

CHAPTER 5

The First Ladies

or
Status at last!

Most of the hard-working group of originals who saw us through the early days on Owen Street have already been mentioned but the presence of the ladies of the Wing was becoming a must as far as operating in an efficient, yet cost effective manner. Their contribution was first acknowledged *officially* during the presidency of John Holder when the Ladies Auxiliary of the Wing became a fact.

You will note that I do not use the word 'Chartered'. I was discussing this with John Holder at the Veterans' Club of Barrie dinner meeting last Thursday (27th February 1997) and it was pointed out that the actual Ladies Charter issued by National is dated much later than the original group. Our belief is that in those still early years of the Association there was no provision at National level to charter such a group and that each Wing was, so to speak, on its own. Just to confirm I phoned Bob Tracy in Ottawa (this thing is beginning to cost!) And he confirmed the above. A couple of other interesting 'way back when' points were also discussed and will be incorporated later at the proper place.

Back to the ladies.

I am going to record the actual names of that first LA in that every one of these ladies had a part in the move to the new quarters and in the life of the Wing as it got established with a wider concept of operations. These operations were expanding to include light refreshments, equipping the kitchen and operating same, decorating the hall for dances and also taking part in any and all of the social aspects of the Wing. Friday and Saturday socials and dances were becoming the norm but help was also needed on the organizational side of these events and the ladies were beginning to make their impact. The original Ladies Auxiliary of 441 Wing was as follows

| | |
|----------------------|----------------|
| President | Mary Woodstock |
| Vice President | Betty Holder |
| Secretary | Betty Shier |
| Treasurer | Jean Hughes |

The First Ladies

These ladies were the Executive Officers of the group and were assisted by the following members of the Wing, all of whom were inducted as Associate Members into the Association once the mechanics of this was approved at Ottawa level. They were Phyllis Mitchell, Mildred Lynch, Eileen Corkan, Ellen Brennan, Mary Midwood, Leora Westgarth-Taylor, Kay Desjarlais, Mildred Baker, Dorothy Humphrey, Terry Hamilton, Marg. Daley and Audrey Strang.

Some of these ladies served for many years and, in due course, when the rules of the Association were widened, became full Regular Members. That, however, was many years in the future and there was no provision for that status in these early years. As in all organizations of this nature personnel changed and people would serve for a time (the same applied to the men) and for personal reasons such as family commitments, work commitments, moves from the area and so on they would drop out, some to return later on a purely social basis. Several, however, served for many years and their names will re-appear in this narrative as time passes. Four names should be noted at this time as they will show up as the Wing develops. They are Mildred Lynch and Phyllis Mitchell, both of whom served the Wing and the Association for many years until their deaths. Two names listed, Leora Westgarth-Taylor and Terry Hamilton have maintained continuous active service to the Wing from before the formation of the official LA, right through until the present and are still serving. (This is being written on the 3rd March 1997). Figure it out: their service dates back to the Owen Street and early High Street days and they have earned many commendations - more of this later.

Many more of the ladies who entered the life of the Wing as time went by will be acknowledged as the history unfolds but a final comment is in order concerning those featured above. Most had several things in common - they were Air Force in their thinking and orientation, most were veterans' wives and many had in a sense served - living on bases and in PMQs, going through posting upheavals and so on.

As a group they took on just about any job that was needed from floor cleaning and polishing to dish washing. They served food and drinks, saw to decorating the premises for whatever function was current and seemingly, no task was beneath them.

Their dedication in the early years set a tremendously high standard for those who would follow in their footsteps. Whether they be living or gone from amongst us, the present membership should never forget these 'The First Ladies' who placed the status of the Wing ladies and their endeavours in the present on an unassailable bedrock foundation.



13 LADIES OF THE WING
LEFT - TERRY HAMILTON, RIGHT - LESLEY HUGHES

Interlude #3

Discrimination? Never!

**AKA
Only in the Air Force?**

All good organizations must have a constitution, and so it was with our original Ladies Auxiliary formed, (as already recorded) in the early 1960 era. It has been handed to me by one of those ladies (Isabel Kelly) . She unearthed it while looking for other background history material for this epic work. The following is directly from the sheet given to me. I doubt if the present day Ladies would accept this as written. There seems to be a slight clash between the word '*democratic*' in the text and the entire wording of the section entitled '*privileges*'. Sure changed for the better hasn't it?.

CONSTITUTION

**R.C.A.F. ASSOCIATION LADIES AUXILIARY
441 Kempenfeldt Wing**

PRINCIPLES AND POLICY

The auxiliary shall be democratic, non-sectarian, and shall not be affiliated or connected directly or indirectly with any political party or organization.

The auxiliary will stand for loyalty to the reigning sovereign and the Dominion of Canada, for the principles of democratic and orderly government and for a rational and united spirit.

AIMS AND OBJECTS

To assist the R.C.A.F. Association (441) Wing in their projects, wherever possible.

FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the Ladies Auxiliary shall end on June 30th each year.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership shall be open to the following:

1. Wives of ex-members of the R.C.A.F. who are members of the Association in good standing
2. Wives of members of the R.C.A.F. who were killed in action.
3. Wives of associate members shall be eligible for associate membership in the Auxiliary.
4. Women who served as members of the Commonwealth Air Forces, and who are regular members in the R.C.A.F. Association, shall not be required to pay dues to the Auxiliary.

AUXILIARY EXECUTIVES

President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Conveners of all committees. The election of officers will be held April of each year. Officers are allowed to hold the same office consecutively.

DUES

One (\$1.00) dollar per year, subject to change if necessary.

PRIVILEGES

1. The Ladies Auxiliary is privileged to use the R.C.A.F. Association rooms for their meetings and special occasions, as passed by the R.C.A.F. Association.
2. Ladies Auxiliary are not privileged to enter the #441 Wing, unescorted except on Auxiliary meeting nights or functions where the Auxiliary are operating.

