

# Wing Mate



Newsletter 408-437 Wing 

Royal Canadian Air Force Association of Canada



Bristol Beaufort

December  2023

## AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION of CANADA MISSION STATEMENT

The Air Force Association of Canada is a national aerospace and community service organization whose aim is to commemorate the noble achievements of the men and women who have served as members of Canada's Air Force since its inception, advocate for a proficient and well equipped Air Force and, support the Royal Canadian Air Cadets.

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Air Cadets	
818 Squadron.....	Jackie Johnston
110 Squadron.....	Cécile Thompson



### Sick and Visiting

Be sure to advise Barbara Newman, Fellowship Chair, if you are aware of a Wing member who is ill or in distressed circumstances.

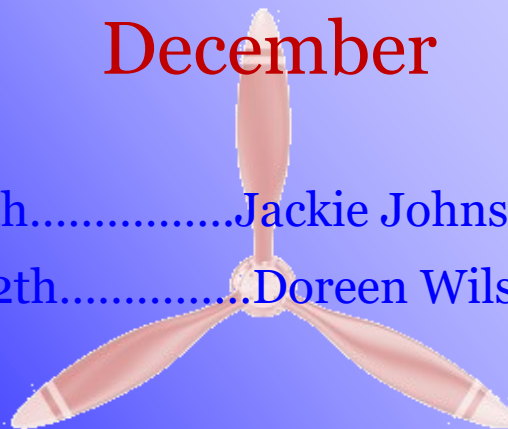
Barbara can be reached at 416-223-7840.

# Happy Birthday!

## December

5th.....Jackie Johnston

12th.....Doreen Wilson



## Wing Meeting

Sheppard Avenue Legion Building  
East of Allen Road, North Side

RSVP: John Wreglesworth  
416-473-5972

Monday, December 11  
**Christmas Dinner**



# President's Report



Merry Christmas everyone!  
Best Wishes from your Execu-  
tive.



Our last General meeting was on 13 November, with Terry Sleightholm giving a talk on Bomber Command during WW2 focusing on Canada's involvement in training air gunners. Very interesting on where and how it was done. Terry has a connection to this as his father was an aircraft mechanic during the war years. There were 13 members attending and were treated to the usual deli sandwich tray and a bonus sushi tray.

Our next meeting will be on **11 December the Wing Christmas party. Please mark it on your calendar. Contact John Wreglesworth.** As usual we will need numbers for Legion catering, and commitment from you.

Interesting tidbit – There is an epidemic of stolen high-end vehicles in Ontario. Oddly no reports of stolen electric vehicles. Hmm, why is that?

*Adept and over- come.*

By the time an RCAF pilot on home leave from Greenwood for Christmas it was late, and a snow storm was developing. Pulled into a little town, every hotel room was taken. The last hotel he stopped at, at the other end of town, was also fully booked but he was spent with no desire to sleep in the car, so he decided to give it a shot anyway and stood before the manager.

"You've got to have a room somewhere," he pleaded.  
"Or just a bed! I don't care where I sleep."

After some hesitation . . . "Well, Captain I do have a double room with one occupant, a Navy guy," admitted the manager, "and he might be glad to split the cost."

"But to tell you the truth, he snores so loudly that people in adjoining rooms have complained in the last couple of nights. I'm not sure it'd be worth it to you."

"No problem," the tired pilot assured him.

"I'll take it." The next morning the pilot came down to breakfast, bright-eyed and well rested.

"How'd you sleep?" asked the manager.

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"Never better."

The manager was impressed. No problem with the other guy snoring, then?"

"Nope, I shut him up in no time." said the pilot.

"How'd you manage that?" asked the manager in awe.

"He was already in bed, snoring away, when I came in the room," the pilot explained.

"I went over, gave him a kiss on the cheek, said, Good-night, beautiful."

He sat up all night watching me."

