

THE LONDON LINK



427 (LONDON) WING — ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION
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SEPTEMBER 16, 2017 Above: Opening the Secrets of Radar Museum on September 16. From the left, RCAF WWII veterans and radar technicians Charlie Jackson and Jim Sands with museum curator Maya Hirschman



Left Alex Meyer, Board Member SORM, Bethany Hayward, SORM Collections Manager ready the cake portions under the watchful eye of Joan Clark



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 1ST 2015 – JUNE 30TH 2016

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

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London Link Editor	Cathy Wood	519 777-5452	cathywood@gmail.com
	Tanya 519 615-6373		

Over 1,000sq ft for Rent at 427 (London) Wing – This includes two rooms with a bar, kitchen facilities and lots of parking. This clean, attractive setting is great for business meetings, small weddings, family gatherings, holiday events, musical concerts or any type of event you'd like to have. Holds 125.

- Call for rental rates • Catering IS an option! Call Flo at 519-455-0430 for more information.



Message from the President-Elect: A new Vision for the Wing

This is a great time to be a member of 427 Wing, since so many developments have come to fruition this year, many due to the efforts of our immediate past president, Rene McKinnon.

If you visit the Wing and look around, you may see some things which are different. Aside from the renovations, you may notice that the average age has dropped, and you will also see more women involved in Wing activities. (FYI: We have had two women presidents in the past, and encourage more women to become involved in Wing activities.) You will also see some renovation, particularly on the west side of the building where the Secrets of Radar Museum is located.

We are thrilled to have the Amateur Radio Club using our facilities; several members worked hard over the summer on renovations, and many have joined the Wing. They are a lively addition.

In July, we had a visit by two of the four replica Sopwith WWI aircraft which took part in our Vimy memorial ceremonies in April. They were parked by our Vimy memorial of 100 maple trees, plus the two Vimy oaks.

We have a strong executive, and we are also fortunate to have help from many Wing members on various projects. Through activities such as Doors Open London and the London Airshow, we have heard many people remark that they didn't know that the Wing was here. To change that, we are working with various groups and with Tourism London to have the Wing become even better known.

The Wing supports the activities of seven Air Cadet squadrons in and around London. We invite Squadron Sponsoring Committees, Parent Groups, and CI staff to keep the Wing in mind as a possible site for various activities, as well as a possible resource for various ideas. Members of the Wing represent a tremendous amount of experience.

If you haven't been to the Wing lately, join us for lunch any Friday.

– Terry Rushton

Notes from the Secretary

At the General Meeting on September 29th, there were 11 new members inducted in as new members of the Wing. Another 9 who could not attend will become members hopefully at the meeting on November 24th. Attendance overall was at least 32. That is good. In case you did not know, Terry Rushton is now the new Wing President and took the oath of office during the meeting administered by The Regional Vice President, our former President Rene McKinnon. Welcome President Terry. Rene will continue to graciously help the Wing Executive Council and all members as he has done since he became a member himself. You may know Rene has done every job from taking out the garbage, doing the dishes to organizing and conducting major events.

Also, at the November meeting, a motion will take place asking for approval of the new 2017 Wing Bylaws. Any member wanting a copy emailed to them for review can do so by emailing me at chuck.hardy@sympatico.ca. I will print a number of copies for members asking for a copy at the Friday lunches between now (Oct 5th and Nov 24th). A notice is being placed on the notice board along with the bylaws on October 6th.

It's far too soon to wish you the best of the festive holidays when Thanksgiving Day, Halloween, the poppy campaign, Remembrance Day and the Wing annual Christmas luncheon are yet to take place. Hope as many members as possible can participate in some of the events mentioned above.

So, then, See you in the January-February 2018 edition of the Link



*–Chuck Hardy
Secretary*



*All the best of the holiday season
from all of us at 427 Wing!*

JOIN US FOR CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON NOVEMBER 24

Per Ardua

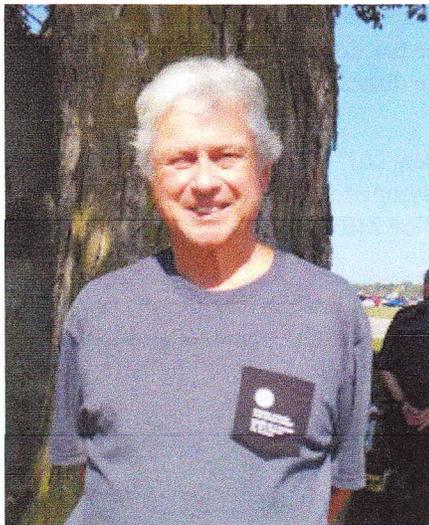
No. 420 Squadron was formed at Waddington, Lincolnshire, England on December 19, 1941 and during the war crews flew Manchester, Hampden, Wellington, Halifax, and Lancaster aircraft on strategic and tactical bombing operations. Shortly after its formation, the squadron was adopted by the City of London, Ontario through the National Air Force Association Adoption program, and was casually referred to as the "City of London" Squadron. In 1942 the squadron received another nickname after it requested that a stuffed snowy owl be provided to serve as their mascot, and so became known as the "Snowy Owl" squadron. Both nicknames were somewhat incongruous to the Squadron's combative Latin motto: "Pugnamus Finitum" which means "We fight to the Finish."