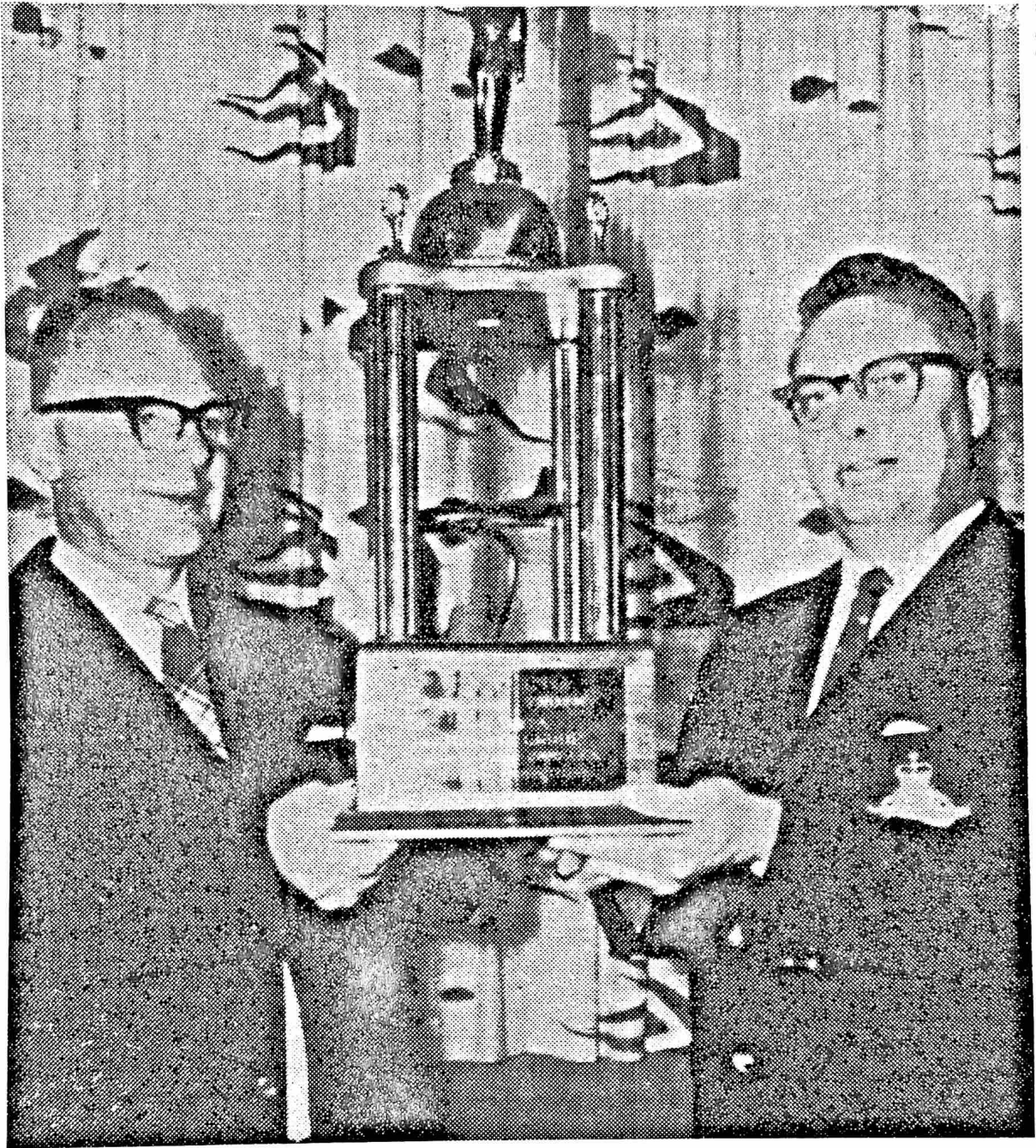
MEETING NIGHT

General meeting of the Ladies Auxiliary R.C.A.F. Association #441 Wing will be held on the third Tuesday of every month.

PROJECTS

At the end of the fiscal year, the ladies auxiliary will donate a sum of money, by cheque, the said amount coinciding with the treasurer's yearly report, to be voted and passed by the Auxiliary members, at a general meeting, to the R.C.A.F. Association (#441) Wing), unless the money is designated for some other purpose by the members of #441 Wing.

THE BARRIE EXAMINER, SATURDAY, MAY 25, 1968



NOMINATED 'MAN-OF-THE-YEAR'

Del Kelly, president of 441 Wing, Royal Canadian Air Force Association, has been nominated "man - of - the - year" for the Ontario group of RCAF associations. Mr.

Kelly, right, displays the trophy with Ken Mitchell, regional vice - president. The national convention in Kitchener in October will choose the national man - of - the - year.

This marked the second time the Barrie wing has received the nomination. The wing has also received a general proficiency award for the second year in a row. (Examiner photo)

14 MAN OF THE YEAR, DEL KELLY (R)
WITH KEN MITCHELL, CENTRAL REGION V.P.

CHAPTER 6

Consolidation Years

AKA

Hoping to make ends meet!

The nice thing about writing this history is that it is getting known that it is indeed being written. Members are beginning to take an interest and mention or produce items of interest. Also coincidences are happening which might have had no significance except a pleasant half an hour of 'meet again' except that now it has a place here for the record.

In support of this I walked into the Wing last Friday (this is March 1997 remember) and as soon as I got into the Astra lounge, a somewhat familiar man stood up and greeted me. I had to admit that while the face was known (but changed by the years) the name was beyond me. That was soon changed when Herb Lawrence brought me to my senses. We hadn't met for at least ten years. Herb's name has never been off the membership board and in the early High Street days he was a good committee member. History-wise, he helped the Newmarket Wing get going but moved away and when he did, that unit went under, and that was before we started 441. Herb has held a Life Membership since 1955 and proudly showed me the card. He has moved back to the area (Wasaga Beach) and will get over to visit, hopefully for the GM this month. He was known to both Terry Hamilton and Lesley Hughes, both of whom were, (don't say 'as usual') on duty at the time. A pleasant visit and he helped confirm some of my early memories already recorded here.

And another nostalgic touch: The Barrie Examiner, dated May 28, 1968, has come to hand. It contains a photograph of Ken Mitchell as then Regional VP presenting Wing President Del Kelly with the Ontario Group Man of the Year trophy for that year.

The time frame now is from the 1967 election, which put Clifford Westgarth-Taylor into the Presidency, (he will be known as 'Westy' from now on because he liked it that way), and he was followed by Cliff Scott, me (again) and Norman Bowen. These years, were as the heading implies, 'consolidation' years. The programs and early sponsorships were in place and the main duties of these Presidents was to keep the Wing financially solvent and ensure the continuity of our programs and social events. This is not forgetting the items that were becoming standard, such as the April 1st RCAF birthday (now known as The Air Force Birthday), November 11th, and of course the social events connected with St Patrick's and Robbie Burns among others. The

Consolidation Years

Christmas parties for the children and the popular New Year's Eve dances were always a well attended series of landmarks during the years.

Just about every President in this period of years and also through much of the 1980's had one major problem and that was in the area of finance. History tells us that Westy, for example, stepped into a deficit money-wise. He had to steer a very careful course and promote, through his various committees, a tight purse string philosophy; which he did and ended his term ahead of the game. One 'thank you' that he did not need, however, during his time in office was the first of a series of heart attacks that a few short years later resulted in his premature death.

One of the major and greatly enjoyed projects started during Westy's term was the first of the Game Dinners. It is quite inevitable that an area such as Barrie being on the doorstep of Muskoka, and for that matter Lake Simcoe with a wide variety of fish, has access to game of various descriptions plus such exotics as morrells, fern tops etc and etc. It follows also that among our members were a percentage of *Mighty hunters and Successful Fishermen* if, of course, the stories of their prowess in these fields is to be believed. It all came to a head when someone (or maybe it was more than one person) implied that some of the tales told were perhaps just a little bit , what's the word? Exaggerated! Anyway, the expression 'put up or ...' was heard and that triggered at least four annual game dinners that raised a fair sum of money for the Wing as, of course, the doubters, as well as anyone else participating, had to pay their way. The dinners lasted through my second term and only ceased when the various warriors had succeeded in killing or catching absolutely *all* available game in the area of Southern Ontario. (This *must* be true because one of them told me so and didn't even crack a smile when he said it). I'm going to wrap up this chapter with a slightly tongue in cheek but nonetheless true description of a dinner which one of the attendees (and a doubter) attended and described as follows.

FAIR GAME

Who remembers the game dinners at 14 High?.....I'm sure I do....

Wing members - them went ahuntin', afishin', agatherin' and abakin' bar-b-qing and some times arguin' about the size of their efforts during any one year.

Then the suggestion was made - *prove it!* Well, they did! Between Del Kelly, Cliff Scott, Peter Noy, Frank Humphries, Donna Blogg and Oh! so many others. This is the sort of menu we enjoyed, (you only got one plate, knife fork and spoon - but lots of paper napkins!). And you only got enough to properly savour the dish as you went up for each different course so that all could sample the goodies. It went like this...

CHOICE OF:

APPETIZERS

Morrell Soup, Clam Chowder, then perhaps or if preferred, a *glass of juice* such as apple/tomato/pineapple, maybe even blueberry and (whoops, I almost forgot) how about *Turtle Soup* one year.