*Nick Czernkovich*

### Christmas/Hanukkah Dinner

### Monday 11 December

Legion Building  
Sheppard Avenue



### 6:30 for Dinner at 7:00



818 Toronto Falcon Squadron  
Royal Canadian Air Cadets

110 Black Hawk Squadron  
Royal Canadian Air Cadets



With Jackie Johnston



With Cécile Thompson

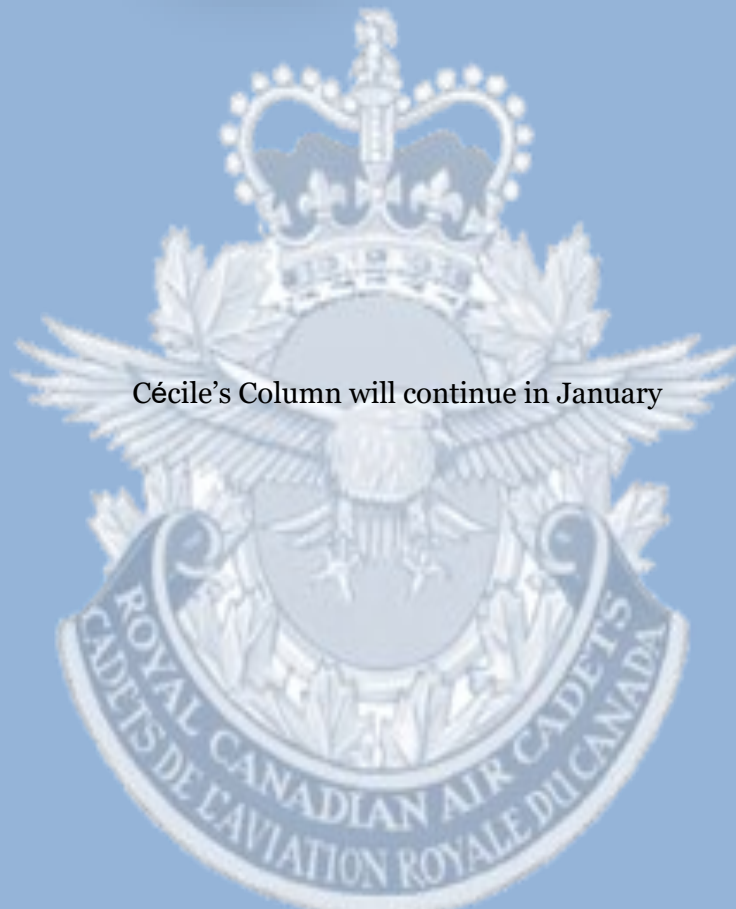
As the holiday season approaches it also means that our training year is nearly half way complete. The Squadron is growing rapidly and cadets continue to spread the word and bring their friends. So far the Squadron has registered 34 new enthusiastic recruits. Additionally, for the first time is almost 20 years

the 818 Squadron Band Program has been revived and we have 14 cadets who are parts of the Squadron Band. We are hoping to get these cadets proficient in their instruments as soon as possible and be able to perform in person by Annual Ceremonial Review. This year will be my final year as the Commanding Officer and our Deputy CO Capt Silk Barwell will be taking Command in May 2024. The Squadron is heading in the right direction for success and in her hands the youth at 818 will have a bright future. On Monday December 18 th we will be hosting a Mess Dinner and I will be sending out a formal invitation to

the Wing to attend. It is always a honour to have 408/437 Wing at events to meet and engage with our cadets.

Daryl Abbott  
Captain  
CO 818 RCACS

Cécile's Column will continue in January



# Sid Barron, Artist

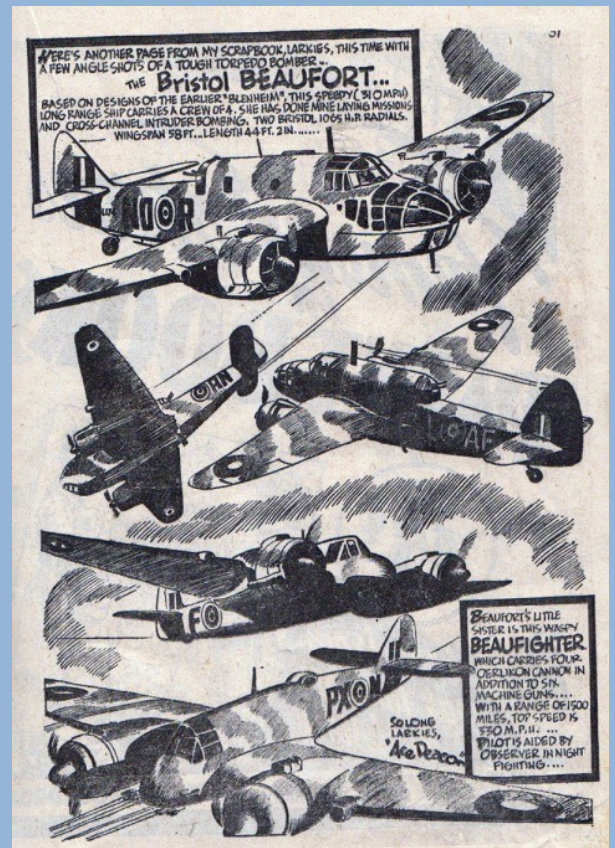
1917-2006

**S**id Arnold Barron was born in Toronto in 1917, the illegitimate child of a Belgian officer billeted with his mother's family. He was raised by his aunt and her family who moved to Victoria, B. C. when Sid was just two. As he grew up he developed a love for boats and the harbour. He did not learn the truth about his real mother until he was an adult. Sid also had a pronounced stammer and was treated for the speech disorder later in the United States.