And fight to the finish it did: as a Bomber Squadron in RAF bomber Command from 19 December 1941 to 5 September 1945; as a Fighter Squadron in RCAF Defence Command from 15 September 1948 to 1 September 1956; and as a Coastal Patrol Squadron in the Canadian Forces Air Command from 1 May 1974 to 15 May 1995; and in a variety of aircraft including the Avro Manchester, Handley Page Hampden, Vickers Wellington III, Vickers Wellington X, Handley Page Halifax III, Avro Lancaster X, North American Harvard, P-51 Mustang IV, CT-133 Silver Star. Many Londoners will recall the sound of the Mustangs roaring overhead their city during the years from 1948 to 1956.

With such a history, it was to be expected that when our Wing was approached in mid-summer and asked if we would be interested in some 420 Squadron memorabilia for our Museum, the answer was a resounding "yes." Contact was made with Jay Hunt, a former member of the RCAF Reserves during and after his university years at UWO, who currently lives in Ottawa.

Jay Hunt has had a life-long love affair with aircraft and flying. Born in London, he joined the London RCAF Auxiliary Squadron No. 2420 from April 1957 until it disbanded in May 1961. Reserve Squadron 2420 had "inherited" 420 squadron's legacy as the Snowy Owl squadron, but since July 1, 1956 was operated as an AC & W (Aircraft Control and Warning) Squadron training Fighter Control Operators. Following his training at Crumlin, Clinton and Centralia, Jay began a series of weekend and summer postings to the Pinetree radar site in Falconbridge, near Sudbury.

After No. 2420 disbanded in 1961, Jay had the time to take flying lessons and earned his private pilot's licence at Crumlin in 1962. Three years later he moved to Toronto and took an interest in aerobatics at airports at Buttonville and Markham. By May 1973 he had become confident enough at aerobatics to participate before a panel of judges, and the following month entered the annual Canadian Open Aerobatic Contest. Through constant practice, teaching aerobatics and taking part in competitions he became the first Canadian to compete at the 1976 World Aerobatic Championships, held at Kiev, in the USSR. He also became one of



the founding directors of Aerobatics Canada and served two years as its president. Unfortunately, due to health problems, Jay was forced to cancel his pilot's licence in 1989. You can read more about Jay's eventful life at <http://jay-hunt.blogspot.ca>

Jay Hunt has donated to our Wing Museum a large amount of interesting and rare material from both RCAF 420 and RCAF 2420 squadrons, including an official photo album and documented squadron history, along with several VHS cassettes of movies which he has taken the time to transcribe to DVD. He selected 427 (London) Wing a because he wanted to ensure that it would be stored and used in a p on and as a valuable contribution to the historic information held by ti on and the Central Public Library. From all of us, thank you, Jay.



Former aerobatic competitor Jay Hunt at the Wing & 2017 London Airshow, and the crest from the 2420 reserve fighter squadron he joined in 1957,



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Kit Shop (formerly known as Regalia):

We still have a few golf shirts with the RCAF Association crest and 427 Wing on them, as well as a very few winter jackets, wool with leather sleeves, and fall rain jackets (small only).

We can also order items from the Regalia catalogue at airforce.ca and from Labusch Skywar. at skywear.com. We still have a number of T-shirts, hats and mugs depicting different aircraft."



A Remembrance Day Story from Terry Rushton



On November 11th some of us will remember Pilot Officer Hugh Edward McGraw, Killed in Action Dec. 4, 1942, at the age of 22.

A member of 402 Sqn. RCAF, he was born in Sudbury, Ontario, and completed high school in Kirkland Lake. He listed his occupation as "miner". We don't know much about him, except that he had a girl friend in Hamilton as well as one in Wales.

Shortly after he qualified on Spitfires, he was reprimanded for landing short of the runway ("landing too soon") but not long after was graded as an "outstanding pilot." His squadron flew top cover for activities surrounding the Dieppe Raid in August of 1942 (as did around 80 different squadrons). He had previously been commended for his role in locating in the North Sea and circling overhead for protection and rescue of a downed RAF pilot.

It was in the Dieppe area where his plane was hit by fire from a Focke-Wulf 190. He bailed out, but was shot and killed during his descent. He is buried at Pihen-Les Guines War Cemetery in the Dieppe area.

He was my mother's older brother. He was very close to his older brother Gord. Those interested in mental telepathy might be interested that, on the day that he was shot down, Gord experienced Hugh shouting out his name to him. My grand-mother was grief-stricken for quite some time, until many weeks later, my mother said that she was told that Hugh had appeared to her one night, at the foot of her bed, and said, "It's alright, Mother, I'm OK."

