

The First 40 Years



A History Of RCAF 441 (Huron) Wing Air Force Association Of Canada

H. Kenneth Mitchell

CHAPTER 12

The Nesting Instinct of the 1980s

" a place to call our own....."

There was no way that the temporary quarters on Broadmore could meet our growing needs as a Wing with an active program. The space available was far too inadequate and the search for permanent quarters was started very shortly after we moved in. The usual annual elections took place and, for the first time, a Wing President was elected who had joined as an Associate member without a service background, but who had proven by his participation and dedication to be qualified as a Regular Member. This was Raymond MacMaster, who had been active on Bingos and as a Board Member on various committees and, of course, had served his time on the Board of Directors.

Ray was succeeded by Milford J. (Bud) Wilds, who had recently retired from the RCAF and actively participated in Wing and Board activities. These two then became our "transition" Presidents. A Search Committee was formed and as far as research confirms, the people involved were Ray MacMaster, Bud Wilds, David Odishaw, George Wood with Frank Ladoucer to round out the team. How the contact or lead was made I have not been able to ascertain but various members were asked to go out and "take a look" at a proposed new building (new to us that is). It was anything *but* new in reality, situated on #90 Highway, outside the city limits in the township of Vespra. Len Douglas, I and others made the trek to inspect the property. The general first impression was not good. Here's why.

The plans of the building describe it as part lots 25 and 26 etc. and it was a fair-sized lot. The building was what was left after a plant, tree, bulb and garden supply retailer had departed. The buildings consisted of a large storage barn with a small business office on the ground floor and one toilet. There were stairs leading to an unfinished and under-insulated (as we found out) attic and, rather unbelievably, the furnace was installed in the front (road end) of this attic, which meant that the oil had to be pumped up to it. The main construction was of aluminum siding with a sloping roof. The rear of the main hall was a truck door large enough for a semi rig to back its end in. However, the toilet worked (at that time). The building had no basement and was constructed on a "floating" concrete slab. This could not be changed as the slab rested on "Menacing" (Minesing) Swamp. We woke up later to the fact that insulation was non-existent as, after all, plants and so on are summer-oriented and insulation is not a problem.

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So much for first impressions. The wheels turned within the committee and somehow a deal was made and the building was ours. I cannot establish clear figures over the time lapse and don't feel that it is necessary to go to the bank (The Royal) for details of so long ago, but the mortgage was apparently about \$300,000.00 and the Wing was the proud owner of new quarters.

Then the fun started!

As far as I can ascertain without records, our Treasurer prior to the move was Mae Leitch with Len Douglas taking over from her as the negotiations progressed. Committees were formed and were going off in various directions to try to make the place acceptable to the only standards that mattered (or so it would seem), the LCBO. This meant washrooms, the conversion of the business office area into a lounge of sorts, provision for a bar and cold storage (if memory is correct there was a cold store area for flowers adjoining the erstwhile office area) and I have been informed that the committee immediately went into a limited catering attempt with hot plates, etc. This apparently did not catch on. The other work began to bear results. One of the main results were the bills which started to come in from many directions. Len Douglas called for some changes. Among these, was the shortening of the opening time with no paid help from 11:00 hrs to 16:00 hrs apart from Fridays and Saturdays. All help would be volunteer. All bills over five (\$5.00) dollars to be cleared through the Treasurer and the issue of some debentures to help keep the bank happy.

There was no provision for a games room, however on the East side of the main building there was an aluminum-roofed area open on all sides. This had been used for open-air potted plant sales. Frank Ladoucer took on this as a project. I think there was a concrete floor in place but he set to with a will and a games room area was constructed and enclosed. Heating ducts were installed where needed and somehow the place became livable. Enough very loyal members continued to patronize the bar which, after all, was our sole source of income and somehow the necessary payments were met. It is my understanding that several members underwrote quite a bit of the bill paying and some masterly chess-playing on the part of our Treasurer got us through somehow. The main hall was now in a shape for some fundraising, and Ray MacMaster spearheaded the restart of bingos on Sunday afternoons, assisted by Jerry Hand and a strong committee. This started to generate a cash flow.

None of this was done overnight. There were a lot of committees working but the main thing noticeable was that, while there were inevitable disagreements and differences as to how, why, when and where, they were solved in the end and no one lost their lives in the process.

As a matter of historical interest, the following observation must be made. One of the main factors influencing the move to this location was the fact that, of course, the main road accessing Base Borden was Hwy #90, and the thinking was that we would attract (and hopefully capture as members) a good influx of RCAF regular force from

base. It did not happen. One or two yes, but the fact remains that we could not compete with the far better facilities in town provided by the ANAF Club. However, a good cadre of our own regular and associate members had caught the spirit underlining our Association. They stayed on and pulled the Wing through this critical period.

This would be a good place to mention one or two of the stalwarts who made contributions, some ongoing and others of immediate use to the Wing. One of these was David Odishaw, retired RCAF. His contribution, apart from the committee work etc., was the prefabrication of a stage to replace the truck door at the rear of the building. The doors were dispensed with and the prefab, constructed outside the rear of the building, was simply manhandled into place. It was as perfect a fit as could be. The stage is still in use today. I have just had contact with David Odishaw with regard to the move to the new quarters and he has 'come through' as the saying goes. His report amused me so much that I will reproduce here just as he wrote it.

The Nesting Instinct of the 1980's

ON STAGE

RCAF Association 441 Wing

Barrie, Ontario

By Capt. (Ret) David Odishaw

After years of training, rehearsals, dreaming of curtain calls my agent informed me there could be a walk on part and if I played my cards right, I may end up doing a little direction.

I reported in on a Saturday to be informed it wasn't what I had hoped for. It was that I would not be on stage, it was I would be building a stage.

The RCAFA had acquired a building on Hwy 90 west of Barrie on the road to Camp Borden. The building was an abandoned flower shop and greenhouse. It was a large barn of a place with an office in front and a covered in space with a lean-to on the east side. The building was framed of two by fours covered with tin, a leaky roof with two thirty-four foot sliding doors at the north end. Much work had been done on the building and now a stage had to be built.

Fortunately or unfortunately the bar was opened and well stocked. (The base of the planning committee). The stage could be placed anywhere in the main structure. Many drawings were made, amended and many measurements were taken and rechecked. The final plan was to remove the doors and build the stage on the north end of the building. More plans and measurements had to be taken and rechecked (with the help of the bartender). At last it was agreed that this was no more than a case of building an air plan, the fuselage being the main building and the stage the tail section. Space did not permit the stage to be built inside as it could not be moved once completed. Back to the bar. The solution would lie in building it outside and flying it on to the main fuselage.

The decision being moved and voted on (it passed) new plans to be made and more measurements, the work began. It took one day to build the stage and one full day to fly it into position. I will not go into the details (I hate to see a grown man cry). The big problem was to get this, (not too stable) three-sided open end box into position. I recall with the help of one WO1 David Leduc and

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some of the 102 Squadron Cadets, the stage was rolled into position on twenty foot poles, car jacks being used to level and square, the main spars were connected.

I will not try to name those who took part. Look up the membership roll of the club, they all had a hand in it.

J. David Odishaw

The foregoing ended a beautiful saga reproduced in its entirety and signed by the author. Thank you from all of us, David!

Another name of note joined the Wing in the late seventies in the person of Ron Osborne. He quickly was appointed Treasurer for awhile, but achieved prominence as a long time editor of our Wing magazine. Under his production and (sometimes with somewhat dubious humour), the Wing won a National award for the magazine's excellence. Ron has continued to serve the Wing on the various Boards, on housing, bar service and the various entertainment and ad hoc committees to the present day. At this time, also, it is only right to mention Collie and Anna Mae Sutherland. Anna Mae continued her fine contribution in bookings for the various weddings and parties, both Wing and private, and also became an expert in directing and doing the annual Christmas and other seasonal decorations. Throughout the years, Collie Sutherland did an efficient and continuing job as secretary. He also won an award for the Wing for his production years of the monthly news magazine. Some other personalities were coming on the scene and contributing to the programs and well-being of all. Among these, George Leitch (the son) serving on the Board, helping on entertainment, as did his wife, May, who worked with the Ladies Auxiliary.

Captain Bill Jack made his presence known at this time and, among other things, became the CO of our 102 Squadron Air Cadets, served as a Board member and on committees. He later became Wing President and more, and will be reported on further as the history progresses. Bill continued to be active both with the RCAF and the Unified Service for quite a number of years until he finally retired in the late 1990's. Other personalities will be mentioned as the story unfolds.

CHAPTER 13

Sunnybrook Saga(s)

“a trial that started and somehow never stopped”

When I was appointed to the Chairmanship of the 1985 Sunnybrook Veterans visit, I little knew what I was getting into in that the Chairmanship continued until the present time. The year 1985 will tell a story from the data on file, the years between will be touched upon and once again a special story developed that will take the 1997 visit into the history of many others beside our Wing.

Let's let the story unfold The Sunnybrook veterans' file was opened by some handwritten notes showing that on 27th February 1985 a visit date was confirmed with the Sunnybrook Hospital and shortly after that the committee headed by Ken Mitchell, and consisting of Alistair Mills, Ray Bartlett and Joe Burke was set up. Ideas began pouring in, Ray Raaflaub suggested a memorial service 'of some sort'. That was shot down as not being the purpose of a visit from disabled and hospitalized vets. Don Daily was to be contacted for possible Air Line hand outs, and utilization of the Pipes and Drums. In all a list of fifteen different ideas, program suggestions and of course the most sensible of all, get the Ladies Auxiliary in on the planning.

