

November – December 2016

Volume 52, Issue 8

THE LONDON LINK

427 (LONDON) WING — ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION
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November 11, 2016 • London Ontario

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.

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Message from the President

SUDDENLY 2016 SEEMS to be winding down. I am not sure where it went but it is upon us. So, to recap a busy year or look ahead to what promises to be a very exciting year ahead. First, we have had the pleasure of an excellent, award winning, editor of our London Link. Tanya Deaville has moved on and we acknowledge her significant contribution. An editor is an important part of our communication to our members and associations with whom we work. So, it is my pleasure to introduce the London Link's new editor, Cathy Wood. We will have more information on this very interesting lady in a future Link. For submissions to the Link please forward them to cathyrwood@gmail.com.

Remembrance Day was a very busy time with an increase in events around this very important day for our Veterans. This Link has a few photographs of members at a few of the presentations. The Wing also had a very rare occasion on November 04 when Pete Schussler was the recipient of the French National Order of the Legion of Honour. 427 (London) is now proud to have two of our members now proudly wearing this prestigious award. Our other member is Michael Sydorko.

The Wing is holding the annual fundraising Christmas Dinner this **November 25th**. Bookings indicate that it will be a sold out event. Some exciting programs early in the new year will be the planned Avro Arrow exhibition early in the spring. And there is the Vimy 100th anniversary with a number of events planned. Sam Newman has an article concerning this in the Link. A few events are planned and as they are confirmed we will let you know.

On a very positive note is with pleasure we are able to announce that over the past few months we have increased our membership by ten. On a more somber note we also had two members pass away just recently – Don Gilks and most recently Frank Smeltzer. Our expression of sympathy is sent to their families.

In closing, we wish all a Merry Christmas and very happy New Year.

*-Rene McKinnon
President*

Notes from the Secretary

FOLLOWING THE LAST general meeting, I sent the minutes out to as many members as possible who have e-mail. We feel that by doing so, it will help to keep members informed of what is happening at the Wing especially those members who do not visit the Wing very often. We hope too that more members will attend the meetings. The next general meeting is on Friday November 25th following the annual Wing Christmas luncheon. A number of new applicants will be inducted in as new members of 427 (London) Wing, RCAFA. Please try to attend the meeting and welcome the new members.

The executive welcomes suggestions and comments in order to provide the best service we can for members and visitors alike.

Hope you all have a wonderful Christmas and New Year's.

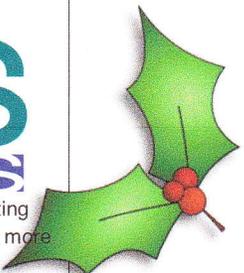
See you in the January/February edition of your London Link.

*-Chuck Hardy
Secretary*

Fundraising: the City of London helps non-profit organizations by making available the Community Suite (Box Seats) for various events at the Budweiser Gardens. The most popular are the home games for the London Knights. We entered the draw for the chance to use the suite, and once again were fortunate to get another date. Of the dates available, we chose Sunday Jan. 22nd at 2 PM, the game against Niagara. We are asking for a donation to the Wing of \$30. for each of the 14 seats available. If you would like some, please contact **Terry Rushton at 519-472-0268 or trushton71@bell.net**.

*-Terry Rushton
Fundraising*

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Per Ardua

Before the weekend of Remembrance Day, 2016 fades into memory, we may want to take a moment to recall some of the events we attended, some events that we missed, and think about why they all seemed so meaningful whether we were there or not.

Two events overshadowed by the American election were the Veterans Day Memorial in Washington, D.C., and the Canadian Cross of Sacrifice at Arlington National Cemetery, both of these take place on November 11th each year in American-Canadian friendship. This year the ceremony in Washington remembered seaman Joseph Benjamin Noil, an American sailor born in Liverpool, N.S., who was later promoted to Captain-of-the-Hold of the USS Powhattan and awarded the Congressional Medal of Honour. While serving at sea on December 26, 1872 he dove into the freezing water to save a shipmate from drowning. The Congressional Medal of Honour is the highest award bestowed for valour. At Arlington Cemetery there were memorials recalling the sacrifices shared by Canada and the United States in two world wars and the subsequent trials in Korea, Afghanistan and Iraq.