He took classes from Allan Edwards (who also taught Pierre Berton) in the late thirties and then illustrated schedule cards for Union Steamships out of Vancouver as well as designing containers and neon signs but soon moved back to Toronto where prospects for illustration work seemed better.

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CHRISTMAS GREETINGS  
AND GOOD WISHES  
FROM  
THE ROYAL AIR FORCE  
MIDDLE EAST



  
 WITH EVERY GOOD WISH  
 FOR XMAS AND  
 THE NEW YEAR  
 FRANCE 1917 15 SQUADRON  
 December R.F.C.

## Bristol Beaufort

The Bristol Beaufort Type 152 was a British twin-engined torpedo bomber. At least 1,180 Beauforts were built by Bristol and other British manufacturers. Beauforts first saw service with RAF Coastal Command and then the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm from 1940. They were used as torpedo bombers, conventional bombers and mine-layers until 1942, when they were removed from active service and were then used as trainer aircraft until being declared obsolete in 1945.

Although it was designed as a torpedo-bomber, the Beaufort was more often used as a medium day bomber. The Beaufort also flew more hours in training than on operational missions and more were lost through accidents and mechanical failures than were lost to enemy fire. The Beaufort was adapted as a long-range heavy fighter variant called the Beaufighter, which proved to be very successful and many Beaufort units eventually converted to the Beaufighter.

### The Canadian Connection

No. 149 (TB) Squadron, RCAF, was formed as a Torpedo Bomber unit at Patricia Bay, British Columbia, in October 1942. This squadron was the only home unit to be equipped with the Bristol Beaufort to meet the Japanese naval threat from the Aleutians. When the Japanese withdrew in the summer of 1943, the squadron was redesignated Bomber Reconnaissance (BR) and re-equipped with Lockheed Ventura aircraft. It was employed on West Coast anti-submarine duty until it was disbanded at Terrace, BC, in March 1944. The RCAF's overseas experience with torpedo bombers differed greatly from the sporadic and often ineffective operations on the home front. Although the RCAF carried only one torpedo bomber squadron in its overseas Order of Battle, many Canadians flew with British squadrons in this role

Nos. 22 and 42 squadrons were the first RAF units to receive the type, and among the first to fly them were

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BCATP graduates. These men began arriving in Britain in November 1940. One of them, Pilot Officer Lawrence Stanley Hill, a navigator from Calgary, had barely reported to No. 42 Sqdn. when he was dispatched on a December Beaufort mission to locate an enemy tanker off Trondheim, Norway. The aircraft was last seen on a homeward track off Scotland's Shetland Islands. Hill and the other four crew members are commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial west of London, England.



Torpedo bombing required both skill and nerves of steel. The "fish" were dropped from an altitude of roughly 80 feet, approximately 1,000 yards from target. Close for sure, but if a ship had shallow draught the torpedoes could pass harmlessly underneath. The attack itself demanded a straight and level approach which made the aircraft an easy target for enemy gunners, and so it was not uncommon for a strike force to lose a third of its planes. The death of W/O Alan Morris of Ottawa, a wireless operator in No. 42 Squadron, is particularly tragic. Not only had the wireless operator completed his tour and participated in several attacks, he was ready to leave the squadron when asked to replace a sick man for a May, 1942, strike on the cruiser *Lutnow*. The mission was a disaster. Three Beauforts in the first wave were shot down. Four more in the second wave were destroyed by German fighters, and the cruiser escaped.

Sergeant James Philip Scott of Toronto, a RCAF navigator in No. 22 Squadron, died during one of the most daring RAF torpedo bomber sorties. On 6 April 1941, Beauforts penetrated Brest harbour and attacked the German battle cruiser *Gneisenau*. The British pilot, F/O Kenneth Campbell, ran a gauntlet of flak before launching his torpedo which put the vessel into dry dock for eight months. The Beaufort crew perished in the mission; Campbell was awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross.