Within all the different suggestions was a program including a variety show for nearly an hour partly from our own Wing and with other outside help. A Bingo half an hour with Ray Bartlett as the caller, a supper suitable for easy eating (shepherd's pie) and then the gathering of the Wing members on the day itself for the meet and greet. The gathering took place at about one p.m., but the bus did not arrive until nearly two forty-five p.m. We had not taken into account the time it takes to load up to twenty wheel chairs at each end of the trip. This became a program time fixture and the meal time was set for five p.m. with departure loading to start at six p.m.

However...

Things did not go as scheduled that afternoon and not even the presence of the Base Commander of Base Borden, Colonel Bill Sterne, could control the program. There was a minor glitch overall. About four p.m., with the program well under way, the glitch reared its ugly head. *The Barrie tornado hit the area.* First touching down around Grand Valley, the twisters hopped, skipped and jumped across country.

At the Wing the skies darkened, clouds lowered, hail started and then the lights blew. The twister touched down less than a quarter of a mile to the south of us, continued to cut a swathe across Hwy 400 and the race track area, causing fantastic

house and property destruction and, if my memory is correct, eight deaths before lifting. We could only be thankful in the Wing that it did not hit us. There were over one hundred people in the Wing (including the Vets), and the death toll would have been close to one hundred percent. With its construction, the building would have collapsed, however, we did not know this until later. Our problem was that we had no lights, it was as black as pitch outside and we had a room full of (rather vulnerable) guests. Cars were positioned at the front and rear doors, motors running and headlights on. Most importantly, everyone took the whole situation in stride. There was no panic among our members and staff, the emphasis was on our guests. To reassure, kid along, and get the show back on the road. Which was done to the eternal credit of such stalwarts as all the Auxiliary members, who continued to get out candles, reassure the Vets and try to save the kitchen situation at the same time. Meantime, the men including Bill Jack, the current president, Ray Bartlett, Ron Osborne, Terry Davis and, in fact, everyone kept their cool, manoeuvring cars to have their headlights shine in to lighten up the proceedings, and hold things while Lloyd Sutton departed under a full head of steam and to lay his hand on a portable lighting generator, (which he did). It was driven by gas, I think, and very efficient for what we needed. Lloyd saved the situation and the floor show went back on, the Bingo followed and the meal, pre-heated in the oven, remained edible. The general impression was that we were in a bad storm but it was all temporary (as far as we were concerned) and the show went on.

Ignorance can be bliss! While the dancers were finishing their number, I went outside and realized that something was very, very wrong. A quick check with drivers of cars backed up on Hwy 90, trying to get into Barrie, told a story of disaster in the area. Colonel Sterne, Commander, Base Borden, was alerted and took off for his base in seconds flat. Some of the 102 Air Cadet Squadron who were with us at the time, later rejoined their unit at the Barrie Armouries for what was to have been a special parade night, however the night ended up with them doing a magnificent job (in uniform), of directing traffic in the city, and aiding the police and authorities in a manner that earned them a special commendation later from civil authorities.

Immediately the overall seriousness of the situation was known the Wing, communication with the authorities and the return to Sunnybrook route was rearranged.

To sum up this visit, we have on file a letter that speaks for itself and the pertinent parts are reproduced verbatim. The entire events of that day perhaps influenced the Wing attitude to the Sunnybrook visits which has persisted to this day. The letter follows:

Sunnybrook Sagas

Veterans Services
PO Box 750
Postal Station "K"
Toronto, Ontario M4P 2H3

June 3, 1985

Mr. K. Mitchell
RCAF Club 441 Wing
Hwy. # 90 Box 324
Barrie, Ontario L4M 4T5

Dear Mr. Mitchell:

On behalf of the veterans and the department I would like to commend the members, Club 441 for the outstanding effort that was extended during Friday's tornado. To continue with the festivities in such circumstances was a clear demonstration of the team-work amongst the members, particularly when you must have all been concerned about your own homes, families and friends. I can only pray that if any of you were personally affected by this disaster that God will give you the strength to cope with any loss and grief you may experience.

The traffic southbound was not as bad as anticipated but one sight of the path the tornado blazed was a clear indication of how fortunate we were. Needless to say the hospital was extremely glad to see us home safely.

Please be advised the cost of the charter was \$399.00 and may be payable to the District Hospital Fund - General Donation.

Once again, thank you for your kindness and generosity; May 31st, 1985 has gone down in history.

God bless you all!

(Signed) Cynthia Armour
Recreational Assistant

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The program pattern that was established for the first visit became the format for all the annual visits thereafter. The entertainment changed from year to year with groups such as the Eastview High School Choir and, latterly, the Barrie Butterflies providing the highlights supported by the always popular Bingos and Nevada sales. The Bingo cards, of course, were free with the Wing paying out the prizes for the winners, usually five dollars a game, with larger jackpots from time to time. As some of the Vets were unable to handle their own markers, the Wing members such as Marlene Jack, Crystal Middlemiss, Terry Hamilton, Joan Davies and many others across the years helped out, with the men also helping whenever called upon. The annual visit has always been a strongly member-supported undertaking and there are many high spots. There are far too many to record but one or two can be included.

For instance, two of our visitors in separate wheel chairs became friendly and when they came back again the following year, they were still in the wheel chairs but were husband and wife. Then there was the gentleman, walking without help to the bus, who, when asked if he would be back next year again, replied "Sorry, I can't, I have to see the Queen". When questioned, he explained. He had just turned ninety-nine years of age and had been invited to Buckingham Palace for his 100th birthday. He had accepted, and I understand made the visit.

THE SAGA CONTINUES

On 28th May, 1997, the annual visit took place once again. This time, a total of twenty wheel chairs plus another twenty-five walking (mobile) Vets arrived. The program was as active as ever and well received, as is evidenced by the following letter. The letter was written by the wife of one of the visitors, not herself a resident of Sunnybrook.

Gentlemen,

My husband visited your Mess May 28th on the Legion bus from Sunnybrook Hospital. He has not been a resident of K Wing for very long and this was the first outing which he has attempted.

He had a great time and enjoyed himself immensely thanks to all of you.

It is certainly refreshing to realize that "someone really cares".

Sincerely,
Norma Elms.

Well, that spoke for itself, but unfortunately it is not the end of the end of the story. In the early hours of June 6th, 1997, a fire broke out in the Veterans Wing, at Sunnybrook Hospital, specifically in the Ward housing the wheel chair Vets. As of June 18th, a total of three deaths had been reported. One (with a report of smoke inhalation as the cause) was to one of our Wing visitors, John Davis. We recognized his picture in the paper and recall what a good time he had enjoyed with us. We were able to pinpoint this in that John loved to play the Nevada tickets and both Patricia Mitchell and Isabel Kelly had helped him in his multiple purchases that afternoon. Although John had difficulty communicating verbally, he was able to 'get through' and we know that he had a good day with us.

As of today, the latest report of the incident is that the mattress fire was set by another inmate who was mentally unstable.

Members of the Wing connected to the actual visit felt very badly about this tragedy and a letter reproduced herewith expressed our thoughts.

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Attention Staff and patients of Veterans Wing:

Dear Friends,

We, in 441 Wing, Air Force Association of Canada, wish to express our distress to you over the recent fire in the Veterans Wing. We have followed the news media reports closely and realize the tremendous response and concern shown by the attending staff. We know that everything possible was done to alleviate a traumatic situation.

Please convey to your patients, some fifty of whom visited our Wing Quarters on the Wednesday before the fire, our sincere sympathy for the deaths that occurred and our feelings of great relief that it was no worse.

We know that John and his comrades enjoyed their visit as much as we enjoyed having them visit with us. It is fitting to finish this letter with the Benediction known to all Veterans.

**"They shall grow not old as we who are left grow old
Age shall not weary them nor the years condemn
At the going down of the sun, and in the morning
We shall remember them."**

On behalf of all members of RCAF 441 (Huron) Wing AFAC, I am

**Yours sincerely,
Fraser MacLeod
President**

This has been a long chapter but as it is an integral part of the 441 Wing story, it was necessary to include the full tale of events.