Visit us at 2155 Crumlin Sideroad at the London Ontario International Airport

Spirit of Flight Museum and Secrets of Radar post-card available for \$1.00

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CHRISTMAS
LUNCHEON
NOVEMBER 24
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Remembrance Day Committee Announces 2017 Events

Tom Shields, Chairman of the Zone A6 Royal Canadian Legion, has issued a letter thanking participants in past Remembrance Day ceremonies and announcing plans for this year.

There will be a Candelight Service on Friday Night, **November 10th**, at 7 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend. There will be a form-up at the Carolina Bells and a short march to the Cenotaph for a brief service.

On Remembrance Day, Saturday, November 11th prior to the Parade, there will be a Commanders meeting at 10:00 hours at the front of the Delta Armouries. Commanders are asked to be present there at 09:55 hours. Prospective Commanders are welcome to attend any or all of the Planning Committee meetings. As has been the custom, the Parade will be formed up and ready to march off at 10:40 hours. The Planning Committee would appreciate your confirmation of parade attendance by October 1st, by telephone to Joanne Shields at 519-652-2319.

Wreaths: Wreaths may be purchased from the Royal Canadian Legion, Victory Branch. Cost of a 20" wreath is \$75.00. To purchase, call Nellie at 519-455-2331 or 519-601-5535. Orders must be placed by October 15th, 2017. Units planning to lay a wreath this year will be responsible to pick-up their wreath after the Service. Any wreaths left will be removed and disposed of and will not be collected and stored by the City. Escorts to lay wreaths will be provided by the Remembrance Day Committee at the Cenotaph when laying your wreath, so please do not bring your own escort.

Help us celebrate and remember those that made the ultimate sacrifice that we who survive may live in the freedom we enjoy today!

Lest We Forget

All about the Per Ardua Motto

Submitted by Sam Newman, (with a grin on my face, and tongue-in-cheek)!

It was the late Maj Gen Sir Frederick Sykes who started off the file about a motto for the Royal Flying Corps, which then had both a military and a naval wing. He was then a brevet Major, temporary Lt Col, commanding the Military Wing at Farnborough. He got the War Office to approve the double-breasted 'maternity' jacket and folding cap of the R.F.C.; got Brig-Gen (later SIR) David Henderson, the Director-General of Military Aeronautics in the War Office, to agree that a badge for pilots was necessary; together they drew upon a War Office blotting-pad the wings which the King later sanctioned, and which, with R.A.F. substituted for R.F.C. and with the St. Edward's Crown instead of the Tudor Crown, are still the pilot's brevet of the Royal Air Force 44 years later. Then Sykes asked his officers to put forward ideas for a motto.

The R.F.C. had grown out of the Royal Engineers, and the officers of both corps were still buddies. So the Sappers in the Flying Corps talked things over with the Sappers who were still Sappers. And it was a Sapper pure and simple, and a junior officer at that, (Lt. J.S. Yule) who first suggested PER ARDUA AD ASTRA to his Sapper friend in the R.F.C., Lt. J. N. Fletcher, who passed it onto Sykes, who passed it on the War Office.

It is not quite clear at this lapse of time, whether Henderson at that moment was the Director of Military Training with responsibilities covering the whole of the Army, including the complete control of military aviation, or if the Military Aeronautics Directorate which was formed in 1913 (and of which he became the first Director) was then actually formed. All the accounts vary. Probably it is immaterial and perhaps impossible now to establish. David Henderson and Major W.S. Brancker (later Air Vice Marshal Sir Sefton Brancker, Director of Civil Aviation) were agreed that PER ARDUA AD ASTRA was a jolly good motto. Then the paper battle began. The file went around and around. Official minutes were written by hand in solemn language. Virgil and eminent current Latin scholars were quoted to support one contention or another. Some scribes offered their scholastic credentials to support their views. The inevitable rival group came into existence, headed by no less a person than the Quartermaster-General, Major-General Sir John Cowans; it proposed ALTIORA PETAMUS (Let us seek higher things).

The Admiralty had to be called in. My Lords Commissioners "saw no objection to" PER ARDUA. After all, the term fitted work at sea. The file then went to the S. of S. for War, Col E.B. Seely (later Lord Mottistone – why wasn't it MottO/stone? – who used to help man the Isle of Wight lifeboat as a lifeboat man, and was once head of the Air League) who solemnly wrote into the file his ultimate minute: "While disagreeing, with great respect, with the interpretation of ARDUA, I think PER ARDUA AD ASTRA is preferable, and the Royal Assent was obtained.

When the R.F.C. and R.N.A.S. broke apart in 1914, the R.F.C. took the motto, the R.N.A.S. dropped it! In 1918, when the R.A.F. was formed, again joining (temporarily) the two portions of Air Power, the R.A.F. adopted the motto from the R.F.C.

