British Car Club, meeting at 7:30pm  
**COM** Retired Commissionaires, 9am - 12pm  
**FO** Fanshawe Optimist's Club, meeting at 7:30pm  
**GM** General Meeting at 1pm  
**GS** Guest Speaker  
**LFC** London Flying Club Reunion

**LVRC** London Vintage Radio Club meeting at 11:00am  
**MAC** Model Aircraft Club meeting  
**OAGM** Ontario Group Annual General Meeting  
**RAA** Recreational Aircraft Association, meeting at 7:30pm  
**WD** The Women's Division join us the 4th Friday of each month for lunch  
**WDP** Wind Down Party for OAGM, at the Wing  
**WEC** Wing Executive Council, 9:30am  
**WT** Wood Turners, meeting at 7:30pm