
THE **LONDON LINK**

427 (LONDON) WING — ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION
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427 (London) Wing



LUNCH

Friday September 15, 2023

Served 11:30 a.m.

\$15.00 per person

Guest speaker Hilda Smeltzer 1 p.m.

Topic: Her Family experience in WWII Nazi-Occupied Holland

Please call Wing (519) 455-0430 to reserve
before Wednesday, September 13

Menu:

Lasagna, Caesar Salad, Buns, Cake, Fruit Tray

(We invite everyone to lunch, but if unable to attend the meal,
guests may attend Speaker session-only, by donation)

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.

THE LONDON LINK - PURPOSE AND CONTENT

Six editions each year beginning with the Jul/Aug edition.

Articles of interest to all readers including items about all components of the military both of a historic and more recent nature; articles written by Air Cadets of all Squadrons; regular Board articles; items from all readers as space allows.

To promote the Wing to the wider and diverse population with the aim of attracting new members and/or seeking volunteers who may not wish to join as members.

427 (LONDON) WING BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Director - Chairperson	Linda Brimson	linda.brimson@yahoo.com
Director	Mike Watts	mwatts427wing@gmail.com
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Acting Secretary	Chuck Hardy	chuck.hardy@sympatico.c

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

Website	Lee Cassar		lcassar@gridpoint.ca
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Museum, War Graves, Poppy Fund, David Smith/Terry Rushton with Howard Johnson and advising.
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Memorial, Tours

CLUB SERVICES

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London Link graphic artist	Cathy Wood	cathyrwood@gmail.com

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



Forces Fight Fires

In Canada, emergencies are managed first at the local and then at the provincial or territorial level. These levels of government can ask the federal government for assistance when more resources are needed.

This year's wildfire season has been the worst on record in Canada, with more than 13 million hectares (roughly 32 million acres) burning so far.

The Government of Canada has programs, policies, and initiatives to keep Canadians informed about the wildfire situation and to support provincial and territorial efforts to combat wildfires, and has sent military troops to assist.

Visit www.getprepared.gc.ca for more information on being prepared for the event of wildfire in your area.



Captain Liz Campbell of 440 Transport Squadron unloads cargo off a CH-146 Griffon helicopter at the Yellowknife airport on August 14, 2023. *Photo: Master Corporal Alana Morin, Joint Task Force North, Canadian Armed Forces*



Members of 440 Transport Squadron entertain people awaiting evacuation from Yellowknife during Operation Lentus 23-07 on August 17, 2023. *Photo: Sailor 1st Class Patrice Harvey, Canadian Armed Forces.*



Canadian Armed Forces soldiers from 2e Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment arrive in Yellowknife on August 14, 2023. *Photo: Master Corporal Alana Morin, Joint Task Force North, Canadian Armed Forces*

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The Battle of Britain: Fighting for Freedom

from Government of Canada pages

Background

Waged from July to October 1940, The Battle of Britain pitted a small group of Allied fighter pilots against a far larger German air force – the Luftwaffe. Their victory gave hope to the people of Great Britain and to other freedom-loving nations. The Battle of Britain was recognized immediately as significant not just because it was the largest air battle to date, but also because everyone knew that it was indicative of a possible invasion, and that the results of the battle would largely determine whether an invasion would take place.

Prelude to the Battle of Britain

In June 1940, France had fallen but England refused to give up the fight. The Nazis' next objective was to subjugate Great Britain and thus have a free hand in Europe. Nazi planners realized that they would have to defeat the Royal Air Force (RAF) before mounting an invasion (Operation Sea Lion). The RAF, already weakened by losses from an effort to stop the Nazis in France, became the bulwark whose job it was to thwart the impending invasion.

Although many Canadians had made their way overseas to join the RAF during the 1930s, the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) numbered fewer than 5,000 personnel when war was declared on September 10, 1939. Only No. 1 (Fighter) Squadron was equipped with modern Hurricane fighter aircraft and it was needed for home defence in those uncertain times. Still, with Great Britain's back against the wall in June 1940, Canada quickly dispatched No. 1 Squadron overseas, although it would be several months before it was declared operational.

Phase I - The Channel Battles (Kanalkampf)

Although clashes between the RAF and Luftwaffe were continuous throughout this period, the official start of Phase I of the campaign – the Channel Battles (Kanalkampf) – is deemed to have begun on July 10, continuing until August 11. During this period, the Luftwaffe launched mass attacks against coastal shipping, which were met by whatever defensive forces the RAF had available. Although pilots on both sides died every day, in a very real sense both the attackers and defenders were building up their forces for the fierce contest that was yet to come. While No. 1 Squadron continued to train, Canadians flew throughout this phase as members of RAF units, including No. 242 'Canadian' Squadron, which had already made a name for itself during the Battle of France.