ENTREES

Then there was a sampling of fish. Over the years some that I remember were *Whitefish, Lake Trout, Perch, Catfish* and when some of our members had been seeing Canada, we had some *Salmon* and one year...*Lobster*. Remember that you only got a sampling of each so that you could get the flavour. O.K. - back with the plate for a sampling of perhaps *Venison, Wild Duck* with mushrooms, *Bear, Beaver Tail, Possum* (not me), *Moose* and every year there was *Rabbit* pie a la Donna Blogg (YUM). Have I forgotten any? I'll be told (I'm sure of that)!! Naturally there had to be some veggies, things like yams, parsnips, beets - you name it!

Naturally a choice of *tossed salad or Caesar*, if preferred, or both. With that went a full serving of *Roast Prime Rib of Beef, Yorkshire Pudding* and all the fixings.

AND THEN THE CLINCHERS!

DESSERTS

About now, even the best were asking for "just a small helping, please" but then there were desserts. (This is where the ladies came through). *Pumpkin, Apple, Blueberry, Blackberry* and, over the years there had to be others that I've forgotten because by then I was too full for desserts!

Good Friends, Good Food, Good Days and Long Ago!

Consolidation Years

“RATTLER”



14 HIGH STREET

BARRIE, ONTARIO

15 THE RATTLER

Interlude #4

AKA 'RATTLER' For January 1968

I think that Isabel Kelly had this among some of the memorabilia she found after house cleaning a couple of years back. Because it presents a very vivid picture of those days and events, this Interlude will reproduce, almost intact, the first three pages with only telephone numbers edited out to save space. Here is how it looked, the text as it was written.

**Royal Canadian Air Force Association Wing 441
14 High Street, Barrie, Ontario**

**GENERAL MEETING
Wednesday, January 10th - 8 p.m.**

(Bar open 7 p.m. - under LCBO regulations)



EXECUTIVE FOR 1967-68²

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| President | Del Kelly (Minor Hockey) |
| Immediate Past President | Ken Mitchell (Publicity) |
| Vice-President | Cliff Scott (Property) |
| Secretary | C. Westgarth-Taylor |
| Treasurer | J. Tom Gates |

2

Editor's note:- As of 1997 Ken Mitchell and Alex Strang are both living in Barrie. The whereabouts of Tom Gates, Jim Baker and Harvey Clark are not known. All the others listed and who served the Wing so well have gone from us to their final resting places.

Interlude #4

COMMITTEE DIRECTORY

Max Matetiché (Membership)

Doug Murray (Air Cadets)

Harvey Clark (Air Cadets)

Ray McFadden (Bingo)

Phyllis Mitchell (President Ladies Auxiliary)

Alex Strang (Air Cadets)

Jim Baker (Air Cadets)

Frank Ladoucer (Air Cadets)

Jim Roe (Hospital Visitation)

Bill Blogg (Club Manager)



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

After a hectic Fall and Christmas season at the Wing, I am sure that most of the members are looking forward to a quiet time for a few weeks. The Hall has been rented many times for Christmas parties, etc. and the Ladies have been working their little fingers to the bone preparing meals (and making money). The efforts of President Phyllis Mitchell and her Women's Auxiliary on behalf of the Wing is certainly appreciated by the members,

Bill Blogg, our Club Manager, as well as many of our hard- working members deserve a lot of praise for a job well done.

Frank Ladoucer's Children's Christmas Party was a smashing success and his clowns were asked to present their skit for the A.N.A.F. Christmas Party, which they did.

Many letters have been received by the Wing, thanking us for the pleasant visits and little gifts that Jim Rowe takes on his nightly trip to the hospital to visit the sick.

Harry Young, Commanding Officer of the Air Cadet Squadron, gave a report on the Squadron operation at the last General Meeting. Our Wing can be proud to sponsor such a fine group of Officers and Cadets..Alex Strang, Chairman of our Air Cadet Committee, is looking forward to one of the best years the Squadron has ever had.

Cliff Scott, Chairman of the Property Committee, expects the kitchen alterations to be completed by the end of January.

Our Bingo Committee, headed by Chairman Ray McFadden, reports a very successful season, and we will be able to meet all our financial responsibilities with the Air Cadets and Minor Hockey.

Bill Castell, Ways and Means Chairman has been doing an excellent job during the year with his Draws on fishing tackle, barbecue and a rifle. Next on the agenda is a transistor radio.

Membership Chairman, Max Matetiché reports an increase in membership over last year of thirty members. This gives our pet project for the year a big boost in the right direction. Our aim is sixty new members for the year, so we are halfway to our objective.

You Can Help Sign up a New Member as Your Project for the Wing this Year!



LADIES' AUXILIARY

The President's New Year's Message

It has been a very busy and rewarding (when we get paid) season. Lots of work - but somehow lots of fun - especially watching dishes being washed at 2:30 a.m. Never mind - it's one way Frank (dish-pan hands) Harrison and Ken (turkey-neck) Mitchell get their hands clean. Ray (set-em-up, tear-em-down) McFadden and Tom (anything-anytime) Gates have been a real help and the efforts of the other men who have assisted is very much appreciated.

A special thanks to Anna Mae and Collie Sutherland who spent all day Friday and half the night helping to supply the music for our December 30th Dance, (home-made beans)- jolly good!

Well, this is an Auxiliary report and as both President and Food Convenor, I have to say a sincere "thanks" to so many. I can't name everyone for lack of space, but must say that we could not have had the successful season so far without Effie McFadden, Lil Latimer, Ada Gates, Lottie (have you heard the latest?) Woodstock, Lollie Westgarth-Taylor, Anna Mae Sutherland, Lola Carter, Isabel Kelly and so many others. Thanks Girls!

Since we all had colds, so much for that.

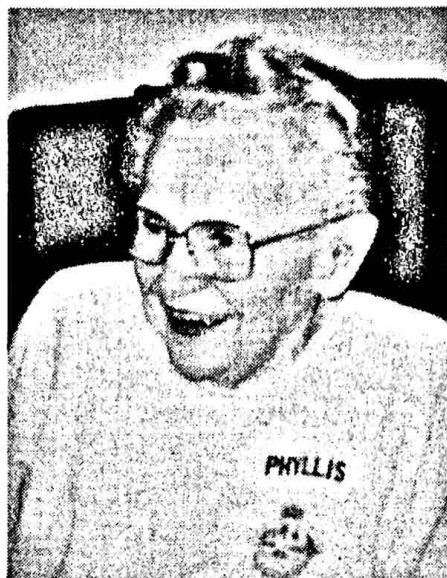
Our sympathy to Donna Blogg, who has a cracked rib, sustained when she slipped a disc and hit a chair on the way down. Donna, anyone in the Air Force knows about 'gravity'. Why didn't you ask?

And finally, from the Ladies to the Men --"A Very Happy And Prosperous New Year".

Did you know that Jack Oates has donated wallpaper for our kitchen? Now we are looking for men to donate their time to get it up. Thanks, Jack! I will thank the others later.

Phyllis Mitchell, President

Interlude #4



16 PHYLLIS MITCHELL



ODDS AND ENDS

Peter Noy offered to punch the President on the nose again, but held off because the President had a sore back.

Sid Justin is going to quit drinking.

Angus MacGillivray did quit drinking.

Effie McFadden has a live chicken in her basement, also in her bedroom, Ray is too chicken to kill the chicken.

Keith Weidendorf won't let his wife Ollie visit the Club while he is away in Germany.

Barb Belyea is beginning to like fat men, at least she is getting curious.

Did you see Westy's daughter, "Sweet Sixteen".

I wish I was 17 (and thinner again).

Cliff Scott keeps two driver's licenses, just in case they take one away from him.

SPEED AND THE AUTOMOBILE

Speed helps bring things closer together - Like this world and the next.