The highest military decoration from the French government is the National Order of the Legion of Honour, in the decree of Knight. This medal was presented on November 4th at the Wing to 427 Wing member William (Pete) Schussler by Colonel Vandomme, the deputy defence attache for France. On a previous occasion another Wing member, Michael Sydorko, was also recognized by the government of France and awarded the same medal, in May 2015. During this weekend event, NDP Member of Parliament Irene Mathyssen, who had nominated both veterans for their medals, said that, "The most important thing our veterans have asked of us is to remember them. It is a modest request." Following this year's presentation, members and guests stood to attention as the national anthems of Canada and France were played.

Not unexpectedly, music was a big part of most of the weekend events in London. In addition to the French and Canadian anthems, the Amabile Boys & Men's Choirs provided Londoners with their "In Remembrance" concert at St. Peter's Cathedral on November 6th. The church was filled, and everyone left with the hope that the concert will be repeated again during every Remembrance Day weekend. The story of the bravery displayed by three RCAF flyers in November 1972, the songs and hymns, the soloists, the massed choirs, the audience participation in familiar war ballads, and the emotion that was engendered, was indeed much more than "awesome."

Finally there was music, marching and memories at the Cenotaph. Another large turnout of military and civilian personnel despite the stiff autumn breeze. The music was provided by the Salvation Army Jubilee Brass Band and the excellent voices of the young women and men of the Catholic Central Chamber Choir. The chilly weather was overcome by their warm and moving rendition of In Flanders Fields and also when all present joined in to sing Abide with Me along with our national anthem and God Save the Queen. Although some of our Wing members may have been daunted by the weather, there was a good turnout of members to march and several blue RCAF wedge caps were visible in the crowd. Hope to see you there next year.

*-Reg Lownie
1st Vice President*

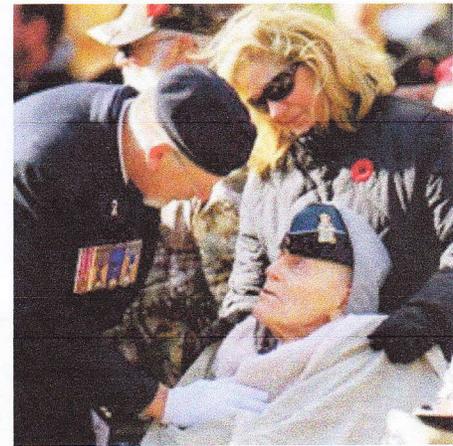




Rene McKinnon (left), Terry Rushton (white jacket) Chuck Hardy on right.



Michael Sydorko



*Wing Member Mike Hymers
at the Remembrance Day ceremony
Victoria Park*

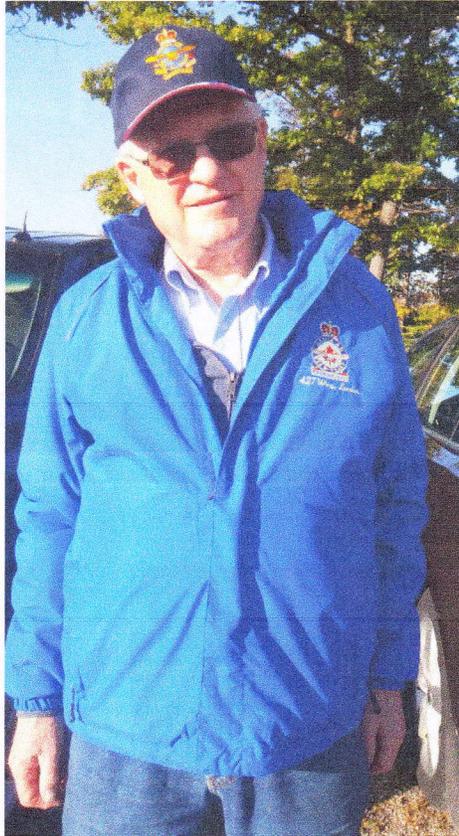


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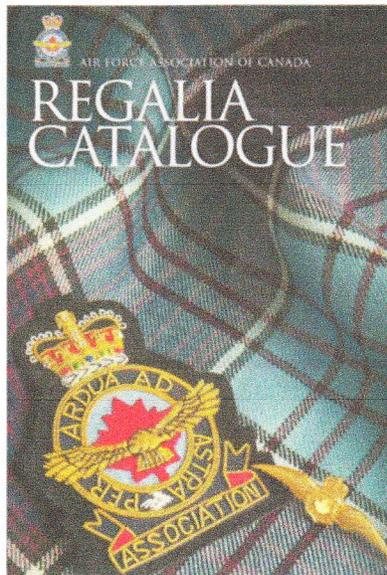
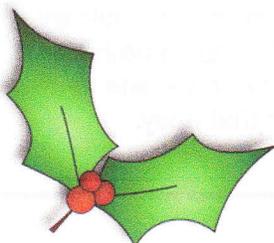
VISIT THE KITSHOP

“Finally we have had weather chilly enough for this jacket, and it has been perfect. it is very light-weight, yet also very warm for those cold, early-morning walks.”