Phase II - Eagle Attack (Adlerangriff)

On August 12, the Luftwaffe began their aerial assault in earnest by attacking coastal airfields in an attempt to destroy the RAF on the ground. Airfields were hit again and again, resulting in numerous casualties amongst the hardworking ground and support crews. After an attack,



People shelter and sleep on the platform and on the train tracks, in Aldwych Underground Station, London, after sirens sounded to warn of German bombing raids, on October 8, 1940.

with scant time to treat the casualties and gather the dead, these men and women rushed to fill in bomb craters, put out fires, and made rushed repairs to damaged aircraft, as well as rearming and refuelling returning fighters for their next "go at Jerry". Phase II lasted until August 23 and painted a picture of things to come with RAF casualty lists growing longer every day.

On August 20, as the Nazi Adlerangriff operation was in full flight, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill delivered his speech praising the airmen fighting the Battle in words that have echoed through the decades:

The gratitude of every home in our island, in our Empire and indeed throughout the world, except in the abodes of the guilty, goes out to the British airmen who, undaunted by odds, unwearied in their constant challenge and mortal danger, are turning the tide of the world by their prowess and their devotion.

Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few. All hearts go out to the fighter pilots, whose brilliant actions we see with our own eyes day after day...

Phase III – Luftwaffe efforts increase

The critical phase of the battle started on August 24 and lasted until September 6. The Luftwaffe launched a massive campaign to destroy the RAF on the ground and in the air. Canadians, including the RCAF's now fully-trained No. 1 Squadron, were in the thick of things. Hurricanes and Spitfires, alerted by radar and guided by sector control centres, clashed with German bombers and escorting Messerschmitt fighters multiple times per day. The English sky was painted with wispy white contrails whose delicate impermanence belied the brutality of the combat overhead. The countryside was littered with the wreckage of fire blackened aircraft and the bodies of young men.

Phase IV – The Blitz Begins

The RAF was pressed, but held its own against the Luftwaffe, despite being severely tested as an organization. The next phase of the Battle began on September 7 when the Luftwaffe shifted the focus of its attacks to London and other cities. The "Blitz" showed the inner strength and courage of British civilians as they endured a deluge of

bombs day and night. Massed German formations of aircraft were met by equally large swarms of British fighters. The fighting reached a crescendo on September 15 when the Luftwaffe launched multiple attacks on London. By the end of the day, more than 1500 aircraft had engaged in combat with two enemy aircraft destroyed for the loss of one Allied aircraft. No. 1 Squadron engaged in combat twice that day, claiming three destroyed enemy aircraft, three that were likely destroyed, and two that were damaged, though two of No. 1 Squadron's Hurricanes were destroyed and one pilot was killed.

Angered by the inability of his air force to destroy the RAF, Hitler postponed the invasion of England on September 17.

The Battle Draws to a Close

On October 12, Hitler formally advised his service chiefs that Operation Sea Lion had been put off to the spring of 1941. In fact, attention had already turned towards Russia and the plan to invade Great Britain was never again seriously considered. The Battle of Britain had, by the end of October, as one historian put it, simply petered out.

The Blitz continued in an effort to destroy Britain's will to fight. For 57 consecutive nights, bombs rained down on London and in total the British suffered nine months of aerial bombardment of their cities.

The Cost

More than 100 Canadians took part in the Battle of Britain, but only one Canadian unit – the RCAF's No. 1 Squadron (soon renumbered to 401 Squadron) – participated. In 53 days of combat these young Canadians claimed 29 enemy aircraft destroyed, eight probably destroyed and a further 35 damaged. It was not without cost, as the squadron lost 16 aircraft and had three pilots killed in action with a further 10 wounded.

The vast majority of Canadians who flew in the battle did so with the RAF and the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm. Twenty of them died and are buried in graves throughout southern England or, if their bodies were never recovered, are listed on the Runnymede Memorial in Surrey, England.

These Canadian pilots distinguished themselves but they were not alone. Aircrew from 13 nations fought as part of the RAF's Fighter Command. Joining the British and Canadians were personnel from Australia, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, France, Ireland, Jamaica, New Zealand, Poland, South Africa, the United States, and Zimbabwe (Southern Rhodesia). They were supported by thousands of ground crew, support personnel and civilian employees and volunteers who, although don't often get the same level of recognition made vital contributions to the victory. It was an international effort to defend democracy but few of them recognized the significance of their actions at the time.