## The Beaufort in Canada

Bristol Beaufort Mk. I (Serial No. N1030), coded N, No. 149 Torpedo Bomber Squadron, RCAF, on patrol over Patricia bay, British Columbia, 18 June 1943. N1030 was built by Canadian Associated Aircraft at St. Hubert, Quebec.



Taken on strength at No. 1 Wireless School, at Montreal, it flew to Western Air Command in September 1941, for use by No. 32 Operational Training Unit at RCAF Station Patricia Bay, BC. Assigned to No. 149 TB Squadron at RCAF Station Patricia Bay, in October 1942. It then went to No. 1 Training Command in March 1944. It was converted to Instructional Airframe A 375 on that date, for use by the Technical Training School at RCAF Station Aylmer, Ontario. Then it went off to No. 1 Air Command in January 1945, still in use at Aylmer. Pending disposal from 15 February 1945, it was stored at the Flight Engineers School at Aylmer. Declared of no further use in March 1947, it was retained in whole state pending disposal.

Talk about getting passed along! This a/c saw a lot of Canada. My father likely saw this Beaufort at Aylmer's Flight Engineer School.







## Canada's CF-18 fighter jet force 'in crisis,' new study funded by DND says

A new study funded by the Department of National Defence says Canada's CF-18 fighter aircraft force "is in crisis" and suffering from low morale, high rates of departure among instructor pilots and a shortage of maintenance technicians, impairing its ability to meet defence obligations to allies.

The report, by Justin Bronk, a researcher at the Royal United Services Institute, a 192-year-old British think tank, points to a number of underlying causes.

Those include the aging aircraft themselves, a "very inefficient" spare-parts supply process, "poor aircraft availability," "unsustainable pilot workload" and a marked "trust gap" in how captain- and major-ranked pilots regard their leadership.

"Resignation and retirement rates among experienced instructor pilots and weapons instructors have been unsustainably high for years, and in such a small fighter force, have now become an immediate threat to its viability," the report says.



"Urgent action must be taken now, before the decline becomes completely irreversible."

The CF-188 Hornet, better known as the CF-18, is Canada's multirole fighter aircraft. It first entered service in the 1980s. Canada is buying new F-35 Lightning aircraft, but Ottawa is taking delivery of the new fighters slowly, beginning in 2026, and won't phase out CF-18s completely until about 2032. The operating life of the Hornets has been extended through a refurbishment initiative known as the Hornet Extension Program, or HEP.

Prof. Bronk warns that this state of affairs could jeopardize

Canada's shift to new aircraft.

Among the remedies he recommends are the addition of more maintenance and support equipment, and the hiring of civilian contractors to reduce the administrative workload for air crew.

He cautions that, without action, "there will be insufficient experienced pilots to effectively transition the force onto the F-35 whilst maintaining any meaningful combat capabilities in the remaining two CF-18 HEP II squadrons out to 2032."

The report, obtained by The Globe and Mail, is labelled "Not for Public Release" and was produced with funding from National Defence's MINDS program, which pays for research and analysis by scholars.

Another driver of pilot disaffection, particularly among experienced instructors, the report says, "is the fact that they do not see themselves as being adequately trained or equipped for many of the missions that they are notionally liable to be deployed on."

These same instructors feel they can't train people to the standards they know to be necessary and "are increasingly frustrated and worried by the prospect of what will happen if they have to go into combat poorly prepared," the report adds.

Canada is a member of both the 31-member NATO military alliance and the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), a joint agreement with the United States. The country has obligations to supply resources to both partnerships. The RUSI report says near-term geopolitical concerns, including risks in Asia, mean the Royal Canadian Air Force's fighter capability can't be allowed to decline.

"With the maximum risk period for a clash between China and the United States in the Indo-Pacific assessed as being 2026-2028 by the Pentagon and wider U.S. intelligence community, and no end in sight to either the ongoing war in Ukraine or increasing Russian military production and recruitment, the global security outlook is far too dangerous to let the CF-18 fighter force continue to degrade," the report says.

Prof. Bronk warns that Canada's CF-18 force "is not credible in a NATO context against many of the higher-end mission sets" that pilots are currently being trained for, both from a mission readiness and equipment perspective.

He cites NATO's Article 5, the collective defence pact at the heart of the alliance, which says that an attack against one member is considered as an attack against all. Such an attack could trigger military action by NATO countries against the aggressor.

"The CF-18 as a 40 year old aircraft, and the limited set of pilot competency achievable within the flying hours available, greatly limit what Canadian Hornet crews would be able to achieve against a peer adversary in a NATO Article Five contingency," Prof. Bronk writes.