There was a lot more in that issue of the Rattler but it was not germane to this history and therefore I cut the cackle at that point. As your scribe, I lived through that period and had personal acquaintance with all those involved. I am entitling the next chapter "The End of a Decade, the 1960s". I shall try, in a few words to give you a background and history (strictly from a Wing point of view) of many of the names mentioned in the Rattler printed just about 'word for word' above.

It will be a privilege for me to do this and thereafter the sixties are closed and the 'savage seventies' with all the momentous accomplishments of the seventies decade will be recorded to the best of your historian's ability.

A toast to the 1960 years then...
GONE-BUT NEVER FORGOTTEN

CHAPTER 7

The End of a Decade

The 1960's

As promised in the preceding chapter, I am closing out the 1960 decade with a few words about the names that were listed in the 1967/68 Christmas 'Rattler'. Some among you met and knew some of them, but the names of others are totally strange to new members and, as has already been stated, many of them have died. Some among them achieved prominence in the 1970 decade and later, and they will not be mentioned here for they will take their proper place as the history develops.

Because Cliff Scott succeeded Westy Taylor for the 1968-69 year we'll put him first. Cliff lived at Minets Point with his wife Alice and family. While not a Charter member he joined the Wing shortly after it's formation and served on various committees. The accident at the Kingston Convention incapacitated him for several months but he came back and was elected as President for the years listed. Cliff was our first (and for many years only) *Life Member*. He achieved this distinction by accepting the challenge from National that any member recruiting fifty regular members in a specified year would receive the award. Cliff did so and I well remember taking the award to him at the RVH. He was having a second stay because of the injuries so we cheered him up. In the 1970's Cliff and family moved to Owen Sound and we did not see much of him after that. He kept his membership current with us, however, until his death in The Soldier's Memorial Hospital in Orillia in the early 1990's. His wife, Alice, who was an active L.A. member, died within a day of Cliff.

Another colourful character was Max Matetiche. Max was active in many facets of Wing life but slowed down after his wife predeceased him. He did, however, keep visiting and for a while was the mainstay of our Nevada sales (by the amount he bought). Max became a Million Dollar Lottery prize winner but got into quite a hassle as he had his name on the ticket but it was split verbally, apparently, with someone else and the resultant 'spuddle' took a while to settle. Doug Murray and Jim Baker served the Wing faithfully and well during their time with us. Their main interest was on the Air Cadet side. Donna and Bill Blogg were greatly loved and hard working members of the Wing. Donna predeceased Bill by some years but both were active in the sixties and in Bill's case into the eighties. Bill served as our Club Manager on High Street for a number of years and was active with the Wing until he also passed on.

441 (Huron) Wing History

As you can read in the Auxiliary report, some other soon to be familiar names began to surface. Among them Collie and Anna Mae Sutherland. To give a short background at this point, Collie, (aka Major) W.C. Sutherland is a retired officer from the Royal Canadian Engineers. They have a son in the Air Force and he and Anna Mae became regular members a long time ago. Their joint contributions to the Wing through the Ladies' Auxiliary, in Anna Mae's case, and Collie through the Executive and Board in a variety of jobs such as Secretary, Bar Officer, Magazine Editor, etc. have, between



17 ANNA MAE AND COLLIE
SUTHERLAND

them, contributed years of fine effort to many Presidents and the general membership. For over ten years, Anna Mae became known as our '*Happy Booker*' as she efficiently ran our rental program and went out of her way, not only to just rent the facilities, but to personally meet the renters on many occasions and make sure that the hall was just the way they wanted to have it. Her input and participation in hall decorations for Christmas, New Year's and other annual festive occasions were often in the range of 'over and above the call'. It is a pleasure to record that both Collie and Anna Mae, well into their eighties, still visit the Wing several times a week and also attend the formal as well as informal 'do's' such as the Friday Night "poor men's meals" (which they are not!).

It would be an oversight indeed to leave the sixties decade without a special word about Centennial Year 1967. The Wing participated in a big way, with planning starting about twelve months prior to the events described. The words were *Air Show*...and it was. I headed up a committee that was one of the best the Wing has ever formed. The results of the effort had Barrie close its schools for the day, packed the entire area round the bay and for that matter almost any open space with any view at all

The End of a Decade

of the inner bay area. The draw, of course, was not just an air show. It starred the never-to-be-forgotten aerobatic team of the RCAF, none other than *The Centennaires*. They topped up their spectacular program with a day full of static displays, fly pasts, Jet Assisted Take Off (JATO) demonstrations from the surface of the Bay, until nature stepped in and The Centennaires came to us through, it seemed, two of the most spectacular rainbows arcing over toward Orillia and framing the bay with the centre of the arc, seemingly over Big Bay Point. Their landing lights came on while heading directly for the end of the bay area, then occurred over half an hour of the most spectacular formation and individual flying ever seen by most of the public present. I am going to quote verbatim from the next issue of 'Rattler' put out within days of the Air show. This is what the Wing President had to say:

Our Air Show was a stupendous success, easily the most spectacular Centennial project the City of Barrie will see this year. The weather was a bit of a problem, with thunder and rain on Thursday night (Air Show was Friday). When I walked into the Club Rooms Thursday evening, I found one of our members (Cliff), who insists he is an atheist, on his hands and knees praying, (comments edited out here), but his final statement was :“Atheist, hell, I'm not taking any chances”!

Seriously, I would like to thank the following people for their terrific efforts in producing the Air Show: The Ladies' Auxiliary, Air Cadets, Ken Mitchell, Cliff Scott, Frank Harris, Len Pledger, George Maltarp, Walter Carruthers, Jim Baker, Alex Strang, Graham Davis, Keith Weidendorf, Ed Lewis, Max Matetich, Everett Shelswell, 'Pop' Woodstock, Hal Smith, Paul Hellyer and Del Kelly.

DEL

I can assure you that the Paul Hellyer named above was not, repeat not, *the* one! As for the others, well, time has had its fling and I am only sure of Alex, Everett and myself being still with us.

Finally. That's the fifties and the sixties as far as my research goes and my memory holds. I have probably missed out on a few of the intrepid pioneers and some will appear soon - a good example is in the person of our hardworking and loyal Lesley (Mother to some) Hughes. Her name will crop up again.

And That's it for the Venture into the 1970's

CHAPTER 8

Spanning a Gap

PLAY BALL AND DROP THE PUCK

The title tells the story. During the sixties and well into the seventies, the Wing was very much involved with sports in Barrie. Two areas especially received our support both in money as far as we were able and also, importantly, in manpower for coaching etc. Ray Heaslip has already been mentioned as being active on the executive and he got the Wing interested when the Midget Juvenile Hockey league came into being. This league was formed in Barrie to fill the void caused when players became too old to participate in the more junior age Barrie Minor Hockey league.

Working with the late Paul Thanasse, Ray actively worked in the forming and coaching of the Silver Fox team and assisting the Midget Juvenile league in general.



18 THE HOCKEY CREST

The Wing team had a successful series of seasons topping the league on at least two occasions, one of these being the 1965/66 season for which a blazer badge was 'struck' and a sample of which is with this history in facsimile.

In due course the Wing, being in its (quite normal) cash shortage position, was forced to look at the budget and since its paramount responsibility was with the Air Cadet Squadron they regretfully had to pull out of financial support of the League. It is good to report that alternative sponsors were found, however, and the Midget Juvenile was absorbed by the Barrie Minor Hockey organization. Wing members active with the team during the Wing support years apart from Ray and Paul were Matt Connolly, Bill Taylor and Harold Lane, and others whose names have now been lost to posterity.

