

434 Niagara

BULLETIN



Vol. 26 no 1 Sept-Oct, 2023

General Meetings

3rd Saturday of each month at

Welland Optimist Club, 38 Patterson Ave., Welland, ON L3B 2C4

Future meeting dates will be advised by email and telephone.

We proudly promote the glorious tradition of the RCAF

434 Wing Board of Directors

2020-2021

Chair – Bill Heron	H - 289-820-8712
1 st Vice Chair – Julie Sheppard.....	H - 905-734-6307
2 nd Vice Chair - Norm Sonnenberg.....	H - 905-834-6722
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Recording Secretary - George Groff.....	H - 905-734-4948
Membership/Welfare - Jeanette Lee.....	C - 905-359-3531
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Advertising Chair—Rod Lee.....	C - 905-359-1975
	C - 289-686-8636
Honorary Director – F/L Tom Vance.....	H - 905-834-8155
Wing Padre - Rev John Cathcart.....	H - 905-384-4660

COMMITTEES

Air - Cadets Capt - Julie Sheppard
Audio Visual - Rod Lee
Phone Committee - Jeanette & George
Programs - George & Board
Sick/Visitation - Jeanette Lee
Publicity - Board

ROYAL CANADIAN LEGIONS

Welland	Branch 4	Office	905-734-3611
		Canteen	905-734-6601
Port Colborne	Branch 56	Hall	905-834-9512
Fort Erie	Branch 71	Hall	905-871-8682
Fonthill	Branch 613	Hall	905-892-6293

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434 (Niagara Peninsula) Wing

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Royal Canadian Air Force Association of Canada

Report from the Chair September 2023

It seems the older you get the faster time moves and here we now are with summer fading all too fast.

Our Wing has had a very busy summer attending functions and fundraising. All of our fundraising proved to be very successful, but without the efforts of those who gave of their time nothing would have been possible so I thank you all for answering the call.

The Debate goes on with regards to the Cairn that was initially brought up at the Ontario Group AGM earlier this year, it has raised a lot of discussion and many of us are left wondering why there is such an objection to it when it recognizes the Association within the Province, time will determine the outcome as we all await a decision.

We held our annual Battle of Britain Commemoration on September 17th it was well represented by Federal, Provincial, and Civic dignitaries along with the Air cadets from 87 Eagle Squadron, representatives from The Royal Canadian Naval Association and the Sea Cadets, members of UN-NATO Veterans of Canada (Niagara) were also present. Thanks must also go to Port Colborne Legion Branch 56 for supplying the colour guard. I would be remiss if I did not mention our Padre Rev. John Cathcart who as always made himself available for this event. The event was taped by Cogeco and aired on 3 separate dates the following week. We had an excellent turnout by members of the public and we think for next year we will require additional seating.

Once more, events like this do not just happen, it takes planning and co-ordination and to all that we relied on thank you all.

As we look to a new year and what lies ahead we need to try to increase our membership, if any current member has an idea on a good approach to achieving this, please let one of the Board members know so that it can be discussed and considered at the Board meeting. We are an aging population and if we are to continue we need to bring in new members.

Shortly, preparations will be underway to mark Remembrance Day when we gather to remember those that served in the armed forces in all areas of conflict and in particular those that gave their lives so that the world could be a safer place.

Remember, this is your Wing, it is only as successful as you our members make it.

I will sign off and leave the Wing in the capable hands of our Board as I will be heading out of country for a couple of weeks.

Bill Heron (Chair)

Per Ardua Ad Astra

Armistice Day 2023—70th Anniversary

Delegates from 22 countries gathered in South Korea for the war anniversary including 64 foreign veterans who were invited by South Korea's Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs for a six day visit from Monday July 24th to Saturday July 29th in commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the 1953 Armistice Agreement that halted the Korean War.



Korean War veterans and their families wave hands during a welcome breakfast at Sofitel Ambassador Seoul in southern Seoul, Tuesday which was held ahead of Thursday's ceremony to mark the 70th anniversary of the Armistice Agreement. Yonhap



Korean War veterans raise their arms together during a joint interview with local media in Seoul, Tuesday. From left are William Word from the United States, Edward Buckner from Canada and Colin Thackery from the United Kingdom. Yonhap

Buckner got emotional when asked about memories he has about the war.