(Ad Libum) And now you know, the Rest of the Story. Likely it was told by Paul Harvey many times over!

Any of you know someone who would like to play euchre on Tuesday afternoons? If, so, please let them know about the Wing Euchre Club - best price, most fun, better and more snacks than any place in London. Non Wing members are welcome. Cost – a tooney.



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Full instructions and addresses may be found at:

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BIRTHDAY BRATS

NOVEMBER HAPPY BIRTHDAY WISHES

Paul Hart, Al Horton, Brad Keeler, Mike Meade, Jack (Fred) Pettit, Marilyn Turner, and JR Weekes.

DECEMBER HAPPY BIRTHDAY WISHES

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

"The older the fiddler, the sweeter the tune."

-English Proverb

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)

 **Poppy campaign at Canadian Tire and Wal-Mart**
Sat Nov 4th and Sun Nov 5th.
Volunteers needed (shifts 10:00 to noon and noon to 2pm) 



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427 Wing and the London Air Show

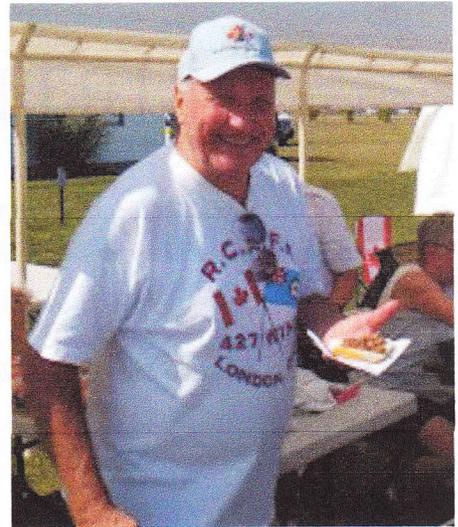
427 Wing was pleased to provide first-class viewing of the London Air Show September 22-24.



Beating the heat at the Airshow were (l-r) Joan & Jack Clark, Peggy Clark, Jim Mortis and Harry Beukeboom.



Joy Thorne, Kathy and Bob Brown getting some cool shade during the airshow



Don Clarke, our Chef-du-Jour at the London Airshow in September, offers visitors the chance to sample his tasty BBQ treats. Thanks to Don's winning recipes, the Wing made a good profit.





Join the Royal Canadian Air Force Association 427 (London) Wing!

For the camaraderie, the special events, the museum and to support our veterans and air cadets...all from our local community (members and non-members) are welcome.

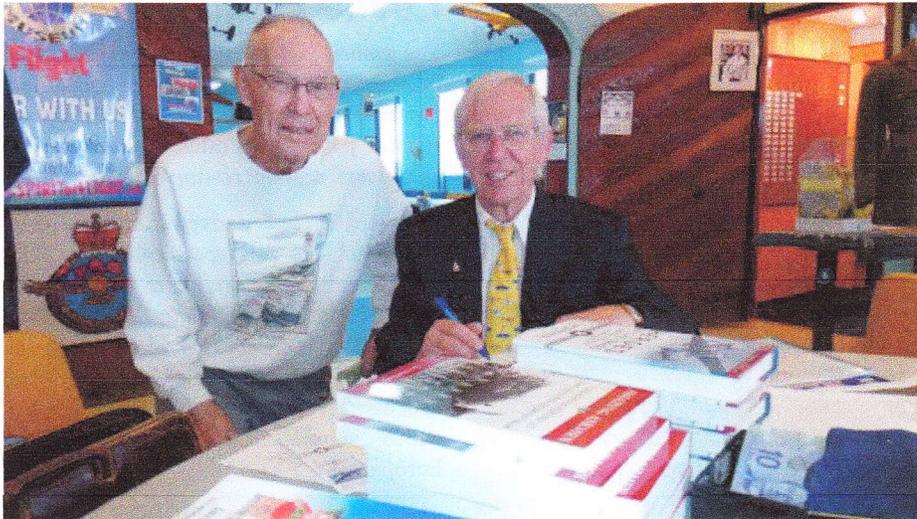
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Unidentified man by Crumlin Road Sign 1940s. If any of our readers has any details, please send them along!

Battle of Britain Luncheon



Following the Battle of Britain Luncheon, on September 15, our guest speaker author Ian Darling signs a copy of his book for Jack Clark.

AMAZING AIRMEN

CANADIAN FLYERS IN
THE SECOND WORLD WAR



Ian Darling

Ian comes from an air force family as his father as well as both of his uncles served in the Royal Air Force during World War II. One of his uncles, George Darling, was a bomb-aimer on a Halifax bomber which was shot down over the Netherlands, but George survived and became a prisoner of war in Germany.

The book "Amazing Airmen: Canadian Flyers in the Second World War," can be purchased on Amazon at <https://www.amazon.ca/Amazing-Airmen-Canadian-Flyers-Second/dp/1554884241>



Battle of Britain Luncheon

Wing Book Sales

As many members and visitors know, the Wing runs an ongoing book sale with very reasonable rates for a good variety of donated books.