Spanning a Gap

In talking with Ray (who is still working actively with the Legion in Barrie), he mentioned that his adherence to the hockey scene plus his pressures of home and work had placed so many time constraints on him that his activities with the Association had to let up. He did, however, stress that the League was not just 'hockey' because, after all, not all could become professionals.

Citizenship was stressed as well as fair play and Ray knows of many players in the league that went on to happy and successfully productive lives in marriage and careers aided by the advice and counselling involved with their League participation.

To mention two of those: first-Danny Maloney went on to the Toronto Maple Leafs and continued a successful career. Danny returned to Barrie, is now connected with Real Estate and I understand, owns a local restaurant. The second is known to many of us in the person of Jack Lynch with the Tourism Bureau. Jack often pops up on the news media promoting our fair city and is very good at doing so. I asked him for some background on his participation and his reply is so informative of the Aims and Objects of the Association that, with his permission, I will produce it verbatim:

Dear Ken,

Further to our conversation of today, I played in the Air Force sponsored hockey league on Monday evenings in the 1960's. I am not entirely sure of the years. I believe it was from 1966-67 season to 1968-69. The Air Force sponsorship league filled a void allowing Wing recreational hockey (house league play) for boys in the Midget and Juvenile age groups (approx 15-19). I believe there were 6 teams, about 120 boys in the league. It was open to all who wished to play regardless of skill level. This league provided me with a much needed season of hockey as when I was 15, I was not good enough to play for the cities "rep" team which meant I was allowed to fall back and at least play in the Air Force league. In other words, it kept me playing. Fortunately due to my desire and opportunities such as this league, I further developed and went on to play Jr. B. Hockey in Owen Sound, followed by two years of Jr. A. In Oshawa and an 8 Year National Hockey League career in Pittsburgh, Detroit and Washington.

The league kept boys in their late teens, with limited skill levels playing hockey. This league was vitally important to all hockey loving boys in this city.

Thanks for allowing me to relive some "fond memories".

Sincerely,
Jack Lynch

I do not think that there is anything to add to the foregoing. All Wing members concerned pitched in and did their share and the young people were the ones that reaped the benefit.

Now, as the title inferred, we were also involved with a Wing softball team. The league this time was the Veterans Slow Pitch League and here I fell back for information on our present Board of Director, Al Hodgson. Al, in turn, arranged a meeting with Ray Pollard and a recap of the years took place. Between them they have some interesting photos, at least one of which (the winning All Stars), composed of young men connected in one way or the other with the Wing, is hanging in the Roundel (Games) room to this day. The initial cadre when the team was formed contained many names that are still connected with the Wing and as such, it is worth recording them with a comment to follow as to how the years have treated the roster. Players and coaching staff in the 1978 list were Kerry Kelly, Stu Miller, David Mitchell, Don Hubbert, Mike Trainer, Skilley Trainer, Chuck Dibley, Bill Walker, Dave Reid, Gerry Hand, Barrie Boisclair and finally Allen Hodgson. Of this small group it is sad to report that Kerry Kelly and Mike Trainer both died young by misadventure and Jerry Hand succumbed to cancer some fifteen years ago.



19 BASEBALL STARS

BACK ROW: KERRY KELLY, ALLEN HODGSON, JERRY
HAND, DAVID REID, DAVID MITCHELL, DONALD HUBBARD
FRONT ROW: MIKE TRAYNOR, BILL ? , SCOTT MILLER,
MIKE TRAINOR ABSENT: CHUCK DIBLEY

Spanning a Gap

Many were the Wing members who turned out on sunny Saturday afternoons at St. Paul's corners on #11 South to enjoy some good contests culminating with the Silver Fox team winning the League Championship in 1981. Leo Berard was active during these years, as was Chuck Dibley, both in coaching capacities. Al Hodgson and Ray Pollard carried their full share in the training and organisation of our Wing team. One final note: Scott Miller went on to a Commission in the RCAF, (later, of course, Air Command). Scott has served over twenty years, currently holding the rank of Major and is flying 'choppers' from Comox, BC, in an Air Sea Rescue Squadron.

As always there has to be a final 'final' note and several of the Wing team and management were chosen for the League "all star" team in 1982. They were: Catcher, Chuck Dibley; Pitcher, David Mitchell; First Base: Dave Reid; Rover, Don Hubbard; Left Field, Scott Miller; and the Assistant Coach was Al Hodgson.

To all the persons who were involved with the above two leagues in any capacity: coaching, playing or (just as so many of us dodos had to do), just enjoying the sporting times you gave us:

Thank You
You Brought Credit to 441 (Huronian) Wing

CHAPTER 9

The "Up Swing/Down Swing" Decade

The 1970's

To say that the 1970s were 'upsy downy' is all too true as the story unfolds. The start was definitely *up*. Two (by now familiar) names were the beginning Presidents in the persons of myself, Ken Mitchell, and Del Kelly. We were followed by Norman Bowen in the natural progression through the executive 'chairs'.

So let's 'literally' walk into the second decade (which little play on words) introduces the *October 1970 Coloramma Walkathon*. The history of this is interesting because it coincides with the beginning of the Barrie population explosion (17500 on the highway population signs in 1953 and 80,000 in 1977 with 120,000 projected for 2010)!

Anyway, the Barrie Arena next to the Central Collegiate was bursting at the seams with activities. An extension of ice surface was a must and the City went to the public to finance the newly constructed Eastview Arena on Blake St. (next to the Eastview High School). Our Wing contribution, organized by the then Second Vice-President Norman Bowen, was the above-named Coloramma Walkathon which became a major fundraising reality. The idea caught on in Barrie with the public signing up for any pledge amount they could get *per mile* for 25 miles. The response was amazing, and that put Mayor Archer and President Ken on the spot, they had to get their pledges too - and did - your President finished the walk and turned in over \$800.00 in pledges.

The route took the 'pack' eastward to Kempenfeldt, wound around the east end, then Blake St., west across Anne and onto Edgehill drive, Hwy.90 and the 25th side road and up, up the long and hilly road to Hwy 27 where (thankfully) we turned homeward to walk (stagger?) down Little's Hill and the Lakeshore finish line.

The organizational work to man this event, provide the check points and all the details like St John's Ambulance support and police help, etc., plus the actual cash raised by the Wing members who walked (and there were quite a lot), earned a permanent wall plaque placed in the new arena (which is there today). Norman Bowen earned all the plaudits that he received. He deserved thanks for the bonus he could not control, which was a glorious fall day in full October plumage, a day such as Barrie can put on to equal the best on the world stage!

As a note, perhaps a little sad, much of the countryside through which we travelled is now built up or under construction. City limits have been widened, townships surrounding the City have been eliminated and amalgamated. Innisfil Township is no

CITY NEWS

THE BARRIE EXAMINER, THURSDAY, MARCH 9, 1972 —



CHAMPLAIN, portrayed by Dave Stubbs, first vice-president of The Royal Canadian Air Force Association, adjusts

the moccasin on one of the "Princesses" who will be taking an active part in the con-

vention in May. FROM LEFT: Mr. Stubbs, Phyllis Mitchell, Isabel Kelly.

20 'PRINCESSES', L-R DAVE STUBBS, PHYLLIS MITCHELL, ISABEL KELLY

longer as rural as it was when we walked through it so long ago.

So into September with another and bigger Battle of Britain parade and then one of the now very popular game dinners. Which brings us to the 408 Peterborough Ontario Group Convention and all that transpired. It must be understood that before *any* convention can be held by a host Wing, a variety of factors must be considered by that Wing. For example, local facilities are needed for the accommodation of several hundred people, both for sleeping, eating and also meetings over a three day span of time. Also, a major space facility is required for the Saturday formal dinner and dance that highlights every convention. Then the Wing must make sure that it has the manpower for the various committees that will operate over a time span of better than

two years.