"I was blessed because I was at brigade headquarters all the time. So I was in contact with everything, knowing what was going on," he replied, shedding tears. "I'm so grateful that you took what you've got and made it what you have. It's a beautiful country."

Korean War veterans and their families wave on a KTX train bound for Busan, Wednesday, where they attended various events honoring the veterans' wartime service. Yonhap



Edward Buckner, a Korean War veteran from Canada, shows photos of a South Korean boy whom he remembers as "Cho Chock Song," during a joint interview in Seoul, Tuesday. Yonhap



Armistice Day 2023 continued

The 22 nations that participated in the Korean War are the United States, Australia, Belgium, Britain, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Greece, India, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the Philippines, South Africa, Sweden, Thailand and Turkey.



Patriots and Veterans Affairs Minister Park Min-shik, right of center in the rear, and government representatives of the 22 countries that helped South Korea in the 1950-53 Korean War, observe a moment of silence before the Ministerial Summit on Veterans Affairs at a hotel in Busan, Tuesday.
Yonhap

27 July 2023 marked the 70th anniversary of the signing of the Korean Armistice Agreement, which ended over three years of fighting on the Korean Peninsula. The Korean War started on 25 June 1950, when North Korean troops invaded South Korea. United Nations forces soon joined the fighting, which would rage until an armistice was signed on 27 July 1953. More than 26,000 Canadians served on land, at sea and in the air during this bitter conflict. Sadly, 516 Canadians died. Canadian Korean War Veterans participated in the Revisit Korea Program at the invitation of the Republic of Korea's Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs. While in Korea, they attended ceremonies and events to recognize those who served in uniform during the Korean War and mark the 70th anniversary of the signing of the Korean Armistice Agreement (July 27).

Prior to their departure, the Veterans headed to Burnaby, British Columbia, where they participated in a commemorative ceremony and events with the Korean Consulate in Vancouver.

In Korea, the Veterans were accompanied by a Government of Canada delegation, led by the Honourable Lawrence MacAulay, Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence. The delegation also included other Members of Parliament, a Veteran representing the Assembly of First Nations, and a historian from the Canadian War Museum.

While in Korea, the delegation participated in commemorative ceremonies in Gapyeong and the United Nations Memorial Cemetery, as well as the Republic of Korea's signature ceremony for the 70th anniversary of the Korean War Armistice Agreement.

From Veterans Affairs Canada

- Eight Canadian warships served in the Korean War. These destroyers helped blockade the Korean coast, conducted counter-mining operations, guarded against enemy amphibious landings, protected the United Nations fleet, attacked onshore targets and provided humanitarian aid to isolated fishing communities.
- The Royal Canadian Air Force No. 426 Transport Squadron ferried troops and supplies between North America and East Asia. By the end of these duties in 1954, they had completed 600 round trips across the Pacific, carrying more than 13,000 passengers and three million kilograms of freight.

Armistice Day 2023 continued

From Veterans Affairs Canada continued

- Canada was the third largest contributor to the multi-national force in Korea. Although the Korean Armistice Agreement was signed on 27 July 1953, an additional 7,000 Canadians served between the cease-fire and the end of 1955, with some Canadian troops remaining until 1957. The names of 516 Canadian war dead are inscribed in the Korea Book of Remembrance on Parliament Hill in Ottawa.
- The anniversary of the signing of the Korean Armistice Agreement, July 27, is also known in Canada as Korean War Veterans Day since the passing of the Korean War Veterans Day Act in 2013.
- In 2023, Canada and Korea celebrates 60 years of diplomatic relations. Canada's involvement during the Korean War (1950-1953) and sustained positive political and economic cooperation contribute to the close relationship between the two countries.
- To the present, Canada contributes members to United Nations Command (UNC) Headquarters based in Pyeongtaek, Korea. In 2018, Canada's current Chief of the Defence Staff, General Wayne Eyre, served as the first non-American Deputy Commander of UNC.