Canada's role in the Battle of Britain, although not large, reflects a national commitment to collective defence in the face of unwarranted aggression. No. 1 Squadron, a small combat force deployed to fight with the best against the best, is the first of many examples of Canadian air power in action.

Additional information

- The official dates of the Battle of Britain are July 10 – October 31, 1940.
- The Allied forces flew the Spitfire and Hurricane Mark I aircraft.
- The Battle of Britain was the first time Canada had deployed its own identifiable national air assets (No. 1 Squadron) to a combat mission.
- 2,353 pilots from Great Britain and 574 from overseas participated.
- 544 lost their lives, including 23 Canadians.
- More than 100 Canadians participated as members of the RAF's No. 242 "Canadian" Squadron, the RCAF's No. 1 Squadron or as members of other RAF units.
- All those who flew at least one authorized operational sortie with an eligible unit of the Royal Air Force or Fleet Air Arm from July 10 to October 31 were awarded the Battle of Britain clasp to the 1939-45 Star.
- Three members of No. 1 Squadron received the Distinguished Flying Cross for their efforts during the Battle of Britain: the commanding officer, Squadron Leader Ernie McNab; his second-in-command, Flight Lieutenant Gordon Roy McGregor; and Flying Officer "Dal" Russel.
- Two Canadian groundcrew were recognized for their contribution to the Battle of Britain: Flight Sergeant John R. Burdes was awarded a British Empire Medal and Flight Sergeant Cecil M. Gale was mentioned in dispatches.



Air raid damage, including the twisted remains of a double-decker city bus, in the City of London on September 10, 1940.



Membership Report for September and October 2023

by Chuck Hardy

Current Membership total is 107. A big drop from the good old days when the Wing had over 400 members. Members moved, the grim reaper took members during COVID and others, especially in 2023, decided not to renew.

We need to build up the membership. We all have a duty to recommend suitable citizens to the Wing Board of Directors. If each member recommended only one new member, that would double the membership.

Beyond the Friday lunches, there is only euchre to keep members connected to 427 (London) Wing. Why is that?

We ask members to attend meetings and to volunteer only a small amount of their time. We need a Secretary, a Treasurer, and a Membership Chairperson. These positions will not take up a lot of your time. With a computer at home, you can do a good portion of the duties in the comfort of your home. Members have served in these important roles over the years. A number of them are still members in good standing.

Times are changing and so is the Wing. Our Board Chairperson, Linda Brimson, will provide you with an update. See her articles in this edition of the Link.

If you move, change your email address, please advise so that we can keep the records current.

YOUR COMMENTS ABOUT THE CATERED LUNCHES PROVIDED BY VAL AND HER STAFF AT THE AIRPORT CAFÉ IS APPRECIATED. THE MEALS ARE VERY GOOD WITH PLENTY OF VARIETY.

PLEASE DO NOT BE PASSIVE. BE HELPFUL AND HAPPY.

See you in the next edition of your great newsletter – THE LONDON LINK.

Cheers,

Chuck

VOLUNTEERS WANTED FOR 427 (LONDON) WING DURING AIR SHOW LONDON

Contact the Wing for Details.

Please support our advertisers.

I recently had two very pleasant and helpful business interactions with advertisers from our newsletter.

Please remember to try their services first when a professional or service need arises.

Many of our advertisers are Wing members who have supported the Wing over many years. Those business owners are interested in maintaining good business relationships.

Thank you to all our advertisers for your continued support of 427 Wing.
We appreciate you!

SEPTEMBER 6

Labour Day

OCTOBER 2

National Day for Truth and
Reconciliation (observed)

OCTOBER 9

Thanksgiving

NOVEMBER 5

Daylight Savings Time Ends

NOVEMBER 11

Remembrance Day

DECEMBER 25

Christmas



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Canadian Harvard Aircraft Association's
**Wings & Wheels
 Family Fun Day**



Saturday, September 16th 2023

(Rain Date September 17th)

Tillsonburg Regional Airport

244411 Airport Road, Tillsonburg, Ontario

9 AM to 4 PM - Admission by Donation

All Types of Vehicles Welcome!

Activities Include:

- Opportunities for Harvard Flight Experiences - Starting at \$225
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Our friends at Canadian Harvard Aircraft Association at Tillsonburg Airport hold Wings & Wheels each year. Entry by donation. Food available on site and at Skyway Cafe. If you have free time Saturday Sept. 16 (raindate Sunday Sept. 17) you'll be treated to a large classic car display (last year 300 vehicles!) plus Harvard aircraft on display and flight experiences available.