The final hurdle is to go up against other Wings who are also bidding and a full delegate vote makes the final decision. 441 Wing did its homework and Del Kelly's idea of an Étienne Brulé / Huronia theme caught on. Anna Mae Sutherland was approached and cheerfully took on the task of making Del's Brulé costume (it was truly a very authentic reproduction) and also made dresses for the four Indian ladies (Squaw type) which, with a few feathers to finish the effect, allowed three of them to burn poor old Étienne at the stake with appropriate gyrations of a dance-type to emphasize that 441 was ready to be the next host in 1972.

That evolved a simple slogan that became the theme of the next two years. It was, simply, *"It's Barrie For You in '72"*. So a thank you went to Joyce Stubbs, Isabel Kelly, Phyllis Mitchell and Terry Hamilton for their costume participation and the Wing settled down to all the hard work of organizing the program to frame the official Ontario Group needs and program. The actual 1972 Convention, the first hosted by the Wing, went well under the chairmanship of Dave Stubbs, and an outline of the events would be in order. It is an impossible task, due to the time lapse, to name the committee heads and members of the Wing who contributed. Suffice it to say that the various groups coordinated well with regard to hotel accommodations, registrations and the thousand and one details that became necessary. Dave Stubbs made a point when I was discussing this convention a couple of days ago. He went to the interim Hamilton Convention which preceded ours a year later than Peterborough and sat in on their planning sessions. He learned a lot from this and it undoubtedly, in his opinion, helped the organization of our own.

The main Convention Hotel was the Holiday Inn for accommodations and we leased the Barrie Curling Club on Essa Road for the meetings (upstairs) and the various meals in the downstairs lounge. The Ladies Program took in visits to points of local interest and, of course, the Malls on the Bayfield 'strip'. Erling Brunstad came through as our lead Chef. There is no question that the delegates had a good convention and enjoyable time. The Barrie Examiner came through with some good pre-convention publicity in the issue of March 9th, 1972, and the picture and caption shows the theme of the convention. Our coverage from the Examiner of those days was good as the other pictures depict. There is also an interesting note in some casual jottings made by then President Del Kelly that the Ontario Government sponsored the Saturday evening gala dinner preceding the Ball.

So much for that convention, there will be two others to talk about as the tale unfolds so let's get back to the Wing itself. Del Kelly had a strong Board of Directors behind him, (still known as an executive as we had not yet incorporated). For the record they are listed as Del, President and backing him in various capacities were Norman Bowen, 1st Vice; myself, Ken Mitchell, Immediate Past President; supported by Paul

The Up Swing / Down Swing Decade

Thanasse, Hockey; Collie Sutherland, Treasurer; Dave Stubbs, Bingo; Len Douglas, Air Cadet Sponsoring Committee Chair; with Art Harrison, Sid Woodward on general committee.

As you can see, the Wing had ventured into Bingo games and they were not only well attended by the public but also placed us in a better position for sponsoring our Air Cadets, sports teams and other projects such as the Salvation Army, etc. A name is also on that Executive that will be around for many years with, however, a gap for a while when teaching at Georgian College. I refer to Len Douglas. Len has given me some notes and a brief summary is in order.

Len Douglas served a long career with the RCAF, including war service, and retired in 1969, joining the Wing in that year. Len was active on the Game Dinner setups and also on one or more of the car rallies that the Wing enjoyed. (I suspect that the rising spiral of gas prices were a main factor in the latter being cancelled). Len will surface again as the history develops.

A word here about the staffing of the bar and the maintenance of the 14 High Street quarters. Our hours were as limited then as they are now with the 16:00 hrs opening from Monday to Thursdays (closing 01:00 hrs) and with Fridays and Saturdays 11:00 hrs to 01:00 hrs. Frank Humphries was a volunteer for some time and later was paid. He was supported by quite a number of volunteer staff. All the later paid staff were also supported by volunteers in order to cover the sometimes long hours and, when there were functions, the need for multiple staff. The men did the necessary furniture shifting when required and the ladies were the moppers, cleaners and dusters as needed. They did a fine job. Mike Ladoucer, Ron Kelly and Bill Blogg also came on strength at various periods in our 14 High Street days.

So the Wing continued to go forward, sometimes on a financial shoe string but somehow always coming through. Many fine evening dances were enjoyed, formal parade events were well attended and our relationships with the City and the other Service Clubs as well as the Legion and the newly-formed Army, Navy and Air Force Association, (ANAF) Unit 365 were cordial. The ANAF unit held its first meeting (which was also its Charter Night) in our quarters at 14 High Street and subsequently moved to their own rented quarters in the theatre district area of Dunlop Street West. Correction here, that Charter Night was held at 14 High Street. but the date, confirmed by long time President of the ANAF, Neil MacKinnon, was 1966.

It would, of course, be nice to say that there was always harmony and agreement among members and that disagreements, both personal and concerning the programs taken on by the Wing and the Auxiliary, but the fact is that human nature and free thinking do not cater to eternal peace and harmony. So, there were disagreements from time to time and the odd person would take umbrage and quit for a time. The odd thing was that, after a cooling off period, the faces tended to reappear. As for the

programs, the fact remains that the good ones stayed and became part of our fabric, the others, who perhaps tried for a while, tended to die a natural death. The solid core of the Wing tended to hang on and our major losses were from movement away caused by employment, family reasons or, as the years went by, death.

This has been a long chapter. It sets the stage for the mid and ending years of the 1970 decade and there is much to record. It is time to close this chapter.

CHAPTER 10

The Calm Before the Storm

The title about sums up the George Wood presidential years of the mid-1970's. We first made the acquaintance of George when he was appointed as our Liaison Officer from RCAF Base Borden. He became official, in a sense, as one of the guest speakers at the 1972 Convention and an Examiner picture of the time shows him being presented with a plaque by President Del supported by Norman Bowen. The photo is somewhat unique in that it was taken just before George retired from the active force (ten days before to be exact) and also portrays Norm Bowen. I add that, as it was only a few short years later that Norman was killed in a car accident in the Kitchener area, there are not many photos of him available.

The key note of the speech that George gave to the Convention, was the role of the Liaison Officer: "help the Association members keep in touch with the Service and to

RCAFA Is Alive And Healthy



DEL KELLY, left, president of 441 (Huron) Wing presents liaison officer Major George Wood of CFB Sault Ste. Marie with a set of RCAFA Association cufflinks and tie bar after he

spoke to the Ontario group convention here Saturday. Major Wood, who retires in 10 days, urged the association members to make use of liaison

officers to keep in touch with the service and to help with their programs. At right is Norm Boyer of 441 Wing. (Examiner Photos)

21 RCAFA IS ALIVE AND HEALTHY



COSTUMES GIVE HURONIA FLAVOR

Indian costumes gave a Huronia flavor to the registration for the RCAFA Ontario zone annual meeting, held this year

at the Barrie Curling Club. Signing in is Jim Gillespie of Kingston, and behind the desk are 441 (Huron) Wing recep-

tionists Joyce Stubbs, Isobel Kelly and Terry Hamilton. (Examiner Photo)

22 REGISTRATION WITH COSTUME FLAVOUR

L-R JIM GILLESPIE OF KINGSTON, JOYCE STUBBS, ISOBEL KELLY, AND TERRY HAMILTON

The Calm Before the Storm



RCAFA HURONIA WING WINS NATIONAL AWARD

The Royal Canadian Air Force Association 441 (Huron) Wing has been awarded an RCAFA Association Award for the most unique silver anniversary project in Canada.

The wing's annual art competition for students was judged to be the best of 18 projects submitted.

