

THE LONDON LINK

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



Lambeth
Air Cadets trip
to England and
France
March 2019



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 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Director - Acting Chairperson	Gus Cameron	519-457-3575	anc@bell.net
Director - Secretary	Tom Pillon (secretary@427wing.com)	519-660-8099	ve3hor@gmail.com
Director	Howard Johnston	519-657-2499	johnston.hoj@rogers.com
Director	Chuck Hardy		chuck.hardy@sympatico.ca
Treasurer	Janet Pole		janet427wing@gmail.com

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Vacant Positions – Food Services, Bar Officer, Entertainment, Sports – call Wing for info

Web-Site	www.427wing.com		
Membership Chairperson	Chuck Hardy	519-452-1379	chuck.hardy@sympatio.ca
Housing	Tom Pillon	519 660-8099	v33hor@gmail.com
Public Relations and Museum			
Wellness/Parkwood Liaison	Hilda Smeltzer, Charlene Odonnell, Hazil Malone	519-657-5759	fhsmtzer@rogers.com
Fundraising	B. Sandler, R. McKinnon, G. Cameron	519-457-3575	anc@bell.net
Kit Shop	Fred Pettit	519 451-0467	arrow105@sympatico.ca
Euchre Club	Don Clarke	519-455-9350	
Museum			
Air Cadet Liaison	Brent Elgie	519-539-5956	lgairs@gmail.com
Lottery	Tom Pillon	519-660-8099	ve3hor@gmail.com
Advisor	Rene McKinnon	519-471-8003	renemck@sympatico.ca
War Graves, Poppy Fund,	David Smith/Terry Rushton		
Heritage/ History & Veterans'	David Smith		
Memorial			
Tours			

CLUB SERVICES

Wing Manager	Flo Douglas	519-455-0430
Bar Steward/Rentals	Flo Douglas	519-455-0430
Padre	Frank Mantz	for more info, ask a member of the Executive
London Link Liaison	Reg Lownie	rjlownie@gmail.com
London Link graphic artist	Cathy Wood	cathyrwood@gmail.com

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.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT

1. MEDIA OUTREACH

To help promote the Wing, two media events were arranged. Post Media, the publisher of the London Free Press and the Londoner provided four free ads in the Londoner in July and August.

In July, Nadine Abi Raad, parliamentary assistant to MP Lindsay Mathyssen and fellow Wing member, Linda Brimson met to draft a press release. Once approved by the Board, Nadine sent the final version to the media. Allison Devereau of CBC Radio in London responded and she interviewed Chuck Hardy the Board designated Wing representative on July 30th. It focused on the need of our membership to be representative of the diverse wider population of the London area. Also covered was the Wing support of six Air Cadet Squadrons. Other topics included the history of the RCAF and the celebration of the glorious tradition of service to Canada and the wider community, Secrets of Radar Museum and the need to raise funds to offset losses due to COVID-19.

2. TREASURER

Former Board Member and Acting Treasurer, Barry Sandler is training the new Treasurer, Janet Pole, on the use of the accounting software package "QuickBooks". This system allows a wider use of recording and reporting. There are some advantages over spreadsheets such as using invoices for membership renewals. More accuracy in inventory control is another feature.

3. FUNDRAISING – MASKS

Janet Pole and other Wing members have made and donated face masks to the Wing. Anyone wanting one can do so by donating a minimum of \$5.00 per mask. Flo is at the Wing most weekdays from noon until 1:30 and will be pleased to accommodate your needs.

4. MEMBERS – A FUN WAY TO LEARN ABOUT EACH OTHER

Please see under Membership a pleasant and easy way to participate and have some of your background appear in the Link. Not a Broadway or Stratford production, but everyone now and then can be on the stage.