Sunnybrook Sagas



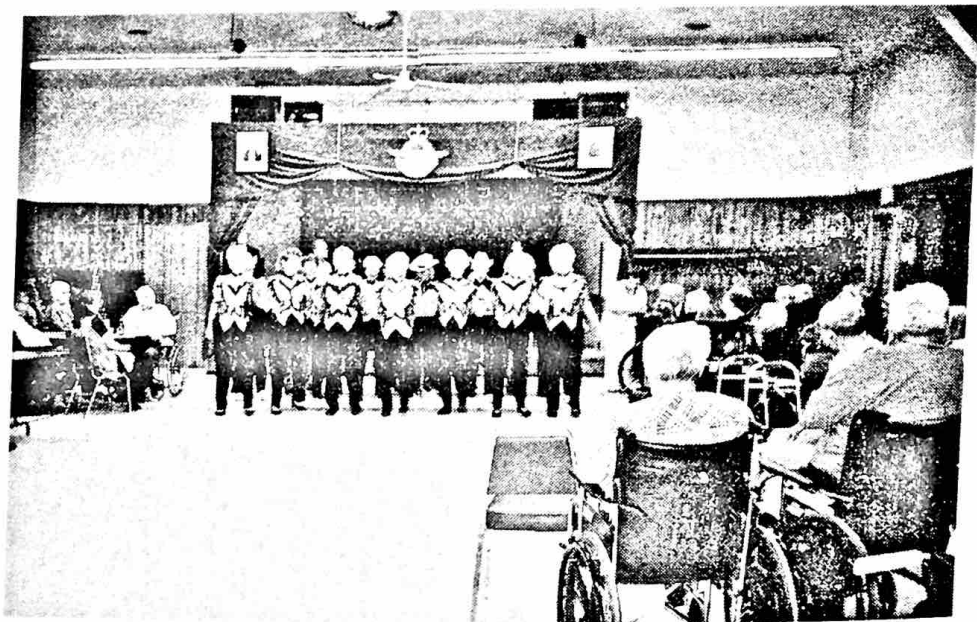
28 WELCOME TO THE SUNNYBROOK VETS, 1997



29 THE ARRIVAL OF THE SUNNYBROOK VETS



30 OUR WORKING TEAM, SUNNYBROOK VETS VISIT 1997



31 THE BARRIE BUTTERFLIES ENTERTAIN

Interlude #6

Bursting Out All Over

Well we were. And somehow, acting on a hint from the building inspection department or maybe the LLBO or at any rate someone, the Wing had to consider its sanitation arrangements. Before going into that however we inherited Dave Stubbs as President for the early eighties. Two things happened. Not that it meant very much but our sanitation which was and is septic tank oriented was very much in need of replacement. Not an easy task with our current financial situation. David however proved equal to the task.

We arrived at a well attended General Meeting and the conduct of normal business until a special order of New Business was tabled. At that point a toilet seat was unveiled above the stage. While this is not a normal procedure (or fixture) common to most General Meetings, an explanation was forthcoming. David outlined the plans for a completely new septic system (the old one was just about done). He also showed the designs and placement to the West of the Wing and then got around to the fact that we had to come up with \$14,000 just to dispose of (*sorry, censored*).

He then indicated that anyone who had the nerve to sign the toilet seat on display was committed to purchase a \$40.00 unit or more in the new venture.

The result was astounding. The shares carried no interest but were to be redeemable on request. Far from a 'no win' situation the membership flocked to the challenge and the deed was not only approved but was put in hand immediately. All pledges were redeemed in due course except for one or two that, even though a year's notice of termination of redemption was given, did not turn them in so that they ended up as a donation to the Wing in point of fact.

Somewhere around this time it was obvious that our overall plumbing, plus kitchen and lounge facilities were not adequate. I made some inquiries through the Bank which had carried our original mortgage (paid off in Bob Roe's era of Presidency). The net result of that was an approach to the next General Meeting for a \$50,000.00 loan to make the place more in line with the times. (It turned out that the \$50,000.00 was short by \$10,000.00 but that also went through without an argument at the next meeting).

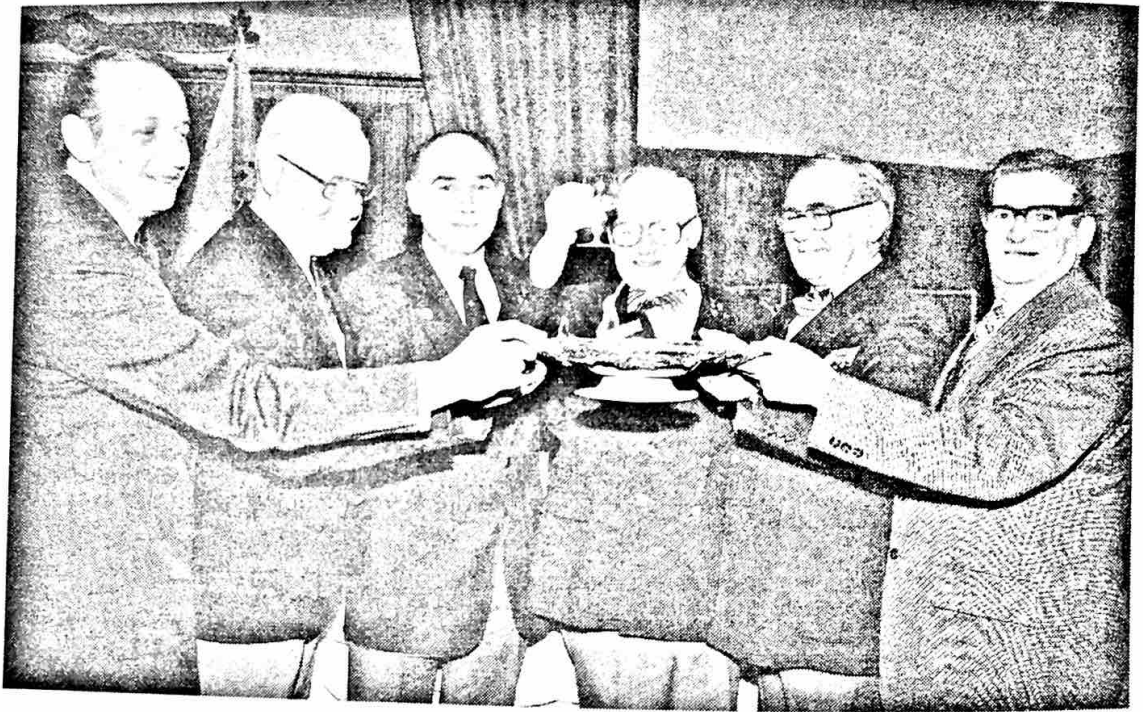
The result of all this was first a new septic system, an enlarged lounge and a more modern front. The kitchen doubled in size and the washrooms became both wheel chair accessible and adequate for our needs. (Nothing like living in the country with a bit of space around you)! The mortgage to achieve these changes was on a ten year basis and the Wing is to be congratulated that the entire debt was cleared in five years only.

The closing thought for this Interlude is that the Mens and Ladies washrooms

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were reversed as to the entrance doors. It was an amusing six months or so before everyone got used to the changes. Old habits die hard!

One other thing - there were no less than ninety-six suggestions as to why the renovations were not being done right. A note was made of all of them and the contributor thanked for his or her interest!



32 TOASTING THE MORTGAGE BURNING, PRESIDENTS AND PAST PRESIDENTS ALL
L-R BOB ROE, CLIFF SCOTT, GEORGE LEITCH, KEN MITCHELL,
DAVE STUBBS, RAY MCMASTER

CHAPTER 14

Convention, Presidents And Stuff

Exciting times as we grew up!

During Dave Stubbs term, yet another task came to the fore. Apparently a glitch developed as to where the proposed Convention was to be held this year. With just six months notice, 441 Barrie became the chosen location. It may be taken for the guidance of all in the future that, while a Group Convention *can* be mounted in six months, it is not enough time to do the job properly. However, every member of the Wing buckled down and, while the arrangements were not ideal, the Wing coped.

For starters, the centre of activities was located in the Barrie Armouries, both for meetings and meals, including the Saturday formal dinner and ball. CFB Borden, through our liaison officer, came through and the Armouries was canopied with parachutes for the Saturday evening event. With the opening of the convention and David in the chair for the welcome, the armouries was packed. After his formal greeting, Dave called on me as Wing Secretary to read some special correspondence. Some time previously a letter had gone from the Wing addressed to Buckingham Palace. The letter, starting with the formal "May it please your Majesty..." conveyed a message of loyalty and respect from the Ontario Group and our Wing with all the Association members meeting on this occasion. The result was a greeting from Her Majesty through her Private Secretary. This followed by God Save Our Gracious Queen and then, of course, Oh Canada, which provided a very special start for the entire Convention.

One or two highlights - the delegates luncheon was catered by Earling Brunstad right at the armouries and he did a spectacular job of home cooking. Our guest speaker was George Wood, at that time a Major, and our liaison officer from CFB Borden. Emcee for the occasion of the dinner and ball was, if David Stubbs memory holds true (I checked with him), Captain Bill Jack, resplendent in Dress Whites, and he did a superb job.

If this chapter seems to 'flip around' there is a reason. In the main it relies on people's memories, and it is a cold hard fact that fifteen plus years does create memory lapses and probably some inaccuracies.

Our next President was George Leitch. He had been active on various committees for some time and worked through the Board of Directors, becoming a Regular member in the process. He involved many others, particularly his wife, Mae, and also Paul and Judy Schembri, and to mention two others- John Rainey and Vic Pedlow. Between them, they set up a series of dances and other Wing events that were

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the best attended for a number of years. This would be a good place to make mention of George S. Leitch, none other than the President's Dad, who became affectionately known to all of us as 'Father George' and was a fixture in the life of the Wing for over a decade. Among other activities, Father George helped on the bar for a while, ran the Nevada sales for several years but his joy was snooker and he became an enthusiastic player on the 441 interclub league. We will never forget his winning of the Silver Cue trophy which was, without question, a high point in his life. In later years Father George's increasing disabilities prevented him from active participation in his favourite sport but he was never far from it and supported the team with his presence whenever possible. Father George was sadly missed after he died but the Wing attendance at his funeral service attested to the affection and respect in which he was held.

Some others who contributed to George Leitch's successful term of office were Trudy Weims on the bar very faithfully, Fred Scaife who took on the contract for cleaning and daily maintenance. He also made up an excellent four at bridge with Ron Osborne battling it out with my wife Phyllis and I over some years on a weekly basis, until Fred felt the tug of the Maritimes and left us to make Pictou his home. This was about the time that Trudy departed to BC. So we started to lose some staunch workers. Included in the list was Anne Bracewell who was Treasurer during the time of George's tenure. During this term, also, a large group attended the Kingston Convention using the Wing Bus. (It made it). That Convention was highlighted by the Snow Birds who put on a spectacular demonstration (as usual) over the St. Lawrence with most of Kingston out to enjoy the spectacle with us.