Many are in mint condition and cover a good variety of subjects such as history, fiction, self-improvement, hobbies and much more.

The success of this fundraiser is the dedication of donors and buyers.

Some of you buy a book and then donate it back to be sold again. See our book displays around the Wing – no salespersons to hover over your shoulder.

Pick a book and pay what you think is fair.

Do you have a favourite author? Let us know and efforts will be made to obtain some of her or his books.



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Welcome New Members

Eleven inductees were sworn in as new members by Regional VP Rene McKinnon during the General Meeting held on September 29th. Left to right are: Frank Birch, Paul Hart, Howard Hazzard, Shawn Lewis, Hazil Malone, Doug Rath, Tom Pillon, Dave Roper, Eve Sutherland, Bill West and Mike Watts. Thanks to our Membership Chair Cathy Newman for making the arrangements.



The Wing's newly-elected president, Terry Rushton, repeats the oath of office during the swearing-in ceremony conducted by Regional VP Rene McKinnon

New Year's Day Levée History

The annual New Year's Day Levée, hosted by the Governor General, the Lieutenant Governor, military establishments, *municipalities and other institutions*, has an unusual and interesting origin.

The word Levée is derived from the French verb lever – to rise (specifically from one's bed) – and has its origins in the Levée du Soleil or Rising of the Sun instituted by King Louis XIV (1643 – 1715) whose custom it was to receive his male subjects in the Royal bedchamber just after arising, a practice which subsequently spread throughout Europe.

The Levée crossed the English Channel in the 18th Century, and in Great Britain and Ireland became a formal Court assembly (reception) given by the Sovereign or his/her representative in the forenoon or early afternoon, at which only men were received.

In the New World colonies, the Levée was held by the Governor acting on behalf of the Monarch. Because settlers were widely scattered, and separated from the seat of Government, the annual Levée was a *very important event, and attendance by village leaders and public dignitaries was compulsory.*

It was in Canada that the Levée became associated with New Year's Day. The first recorded Levée in Canada was held on January 1st, 1646 in the Château St. Louis by Charles Huault de Montmagny, Governor of New France (later Québec) from 1636 to 1648.

427 (London) Wing continues the tradition. People come by at 1:00pm for a drink some light snacks and all end up at the Byron Legion at the end of the day.

For the complete history of the Levée, visit

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**NOTICE OF INTENTION
427 (LONDON) WING RCAFA
NEW BYLAWS
MOTION AT GENERAL MEETING
FRIDAY NOVEMBER 17**

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.

JOIN US FOR NEW YEAR'S DAY LEVEE 1pm



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**Royal Canadian Air Force Association
427 (London) Wing
2155 Crumlin Road, London Ontario**

**Join us for our annual
Christmas Luncheon
Friday November 24, 2017**

Served at 11:30
Home cooked turkey with all the festive trimmings.
Desserts offered thru the generosity of Wing members

Tickets: \$20.00 reservations in advance. Tickets at the door \$25.00.
Tickets available at the Wing or call 519 455-0430 to reserve.
Ticket cut-off date: November 17th

519-659-7070 · www.crumlincreek.com

PETER HENDERSON
Superintendent

Cell: 519-494-9220
peter@crumlincreek.com

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100 Mosquitos Junked Aircraft Is Obsolete

By JACK HAMBLETON

Valued in excess of \$30 million, more than 100 Mosquito aircraft now stored at the DeHavilland Aircraft plant here are to be sold to the highest bidder or scrapped in the near future, it was learned last night.

The machines are to be turned over — if they have not already been so placed—in the hands of War Assets Corporation since the Royal Canadian Air Force has classed them as "surplus" material.

Possibly purchasers are so unlikely that it was hinted last night that a "bid of \$25, \$50 or \$100 on the field might be seriously considered" for one of the planes, which cost an estimated \$300,000 each and, with component parts and spares, probably another \$25,000 more.

"The machines have been declared surplus and will be wrecked or sold," it was stated by an official of the firm. "There is no criticism of the RCAF, for there is nothing else that can be done with them. We had a contract for 'inhibiting' (storing) them but that ran out on April 1. We had been looking after them in storage but that has now been abandoned.

"When the war ended, there were about 210 machines between here and the plant of Central Aircraft at London, Ont., where 'cocooning' is now going on. The cocooning is a method of covering the machines so that they can be stored indefinitely outside. The remaining machines have been sitting in bays of the plant here ever since and so far as we know, there are no plans to cover them with the preservative.

"We have just been talking about

wheeling the machines out onto the field and leaving them there. It seems a terrible waste to see \$30 million on wheels sitting idle but what use are they now the war is over? The RCAF, is going into jet fighters and is not doing much flying other than transport work now. They are getting Vampires—jet machines—and the Mosquito is an old machine as a fighter now. We hate to see them go but we cannot quarrel with the decision of the Air Force.