FROM LEFT: George Wood,

president of 441 Wing, who received the award at the RCAFA national convention in Moncton this month. Ken Mitchell, past president and co-

ordinator of the art competition, and Kerry Kelly of Lount Street, one of the winners in the competition, held in February. (Examiner Photo)

23 RCAFA AWARD FOR MOST UNIQUE SILVER ANNIVERSARY PROJECT

help with the (Wing) programs". George did a great job in fulfilling these liaison duties before, as you will see, going on from there in the Association itself.

At this time, a listing of the Executive that served with George would be in order as they all served well in the cataclysmic events that were still over the horizon. The executive were: 1st Vice, Dave Stubbs; 2nd Vice, Frank Ladoucer; Secretary, Ken Mitchell; Treasurer, Ken Bradley; Immediate Past President of course, was Norm Bowen. Executive Council were: Dan Inglis, Gord Ruland, (also President of Ontario Group), Ross Kennedy, Jim Folliott, Harry Wickstead, Nan Wickstead, Paul Schembri, George Leitch. For the Ladies Auxiliary, President Miriam Wood (George's wife), Mae Leitch, Terry Hamilton, Lesley Hughes, Anna Mae Sutherland, Ethel Kennedy, and Lorraine McMaster. During George's presidency the Wing prospered. All the usual annual events were honoured as the years wore on and all our financial commitments were met. Anna Mae Sutherland resumed her place as booker for the rentals, a job she held for many years thereafter, and filled it with a dedication worth pure gold to the Wing. It was during this period, also, that a team formed which in 1997 is very much with us. This was the tie-up between Terry Hamilton and Les Hughes (dubbed "Mother" by some) when they became a volunteer bar team. They continued to operate through thick and thin with Les taking various stints as the Wing Bar Manager and Terry taking on a

long term responsibility as head of the Sick Committee. Lorraine McMaster later became President of the Auxiliary and involved her husband, Ray, to the extent that he will appear on stage in the President's chair in due course, as will George Leitch (also listed above). It is interesting in that although both became 'Regular' members in due course, they started as Associates with our Wing and the Association.

One of the achievements of George Wood's term of office as President was the continuation of the Art Competition in the Barrie schools, which was started by Norman Bowen. George appointed me to chair the committee for the event in early 1974. At the Moncton National Convention that year, George accepted an award on behalf of the Wing for *The Most Unique Silver Anniversary Project* in Canada. The Barrie Examiner news photograph depicts George presenting the plaque to Kerry Kelly, one of the prize



GUS BALDERER receives his 25-year membership pin in the Royal Canadian Air Force Association awarded by Len Douglas, executive

member of 441 wing of the RCAFA, from Barrie. Mr. Douglas made the presentation on behalf of the wing's president, George Wood.

24 PRESENTATION OF 25 YEAR PIN TO GUS BALDERER AWARDED BY LEN DOUGLAS

The Calm Before the Storm

winners in the competition, and myself, for display in the Wing quarters.

Back to President George. Before assuming the presidency, he had served the mandatory minimum (plus) on the General Board and after his term he assumed the larger responsibilities of Regional Vice-President for this area as part of Ontario Group. He then became President of Ontario Group, stepped up to National in that capacity and in due course finished off with the home-run position as President Of The Royal Canadian Air Force Association of Canada. This meant that when we went to Victoria (a very successful convention from 441 Wing point of view), we had the pleasure of having one of our own in the President's Chair for the event. A final memory of George's years with us was his setting up of the first Wing Battle of Britain parade, using the Cenotaph at Memorial Square in Barrie. It is particularly memorable in that the four or five of us who attended were in torrential rain and any parade, as such, was out of the question.

It is only proper to congratulate George on his long and dedicated career with the Association. This career was not without setbacks in that he lost his wife, Miriam, to cancer a few short years later. Some time after that George remarried and moved to British Columbia to be closer to his family. (Any excuse - it's a wonderful stretch of countryside on Vancouver Island)

So - our congratulations to you George and "Lang May Yer Lum Reek".

In mid 1975, George passed the gavel to Frank Ladoucer. Frank had his own way about him and a couple of people who were on the opposition at the election were overheard to say "he can't do it, he hasn't got the experience". Boy! Were they to be proven to be in major error!

CHAPTER 11

Fire, Fire, Down Below!

Fire! Fire! Fire down below
So fetch a bucket of water boys,
There's fire down below...

(Sea shanty circa 1600 AD)

OBITUARY OCT. 27, 1975

Funeral services held Saturday for 'Westy' Westgarth-Taylor

Funeral services were held Saturday for Clifford (Westy) Westgarth-Taylor, 52, who died Thursday at the Royal Victoria Hospital.

Mr. Westgarth-Taylor is survived by his wife, Leora Nelson, children, Brian, Barrie; Terry, Bramalea; and Cathrine Atkinson, London, Ont.

He also has two brothers, Norman and Eric, living in England.

Born in Cambridge, England, Mr. Westgarth-Taylor moved to Barrie following the Second World War after serving in the Royal Air Force.

During his almost 30 years in the city, he was active in the community, participating in a number of organizations.

Interested in the development of youth, he coached for the Barrie Legion's minor hockey league, taught at the Air Cadet League, was a member of the Radio Club at Georgian College and a leader for the Boy Scouts organization.

Mr. Westgarth-Taylor was very active in the formation of the Simcoe County Emergency Measures Organization. He and his wife, as qualified radio communication instructors, worked with the group.

With his work, Mr. Westgarth-Taylor was appointed and approved by the Emergency Measures Control Committee, headed by the county warden and city mayors, as the Radio Communications Officer.

Mr. Westgarth-Taylor was a member of the Barrie branch of the Royal Canadian Legion and the Royal Canadian Air Force Association.

Employed by Canadian General Electric in Barrie, he was in a management position, preparing manuals on small appliances.

Mr. Westgarth-Taylor was buried at Barrie Union Cemetery after the service at St. George's Anglican Church. The body was resting at Steckley Funeral Home on Worsley Street.

25 CLIFFORD WESTGARTH-TAYLOR LAID TO REST

Fire, Fire Down Below

Frank Ladoucer's term of office, which was to be extended to a full three years as events turned out and dictated in a way, did not start well. In September, 1975, our Past President Clifford Westgarth-Taylor died suddenly from heart failure. "Westy" was laid to rest in the Union Cemetery and was accorded full military honours as he well deserved. He was known and respected by those who knew him and his memory has been kept alive by the activities within the Wing and the Association of his wife, Leora (Lolly), who soon thereafter became active with the Executive. Leora shortly afterwards assumed the heavy responsibility of Membership Chairperson and has held the demanding job for well over twenty years continuing to this day. She went on to become the first Lady President of the Wing, however this will take its proper place as the history progresses.

Which brings us to December 1975, when the Wing had to face the biggest challenge of its existence.

Like many others, I had gone to work that morning in the Federal Building at the corner of Worsley and Owen on the second floor. I had no sooner arrived and was walking to my desk area when one of the staff, whose desk was at a window facing west said "Ken, you're in the Air Force Club aren't you?" I, of course, answered in the affirmative, and she went on "then you'd better take a look - its on fire!" I did and it was. A big column of black smoke was rising skywards over 14 High Street. I was there in something under five minutes, joining an ever growing crowd as the fire department and related police and other vehicles arrived and went to work.