Two events in 1982 should be mentioned. A formal dance celebrated our 25th Anniversary as the picture shows, and George Penfold was with us as he was on day one.

The other event was the issue from National of the first Official Charter for the Ladies Auxiliary. The names of on the Charter are the history of the Wing itself in many ways. They are, as the framed Charter dated November 20, 1989 in the Wing shows, Phyllis Mitchell, Mildred Lynch, Eileen Corkan, Ella Brennan, Mary Midwood, Leora Westgarth-Taylor, Kay Desjarlais, Mildred Baker, Dorothy Humphrey, Terry Hamilton, Audrey W. Strang, Mary Woodstock, Betty Holder, Betty Shier, and Jean Hughes.

Well, this chapter has touched on some of the events and people who strengthened the Wing and established the solid core for that decade. As with so many organizations, the personnel changes from time to time. People tend to work hard for a while, then family and other responsibilities (or simply moving from the area) seem to crop up and some really fine and enthusiastic workers drop away, some for just a while but others of course proving that distance in our wonderful country is something that can't be overcome.

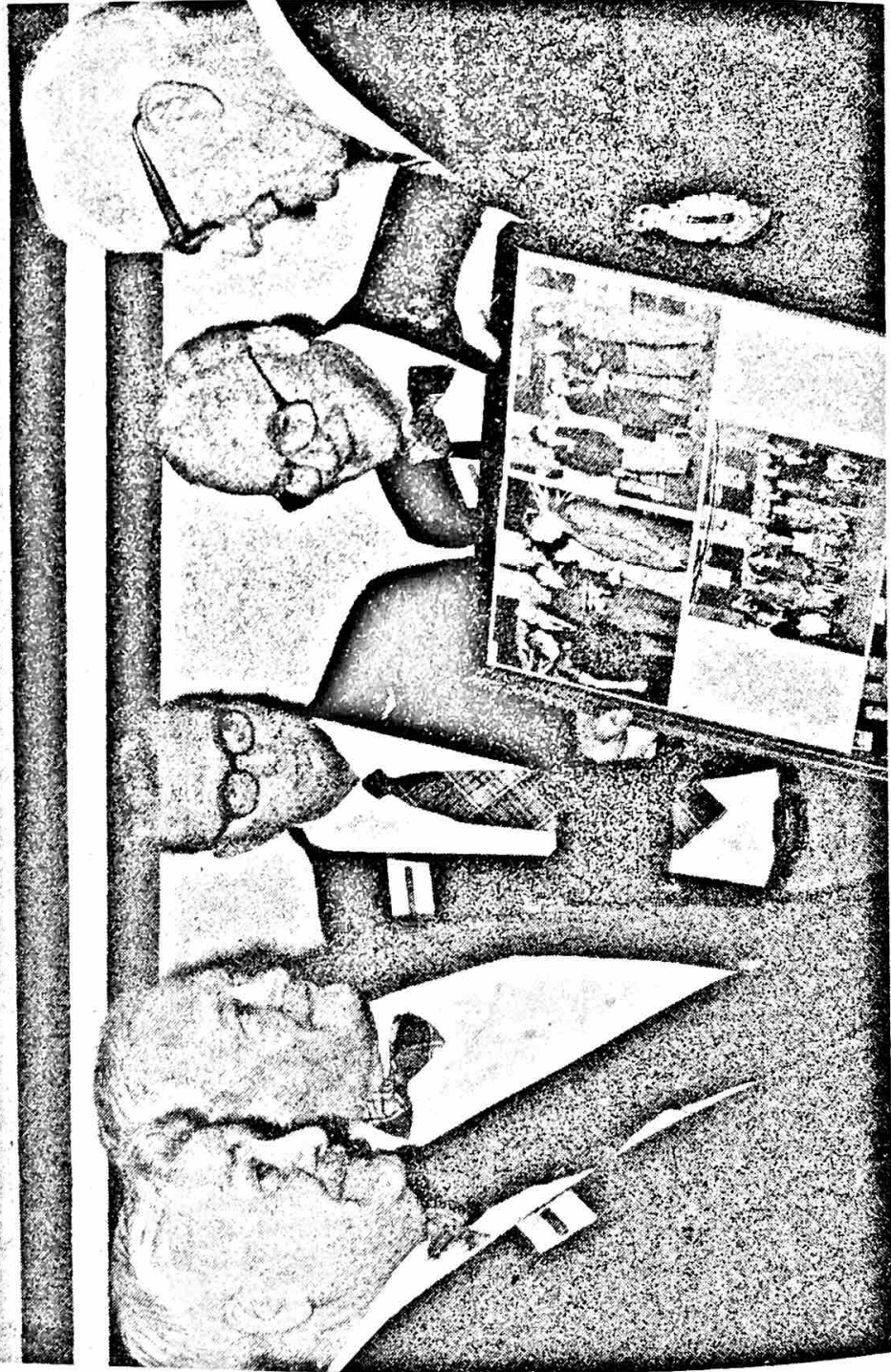
This brings this history into the middle of 1980, ending an era of change and yet

Conventions, Presidents, and Stuff

an era that had an overall stabilizing effect in that the patterns of procedures were being set, the systems and traditions of the Wing were formed and were forming still. With the format for running well established, the Wing was ready for its next President in the person of (Captain) Bill Jack. I asked Bill, who has been active with the Wing ever since as well as going on to the Presidency of Ontario Group (with whom he has just taken on a second term as Treasurer as well as remaining active in Wing affairs), if he could give me some highlights of his presidency. The result was a full report and it deserves its own chapter. It will contain, among other things, the full story of the installation of the T-Bird at the Wing. Bill's story follows.

33 25 YEAR CELEBRATION

L-R FRANK LADOUCEUR, GEORGE PENFOLD, DEL KELLY, KEN MITCHELL,
AND HANK PARTRIDGE



25 years...The 441 Huronia Wing of the Royal Canadian Air Force celebrates its 25th year at the wing's headquarters

on Saturday. From left are Frank Ladouceur, George Penfold, Del Kelly, Ken Mitchell and Hank Partridge. -Banner

CHAPTER 15

A Presidency of Changes And Achievements

Flying it in!

By Bill Jack



34 BILL JACK

1.

Bill Jack joined the RCAFA at 441 (Huron) Wing in 1978 and after sitting as a member of the Board of Directors and Executive of 441Wing for four years, Bill was nominated in 1985 for the position of President. He embarked upon a campaign that disconcerted a few Wing members by going into the election with an active format. Bill sent a letter to all regular members outlining his platform, based on two main planks. Being a relatively "new kid on the block" Bill deemed it appropriate to let the members know of his background, and explain to the membership the direction he would attempt to lead the Wing, if elected.

Being somewhat disenchanted with general meetings that frequently did not terminate until the early hours of the next day, and also being dismayed with a "workshop" atmosphere in the Gallery Lounge, he campaigned on a programme to streamline the conduct of general meetings and outlined a dress code for attire in the various rooms of the Wing, and was successful in the election.

He introduced to the officers of the Wing the concept of not reading the minutes of the preceding executive meeting and previous general meeting at the ensuing general meeting. Instead, the minutes of meetings would be posted on the bulletin board, and those with enough interest to follow meeting activities would have the opportunity to peruse the minutes, and were entitled to ask questions of the content when the secretary made the motion for the adoption of the said minutes.

This tactic led to time savings of ten to fifteen minutes of reading and also stilled the voices of some of the more vocal members who really had no challenge to the content of the minutes, but loved to take the floor and enter into discussion of entries in the minutes with the sole intent of making sure the other members knew that the speaker was in the room. These harangues often lasted an hour or more. The executive endorsed Bill's procedure, and, happy to state, it continues today.

On the subject of dress, some members expressed a dislike to attending the Gallery Lounge for a drink or two and quiet discussions, to find that the lounge was populated by other members, still clad in their work attire, and having the advantage of a head start at the bar, loudly discussing the joys (or problems) of their occupations, and usually with the workshop vocabulary. To Bill, this suppressed opportunities for members to attend for a quiet evening, and he persuaded the elected officers to institute a dress code - specific attire for specific times in specific rooms of the Wing. The majority of Wing members endorsed this standard, however, even today there are still a few objectors. As an aside, the most vocal objector still maintains that the dress code is an attempt to turn the Wing quarters into an Officers' Mess. That idea is incorrect! Amusingly, that person also avers to never having been inside an Officers' Mess, a classic case of firm opinion based on no knowledge.

35 CHRISTMAS CHEER FUND DONATION



Examiner Photo

Christmas Cheer fund gets boost

Members of the 441 Wing of the Royal Canadian Air Force Association, (left to right) Collie Sutherland secretary, Bev Roe-Treasurer and Bill Jack-President, present a cheque for \$1,000 to Salvation Army representative Captain van Duinen for the annual Christmas Kettle Fund.