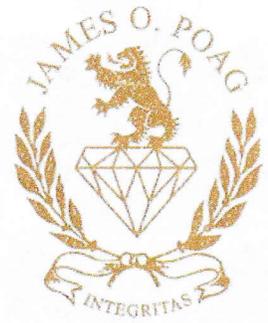
*-Terry Rushton
Kit Shop*



Terry Rushton at the Model Aircraft Swap meet October 16.



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BIRTHDAY BRATS



NOVEMBER HAPPY BIRTHDAY WISHES

HAPPY BIRTHDAY WISHES to
Al Horton, Mike Meade, Jack Pettit, Bob Shiell, Al Szawara,
Marilyn Turner, Jr Weeks.

DECEMBER HAPPY BIRTHDAY WISHES

go on their way to...

Joanne Banyard, Len Fallowfield, Larry Fox, John Funston, CD, Peter Garland, CD, Gerry Haliburton,
Howard Johnston, Frank Kasawan, Ken Lilley, Mike Ryan, Jeanne Sharpe, Pam Storey and Bill Weir.

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

~English Proverb

Second Wing Veteran Honoured by Government of France

“For what you did for the people of France, we have never forgotten, and in the name of the president of the Republic, and under the authority granted to me, we confer to you the decree of Knight, the National Order of the Legion of Honour.”

These stirring words, from the French deputy defence attache Colonel Roger Vandomme, to William (Pete) Schussler, the newest Associate member of 427 (London) Wing, brought forth an avalanche of applause from the more than eighty relatives, friends and other Wing members who had gathered for this memorable occasion.

Pete Schussler enlisted in the Canadian Army at the age of 16 and later served in the Lincoln and Welland Regiment and the 4th Armoured division as they fought to bring liberation to Holland, Belgium, France and Germany. He later continued during the Korean War and with the United Nations Peacekeeping forces in Egypt and the Middle East, before his final tour with the NATO forces in Germany. Pete retired as Chief Warrant Officer on July 1, 1980 after 38 years of service. During this time he received fifteen medals to which he has now added this esteemed award.

Established by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1802, the National Order of the Legion of Honour is France's highest decoration. It is reported that until the recent past, fewer than fifty Canadians had received this honour, a list that includes WW I Flying Ace Billy Bishop. The list now includes the name of Pete Schussler, as well as Wing member Michael Sydorko, who was the recipient of this medal on May 29th, 2015. On both occasions it was New Democratic MP Irene Mathyssen who nominated both these brave men. Sincere and heartfelt thanks were expressed to her and her staff for their help.



Rene McKinnon, Pete Schussler, Irene Mathyssen, Colonel Roger Vandomme

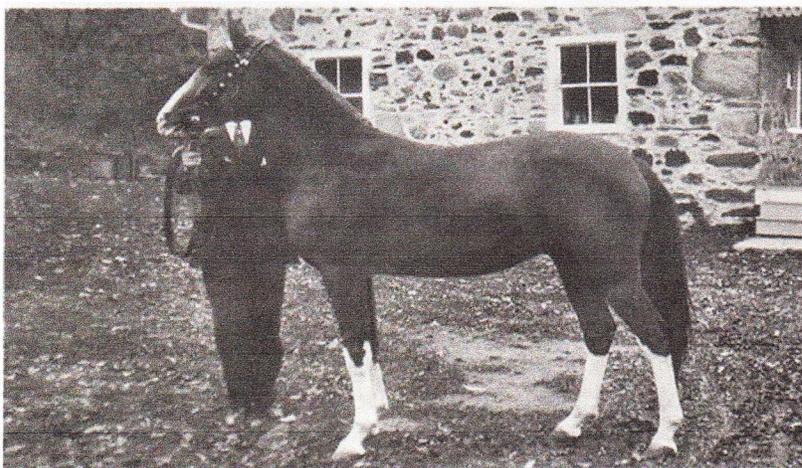
Noble Steeds

Canada sent tens of thousands of horses into battle, but only a select few returned *by Don Martin Jr., Melbourne, Ont.*

When I was a boy, my father always told me about interesting events in history; as a result, I developed a lifelong interest in history. In 2014, I happened upon a story that really caught my attention.