President Yoon Suk Yeol applauds veterans who fought in the 1950-53 Korean War during a ceremony to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the armistice held at the Busan Cinema Center in Busan, Thursday. During the opening ceremony, Yoon greeted 62 U.N. veterans who fought for South Korea. Korea Times photo by Seo Jae-hun



Canadian Section of UN Memorial Cemetery, Busan, South Korea

A Canadian veteran of the Korean War pays tribute to his fallen comrades at the U.N. Memorial Cemetery in Busan, Thursday, July 27, 2023.
Yonhap



434 Niagara Wing Barbecue

July 30, was a warm, sunny day at the Niagara Central Dorothy Rungeling Airport where 434 Niagara Wing held its barbecue for members and guests.



Setting up for the barbecue at Hangar 4



The airport is also home to 87 Eagle Royal Canadian Air Cadets and the Niagara Sky Dive Centre Inc.



Chair Bill took advantage of the gathering to present Membership/Welfare Chair, Jeanette Lee, with a Certificate of Distinction and a Certificate of Appreciation



Chair Bill presented 434 member, Dan Carr, with an Award of Merit.



434 Niagara Wing Barbecue continued



Dinner at the exclusive Hangar 4 Facility, courtesy of 434 member and pilot, Ray Larson.



Watching the sky divers land

Canal Days 2023



Julie, Deb and Mitch (behind post) on Friday, the opening of Canal Days.



Deb and Mitch, ready for sales at Canal Days on Sunday.



Chair Bill on phone drumming up sales on Monday, the final day of Canal Days.

In The News

Indonesia Activates Second Tranche of Rafale Orders

Indonesia has activated its second order for 18 Rafale multirole fighter jets from Dassault Aviation as part of a \$2.3-billion acquisition program signed in April 2023. The Rafales are replacing Indonesia's aging F-5 supersonic light fighter aircraft from Northrop Grumman.



Rafale Multi Role Fighter Aircraft

The Indonesian and French defense ministries signed a contract in February 2022 for 8.1 billion euro to provide the air force with a fleet of 42 Rafale fighters. Dassault delivered the first tranche of six Rafales for \$1.1 billion to Indonesia in September 2022. The latest tranche brings the total to 24 aircraft of the 42 to be acquired. Indonesia's order for the latest version of the French-built fighter is on a complete "turnkey" basis. Alongside the aircraft, Indonesia receives corresponding technical training.

Belgium Refuses Deliveries of F-35's

August 10, 2023, the Belgian Defence Ministry has refused deliveries of the first two F-35A stealth fighters ordered in October 2018, with the aircraft reportedly found to be "technically unsatisfactory" and requiring further software improvements before meeting the Air Force's standards. The fighter program has been plagued, by extreme performance issues with approximately 800 defects still afflicting it - a number which has not changed significantly in well over half a decade due to both the slow speed at which issues are resolved and the continuous discovery of new flaws. These issues have not only left the fighter unviable for high intensity combat, which is not expected to change at least until close to 2030, but they have also seriously undermined its availability rates, imposed billions of dollars' worth of additional operational costs, and at times placed the lives of the fighter's operators at risk. A notable recent example was the report from a U.S. Air Force investigation released in June showing that an F-35 destroyed in an accident at Hill Air Force Base in Utah on October 19, 2022 had crashed due to a software issue, which left the pilot unable to abort its landing sequence as it stopped responding and sharply banked to the left.



The F-35's performance has been very widely criticized by both military and civilian officials, as well as in reports from foreign operators such as South Korea, with its very low availability rates at around 30 percent, and lack of reliability, taking a serious toll on the operational readiness of fleets adopting the aircraft. Upgrades to the F-35's software have notably faced considerable delays, with software issues set to cut production by approximately 50 aircraft in 2023 down to only around 100 airframes with significant consequences for the delivery rates to foreign clients.

The Pentagon does not expect the flight certification process to be complete until December at the earliest, but potentially as late as April 2024.