441 (Huron) Wing History

During Bill's tenure as President, Beth Thompson called him and said there was an opportunity for 441 Wing to participate in a bingo enterprise, newly arrived in the city. With the move from the city to the location on Highway 90, the weekly bingo games, formerly sponsored by the Wing in its previous downtown headquarters had been abandoned, primarily due to the lack of participants, and also the lack of volunteers to run the activity. The arrival of commercially organized bingo games in the area, according to Beth, would provide a large base for the Wing's charitable operations. As an understatement, Bill is not a big fan of bingo. However, with Len Douglas, the Wing's financial adviser, in tow, a meeting was arranged at Bingotown and it was soon decided by the executive and board to pursue the bingo operation. Congratulations to Beth for her foresight! Since participating in this activity for 13 years, 441 Wing has been able to contribute early \$300,000.00 through the Wing's charity committee, collectively, to 102 Squadron Royal Canadian Air Cadets, to a myriad of community benevolent and service organizations, and to individuals in need.

One other facet of Bill's activity in the Wing was to re-establish the annual observance of the Battle of Britain with an annual parade in Barrie in mid-September. He commenced this activity in 1980 when he was the Commanding Officer of the Air Cadet Squadron. In recent years, this annual observance has taken place at CFB Borden, with Wing members and other veterans leading the parade organized by the Canadian Forces School of Aeronautical and Technical Engineering.

Bill also spearheaded the procurement of a T-33 aircraft and a pedestal to decorate the Wing headquarters, and make the Wing's location a landmark in the city. But that's another story!

2.

The Red Knight - 441 Wing's T-33 "Silver Star" Aircraft

In 1981, in a letter written to the Minister of National Defence, a request was made for a surplus aircraft to be made available to the Wing for display purposes. It had been learned that a near-derelict T-33, used by the Explosive Ordinance Demolition School (EOD) at CFB Borden as a training aid was going to be struck from the inventory of the school.

Just about this time, a tragic accident occurred in California, when a former RCAF "Golden Hawk" F-86 Sabre jet crashed through a MacDonald's restaurant during take-off, killing several people and injuring many more. The American Federal Aviation Administration's investigation of the incident established the aircraft, prior to its disposal by the Crown Assets Corporation of Canada, had its main spar intentionally severed. This disabling procedure was established early in the Cold War era, when legislation was passed by the federal government that no Canadian war machine would be released to any organization in an operable condition. This legislation came about when it was earlier learned that a private company was nearly ready to deliver to Cuba a fleet of surplus CF-100's. The Canadian federal government became involved in the periphery of law suits generated by the F-86 crash, and a mandarin in DND, who deemed that these actions were an embarrassment to the department, declared that, in future, no military machine would be made available to the public, for any purpose.

The F-86 had been initially purchased by a private aviation museum owner in Pennsylvania, who later sold it to an enthusiast in California who began the task to make the aircraft flyable. Apparently, during this restoration, no one took note of the fact the main spar was not intact. Unbelievable as it may seem, the F-86 was refurbished, and on its initial test flight the Wings folded upward on take-off, thus converting the aircraft into a lethal missile, causing the horrendous damage to the people and the restaurant upon impact.

Then came a change in government, and the Wing received correspondence from DND asking if there was still an interest in obtaining an aircraft for display. Of course, the interest was still there and the project was handed to Bill Jack, a military pilot, Wing member and currently serving member of the Canadian Forces (Air Element).

The Wing President wanted Bill to form a committee to look after this project, but after some discussion, Bill persuaded the President that he could handle the project on his own, but with recourse to Wing assistance, if required. Bill wasn't, and is not, enamoured with the "committee" approach to undertake projects. Give someone the task, and let that person run with it. He has many times seen projects come to a stall, yet

the appearance of progress is perceived to being made, because the "committee is holding meetings". In many instances, useless meetings are held to impress a supervisor that "people are busy". Another downfall of the committee system is that sometimes committee members go "out on their own" and don't let the committee know what they've done, often implementing a duplication of effort. Specifically, after Bill had contracted with pedestal fabricator to commence construction, a Wing member visited the manufacturer and told him to put the pedestal on hold, as he had a cheaper source of supply for the high pressure pipe used for the upright stand. This cheaper source, however, never materialized, and by the time it became known that the project had been put on hold, nearly three months of inactivity had slipped by.

Bill had received from the Directorate of Supply Requirements and Operations at DND a formal agreement to utilize the T-33 at Borden as a display aircraft on a long term loan basis, with any costs of refurbishing and transportation to be borne by the Wing, provided that an engineered structure was built to hold it, and a valid insurance policy on liability on the aircraft was established. These requirements were met, the necessary signatures to this agreement were obtained and we were off to the races.

The T-33 had originally arrived at Borden as a training aid in the Canadian Forces School of Aeronautical and Ordnance Engineering (CFSAOE) in 1961. The school later became known as Canadian Forces School of Aerospace Technology and Engineering (CFSATE). The aircraft was used to teach technicians at various rank levels the intricacies of jet aircraft servicing, maintenance and repair. In 1980 the aircraft was assumed by the Explosive Ordnance Demolition (EOD) school to teach personnel how to disarm downed aircraft. It had this role until the agreement for loan and display was signed in 1985 and it was moved to CFSATE for its return to displayable status.

The agreement to refurbish specified that any costs would accrue to the Wing, unless CFSATE could reasonably use the carcass as a training aid for students in the refinishing trades. Also allowed would be volunteer, not-on-duty-time labour. It took over a year for the dents and corrosion to be knocked and polished out, and the aircraft to be stripped of all interior equipment and furnishings. In fact, the only interior equipment in the aircraft as it sits on the pedestal today are the two pilot seats, the tops of which can be seen through the canopy.

A well-known fact among service personnel is that the right people can convert "hangar, aircraft to hanger, coal" and vice versa, and also convert "boats, navy to boat, gravy" and, also, vice versa. In both instances one conversion is considerably more advantageous than the other.

The Commandant at CFSATE had informed Bill the T-bird's canopy was cracked, had a couple of small holes and was beginning to craze from long exposure to the elements. 441 Wing could have a new canopy at a cost of more the \$7,000.00! These dollars the Wing didn't have, and we had the option of a plywood-moulded campy

441 (Huron) Wing History

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A Presidency of Changes and Achievements

on a frame built to suit, or a canopy made from a carved log. The choice was ours, and also the colour, silver or black.

Over a beer and a Glen Fiddich, the CFSATE Chief Warrant Officer suggested that Bill get out of the picture re canopy, and all would be fine. Fortunately, Bill had been around long enough to know when to disappear.



36 T-33 HANGING BY CABLE OVER THE WING

At the same time of the refurbishing the Wing's aircraft, technicians at CFB Trenton were preparing a T-33 for display at the RCAF museum on that base. The Trenton aircraft was to be mounted on the ground sitting on its undercarriage. However, this aircraft had no undercarriage. As the Wing aircraft was to be on a pedestal, it didn't need undercarriage. Somehow, the museum had found a T-33 canopy. It was then that some perspicacious senior NCO's got the phones going, and lo! Trenton had wheels and CFSATE had a canopy. And there probably were some other similar "deals" that nobody wants to, or needs to know about.

Transportation of the refurbished aircraft was to be a Wing funded operation. Unless the Wings were removed, it would not be possible to move the aircraft through Angus on a flat-bed trailer, due to two narrow bridges on Highway 90. To bring the aircraft to the Wing through the boondocks would require concession and side road closures as the aircraft progressed towards its destination. It was thought that if the move was made at night, little traffic disruption would occur. These closures would have to be monitored by a team of OPP and their vehicles for which the Wing would have to pay. This seemed the best, and cheapest way, until it was learned that such a move, under Ministry of Transportation and Communications regulations, would have to be made, for safety reasons, during daylight hours. Thus, the costs prohibitively escalated.

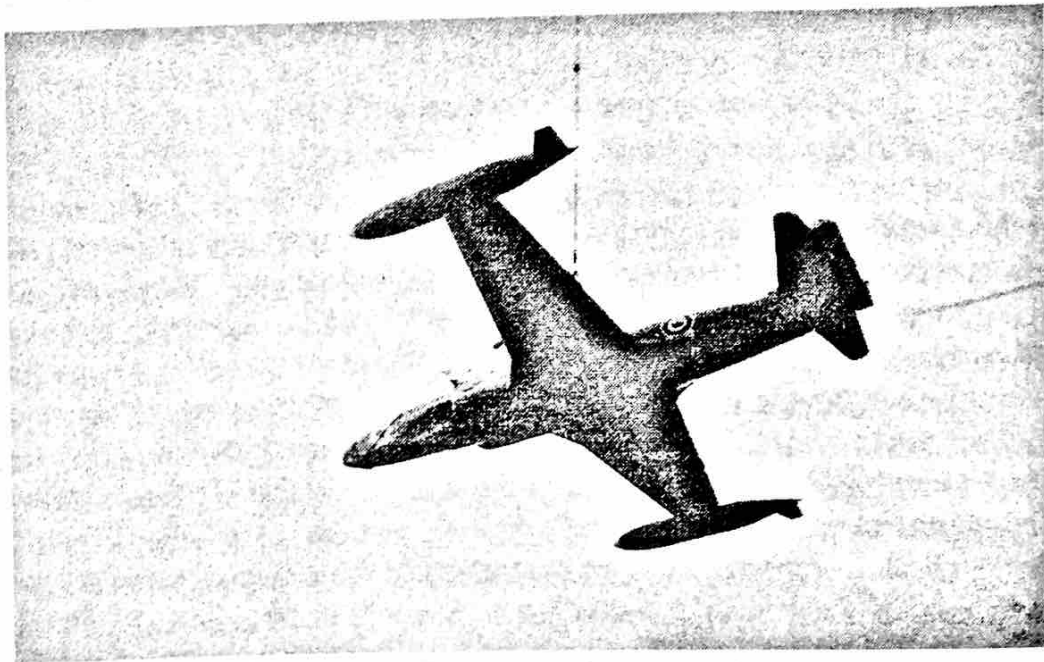
In a casual conversation, the Deputy Base Commander at Borden (also a Wing

441 (Huron) Wing History

member) became aware of this dilemma and volunteered to sign off a message to 10 Tactical Air Group, at Mobile Command Headquarters, requesting that an airlift by helicopter be arranged, as part of a pilot training manoeuvre.