I was doing public relations for the Royal Canadian Air Force Association's #427 London Wing in London, Ont., when I first heard about the Sir Arthur Currie Memorial Project, a cornerstone of which is a life-size sculpture of the WWI general, created by Canadian artist Adrienne Alison. I contacted an organizing committee member, John Sargeant of London, Ont., for more details. In our conversation, John mentioned that Sir Arthur Currie's warhorse, named Brock, was buried on Currie's brother's farm just outside of Strathroy, Ont. He had also heard of another warhorse buried in eastern Canada, but he couldn't recall the location or the horse's name.

That chat with John prompted a childhood memory. As a young boy, I would join my father, Don Martin Sr., on drives out to the Knowlton, Que., area to visit my grandmother. On the way, we would pass by Lt.-Col. George Harold Baker's summer residence at Baker Pond near Knowlton, and I recalled my father saying that Col. Baker's warhorse was buried there. After some research, I was pleased to discover that my father was correct—Col.



Morning Glory, one of the few horses that returned from WWI.

Baker's horse, Morning Glory, was indeed buried there.

Col. Baker, the only member of Parliament to serve overseas during the First World War, sent Morning Glory to France in 1915. They were separated for most of the war, with Morning Glory serving as a mount for a battalion commander. Col. Baker visited his horse for the last time a month before being killed in 1916 during the Battle of Ypres. In 1918, his friend Brig.-Gen. Dennis Draper brought Morning Glory home to the Draper farm in Sutton Junction, Que., where the horse lived until 1936, passing away at age 26.

Few warhorses were as lucky as Morning Glory. Canada shipped more than 130,000 horses overseas to fight with Canadian, French and British forces on the front lines, along with

mules and donkeys. At least a quarter of these heroic horses died every year in battle; more succumbed to disease and starvation. There is a bond that develops between a soldier and his horse, and so I find it unfortunate that it was only officers who had the privilege of having their horses shipped home. The other surviving warhorses were either slaughtered for meat or sold to farmers as workhorses.

I was also amazed to find out that these two horses, Brock and Morning Glory, were among the very few—only about 60 in total—who returned home to Canada after the Great War.

It has been said by wiser people than me that we would never have won the Great War without the horses, as they kept everything moving. I believe this to be true. ■



*Hilda Smeltzer and
Dr Chuck Spurgeon at the memorial
service held for
Frank Smeltzer November 03 at
Forest Lawn Funeral Home.*

LAST POST

After a long and courageous fight with Parkinson's disease, Frank Smeltzer passed away on November 2nd, one day before his 80th birthday. Beloved husband of Hilda, to whom he was married for just over 52 years. He was a model railroader and private pilot, and belonged to a number of organizations including the RCAFA 427 Wing London.

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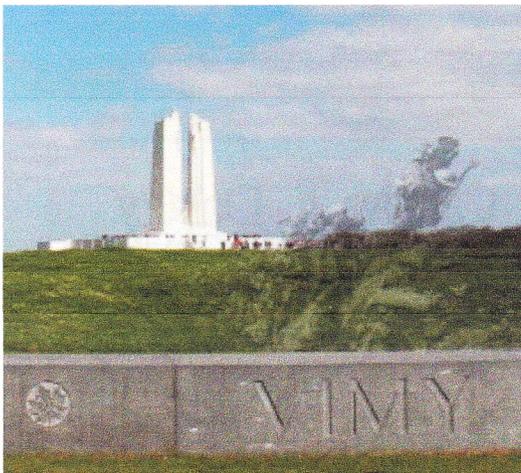
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REUNION NOTICE

The origins of No. 1 Air Division, Royal Canadian Air Force, trace to Paris, France on 1 October 1952.

In April of 1953 the Air Division headquarters was relocated to Metz, France and remained there until the Air Division was disbanded in 1967. The year 2017 will mark many anniversaries, of which the 50th anniversary of the end of a very significant era in the proud history of our Royal Canadian Air Force is but one.