"The Mosquito, too, is hardly a week-end plane. It requires a skilled pilot who is in constant practice, and hence they are out of the question for the average sportsman pilot. They are also highly complicated, and the Vampire is much easier to handle. We have been trying to sell these hither and yon around the world, in Argentina, China, Turkey and all over, but no one seems to want them."

The planes are powered by two Rolls Royce engines generating 2,000 horsepower, and hence even the power plants would be of little use. Some have been purchased by sportsmen who plan to use them in racing motorboats, but "the market is very limited." The gasoline consumption, hardly a factor under wartime emergencies, would be a heavy burden on anyone wanting to use the engines for commercial or private use, it was pointed out. "The plane was a war necessity and a peacetime headache," it was stated. "The cockpit is only large enough for two people—and small people at that—and so they couldn't be used to carry any substantial amount of

freight even if anyone could afford to use them for that purpose."

Officials of No. 1 Equipment Depot declared "they were not in a position to say what would be done with the machines," but it is understood there have been numerous suggestions and proposals investigated. So far, however, no one has come up with any solution as to a feasible and economical use for them. In the bays of the plant, the Mosquitos are lined up in long, military-like rows with even the propellers all stopped at exactly the same angle. If an emergency arose, they could be put into service in a matter of days.

The Mosquito was one of England's unique bombers, born on British drafting boards during the Empire's gloomiest hours, when France had fallen and hard air fighting wrested the remnants of the British Expeditionary Force from capture or annihilation. The problem then was to achieve a multi-purpose machine that could be built of native materials by semi-skilled labor, in any part of the Empire, without impeding the production of metal aircraft.

It first saw action in a raid on Oslo, Sept. 25, 1942, calculated to break up a Quisling rally. From then on, it performed more daring individual raids than any other British light bomber. It was the only important operational aircraft built by the British entirely of wood, with a monocoque shell fuselage made up of molded plywood, sandwiched on each side by a stabilizing balsa core. The body was built in two individual sections, completely fitted and then assembled. The wing was a simple wood structure built in one piece.

The plane was most versatile, being used as a fighter, trainer, unarmed bomber, photo-reconnaissance machine, night interceptor, pathfinder and high-speed mail-plane. It had a wingspan of 54 feet two inches, an overall length of 42 feet two inches and a standing height of 15 feet three inches. Various models had horsepower ranging from 3,000 to 4,000, and speeds ranged up to well over 400 miles an hour. All Mosquitoes were two-place, with room for a pilot-gunner and a bombardier-radio-operator-navigator. Exact speeds of the new models were never revealed, but one of the planes set a mark of five hours and 10 minutes for a trans-Atlantic crossing.



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The SPOONER STORY (Continued from the Oct-Nov London Link)

Written by Sam Newman

“CAUGHT IN TIME” or “A TRAINING MISSION THAT ENDED IN TRAGEDY”

As compiled by Wally Fydenchuk

On May 14, 1943, five Royal Canadian Air Force personnel stationed at # 4 (AOS) Crumlin, departed by air from the station for a routine training exercise. On board Anson 7064 that day, were two Navigation students who were to complete an exercise known as a “Square Search”; their target being the Catholic Cemetery in Woodstock. Upon completion of the exercise, the pilot, Sgt Dana Nelson, turned the a/c westward towards their home base. Nelson, a previous resident of Mosherville, Nova Scotia, suddenly collapsed at the controls of the a/c.

One of the navigation students, LAC Kenneth Spooner, of Smith Falls, Ontario, was sitting beside the pilot in the “jump seat”, named for the fact that it would fold down in order for the student bomb aimer to crawl into the nose of the a/c to practice his bombing exercises. According to newspaper reports at the time of the incident, officials at the Crumlin School said the first intimation of trouble was a wireless message sent by the wireless air gunner on board the a/c, Sgt, William Brown, of Theodore, Saskatchewan. The message stated that the pilot had fainted and that the wireless air gunner had taken over the controls. Advice on how to pilot the airship was immediately wired back and an a/c took off to search for the pilotless Anson. The first S.O.S. signal was sent at 1815 hrs (6:15 p.m.)

Over Shedden, a student navigator and a student bombardier bailed out and landed safely near Frome. A witness to this incident, who was a young boy at the time, recalled seeing the two parachuting down and think that they must be on a parachute training exercise. Little did he know at the time, the terror taking place both in the a/c and in the minds of the two crew members who parachuted to safety. Meanwhile, the a/c, with the three members on board was heading in a south-easterly direction towards Lake Erie. As the a/c neared the lake, officers at No 4 AOS radioed the three remaining members of the crews to bail out, but to first buckle a parachute to the unconscious pilot, pull the ripcord and throw him overboard. Shortly after, the Anson headed over the lake at Port Bruce. Sgt William Brown jumped from the a/c. After his parachute opened, he was seen frantically kicking, attempting to direct his descent towards land. Unfortunately he landed in the lake and drowned.