Coincidentally, the museum folk at Trenton had applied for help in moving a CF-100 Voodoo from CFS Mountain View at Trenton. There was also a requirement for an RAF exchange pilot on 450 Squadron, flying Chinook helicopters, to get checked out on the airlift of unusual objects. These requests and requirements got married up, and on October 6, 1989, the Voodoo was moved to Trenton in the morning, and in the afternoon, the Wing's T-33, in Red Knight colours and logo was airlifted from Borden, to be set close to the pedestal, where it was lifted by a donated crane and operator to its proud position at 441 Wing's headquarters. And 450 Squadron had performed the check out of their exchange pilot.

All these events, and some not recorded, were made to happen through the excellent cooperation of many organizations and individuals, and our debt to these fine folk is recorded on the dedication plaques on the aircraft pedestal.



37 T-33 SILVER STAR AIRCRAFT

Erected in Gratitude
To Commemorate the Valiant Deeds of the Members of the
ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE,
COMMONWEALTH AND ALLIED AIR FORCES,
Who, in Times of Conflict, Served to Protect the Freedoms
We Enjoy, and to Pay Tribute to
The Air Command Members of the Canadian Forces
Who Continue to Serve Their Country in Protecting
Those Freedoms that are Our Heritage
“WE WILL REMEMBER THEM”

6 Oct 89

The Acquisition and Erection of this Monument
was Made Possible Through the Assistance and Generosity of
National Defence Headquarters; Canadian Forces Base Borden;
Canadian Forces School of
Aerospace Technology and Engineering;
Barrie Welding and Machine (1974) Ltd;
Peto MacCallum Ltd; FJ Reinders and Associates (Barrie)Ltd;
Cliffside Utility Contractors Ltd;
McCord & Company; High-Wall Concrete Forming Ltd;
Jim Bertram and Sons Inc
450 Transport Helicopter Squadron;
Martin Ready-Mix and Materials Ltd;
Call Service; Simcoe Trophies; Several Wing Members

CHAPTER 15

To Close The '80 Decade

"Back in the saddle again"

1.

In 1987, I was elected President for my third term in the history of the Wing, and the term of office extended (after a hard-fought election in 1989) for an extra year until June 31, 1990. This term of office was to result, with the work and dedication of all Wing members, in an unprecedented series of awards at both the Group and National levels.

At the time of the election certain projects were already in hand. The main one, Project 441 Non-Profit Homes (due to be incorporated shortly thereafter) was already awaiting government approval and funding from both the provincial and federal governments. The original concept of a Veterans' retirement complex was not approved, however the provision of a Non-Profit Housing Unit with rents subsidized and geared to income was approved. A General Meeting of the Wing also approved the concept, particularly as a renting approval committee of Wing members would have a say with The South Simcoe and Barrie Housing Authority in the selection of the initial occupants of the complex.

I approached Wing Commander Bob Middlemiss, DFC, to ask if he would undertake to write up the background of Project 441 for this History, as he had been actively involved with the initial stages of the Project and Bob agreed to do this. His comprehensive writeup will immediately follow Part I of this chapter as he wrote it. Thank you Bob!

Meantime, another event loomed over the horizon. The 30th anniversary of the presentation of our Charter was coming up in February 1988, and a committee went to work on the project, which turned into a gala occasion combining a formal Dinner followed by a Ball. There was a strong turn out of members but the highlight was the centre table of the 'E' set up at which all the Past Presidents and their Ladies were seated. As memory holds, the only ones that could not be there were Jim Lynch (and Millie) (because of distances involved) and Stan Hammond. It must be recorded that this was to be the last gathering for a goodly number of our pioneer Presidents, as during the planning stages for invitations to the 1998 40th Anniversary, the committee found that six of the past presidents at the 1988 occasion have gone from amongst us, leaving us to carry the traditions forward. They are Hank Partridge, Jim Lynch, Del Kelly, Cliff Scott,

To Close the 1980 Decade

Ray McMaster and Frank Ladoucer. In addition, there has been the passing of two of their wives in the persons of Mildred Lynch and Mary Ladoucer. Phyllis Mitchell, Past President of the Ladies Auxiliary, left us in 1993. *Sic transit!*

This anniversary, combined with the Project 441 development, the renovation and extensions to the lounge, washrooms and kitchen areas resulted in an increase in our membership to an all time high of two hundred and five Regular and a corresponding number of Associates. A very active sports program including Golf Tournaments, Crib Tournaments, the Barrie Men's Darts league taking the Saturday afternoons all winter followed by the Mixed league on Monday evenings, plus all the traditional Bobbie Burns, 17th of March, Christmas and New Year's plus rentals for weddings and anniversaries made for a very full program. The awards already mentioned were the result of these activities. In 1990, I was awarded the Group Member of the Year Award and this was followed at the National Convention with the Association Member of the Year Award.

Part 2 of this chapter will be a revival of memories of some of the Wing members who have been active over the years but not necessarily in the spotlight. They represent some of the background that built the Wing and gave it the strength and durability that it has today.

As promised the write up on Project 441 Non-Profit Homes Inc follows.



38 NATIONAL GROUP MEMBER OF THE YEAR AWARD 1990, KEN MITCHELL
AND LEORA WESTGARTH-TAYLOR

The Story of Project 441 non Profit Home Corporation

By

Wing Commander R. . (Bob) Middlemiss, D.F.C.. (Ret'd).



39 BOB MIDDLEMISS

The kernel for a retirement home for veterans was an idea of Ken Mitchell some years ago. This idea was bandied about at the Wing and eventually put before the Wing Executive. The concept appealed to that illustrious group and of course the usual happened, the Executive "volunteered" Ken into doing a feasibility study on Non Profit Housing projects in Ontario. Two other "volunteers?" Bill Jack and Bud Wilds along with Ken Mitchell attended a seminar organized on by the Ontario Ministry of Housing in Toronto. This seminar was to "gen them up" and become experts in the field of Non Profit Housing. They came back to Barrie filled with knowledge and red-tape - "oops" - I mean the steps to be followed as laid down by the Ministry, such as, incorporation, retention of consultants and the myriad of other details normally required by government agencies.

The proposed project was approved by the 441 Wing R.C.A.F.A. Executive and a loan of \$2,000.00 for the initial startup expenses was advanced, this money to be repaid. Of the \$2,000.00 only \$1,000.00 was actually used and this was paid back to the

To Close the 1980 Decade

Wing.

Undaunted, and back in Barrie, the first Executive was formed in 1987 consisting of the following: Ken Mitchell, Bill Jack, Bud Wilds, Ron Merrow, Beth Thompson, Len Douglas and Bob Middlemiss.

In addition to the seven person executive several other 441 Wing members joined the group, these were:- Ray Bartlett, Ron Osborne, Leora Westgarth-Taylor, Brian Westgarth-Taylor and Bill McCurdy.

Meetings were held when required and the name '*Project 441 non Profit Home Corporation*' was chosen. The first item business to be taken was to select and hire a reliable and knowledgeable consultant firm. The Executive carried out a number of interviews and Lantana Non Profit Housing Corporation was awarded the contract.

Then we had to establish the need for this type of housing in Barrie. This was not too difficult with the rental housing in 1987 being close to the zero mark. Lantana then completed the necessary Ministry of Housing forms which were sent off for approval. At the same time the Committee began looking for suitable sites in Barrie. After looking around it was decided that the present one, Anne Street, was ideal because of location and the amenities in the area. An Offer to Purchase was drawn up along with at \$5,000.00 deposit, provided by Lantana, and presented to the Vendor. The Offer for the land was finally agreed upon. In concert with the above, Mr. Alf Dick, a local lawyer, was selected as the solicitor for Project 441. His responsibilities included the preparation for the incorporation and other legal matters, guiding us through the legal jargon as required. Mr. Len Boyko, another local, was hired as the architect for the project. He prepared a number of building designs that would be appropriate for the site and in keeping with the local area. The design finally selected was to be two buildings, three stories high, with twenty-five units in each.

The Ontario Ministry of Housing gave approval for the type of buildings and the grant for the project in August, 1978. The original concept of a Veteran's Housing had to be changed to meet the Ministry's requirements. A mix of one, two and three bedroom apartments to be subsidized for core-need, shallow need and fifteen percent of the total rent geared to market income. At the time of writing twenty percent of the complex is occupied by Wing members or their dependents.

Tenders were sought and submitted and once again a local construction firm Bertram Brothers was awarded the contract.

Then the waiting period. The construction was followed with great interest and anticipation. We then obtained a mortgage from Sun Life of Canada for over \$3,500,000.00, this mortgage to be guaranteed by the Governments of Canada and Ontario - your taxes at work. In addition to the mortgage the Ministry of Housing agreed to subsidize rents and be liable for any deficits incurred. Classic Consultants were selected as the Property Managers and are responsible through the Board of Directors

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for the efficient daily running of the Project.