In recognition of these milestones - 150th anniversary of Confederation - 100th Anniversary of Victory at Vimy Ridge - and our RCAF heritage in Metz, France - an enthusiastic group will journey to France in April of 2017. Would you like to join our trek down memory lane? Additional information is available at: <http://www.navreau.org/>

*Illustration compliments of
David Botton (www.agoodeye.ca)*



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An Invitation to all 427 (London) Wing RCAF Association Members

DURING 2017, CANADA WILL CELEBRATE ITS 150TH BIRTHDAY. In addition, our country will also commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge. The City of London has already commenced planning for these events. One of the Legion Branches here in London, the Vimy Branch 145, plans to celebrate the landmark Commemoration by sponsoring a VIMY Gala Dinner on 01 April, 2017 in the Grand Ballroom of the London Convention Centre. Some 800 – 1,000 attendees are expected.

The event is to be one of the largest undertakings of this kind in recent years. The evening is being organized in collaboration with the Vimy Foundation, and will involve not only the Legion, but the City of London, the London Area Military and Cadet Units, Police, Fire, Paramedics, Area Museums, Historical Societies, and the faculty members of Fanshawe Community College. All proceeds from the event will go to the Legion Poppy Fund, the purpose of which assists Veterans and their dependents, ex-Service personnel and their families in need of assistance.

We are awaiting confirmation of participation from the invited Distinguished Guests of Honour, His Excellency, David Johnston, Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of Canada; Her Excellency, Sharon Johnston; the Ambassador of France, Nicholas Chapuis and Madame Chapuis, and of course, other notables are expected to be in attendance as well.

This Commemorative Gala Dinner is being planned to be a most enjoyable and memorable evening for all, and hopefully it will be “The Social Event of the Year”. It will truly recognize the important anniversary through rich military and musical pageantry, exceptional speakers, impressive historical displays and a very moving Remembrance Ceremony. All of this, combined with a delicious meal and after dinner dancing, enhanced by the realization that your attendance is supporting our Veterans. Those attending will receive souvenir Vimy pins, a keepsake Gala Program and replica period documents and imagery located at their tables. Finally, the Gala will also host a Silent Auction where period pieces and related items will be available for bidding. I will tell you that this will truly be a Black Tie event with Tuxedos, Mess Dress, Blazers, Business Suits, long gowns, and, of course, Medals and Decorations abound.

You are likely asking “Why am I telling you all this?” Well, I (the undersigned) have been tasked with inviting interested attendees to commit to this Gala Event, and making the necessary seating arrangements. True, it is indeed, quite early in the planning phases, but for the Legion’s own planning numbers, it is also important (as you can understand), to ascertain a commitment from those wishing to attend, and to have their intentions recorded and included in the planning. Already some two-thirds of our tables are spoken for, and have been reserved. As I write this column, (4 April) and from verbal circulation of invitations thus far to our Wing members and their friends alone, we already have 14 seats committed. What I do need from newcomers is your firm support and intentions (preferably in writing) accompanied by a cheque in the full amount or a minimum amount (in cash) for one half the amount of your total levy. Tickets are available \$100 p.p. and they are now on sale to the public.

Should you be one who loves the Pomp and Ceremony of a formal affair, you won’t want to miss out on what will truly be a ‘Once in a Life Time’ experience. Our neighbour Veteran sponsors look forward to a good representation and support from our members, and moreover knowing you will be present for such an auspicious occasion, along with friends of a Military or Civilian connection. Should you be genuinely interested in obtaining tickets, I would ask that you please provide your intentions early, as I don’t want anyone to miss out on this momentous opportunity. Should you have friends that you would like to invite and sit with, please let me know. Arrangements can also be made for an entire table (10 people) to suit your own party needs, should that be your preference.

I can be reached, at sfn.afac@rogers.com or contacted at 519-452-1886, home address 989 Apache Rd, London, N5V 2V7. Cheques are to be made out to “VIMY BRANCH 145, RCL “ I can’t urge you strongly enough, in order to avoid disappointment, to kindly contact me soon. To be fair to all, it has to be on a ‘First Come, First Served’ basis!

-Sam Newman

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UPCOMING EVENTS



“Canada 150”

A taste of what’s to come to the Wing by the Spirit of Flight Museum project in 2017.

Stay tuned to the Link for continuing details!



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426 squadron Halifax Navigator and 427 Wing RCAFA member Lorne Spicer presented a wreath at the Parkwood Veterans Care Service in London today. He was assisted by Sergeant Ryan Elgie of 614 RCAirC Forest City Squadron Squadron.