What a special memento for veterans

There are several upholstery firms that specialize in creating an special chair from a military uniform. All for a price. Many are in Britain but a Google search for "upholstered chair with veteran uniform" will turn up lots of examples. Maybe you can find an experienced upholsterer who could craft such a creation.

A special remembrance for a family heirloom or to honour a serving veteran on retirement.



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Euchre Anyone?

**THURSDAYS AT 1:00 p.m.
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REMINDER

**April 1st, 2024 marks the 100th anniversary
 of the Royal Canadian Air Force**

There are special fundraising initiatives and celebrations from national level being planned.

Follow 427 (London) Wing on Facebook for updates. There is remarkable history to celebrate and many great veterans to remember, along with wonderful aircraft. A century of service and achievement.



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Masks are currently optional at 427 Wing.

Please respect the personal decision of others.

Paul Manson remembered

We had already sent our July-Aug 2023 issue of The Link to print, and were unable to acknowledge Paul Manson's death on July 1, 2023, at the age of 88 years.

Born in Trail, BC and raised in Montreal and Deep River, Paul attended Royal Roads Military College in Victoria and Royal Military College of Canada in Kingston, graduating in 1956 with the Sword of Honour. He received BSc degrees in electrical engineering from Queen's University and RMC, and honorary doctorates from both Royal Roads and RMC. His life of exemplary leadership began with 38 years of military service as a pilot in NATO Europe and Canada, and saw him rise to positions of increasing responsibility, including Base Commander at CFB Chatham, NB, Commander of the Canadian Air Group in Germany, and Program Manager of the New Fighter Aircraft Program, leading to the selection of the CF-18 Hornet in the late 1970s. He commanded the Air Force from 1983 to 1985 and was Canada's Chief of the Defence Staff from 1986 to 1989.

Following military service, he became president of a large aerospace company, retiring in 1997. He will be remembered for his significant contribution to the creation of the new Canadian War Museum as volunteer chairman of the Passing the Torch Campaign, and as Chair of the Building Committee. He was Chair of the Aerospace Industries Association of Canada and of Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame, and President of the Conference of Defence Associations Institute. He also served for five years as a trustee of the Canadian Museum of Civilization. Among his many honours were the C.D. Howe Award (1992), the Vimy Award (2003), the Order of Military Merit, the RMC Wall of Honour (2009), and induction into Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame (2018). In 2002, he was named an Officer of the Order of Canada. He was a frequent commentator on radio and TV on defence and security issues.

Read Paul's obituary by the Canadian Aviation Historical Society in their July newsletter at:
<https://www.caahs.com/july-2023-caahs-e-newsletter.html>



Benefits Payment Calendar 2023

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.

CANADA PENSION AND OLD AGE SUPPLEMENT and GUARANTEED INCOME SUPPLEMENT

January 27, February 24, March 29, April 26, May 29, June 28,
July 27, August 29, September 27, October 27, November 28, December 20

GST / HST CREDIT: January 5, April 5, July 5, October 5

ONTARIO TRILLIUM: January 10, February 10, March 10, April 6, May 10, June 9, July 10, August 10,
September 8, October 10, November 10, December 8,

VETERAN DISABILITY CREDIT: January 30, February 27, March 30, April 27, May 30, June 29, July 28,
August 30, September 28, October 30, November 29, December 21

CLIMATE ACTION INCENTIVE: January 13, April 14, July 14, October 13

BIRTHDAY BRATS

SEPTEMBER HAPPY BIRTHDAY WISHES

Jim Donnelly (August), Rene McKinnon, Doug Adams,
Carolyn Dalgity, Brian Perry and Claude Vigeant

OCTOBER HAPPY BIRTHDAY WISHES

Flo Douglas, Armin Grunwald, Bette Hexter, Don Martin,
and Randy Warden

*“The older the fiddler, the sweeter the tune.”
~English Proverb*



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LONDON LINK SUBMISSION DEADLINES:

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

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

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

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

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Comments from the Board Chair by Linda Brimson

It's been a hectic summer and a challenging time for Wing Board members and advisors. A lot of time and effort has centred on efforts to find a new wing manager.

At August 18th board meeting at the Wing, members present and the Board met the recommended candidate. I won't name the person here until notice is given to their employer and an employment contract is signed with Wing. The new manager is expected to start operations October 1st.

During the search for a new employee, it became apparent the Wing would have to move in new directions to ensure survival financially. Few people embrace change but that is what Wing members are going to experience, by necessity.

The new manager wants to bring a card playing group to the Wing with access every day. This will require a custom rental agreement. The Wing Board is seeking legal advice to have fair agreements with both employee and rental groups.