Chuck Hardy Board Member - for all members of the Board

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 427 (LONDON) WING as of October 1, 2019

Janet Pole

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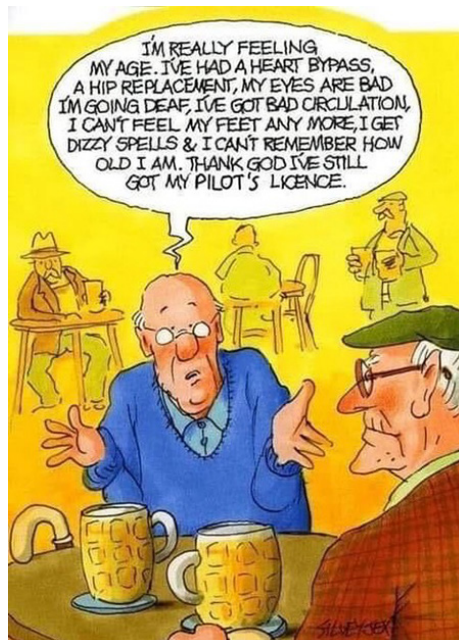
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Ontario Group Representative

Rene McKinnon

renemck@sympatico.ca

519-471-8003



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James G. Poag
GRADUATE GEMOLOGIST
GOLDSMITH – APPRAISER

Jeffrey R. Poag
GOLDSMITH – DIAMOND SETTER

Jenny Dortmans
GRADUATE GEMOLOGIST

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The Caterpillar Club –

compiled by Linda Brimson from Google and Wikipedia

I know of one storied Spitfire pilot, Jerry Billing of Windsor-Essex area (deceased in 2015 at age 93) who successfully bailed out twice, during WWII. You can read about him on various internet sites. I wondered if there are Wing members or veterans in our area who have the distinction of having parachuted to safety? Please let us know, for the next edition of the Link.

It is described as the club that no one wants to join. And those who become members do so, quite literally, by accident. The Caterpillar Club is an informal association of people who have successfully used a parachute to bail out of a disabled aircraft. After authentication by the parachute maker, applicants receive a membership certificate and a distinctive lapel pin. The nationality of the person saving their life by parachute and ownership of the aircraft are not factors in determining qualification for membership; anybody who has saved their life by using a parachute after bailing out of a disabled aircraft is eligible. The requirement that the aircraft is disabled naturally excludes parachuting enthusiasts in the normal course of a recreational jump, or those involved in military training jumps.

The club was founded by Leslie Irvin of the Irvin Airchute Company of Canada in 1922. (Though Leslie Irvin is credited with inventing the first free-fall parachute in 1919, parachutes stored in canisters had saved the lives of observers in balloons and several German, Austro-Hungarian pilots of disabled military aircraft in the First World War.) The name "Caterpillar Club" simply makes reference to the silk threads that made the original parachutes, thus recognizing the debt owed to the silk worm. Other people have taken the metaphor further by comparing the act of bailing out with that of the caterpillar letting itself down to earth by a silken thread. Another metaphor is that caterpillars have to climb out of their cocoons to escape. "Life depends on a silken thread" is the club's motto.

An early brochure of the Irvin Parachute Company credits William O'Connor, 24 August 1920 at McCook Field near Dayton, Ohio as the first person to be saved by an Irvin parachute, but this feat was unrecognized. On 20 October 1922, Lieutenant Harold R. Harris, chief of the McCook Field Flying Station, jumped from a disabled Loening W-2A monoplane fighter. Shortly after, two reporters from the Dayton Herald, realizing that there would be more jumps in future, suggested that a club should be formed. Harris became the first member and from that time forward any person who jumped from a disabled aircraft with a parachute became a member of the Caterpillar Club. Other famous members include General James Doolittle, Charles Lindbergh and (retired) astronaut John Glenn.

In 1922 Leslie Irvin agreed to give a gold pin to every person whose life was saved by one of his parachutes. At the end of World War II the number of members with the Irvin pins had grown to over 34,000 though the total of people saved by Irvin parachutes is estimated to be 100,000.

The successor to the original Irvin company still provides pins to people who have made a jump. In addition to the Irvin Air Chute Company, other parachute manufacturers have also issued caterpillar pins for successful jumps. GC Parachutes formed their



Linda Brimson saw this Caterpillar Club membership card and caterpillar pin, at the East Kirkby Aviation Museum in Lincolnshire, England in May 2019.