Not long after, the a/c with Sgt Dan Nelson and LAC Kenneth Spooner on board, plunged in the water about a half mile from shore at Port Bruce, time 1845 (6:45 p.m.) After the crash, it was determined that LAC Spooner had sacrificed his life in order to save the lives of the other crew members, and was posthumously awarded the George Cross, at that time, the Empire’s second highest award for bravery.

This incident has been well documented in Military publications. Each report has a slightly different version of the story. All report that LAC Spooner assumed charge, ordered the other crew members to bail out, while he attempted to control the a/c. Absolutely no mention has ever been given to the efforts of the wireless air gunner, Sgt William Brown, who sent out a distress signal, established wireless contact with the home base, and received instructions through a wireless message on how to fly the pilotless a/c. Only at the last minute before the a/c was going to crash, did Sgt Brown bail out. He stayed with the a/c 30 minutes after the other two crew members bailed out. All five members on board that flight (74 yrs ago, now in 2017) were hero’s. They all put their lives on the line for their country during the Second Great War.

Fate had dealt the outcome!

Over the ensuing months, most of the important work all got done as planned, and so we proceed to

THE DEDICATION CEREMONIES

Following the Meet and Greet of all the VIPs, Wing Executives, Members of the Wing and Friends the night before, the official Dedication Ceremonies took place on Sunday 15 Sep 2002, to celebrate our Battle of Britain commitment to the Air Force Association of Canada, and formally pay tribute to all of our past Wartime Veterans, here in London, Ontario. Major General (ret’d) L. Bourgeois, OMM, CD representing DND as well as the Air Cadet League of Canada, took the General Salute from the Honour Guard and Colour Party comprising London Area Air Cadets representing five local Air Cadet Squadrons, (27, 201, 614, 741 and 862 Sqns) including the many Veterans on parade. There were over 400 spectators in attendance.

The Spooner Memorial was unveiled by Isabel Leahy (half-sister) and Doug Craig (half-brother); Mr. Don Pearson, SSO Heritage and History, from 1 Air Div HQ in Winnipeg, spoke on “The Battle of Britain Remembered”, which nicely tied in the other three parts of the entire Spooner Memorial components that the Wing members had constructed. A delightful Legacy Stone walkway containing the engraved names and suitable remarks of donors to the project led into the Spooner Memorial from two different directions, located at the front door of the Wing. On down the walkway, the marker paying tribute

to # 3 EFTS and # 4 AOS from the BCATP years could be found; and finally down at the side of the parking lot, one could find the Commemorative Wall which acknowledged the contribution of RCAF Units located around the London area during WWII. Seven story plaques give a brief history of each of those units, while the flags of participating countries fly high above the wall.

George Tabner, who shared quarters with Spooner some 60 years before, was present at the dedication and recalled his training with Spooner. Not surprisingly, he remembered Ken mainly as 'just an ordinary person'. 443 (Rideau) Wing members from Smith Falls, were lead by their members Fred Lothman (and wife Susan), Stan Kochanczyk (with wife Denise) ensured that four relatives of Spooner and their spouses were invited, transported and housed in London to mark the dedication. Included in that party were Georgia Larter (1st Cousin) from Ottawa, Doug Craig (1/2 brother, wife Wilma) from Lombardy, Isabel Leahy (1/2 sister with husband Ron) from Orleans, and Tom Craig (cousin with his wife Vivian). They, in turn were accompanied by Murray and Margaret Cameron, as well as Bob and Dorothy McFarland. Both couples were personal friends of the family. The last 'recorded for posterity' guests, were the President of the Ontario Group of the RCAF Association at the time, Les Ball and his wife, Lois.

SPOONER WRAP UP

Readers always seem to be interested in facts and figures concerning with CASH TAKEN IN AND CASH SPENT, so herein is a summary for your perusal:

SPOONER Legacy Stone Sales

	Phase 1	Phase 2	Totals
INCOME	\$34,212.68	\$5,475.00	\$39,687.68
EXPENSES	\$32,436.76	\$1,209.89	\$33,646.65
NET	\$1,775.92	\$4,265.11	\$6,041.03
BANK INTEREST	\$167.25		
BANK BALANCE as at (31 Oct 2003)			\$6,208.28
CURRENT BALANCE (May 2017)			\$731.31

Donations received from 120 Wing Members, 64 non-members, and 36 Corporations and Associations. Our Stones/Bricks represent Veteran's (past and present), as well as Cadet Organizations, numerous Legion Branches, Army, Navy and Merchant Marine ex-personnel, Bases and Stations within the Province, Industries and Businesses, and Aviation Aficionados. Lastly, and NOT surprising, our walkway also contains many Stones with the names of those interested in leaving a legacy out on our property, for whatever their personal reason happened to be. We thanked EVERYONE for their consideration and their generosity.