In The News

New British Report on F-35 crash raises broad safety concerns

After the loss of a British Royal Navy F-35B operating in the Mediterranean Sea in November 2021, an investigation into the incident has raised serious questions regarding the safety of the country's operations using the aircraft. The inquiry highlighted multiple deficiencies regarding how the F-35 was operated and recommended 46 changes be made. The paper called for a better understanding among commanders of "safety and security requirements for a fifth-generation platform," adding that "introduction of special access programs" such as the new stealth fighter had "elevated security thresholds, which places extra strain on safety."

Despite being a first tier partner in the F-35 program Britain has made deep cuts to its orders for the aircraft compared to prior expectations due to budgetary restrictions. This combined with a slow delivery rate has forced the Royal Navy to deploy a U.S. Marine Corps F-35B guest contingent for carrier operations, although the carriers much like the F-35s themselves have often been unable to operate due to their own frequently arising performance deficiencies.

The report further raised serious questions regarding whether Britain's sole frontline F-35 squadron, 617 Squadron, was fully ready to deploy complex stealth aircraft, highlighting that the unit "faced a higher operating tempo than it was prepared for, as the Carrier Strike Group aspired to a baseline flying rate associated with so-called surge operations." It noted high levels of fatigue among British personnel operating F-35s, with decreased opportunities for fresh air and recreation and a lack of routine access to outside space being among the contributing



Personnel notably had not received the necessary levels of training for operations at sea. The report comes as multiple countries have had serious difficulties adapting to F-35 operations, with the aircraft suffering from approximately 800 performance defects as more issues continue to be discovered.

Thunder River Bike Fest August 12th and 13th, Welland County Fairgrounds

Biketoberfest September 16th, Welland County Motorcycle Club, Netherby Road, Welland

Thanks to Treasurer Julie, 434 Niagara Wing was present at both of these events. Kit shop items were sold and information brochures on 434 Niagara Wing were distributed to attendees.



Advertising Chair, Rod was present at Thunder River Bike Fest with his motorcycle. Our 434 Niagara Wing tent can be seen in background to the right with blue top.

Thanks to member Wes Pierce for facilitating our presence at Biketoberfest!



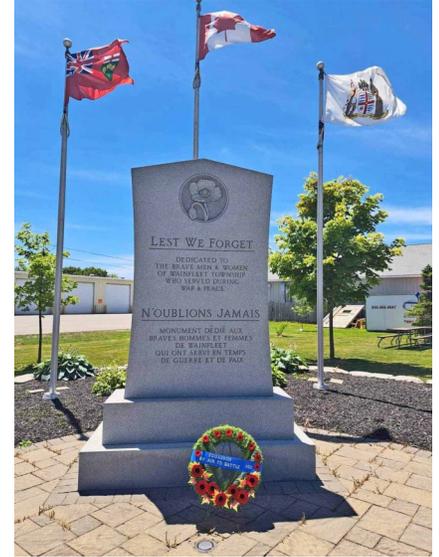
Wreath to Honour Fallen members of 450 Squadron

434 Niagara Wing members Mitch Mascitelli and Rod Lee laid a wreath at the Cenotaph in Wainfleet on June 26th to honour the members of 450 Tactical Helicopter Squadron killed when their Chinook Helicopter crashed on June 20th in the Ottawa River near Petawawa. Capt. David Domagala of Woodstock, ON and Capt. Marc Larouche of Amos QC were among crew members when the Chinook helicopter crashed.

Along with 434 members, the ceremony in Wainfleet included members of the UN NATO Veterans Group Niagara and the newest group in Niagara, Veterans Canada Riding Club.



Rod Lee



Wreath at Cenotaph in Wainfleet



Chinook Helicopter

Fund Raising Barbecue #3

Saturday, August 26, 2023 was our final fundraising barbecue for this year. The weather was perfect and people were hungry, making the barbecue another success.



Kit Shop Table



Battle of Britain 2023

A large gathering attended the Battle of Britain ceremony held at the beautiful Chippewa Park in Welland on Sunday, September 17th.