Gold Club in 1940. The Switlik Parachute Company of Trenton, New Jersey issued both gold and silver caterpillar pins. The Pioneer Parachute Co. in Skokie, Illinois, also presented plaques to people who packed the parachutes that saved lives.

Membership requirements

There are no annual fees, though the Switlik club charges a nominal enrollment fee. Both the Irvin and Switlik clubs issue gold and silver pins depicting caterpillars. The Irvin Golden Caterpillar has amethyst eyes. Prospective members must send documentation of the incident to the manufacturer, which then conducts its own research.

The requirements for membership are rigid – members must have saved their lives by jumping with a parachute. Consequently, RAF Sgt. Nicholas Alkemade, who during World War II bailed out of a RAF Avro Lancaster without a parachute and landed uninjured in a snow-drift, was refused membership because a parachute had not been used. More recently, a group of twelve skydivers were denied membership when one of them fouled the plane's tail and caused it to fall from the sky. He died in the crash but the other eleven parachuted to safety. They did not qualify because it had been their original intention to jump from the plane. The pilot, however, was admitted to the club.

Today the ranks of Caterpillar Club members number in the tens of thousands; men and women, and even a Scottish 12-year old glider passenger. Both Irvin Air Chute Company (today as Airborne Systems) and Switlik Parachute Company continue to register members. Famous members include John Glenn, Jimmy Doolittle, and George H. W. Bush. With four jumps to his credit, Charles Lindbergh is probably the member with the most pins.

Active branches

There are branches in Canada, the USA and Britain. An active branch of the Caterpillar Club has its annual reunion/dinner/dance in Blackpool in the Northwest of England each March. The club has approximately 70 members, either ex-WW2 RAF aircrew, family members of deceased members or associate members. Despite its 'North West' title the Club welcomes ex-Caterpillars from across the UK and worldwide. The Club secretary can be contacted via the Doric Hotel, Blackpool.

Cloth Masks available at 427 Wing for \$5 minimum donation

Supplement your mask supply by choosing a reusable, washable cloth mask, sewn by Wing member Janet Pole who generously shared her creations with the Wing. Selection of colours and fabrics to suit any taste. Keep extras in the car, in your purse or at home and you'll always be protected. We're all going to require masks for the foreseeable future.

Lambeth Air Cadets Trip (cover photos)

by Sue Graystone

In March 2019, we had the incredible honour and opportunity to reconnect with our sister squadron, 50F Camberwell/Lambeth Squadron Royal Air Force Cadets. We were able to participate in their CO's parade night (a formal parade, usually held once a month) as well as their sports night. Needless to say, friendships were formed and cadets/staff continue to develop these bonds. Our hope is that one day, cadets/staff from 50F Squadron will be able to come to Canada to join our unit in some of our activities and take in some of the sites that we have to offer. Our trip also included taking the time to pay our respects in several of the memorials for Canadian Troops who served during WWI and WWII, such as Vimy, Hill 70, Beaumont Hamel and a few others.

A Big Thank You

to grass-cutters and groundskeepers at the Wing
From spring through a hot summer, a faithful team from London Amateur Radio Club has worked each week to keep the Wing grounds looking green and clipped. Great job guys and your efforts are appreciated!



Proud to support the 427 Wing



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Fundraising Update

How anyone can donate to the Wing

Since the last Link edition, a gofundme page for 427 Wing has been created. Thanks to member Janet Pole for this initiative.

The Wing sends sincere best wishes for your health, and heartfelt appreciation for your generosity.