An airplane was about to crash. There were four passengers on board, but only three parachutes.

The 1st passenger said, "I am Steph Curry, the best NBA basketball player. The Warriors and my millions of fans need me, and I can't afford to die." So he took the 1st pack and left the plane.

The 2nd passenger, Donald Trump, said, "I am the newly-elected U.S. President, and I am the smartest President in American history, so my people don't want me to die." He took the 2nd pack and jumped out of the plane.

The 3rd passenger, the Pope, said to the 4th passenger, a 10 year old schoolboy, "My son, I am old and don't have many years left. You have more years ahead so I will sacrifice my life and let you have the last parachute."

The little boy said, "That's okay, Your Holiness, there's a parachute left for you. America's smartest President took my schoolbag."



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NEC AGM report

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Please pass this along to your newsletter editors.

A brief report to Ontario Group members.

The National AGM held on October 28th and 29th 2016 went by quite quickly. With the format having a number of items pre-approved by wings, on the agenda and the wings having voted in advance on the resolutions, it was hoped that time would be reduced and this would reduce costs to all levels. This is what was called the Consent Agenda. In the end discussion took up some extra time and we did not get to about six items in the open session on Saturday afternoon. These will be dealt with by the NEC at an upcoming teleconference.

In a couple of instances the process was quicker and it did allow for some discussion on items brought up from the floor.

It did allow for discussion on resolutions but because the process of discussion and voting and the carrying of a proxy vote from the wings, it did not allow for amendments to be made to a resolution as has been past practise. Changes to resolutions will have to be made through the resolution process. This situation has been created by the Not For Profit legislation.

Throughout the meeting the call for nominations was heard the three prescribed times.

Elected to the NEC at this time was ; Jorma Hamalainen, John Scott, Don Hogan and appointed by the NEC was Terry Chester. Our new Honourary Colonel is Andrea' Dechamp.

The results of the votes on the 7 resolutions were as follows.

The resolution from 429(Georgina) on crests will be returned to 429 to be re-written.

The resolution from Jack Shapka, 888 Wing Komox, was carried.

The resolution from Escadre 302 Wing, consultation on the Association Ensign was carried.

The resolution from Alberta Group on membership length was carried.

The resolution from Alberta Group regarding resolutions voting was returned to the originator, 783 Calgary Wing.

The resolution from Alberta Group on the number of Wing members required to maintain a Wing, was carried.

It was decided that the resolution from John R. Newell, had already been passed in 2008 and that the current NEC would follow through on it and see if they could not get some government action on it as it seemed to have been overlooked by previous executives. This would be staffed after consultation with Mr. Newell.

Attached is also a summary of strength of groups prepared by an Ontario Group RVP.

He presents it as a..."things that makes you go Hmmm".

National is also looking at a location for the 2018 NEC AGM and is considering having a permanent location instead of moving around the country.

It is also looking at moving some of the award ceremonies and other functions of an AGM down to the Group level. This is still in the "thinking out loud" stage but could possibly take place.

Workshops and training sessions were something that was asked for at AGMs and the need to increase membership is also being more seriously worked on.

An Action Plan and rebranding to follow suit with the RCAF was discussed. With the approved action plan, the RCAF will allow us to become more involved in programs they prepare for members as they prepare to leave the forces.

A great mess dinner was had Saturday evening and it was a great wind down topping off the events of the weekend.

Please feel free to make your thoughts known to your Wing President and they can be passed along to your RVP who can forward them on to the members of your Group Executive.

John C. Hooper
President Ontario Group
RCAFA
705-248-1233

November 2016						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4 Lunch	5
6	7	8	9	10	11 Closed for Remembrance day	12
13	14	15	16 Euchre	17	18 Lunch	19
20	21	22	23 Euchre	24 London Airport Chili Cookoff 12:30	25 Christmas Lunch, WDs, GM	26
27 WT Cancelled	28 WT Cancelled	29	30 Euchre	Notes: The last lunch in December is Friday 16th. The Wing will be closed for the rest of December.		

December 2016						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2 LUNCH	3 Don Hatch
4	5	6 COM-RAA	7 Euchre Christmas Lunch	8 WT	9 WEC Lunch	10 WT 0900-1200
11	12	13 MAC	14 BCC	15	16 Last Lunch of 2016	17 Holidays until January 3
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

HAPPY HOLIDAYS



LEGEND

- AGM** Annual General Meeting, 1pm
- BBQ** Barb-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