A contest was held in 1989 to select a suitable name for the complex and buildings. *Ad Astral*, submitted by Bob Danford, was selected for the complex and *Orion* and *Pegasus* submitted by Jack Benton for the buildings.



40 RIBBON CUTTING FOR AD ASTRAL

L-R EDNA ANDERSON, MP; JANICE LAKING, MAYOR; BRUCE OWEN, MPP; KEN MITCHELL, PRESIDENT 441 HURON WING

To Close the 1980 Decade

Occupation of the buildings began in April, 1989 and the official ribbon cutting with a distinguished group in attendance was carried out on May 19, 1989:

Ontario Ministry of Housing Catlin Elginton
Federal Member of Parliament Edna Anderson
Provincial Member of Parliament Bruce Owen
Mayor of Barrie Janice Laking
Canadian Armed Forces Base Borden Brigadier General Dziver
Ontario Group R.C.A.F.A. Stan Nichols
President 441 Wing R.C.A.F.A. Ken Mitchell

Project 441 Executive

Guests including:

President Korean Veterans Association Don Lecroix
President Army, Navy, Air Force Association Neil McKinney
Members 441 Wing R.C.A.F.A.
Families living at Ad Astral Place
General Public



**41 UNVEILING THE COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE AT AD ASTRAL BY
BRIGADIER GENERAL RAY DZIVER**

441 (Huron) Wing History

Project 441 continues to flourish with 95 -100% occupancy. The tenants are happy and are enjoying the building and the surrounding area. Committees have been formed to host Halloween, Christmas parties and other functions.

The original Chairman, Ken Mitchell, relinquished his position in June, 1990, and remained as a General Board Member. The new Board of Directors that took over are as follows:

Colin Duffy	Chairman
Len Douglas	Vice Chairman & Secretary
Beth Thompson	Treasurer
Leora Westgarth-Taylor	Executive Member
Bill McCurdy	Executive Member
Bev Totman	Executive Member
Fraser McLeod	Executive Member
Bob Middlemiss	General Board Member
Ron Osborne	General Board Member
Moe Clouthier	General Board Member

We owe a great deal of credit to the original volunteers for all their efforts, but we now leave it to the present members and the ones to follow, to carry on and keep *Project 441 Non Profit Home Corporation* flying high. To them, we wish you well and good luck in the future.

In the year 2024 AD the mortgage will have been paid, the land and buildings will belong to Project 441 Non Profit Home Corporation free and clear. I wonder how many of us will be around to see the "burning of the mortgage" and see the fruits of all the labour that has gone into this great project. Some who are reading this perhaps but, alas, not me.

2.

KOREA VETERANS ASSOCIATION

(Back to Ken Mitchell)

This would be a fitting time to report on another successful foray into the mysteries of getting some new venture (i.e. never before attempted) onto the tracks. For a number of years, there had been a relationship developing between the Wing and the Korea Veterans Association, Unit 6. This unit, under the Presidency of Don Lecroix ably assisted by Gerard (Jerry) Dorion, had been using our club premises for several years. Under their constitution, it is not permissible for them to own premises, there are no Associate members and only genuine Korea Veterans can belong.

In the past, the KVA had used the club for various meetings and functions, always paying their way, and one or two had become Associate members of the Wing without, however, this being a necessary criteria in the interrelationship that was developing between the two groups. Sometime in 1988, Don Lecroix and I were chatting together over a social beer in the Wing lounge and Don raised the question of a possible affiliation of the two groups to the mutual advantage of both. This, of course, was a new concept and, as far as was known, had no precedent in the Air Force Association. The idea had merit however and I, with the knowledge and consent of Wing executive and members, started inquiries through Group. Again the idea was new and Group could offer no guidelines so National was consulted. Here again the same situation applied. It had never happened before and certainly there was no precedent or guide rulings in the matter. In effect, the Wing was advised that this was a matter for local decision so long as the governing guidelines of the Air Force Association were not compromised.

All this, of course, took time and the Executives of both organisations set up committees to discuss the ramifications. Eventually, the wording of an Affiliation Agreement was agreed to with the Korea Veterans paying a per capita assessment based on numbers each year and in return having the club facilities available for their functions. Both executives passed the agreement in principle and it was put to General Meetings of both organisations. The new venture came to fruition at the February 1990 General Meeting of the RCAFA when, after the business of the Association was finished, we were joined for the New Business section by the President and Members of the KVA in full regalia and with their colours. After a welcome from the President, Bill Jack took over as Master of Ceremonies in his usual capable manner. A special table was placed at the front of the hall and Bill Jack read out the Affiliation Agreement to those present. Since the terms had been previously agreed and had been approved, Bill invited President Don Lecroix and Vice President Jerry Dorion of the Korea Veterans



42 SIGNING THE KVA AGREEMENT , FEBRUARY 1990

Association together with myself as President and 1st Vice President Leora Westgarth-Taylor representing the Wing and Air Force Association, to meet at the table. The formal agreement was duly signed by the four representatives. The original of the agreement hangs in the lounge of the Wing and the arrangement has worked to the benefit of both organizations ever since.

It should be emphasised that each of the organisations has retained its own identity but each does support the events of the other when in the form of annual picnics, turkey shoots, Christmas dances and so on. The KVA tent has been of great value to the Wing on the occasions we have had to use same, and it is a more or less a permanent fixture in the grounds of the Wing in the summer months. Apart from the formal events, KVA members have formed the habit of a regular Friday afternoon get-together in the lounge and thereby support our operations in a tangible way, and we are able to reciprocate by reserving our facilities for their use on dates as requested.

This Affiliation has been very beneficial to both organisations and is now in its seventh year. We look forward to it being continued for many years to come. To wind up this chapter a copy of the Agreement follows and will go into the History as Interlude #7.

Interlude #7

It Speaks for Itself....

Affiliation Agreement Between 441 (Huron) Wing Royal Canadian Air Force Association And Unit 6 (Huron & District) Korea Veterans Association

Whereas the officers and members of the above Veterans Groups have agreed, by vote taken at their respective General Meetings during February 1990, to an affiliation whereby the *Korea Veterans Association Unit 6* will be accorded a Special Membership Status with 441 (Huron) Wing *Royal Canadian Air Force Association* and whereas the terms of agreement of this membership by individual members of K.V.A. Unit 6 have been agreed, a copy of these terms follow and will be binding.

TERMS OF AGREEMENT

1. Unit 6 K.V.A. will become affiliated with 441 Wing as a group.
2. Individual membership cards (numbered) will be issued to K.V.A. members identifying each member with an identifying list held by Wing and Unit.
3. K.V.A. members agree to respect and support in Principle the Aims and Objects of the Wing and the Wing, the Aims and Objects of the K.V.A.
4. K.V.A. members will be entitled to full use of all Wing facilities except voting on Wing policies and operating procedures.
5. The K.V.A. agrees to abide by our laws regulating dress and behaviour as they are now or may be promulgated.
6. The Wing undertakes to provide the same courtesies in regard to meetings and rentals as is the past.
7. The agreement can be terminated by mutual agreement or in the event of either Association wishing to withdraw because

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of K.V.A. or R.C.A.F.A. policies.

8. Based on an initial 60 unit numbers a fee of \$5.00 per head will be paid by March 1st, 1990. Base numbers will be mutually agreed by March 1st each year.

KNOW THEREFORE that Unit 6, K.V.A. is now considered an Affiliate of 441 (Huron) Wing, it being understood that this affiliation is at Wing level and does not bind either group or national of the R.C.A.F.A. and the K.V.A. does not become affiliated with the R.C.A.F.A. neither does the agreement involve the K.V.A. parent organization. It is further agreed that this affiliation will be subject to renewal with effect March 1st, 1991, and subsequent years.

(Signed) H.K. Mitchell
President
441 (Huron) Wing
(Signed) L.A. Westgarth-Taylor
1st V.P.
441 (Huron) Wing

(Signed) Donald Lacroix
President
Unit 6 K.V.A.
(Signed) Gerard Doiron
1st V.P.
Unit 6 K.V.A.

CHAPTER 16

W-T 'Our first lady'

Some family names are interwoven into the fabric of 441 (Huron) Wing from the very early days and in this respect the family name of *Westgarth-Taylor* is unique. Some 35 years ago Brian Westgarth-Taylor graduated from 102 Squadron Air Cadets as the senior Warrant Officer Cadet and commanded the graduation parade. Brian has been a member of the Wing, served on the committee to assist in the setting up of Project 441, and is a Veterinarian with a large practice at this time. While Brian was active with the cadets, his father, Clifford, (Westy to us), was a civilian instructor. As has already been reported, Westy became Wing President and his term of office and later untimely death has already been made part of this history.

We come now to Leora Westgarth-Taylor (known to most as 'Lolly'). Leora has served as a member of the Auxiliary over the years but, far more importantly, has held down the position of Membership chairperson for what, in 1998, will be a term of twenty years. This has involved serving on the Board of Directors through this time also. It was a well-deserved honour when, after five years waiting in the Wings as First Vice, Leora was elected to be the Wing President, taking office on July 1, 1990 thereby being the first lady President in Wing history.