Four Donation Options:

1. You can donate by credit card on the CanadaHelps website. Under “Donate”, search for Royal Canadian Air Force. Select Royal Canadian Air Force Association Trust, Learn more. Under “Campaigns”, select 427 (London) Wing RCAF Association. Tax receipt available.
2. You can donate on gofundme by searching for 427 Wing. (no tax receipt).
https://www.gofundme.com/f/427-london-wing-rcaf-association-fundraiser?fbclid=IwAR17KfAEgGq1Lzol-7mn0lvCOw0LUBkbydn-dA7_aA_gb4iYRHrBiXulex4. Share the link on your Facebook pages and with your friends by email.
3. You can also donate by calling the Wing: 519 455-0430; leave a message, and your call will be returned.
4. You can make a cheque to RCAF Association Trust Fund, and on the memo line of cheque, write: “For 427 (London) Wing”. Mail cheque to 427 Wing (London) RCAF Association, 2155 Crumlin Road, London ON N5V 3Z9 Canada (Tax receipt available).

Search

How it works


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
Donate



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.

www.427wing.com • 519-455-0430



427 Wing is organizing this fundraiser.

Created July 9, 2020

Community & Neighbors

427 (London) Wing RCAF Association needs your help, please

With Wing events cancelled due to COVID-19 shutdowns, our event revenue is nil. We're raising funds to meet our commitment for the outstanding roofing replacement expense in 2020, to continue our active veteran, community, repairs, maintenance, and museum programs.

Our wonderful Second World War RCAF Canteen building, on London International Airport property, must be maintained for future years. Originally from Station Crumlin Flight School, it's a historical treasure and a wonderful, rare example of British

[Read more](#)

\$400 raised of \$25,000 goal

8 donors 8 shares 8 followers

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16 d

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28 d

Richard Brown

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29 d

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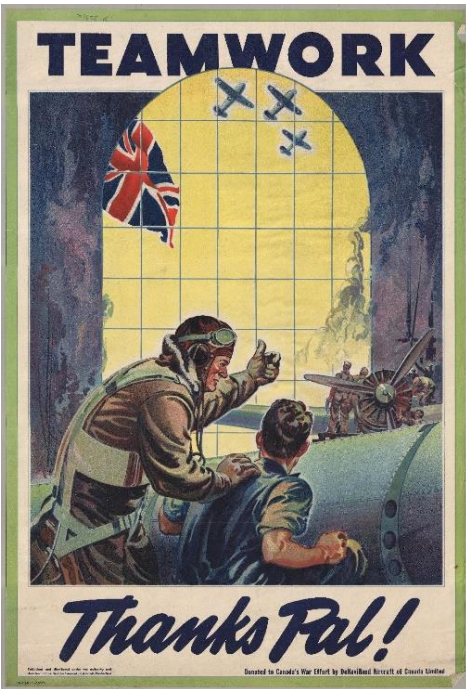
See all

Donate

Share

6 | JULY/AUGUST 2020

Rally 'Round the Wing – 70 years strong



New Poster available from the Wing

There's a wonderful WWII aviation poster available by donation, to have in your home, office, workshop or hangar for family, veterans and friends to enjoy. The perfect gift to support the Wing! (For minimum \$5 donation, you'll receive your choice of 2 posters and two postcards). What a deal – please place your order ASAP by phone to Linda Brimson 519 659-0628 or see email below.

It was originally produced by de Havilland Canada Ltd. (DHC), who produced the multi-purpose Mosquito and training airplane, Tiger Moth, at its Downsview Ontario facility in Toronto.

The DHC-1 Chipmunk, another training aircraft, followed in 1946. The Chipmunk was de Havilland Canada's first all-Canadian design.

Available in 11" x 17" size, and 13" x 19" size on slightly heavier stock.

Full-colour, the poster evokes memories of Air Force bases. Order yours today by phoning the Wing 519 455-0430, or email Wing member Linda Brimson, linda.brimson@yahoo.com.



New Postcard available from the Wing

Here's a handy 5" x 7" postcard available by donation, to have in your home or office, or send it with a note to keep in touch with folks you're not seeing at the moment.

The caption on back reads: A lower right inscription block of four 6-cent airmail stamps issued as part of Canada's "War Issue"

shows student pilots, their instructor, and the Harvard II trainer. The inscription pays homage to the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan.



To thank Lindsay Mathysen for her wonderful gesture of a donation to 427 wing, we presented her with a copy of our Team Work poster.