For all practical purposes, it was too late. As it turned out from the subsequent investigation, wires had shorted between the walls of the staircase leading up to the Wing quarters sometime in the early hours and smoldered away. The arrival of staff at the New Service Cleaners downstairs and the opening of entrance doors on the ground floor supplied the necessary oxygen and air currents for a full scale blaze which, while not damaging the ground floor cleaning operation, completely destroyed the main floor containing the Wing and all its equipment, furnishings, files and memorabilia. I was going to add supplies to that list but there was an exception which we did not know about until later. I know I was not alone in feeling a sense of total frustration as I, and many other Wing members who had got the word, stood and watched hours of work, play and memories literally 'go up in smoke'. Not a nice feeling!

Two days later, the heat had gone from the blaze and in company with Frank and Mike, his son, we had gained a footing on top of the debris on the second floor. We were able to salvage some files that had been in a filing cabinet and consisted of the minutes of past meetings. They were, of course, saturated, but we did hope that some could be dried out and saved (this turned out to be wishful thinking in the long run). They were eventually deep-fixed. Apart from that, a few bent metal chair legs and the ruins of some of the kitchen equipment were apparently the end of the tale. But not quite!

At that time, we were still perforce operating on banquet permits for each time

that we opened, and on the day prior to the fire we had laid in the Friday and Saturday beer allowance. We then discovered that the pile of rubble upon which we were sitting (wondering what came next), was actually concealing the original walk-in fridge behind what had been the bar. With great daring, (everything was in a fairly unstable state), we freed up the door and, lo and behold cases of beer were present and, incredible as it may seem, they were relatively cold. It is up to you, the reader, to guess how the temperature of the brew was established - and we couldn't be seen from the street anyway! The refrigerator contents were discreetly removed and shared out among the working parties a little later, as things started to happen.

What to do now was, of course, the key question and here the initiative passed to Frank Labourer as our President. Remember that, while we were not broke as far as a bank balance was concerned, we certainly did not have much working capital and further, any credit rating we had was certainly in jeopardy. It was an interesting time with some people coming up with "enough is enough" type of remark. Not Frank! Whether he had a few people working with him or whether (as I suspect) he worked on his own, I do not know, but the next move was an Extraordinary General Meeting convened in the upstairs hall of the new Royal Canadian Legion building which Branch 147 had built and opened at Cundles East and St. Vincent Streets. They generously donated the hall for this meeting, which probably had a ninety percent active member turn out.

The meeting, far from being a sink or swim 'wake', turned out to be a positive upswing meeting. Frank had located and wanted approval for a new location. This was a storefront operation located on Broadfoot in the Plaza just off Little Ave. It was small, too small for even a full General Meeting, but it did provide washrooms, a small bar area and a location where we could take stock and regroup. Frank got the support he was seeking and the move to the new quarters was a relatively easy job (as there really wasn't anything to move anyway!)

Somehow the basics for furnishing the new quarters were forthcoming, mostly a conglomerate of chairs and tables donated from basements, but the spirit was great. There was an element of 'making do' in the air and everyone was pulling together and realizing the leadership that Frank had and was contributing. The darts league rejuvenated, electing Dave Mitchell as the chairman that year, the Wing started to open on a daily basis. Although with limited weekday hours it was full time on the weekends within LCBO time parameters.

It was at a General Meeting on 'Little Ave', as the quarters became generally known to us all, that Lenora Westgarth-Taylor made a presentation to the Wing of a new Wing (Association) Banner. The occasion was very formal, with the Colours being presented in memory of her late husband and past President, Clifford Westgarth-Taylor. The Banner is still in use today and is paraded whenever required.

As will be seen from the following listing, Frank had a very strong working

Fire, Fire Down Below

executive behind him. Jim Folliott stepped up to 1st Vice with a new name appearing on the Executive Board for the first time in the person of Ray MacMaster. Ray had been working on Bingos etc. and had also been accorded Regular status for the work he had done. Bill Mutter was listed as Treasurer and I continued as Secretary. Earling Brunstat continued his Wing participation on the Bingo Committee, however it must be pointed out that the new quarters eliminated that activity due to lack of space. R. Eastman and Ross Kennedy came aboard and George Leitch took on Sick and Welfare. The George Leitch referred to is, of course, "Father". His son (another George Leitch) took on the Presidency in due course. Len Morris headed Air Cadet Liaison supporting Captain David Odishaw OC 102 Air Cadet Squadron. Bob Roe appeared for the first time. Bob was a serving Master Corporal at CFB Borden at this time, and was also a future Wing President. The committee was rounded out by Gord Ruland, Paul Schembri, Collie Sutherland (editor of our magazine) which had undergone a name change to *Flight*, and, finally, George Wood who was listed as Budget and Membership.

Records also show the Ladies Auxiliary executive, headed by Lorraine MacMaster, President; Phyllis Mitchell, Vice President; Les Hughes, Treasurer; Judy Shembri, Secretary and Anna Mae Sutherland on (three guesses!) Bookings.

The Wing settled down to a surprisingly busy program, considering the recent trauma, and was further enlivened when Frank Ladoucer acquired a school bus for the Wing. This bus, after due rehabilitation for road safety, was painted in colours and words that clearly indicated that the Barrie Bunch was 'hitting the road'. Lasting for some four to five years, it took parties to conventions and other trips and paid its way. Frank himself was usually the driver on these events, which gave birth to a rather rude song starting with "Our bus driver is..." You take it from there.

Enough for now, a committee was already on the search trail for larger and more permanent quarters and the results of this search will be seen some two years or so down the road.

Interlude #5

The 48th Ontario Group Convention

17th - 19th May 1997

Changes? Yes but not Intent? No change!

This journal has already reported one convention (the 10th Annual), albeit in a somewhat "tongue in the cheek" manner. There will be nothing flippant about this report, time has gone by and I am sure that I speak for the 'old timers' attending the Peterborough Convention a few days ago, that the differences were not only obvious to us but were vital and very significant to the future of our overall organization. This insert is in this position in the history because it will in a sense provide an end and a beginning to the years of work between the status achieved by the year 1980 and the progress and the sometimes struggles of the next seventeen years.

To Peterborough then - sixteen members of 441 attended this Convention and did so in several capacities, ranging from fraternal, three accredited and two who were members of the Ontario Group Executive. Where applicable, the delegates were attended by their respective spouses, who were also members in good standing of the Wing.

428 Peterborough Wing did an outstanding job of hosting this convention and representation from the Ontario Wings was almost 100% with proxies to make up the shortfall in all but one case. With the meetings, hospitality and accommodation all under one roof, in this case the Holiday Inn, the program was well orchestrated and smooth. So, why the heading using the word *change*? To the casual observer, it was still an enthusiastic and happy group of old friends meeting again as in past conventions, *but* there was a difference. Whereas some twenty to thirty years ago, the vast majority of medals worn depicted the decorations and campaign medals of the 1939 to 1945 war years, these now tended to be in the minority with the medals worn reflecting the post-war years to a greater extent. The Canada Defence (CD) medal was very much in evidence, some with one bar depicting 24 years of service and one or two with two bars. Many of these were supported by Peace Keeping decorations and what the 'Old Lags' were seeing, (if they took the time to look and analyse), was the upsurge of younger men who had done full terms of service in the post-war years and had, many of them, a number of years active service with the Royal Canadian Air Force Association now, (and rightly) named the Air Force Association of Canada.

Now for the word '*intent*'. It was obvious as the business sessions progressed that the intent of the original Aims and Objectives of our Association had not changed and that the management of our organisation is, in the main, in younger and less tired

Interlude #5

hands. The comradeship, partying and all round fellowship has not changed greatly. It is perhaps toned down a to certain extent, but the intent and good feeling and above all *pride in our association and appreciation of the work of our executives and leadership* is very apparent.

SO BE IT!

441 (Huron) Wing History



26 RCAF BUILDING (FRONT VIEW)

Interlude #5



27 RCAF BUILDING (BACK VIEW)