Gathering for the Ceremony



Commencement



Colour Party, Branch 56 RCL Port Colborne



Padre Rev. John Cathcart with opening Prayer

Flypast



Alf Beam and fellow pilots of the Southern Ontario T-28' pilots perform flypast for ceremony



Missing Man Formation

Battle of Britain 2023 continued

Air Cadets and Sea Cadets



We were honoured to have both the **87 Eagle Royal Canadian Air Cadets** and the **Royal Canadian Sea Cadet Corp 358 Sir Isaac Brock** participate in the B of B ceremony this year. Several speakers reminded the cadets that it was their responsibilities to carry of the military traditions established so we do not forget. If we forget, they disappear.



Battle of Britain 2023 continued



Bringing Greetings



Federal MP, Vance Badawey



Provincial MPP, Jeff Burch



Welland Mayor, Frank Campion



Brenda Wilson, Central Region
VP Ontario Group



Br 56 Legion President, Harry
Hamilton



484 Wing RCAFA Chair, Bill
Greenwood

Battle of Britain 2023 continued

Bringing Greetings continued



434 Niagara
Wing Chair, Bill
Heron with
opening remarks

Wreath Laying



MP Vance Badawey for Canada



MPP Jeff Burch for Ontario



Mayor Frank Campion for City
of Welland



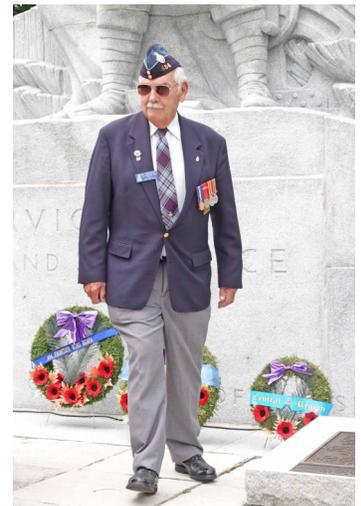
Councillor Wayne Olsen for
Town of Pelham



Brenda Wilson, RCAFA
Central Region Ontario
Group, for Central Region



Dave McIntyre, President, for
UN NATO Veterans Canada –
Niagara



Bill Greenwood, Chair, for
484 Frontier Wing, RCAFA

Battle of Britain 2023 continued



1st VP, Shipmate Jeff Seburn and Navy Sea Cadet for the Royal Canadian Naval Association Niagara Region



F/Lt Ret'd Tom Vance accompanied by 434 Niagara Wing member Debbie Wilkes-Whitehall for 434 Niagara Wing



Treasurer Julie Sheppard taking photos for Bulletin, with 434 Niagara Wing member Jim Hutchinson



Secretary George Groff greeting guests



(l to r) Reverend John Cathcart, 434 Niagara Wing member Debbie Wilkes-Whitehall, F/Lt Ret'd Tom Vance



(l to r) Mayor Frank Campion, your Editor, MPP Jeff Burch, Br 56 Legion President Harry Hamilton, MP Vance Badawey

Battle of Britain 2023 continued



Wilkinson Sword cast 40 Sir Douglas Bader swords to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain, one of which was donated to 484 Wing RCAFA which they shared for our B of B ceremony.

Thanks to our Master of Ceremonies,
Pat Porter

First General Meeting for the New Season

434 Niagara Wing held its first general meeting on September 30th. Due to space limitations, the report will follow in our November-December Bulletin.

Birthdays

October

Jim Hutchinson

Thomas Taborowski



Sponsors

Giant Tiger

Wayne Zatorski – Store Owner
200 Fitch St., Welland, ON, L3C 2V9
(905) 735-0963

M.T. Bellies

Tap & Grillhouse John Clark
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(905)-788-9474

Sobeys

Ron Kore
110 Highway # 20,
Fonthill, ON L0S 1E0

McDonalds Restaurant

Joanne Martin
569 Main St. W., Port Colborne, ON

Botanix

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Mike Knapp Ford Sales LTD

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Legion

Royal Canadian Legion Branch 4
383 Morningstar Ave., Welland, ON