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Membership Report

Most members as of early August have renewed their membership dues. With little income, because of COVID-19, membership dues and fundraising efforts are helping the Wing. We thank you all.

A fellow member has suggested a fun way to participate by telling readers of the Link a few tid-bits about themselves. So, for this edition and provided that the editor Cathy Wood accepts it, here is a tad more about yours truly:

Born in St. Thomas and served in the military in Germany, Cyprus, Manitoba, Alberta, Toronto, Petawawa and London.

Favourite holiday destination: Europe.

When not working (for the Wing) reading, listening to good music, doing chores, shopping (not malls) and working for the Wing.

Currently reading: "The Scribbler Too" – a series of short stories put together by Sam and Tammy Newman. Also, books by Anne Perry.

Jobs I would be terrible at: Secretary, Treasurer, writing articles, doing the dishes, boiling water, and visiting malls.

Qualities valued in people: sincerity, sense of humour, who will listen, and will volunteer their time and talent.

Who will be next for the November/December edition? The above is a mere sample. You can decide what you would like to talk about. We could even do up a little contest.

One thing for sure, and that you will all agree with is that in every edition of the Link, there is a wide variety of well written articles.

Recently a visitor to the Wing website, remarked that there is no indication on the website or the membership application form, that refers to benefits of being a member. Some include the camaraderie, some discounts, a sense of feeling good by donating time and talent by serving on a committee.

Please contact me if you think of more benefits of being a member of the Wing.

See you in the next edition and best wishes, Chuck

Chuck Hardy

Military College Life

by Captain (ret) Tammy Newman

I joined the Canadian Armed Forces in 1983. I went to the French military college in Saint Jean sur Richelieu, QC, about an hour's drive from Montreal. At that time, the college was called Le Collège militaire royal de Saint-Jean or CMR for short. (And, yes, not all the words are capitalized as is the custom in the French language.) The program was a five year one – prep, first, second, third and fourth year.

- In 1952, CMR was set up as a feeder school for Royal Military College (RMC) in Kingston, ON. Its purpose was twofold. First, the government wanted to increase the number of Francophones in the officer corps. Second, the government wanted to provide the opportunity to achieve higher ranks for two under-represented groups – French Canadians and Atlantic Canadians.
- In 1971, CMR established a formal partnership with the Université de Sherbrooke where CMR cadets were able to obtain a Bachelor's degree without leaving Saint Jean.
- Female cadets were not allowed entry until September 1980, so I was in the fourth class of women.
- In 1985, the Quebec government passed an act granting CMR its own university charter. This worked out great for me since I was able to graduate from the actual university that I attended.
- In 1995, massive government cutbacks on defence spending forced the Department of National Defence to close CMR.
- In 2007, the reopening of CMR was announced for the fall term.

While I was at CMR, from July 1983 until May 1988, the rules were fairly strict. Boyfriend – girlfriend relationships were a No-No, although the unwritten rule was always "don't flaunt it and don't get caught." Everybody lived in the dormitories. There were no exceptions. Today, cadets may date openly. At RMC, cadets who want to rent civilian accommodation can ask permission to live off-campus.

I think I prefer the way that it was back in the '80s. We were stuck together and we learned to flourish as a group. We knew how to help each other because we knew everyone's strengths and weaknesses. We were a truly bilingual university which was a great asset as an officer. Sure, we played language jokes on each other. There are two that I can still remember today. We taught the Francophones that if they wanted to ask someone for help, all they had to say was, "what's the scam, mamma jam?" In turn, they taught us that to ask someone to be a little quieter, all we needed to say was "ta gueule." In actuality, that meant "shut up." By the end of my five years there, I was bilingual. I knew my academics in both French and English. I knew my drill in both languages. I even knew my Christmas carols and my church prayers in French. That certainly gave me confidence moving forward as an officer in the military. Life at CMR was probably one of the most difficult things I've ever done. In the end, it was well worth my effort.