The report says Canada is wasting flying time and money training for high-risk scenarios that "no NATO commander would ever allocate RCAF CF-18s to."

Prof. Bronk recommends that Canada refocus its aircraft training and resources on missions for which it "could credibly be employed," such as NORAD air interceptions, NATO air policing and other scenarios.

Prof. Bronk declined to comment on his work, saying in an e-mailed statement that it was "for official use only."

Conservative defence critic James Bezan blamed Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's government for what he called the "state of disrepair" of the **Canadian Armed Forces**. He cited the years it took the government to procure a replacement for the CF-18s, and what he described as billions in the defence budget that have gone unspent. The government calls this "lapsed spending." It is often caused by procurement delays.

He accused Mr. Trudeau of "playing politics" with fighter jets by promising in his 2015 election platform not to buy F-35s, then running a selection process that years later ended in a decision to buy F-35s.

Andrea Charron, director of the Centre for Defence and Security Studies at the University of Manitoba, said the report has identified key problems for Canada's air force. "But I am not certain it is as stark as painted," she said.

She noted that Chief of the Defence Staff Wayne Eyre "has been very upfront that recruitment and retention is a focus area" in the military.

She said the report may nevertheless galvanize concern. "The shock value, however, may help expedite changes," she said.

Daniel Le Bouthillier, head of media relations at National Defence, said in a statement that the department and the military "are aware of the many issues highlighted" by Prof. Bronk and "are actively engaged, alongside our DND colleagues, in looking into these issues, and seeking solutions to them."

But he said the air force "remains able to meet our NORAD commitments for the defence of Canada and the security of North American airspace."

David Perry, president of the Canadian Global Affairs Institute, said he is concerned about the ability of the air force to keep its fighter force intact until Canada begins to receive F-35s.

He said the military should look at setting up an air national guard, as the U.S. has, to ensure trained pilots are ready for the new fighters. "It's time to get creative, because this is a really serious situation," he said.

Steven Chase: Sr. Parliamentary Reporter; Robert Fife: Ottawa Bureau Chief; Globe & Mail, 28 October 2023



# Canadian Airmen Airwomen

## James Francis “Stocky”/”Eddie” Edwards

**A** fighter pilot and ace, Edwards was born 5 June 1921 in Saskatchewan and died in 2022. He was credited with shooting down 19 enemy aircraft and another 7 “probables” during the Second World War. He also destroyed 12 aircraft and about 200 vehicles on the ground. His actual total was likely higher, as Edwards was unconcerned with claiming victories. He fought in

commissioned flight sergeant to wing commander, he demonstrated a different type of competence. Stocky was a take-charge kind of guy. After receiving his RCAF pilot wings in 1941, Stocky was posted to RAF 94 Squadron in North Africa. In March, he downed an enemy fighter during his first operational mission. Within the year, he had six combat victories, had been commissioned, and had been awarded both the Distinguished Flying Medal and the Distinguished Flying Cross, by then serving as a flight commander with RAF 260 Squadron



By early 1943, Eddie (now) was given command of RAF 274 Squadron, flying Spitfires, first in Italy and later at RAF Station Hornchurch in England. His 23rd birthday was on the eve of D-Day. After an instructional tour in Canada, flying Anson and Crane trainers, Stocky was sent back to England, where he was promoted to wing commander, commanding RCAF 127 Wing until the end of hostilities.

By the war’s end, Edwards had flown an incredible 373 combat missions, shooting down 19 enemy aircraft, of which 18 were fighters, without being shot down himself.

When asked about his stunning wartime rise through the ranks, and about whether he felt well prepared to assume leadership, Edwards’ answer was: “Oh, I wanted to lead! I was schooling myself to be a senior officer. Why? To save lives.” While he admired the RCAF’s flight training, he had nothing positive to say about its combat tactics or leadership, and felt that his squadron was losing pilots unnecessarily. He stepped forward to lead, often increasing his exposure to harm, simply because he knew that it was the right thing to do. Asked whether he received any formal leadership training from the Air Force, he replied, “None.”

the North African, Italian and North-West Europe campaigns — a rare record for an Allied pilot. Until his death, Edwards was likely the top surviving fighter pilot in the Commonwealth. Stocky Edwards didn’t distinguish himself in war merely as a crack shot with keen eyesight. Progressing from a non-

After the war, Edwards stayed in the RCAF, flying Vampire, CF-100 and Sabre fighters, retiring in 1972.