The Crew Members from the Anson a/c 7064 were:

Pilot – R 137915 Sgt D.A. NELSON, Moskerville, N.B. Age 24

No known grave – name inscribed on the Ottawa War Memorial.

Wireless Air Gunner – R 132466 Sgt W.J. BROWN, Theodore, Sask: Buried in his home town

14 | NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2017

Students:

LAC R.H. BAILEY, Toronto, ON

LAC J.A. CURTIS, Timmins, ON

R 179314 LAC K.G. SPOONER, Smith Falls, ON Buried in his home town in the Hillcrest Cemetery

THE SPOONER LEGACY COMMITTEE

The Spooner Legacy Committee Meeting (27 Oct 2003) deemed it timely to hand the responsibilities involved in organizing future Battle of Britain Memorial Parades, Dinner, Entertainment etc., back to the Wing Executive for ALL SUBSEQUENT AND FUTURE action. It was suggested at that time, one of the local Air Cadet Squadrons might provide a Colour Party (all members from one Squadron), and interested Squadrons be invited to provide personnel for any future parades. As the years have passed us by since the SPOONER DEDICATION spoken about above, regrettably it is evident that the few Veterans remaining in the Wing, are unable to provide the necessary future Parade expectations.

Lastly, as this celebration comes to an end, the current Spooner Legacy Committee Members consisting of Sam Newman (Facilitator), Don Clarke, Don Hatch, Joe Wyatt, and Diana Cuthbert are all to be acknowledged and thanked for remaining at the helm and directing the current action taken with reference to the Spooner Memorial upkeep and its presentation.

For interest sake, it would appear prudent to point out that the pertinent guidelines for that committee initially established some 14 years ago were:

- 1) To maintain the "Legacy Stones";
- 2) To promote the sale of any future Legacy Stones;
- 3) To maintain the Spooner Wall, the RCAF plaques, and provide new flags when they require replacement;
- 4) To maintain the large Spooner Memorial;
- 5) To maintain the walkway (snow removal and weeds); and
- 6) To provide minimal assistance for the beautification of the gardens surrounding the Memorial.

FOR RECORD PURPOSES: The Spooner Memorial is registered in perpetuity with the National Inventory for Canadian Military Memorials complete with all the required and pertinent points of interest dealing with this project. (# 35042-021)

A MODEST FOLLOW – UP

The Current Balance of our Spooner Account, (May 2017,) stands at \$731.31

For the record, the current Committee still encourages the purchase of Spooner Legacy Stones, as a means to keep up with our modest expenses. The cost charged for our normal-size bricks with 1 name, and requiring 2 lines, start at \$125.00. When more letters are required, we negotiate a fair mutual price to encourage a continued interest in their purchase. Should anyone wish to arrange a Legacy Brick purchase, please contact Wing Member, Sam Newman at (519) 452-1886 or sfn.afac@rogers.com

Calling All Airwomen!

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.

In the November newsletter, the London Executive Committee reached out to any airwomen travelling or visiting the London area and invited them to join the group. If you know of any serving or former airwomen, please tell them to email Marilyn Chalk at 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 atrcf_airwomen@yahoo.com they could read it online. The Airwomens group publishes its newsletter at: www.rcfairwomen.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.



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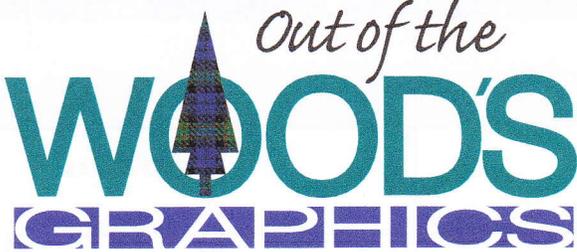


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IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL RCAF ACTIVE AND FORMER AIRWOMEN - RCAF AIRWOMEN'S REUNION

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

At this time we are looking into entertainment and excursions which will be announced when available.

November 2017						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	LARC	3 LUNCH
4						4 LARC
5	6	7 EUCHRE RAA	8 BCC	9 WT	10 WEC LUNCH	11 LARC
12	13	14 EUCHRE MAC	15	16 LARC	17 LUNCH - GM	18 WT
19	20	21 EUCHRE MEMBERS	22	23	24 CHRISTMAS LUNCH, WDs, Swearing in New Members	25 LARC
26	27	28 EUCHRE - FO	29 RETIRED COMM	30 LARC	Notes:	

December 2017						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 LUNCH	2
3	4	5 EUCHRE RAA	6	7 LARC/POTLUCK	8 WEC LUNCH	9
10	11	12 EUCHRE MAC	13 BCC	14 WT	15 LUNCH	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
CLOSED FOR THE HOLIDAYS FROM THE 16th. HAPPY NEW YEAR!						
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	Notes: JANUARY 1 2018: LEVEE - Drinks and Snacks at the Wing 1pm					

- 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