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Restarting Lunches at the Wing

As we move closer to the date at which we will begin offering lunch again at the Wing, we are preparing procedures and methods to ensure your enjoyment, your safety and the safety of the volunteer staff. We thought you'd like to know, in advance, what to expect. At the time of publishing, no date has been set for the restart of offering lunches.

Due to the limits on attendance inside the Wing building during various phases of reopening in Ontario, we are moving toward using a reservation system. Reservations will be accepted up to the middle of the week so we may know the numbers who will attend. Patrons will be told of the week's menu when they call to make a reservation.

Before you arrive:

If you are not feeling well that morning, we ask you not come to the Wing. You may call and let us know anytime.

When you arrive:

The south door will act as an entrance and the east door will act as an exit. Those with mobility issues can use either door for entry and exit. You will be asked if you are feeling OK. You will not be tested for temperature or anything else. The wearing of masks inside is mandatory. If you forget to bring one, we will provide you with one for a small donation. Please wear the mask at all times unless you are eating or drinking.

Physical distancing placeholders will be on the floor marking where to stand when paying for lunch or ordering from the bar.

The meal service:

Like a restaurant, you will be assigned a table, with a limit of 4 persons per table. Your lunch will be brought to you. Everything is disposable. If you need service, raise your hand and your server will attend to you. Procedures for the snowball and 50/50 draws are still being worked out.

The two washrooms in the common area will be open.

We realize that this will present quite a change from the usual. Hopefully we can all enjoy the experience and be safe at the same time

Regards,

The Wing Reopening team.

Last revised: August 12, 2020

UPCOMING EVENTS

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic 427 Wings most events are cancelled until further notice. For more information on the Wing please call 519 455-0430 and leave a message and we will get back to you.

Airshow London is excited to present SkyDrive.

The 2020 air show September 12 & 13 will be held as a drive-in event, offering Canada's first socially responsible and physically distanced air show! This innovative approach will still offer a full air show, highlighted by the only Canadian appearance of the United States Air Force Thunderbirds! As well as performances from U.S Army Golden Knights Parachute Team, US Air Force F-22 Demo Team, and the US Air Force West Coast C-17 Demo Team

Airshow London has always adhered to advanced safety measures as the show's highest priority is the well-being of guests, volunteers and performers. And now with COVID-19, new measures will be introduced that conform to public health guidelines to ensure an experience that minimizes risk to health and safety to everyone involved.

Benefits Payment Calendar 2020

Below are dates for recurring Government of Canada benefit payments administered by Canada Revenue Agency. If you signed for direct deposit, payments will be made to your bank account.

January 29, 2020
February 26, 2020
March 27, 2020
April 28, 2020

May 27, 2020
June 26, 2020
July 29, 2020
August 27, 2020

September 28, 2020
October 28, 2020
November 26, 2020
December 29, 2020

CPP payments include the CPP retirement pension, CPP disability, children's benefits and survivor's benefits.

OAS benefits are made out on the same dates and include the OAS pension, Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS), Allowance and Allowance for the Survivor.

BIRTHDAY BRATS



SEPTEMBER HAPPY BIRTHDAY WISHES

Rene McKinnon, Dave O'Brien, Doug Rath, Barry Sandler, Walter Schussler, Bill Sutherland, Claude Vigeant, Carolyn Dalgity, and John Webster

OCTOBER HAPPY BIRTHDAY WISHES

Gus Cameron, Tanya Deaville, Flo Douglas, Armin Grunwald, Bette Hexter, Don Martin, Charles Rath, Ernie Regan, and Thomas Taborowski.



*"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)



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September 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 RAA	2	3	4	5
6	7	8 MAC	9 BCC	10 WT	11 CLOSED	12 CLOSED
13 CLOSED	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	(Rental Organization Activities Only) All Wing member activities are canceled for September		

October 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6 RAA	7	8 WT	9	10
11	12	13 MAC	14 BCC	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
To check for October Wing activities or updates call 519 455-0430 for recorded messages						

**Please call 519-455-0430 or visit the
427 (London) Wing Facebook page for updates.**