Personally, I am dismayed at tensions and tempers that flared among discussions on Wing direction. We can disagree but must remain transparent and respectful or we harm our relationships; sadly, even to the extent we lose good people. The reason members take their membership seriously is they want the Wing to continue as a respected organization. As Director and Board Chair, I, like others, felt the weight of stewardship decisions recently. Can the Wing move forward and still be an organization that members are proud of? I certainly pray that will be the case.

Even when there are uncertainties, I believe we have to let this new venture unfold. The Wing is hiring someone with decades of hospitality experience, marketing expertise and contacts. I want to trust in the person's integrity that all Wing traditions will be honoured and any group using the Wing has to operate beyond reproach. Any new wing manager has to learn about the Wing from members.

It is up to Wing members to share Wing ideals and what you don't want to change, along with giving new ideas a chance to take seed and grow. The success of the Wing definitely lies in the new managers' hands and the willingness of members to be on-board with new efforts. 427 Wing remains a non-profit dedicated to preserving RAF and RCAF history, remembering veterans, supporting air cadets and engaging the community.

Friday lunches in August and September will continue to be catered by Val from the two London International Airport cafes. The meals have been well-received; delicious with lovely presentation; thanks to all faithful attendees. Val has been very obliging to all requests. The Battle of Britain lunch Friday Sept. 15 will feature lasagna, Caesar salad, buns, fruit tray and cake. See notice in this issue. Please call to reserve your lunch place. Wing member Hilda Smeltzer is speaking at 1 pm on her family experience during WWII in Nazi-occupied Holland. We are grateful to Hilda for her willingness to share her story. In the past we've had speakers on the topic of Battle of Britain and continue to share newsletter articles on that epic sacrifice in 1940.

Thanks to Door Opens London volunteers – Sat Sept 16 and Sunday Sept 17. We need members to be ambassadors for the

Wing by welcoming and engaging visitors. Display material and handouts will be available. Signup list at bar.

By the time you read this, Airshow London 2023 may have occurred. Best wishes to our friends at Airshow London and London International Airport and all their volunteers for a safe, great flying weekend.

I'm having some challenges with health issues. With regret, I am resigning as a Director and Board Chair effective Sept. 30. I hope to give time and attention to myself for a while. I haven't yet been living "my retirement dream" so also have to improve on that front. I remain a Wing member and ask others (new and seasoned members) to step up, even until year-end, so my colleagues on the Board don't have to struggle with additional duties. More hands make lighter work. A General Meeting Friday Sept. 22 at 1 pm will receive nominations, with voting (if necessary) at Friday Oct. 20 General Meeting 1 pm.

Thanks everyone for continuing to support and promote 427 Wing.



DOORS OPEN LONDON Welcome to 427 Wing

SEPTEMBER 16: 10am – 4pm
SEPTEMBER 17: Noon – 3pm

During Doors Open, 427 Wing will explore the food theme with presentations on rationing that occurred during the First and Second World Wars, home-front recipes when ingredients were scarce, demands on Canadian farmers to increase agricultural yields, local and national plans to harvest crops after farmers enlisted, and the recruitment of farm girls or Farmerettes.

Visit The Spirit of Flight Museum and
Spooner Memorial Gardens



SEPTEMBER 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 LUNCH	2 LARC
3	4 LABOUR DAY	5 AIR SHOW LUNCH	6 AIR SHOW LUNCH	7 AIR SHOW LUNCH	8 AIR SHOW NO LUNCH NO WING LUNCH	9 AIR SHOW
10 AIR SHOW	11	12	13 BCC	14 EUCHRE WT	15 LUNCH	16 LARC DOORS OPEN
17 DOORS OPEN	18	19	20	21 EUCHRE WT	22 LUNCH GENERAL MEETING	23 LARC
24	25	26	27	28 EUCHRE	29 LUNCH	30 LARC

OCTOBER 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2 National Day of Truth and Reconciliation	3	4	5 EUCHRE LARC	6 LUNCH	7
8	9 THANKS- GIVING	10	11 BCC	12 EUCHRE WT	13 LUNCH	14 LARC
15	16	17	18	19 EUCHRE	20 LUNCH GENERAL MEETING	21 LARC
22	23	24	25	26 EUCHRE	27 LUNCH	28
29	30	31				

AGM: Annual General Meeting
 BCC: British Car Club
 GM: General Meeting
 LVRC: London Vintage Radio Club
 RAA: Recreational Aircraft Association

WD: The Women's Division
 LARC: London Amateur Radio Club
 DFC: Diamond Flight Centre
 WT: Woodturners