It did not take long for her to receive her baptism of fire (in this case water). The Wing, sitting as it does (literally) on top of the Minesing Swamp area, has always had a water problem in that, while medically safe, the water has an unmistakably 'swampy' smell to it. OK for dishes and boiled but our drinking water has been imported for many years. At the start of Leora's term, the problem spread and the toilets, instead of flushing as they should, started to fill with swamp mud with its accompanying bouquet of sweet violets (for want of any other description). The Board approved the expenditure (it had no real option anyway) and the work was put in hand. The first shaft went to eighty feet and struck water, however it was neither a sufficient flow or as clear as it should have been and a second drilling at another location was needed. This time a depth of one hundred and forty feet was reached. This proved successful and a continuing flow of fairly good water has resulted ever since. However, water for the bar and most catering needing water for human consumption has continued to be imported in the interest of safety.

As if that wasn't enough, the Wing suffered a break and entry at this time with the end result being the installation of a Security System. That took a bit of getting used to. The initial coding needs and the movement of fans during the night meant several

441 (Huron) Wing History

false alarms, and eventually a warning was received from the police that the Wing would have to start paying the costs on false alarm police calls. The glitches did get ironed out, however, and a stricter control on keys and eligible key holders has made for a safer operation.

A series of ceremonial events followed, these were well publicised in most cases, and Wing participation was handled in a capable manner by Leora in her official capacity. The events included the rededication of the Honour Roll at St. Andrews Church in Barrie in November, and attendance at the dedication of the new cenotaph in Sharon, Ontario, supported officially by me, Squadron Leader 'Bob' Heyward D.S.O. D.F.C., our Colour Party of Al Hodgson and Randy Burry, with other Wing members. This took the form of a Drumhead Service with a march past of Canadian Forces military 'squads' in military dress from the 1800's on. A very colourful day. Leora was also involved in the conferences and meetings that culminated in Base Borden receiving the *Freedom of the City* in another colourful ceremony in Barrie. Of course, Leora officiated at the normal annual parades (Battle of Britain, November 11th, etc.), and chaired the social events capably as needed.

In June of 1991, Leora took part in the burning of our mortgage, originally sixty thousand for ten years, with the Wing successfully clearing it in five years. It is noteworthy to add that during her term of office the Wing, as an organisation, and with her leadership, received Wing Proficiency and also Membership awards for two years in a row. In addition, Leora was awarded the Membership Chairman award at the Colorado Springs National Convention.

During this period I was Regional Vice, Central Region, and since the cadre of the new 229 Wing forming at Baldwin International Airport was drawn from actively participating 441 Wing members, the Wing was asked and willingly participated in assisting the new Wing to get going. Assisting Leora in this were Bill Jack and (a special thanks requested here by Leora), Randy Burry, his wife Debra and many others. At the gala Charter Night of the new Wing, Leora was able to present cheque for \$2000.00 to help them fly.

During Leora's period of office yet another project received Wing support both in monetary and moral support. This was the setting up and dedication of a memorial stone, suitably inscribed, to the participation of RCAF Base Borden in the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan. The stone is appropriately situated outside one of the original prewar hangers on the Base flight line.

In June 1992, the Mount Forrest Wing was so reduced in membership that it had to relinquish its charter. In spite of the heroic efforts of Illa Dell and others, there was simply no human resources in such a scattered rural area for the Wing to survive. It was with sadness that Leora received the Wing Standard and Charter for safekeeping at 441. This occurred at Leora's last meeting as President. She retired with honour and this was

Our First Lady

recognized as at the Edmonton National Convention when Leora became the third *Life Member* of the Association. The only other recipients of this honour have been the late Cliff Scott, who received the award in the late 1950's and myself, who was awarded my Life Membership in 1993.

Leora continues her active participation as Past President and Membership Chairperson, serving through the terms of the next two Presidents and being appointed again in 1997 to the same position.

441 (Huron) Wing RCAF Air Force Association of Canada is fortunate and very proud to have a lady amongst us who has dedicated so much of her time and talents to the good of the Wing and the Association. As the Scottish saying goes, to you - *Lang May Yre Lum Reek*, Leora (Lolly) Westgarth-Taylor.

CHAPTER 17

A Term With Major Changes

'What's in a name'?

In midsummer 1992, Archie Johnstone was elected President of the Wing, bringing with him a long background connected to the Royal Canadian Air Force. To give some background, Archie is one of the originals, who in and about 1946, formed separate clubs of ex-Air Force vets and became President of those clubs. These clubs were formed in Toronto and several other centres, such as Brantford. For example, I was then working in Brantford, Ontario, and joined the Air Force Club in that city. The Brantford club was actually part of an independent group loosely classified as #1 Wing RCAF of the British Empire Service League of the Royal Canadian Legion, in which Archie was involved. Incidentally, the Brantford Club never did become part of the Royal Canadian Air Force Association. Several delegates from the new Association attended meetings to bring the various units into the Association fold but in most cases were not successful (why pay dues to Ottawa)?

In 1988 Archie, then residing near Orillia, joined 441 Wing and brought with him quite a contingent from the Orillia area in the persons of Gord King, Jim Lawler, Jim Burlison and others. At that time, our sole Orillia member was Ray Rafflaab (who was still active from the original Orillia Wing which had surrendered its Charter some 18 years before), and has stayed with the Association on an active basis with 441 Wing.

Archie came onto our Board of Directors, participated actively with his wife, Morrie, in the social events and, among other things, participated as Chairman of the Finance Review Committee. As it turned out, that participation was important in light of later developments.

A digression is in order at this time. 441 Wing is, and has always been, a non-profit organisation and work within the Wing structure has been without remuneration except in such necessary contractual work such as cleaning and maintenance contracts. This means that, at many times in the history of the Wing, the finances have been at low ebb particularly if any major renovation or mortgage commitment was on the platter of any particular President. The Wing has also had a succession of Treasurers, none of them remunerated. Some of these Treasurers had a lot of experience and some had only a peripheral accounting background. This has, from time to time, landed us in financial binds from which, obviously, we were able to pull through without our credit rating being upset.

A Term with Major Changes

In the September of Archie's first year, it became apparent that information necessary for effective Wing management was not available due to a breakdown in procedures regarding Wing records, filing and financial accounting activities. This became of major importance when notice was received from the Ministry of Finance to the effect that Wing assets, both financial and property, would be seized to pay overdue PST and GST taxes. Obviously, this created a period of stress for the President and the Board of Directors.

Fortunately, with the full co-operation of the Board members and more specifically with the assistance of Duncan McLeish, Bill Gage and Les Ball, new procedures were established, including a complete computer program and the procurement of an accounting service. The implementation of this overcame the aforementioned circumstances and conditions. The above services have continued since Archie's term of office and with Les Ball continuing through three terms as our very competent Treasurer.

Another committee which was set up and chaired by Archie at this time was a committee primarily composed of himself and Ian Branagh. They surveyed the present structure of the Wing as to the state of the building, the roof and, in fact, the total structure and obtained cost estimates as to what should be done. This was toward the end of Archie's term and the end result, conveyed to the Wing, was that the building structure needed urgent attention in a number of areas. A cost estimate left the issue on an "is it worth spending this kind of money on an old building"? The answer to this was that the membership agreed with the findings. However, this sparked action in the ensuing term of office, as will become apparent.

During this term of office the Wing enjoyed the presence, on an active working basis, of (Capt) Don Lefevre. As well as working on the Board and various committees, Don involved the 8th Barrie Scout group in visits to the Wing (an involvement with some far reaching later developments). In addition, Don set up a very efficient filing system, which continues to the present time.

Probably the most important change in the Association came to the floor in Archie's term. This was the National proposal for a change of name from our hallowed '*Royal Canadian Air Force Association*' to the more inclusive title of '*Air Force Association of Canada*'. Probably because of our longtime close association with the RCAF and Air Command at CFB Borden, this change, while questioned and discussed, particularly by some of the 'die hard' RCAF vets, was given Wing approval and our Convention delegates were so instructed. (As a matter of history, one or two Wings did not agree to the change and actually dropped away from the parent body altogether). Fortunately, however, this was not general and the more level heads, realizing that the change would involve better and closer relations with Air Command, went to the National Convention in Winnipeg in 1994 and the changes were passed. The tricky discussions at

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Wing level were ably handled by Archie and I am pleased to quote from some notes he has given me to work with: "hence I became the first President of '*The Air Force Association of Canada*', 441(Huron) Wing Inc., an honour gratefully accepted". All in all, a productive term, like many others with its areas of opposition to views and plans as the term went by. But ably handled with tact (and firmness when necessary).

Largely due to his wife's (Morrie) deteriorating health, Archie was forced to become less active after his term was completed, however he is still with us at the major Wing functions.

CHAPTER 18

Among Those Present

"Let's talk about YOU"

1.

Before heading into the final presidential terms of office we should pause to remember the participation of so many individuals who, while not necessarily going onto the Board, did contribute to the fabric of the Wing across the years. This may be a tricky area as I shall be relying in many cases on personal memory only. I shall, however, call on one or two of the 'old timers' to correct or embellish these very 'thumb nail' sketches. Here goes, in no particular order.

Newsletter

Various known as '*The Rattler*', *Future*, etc. Editors ranged from Del Kelly, Collie Sutherland, Ron Osborne, Bill Gage, Ian Branagh and myself. And from time to time, others have filled in. Let's talk about some of them - not Del nor myself, we have been featured elsewhere. Collie Sutherland has also been mentioned but as long time Wing Secretary and Editor of the News Letter, he certainly put in a lot of time. Collie also won the News Letter award at Convention level. He and his wife, Anna Mae, (who looked after our Wing bookings for so long) were regular Convention goers, participated actively in the social activities and, I am glad to say, still visit the Wing regularly, which, seeing that neither will see age eighty as a birthday again, reflects a dedication to our Aims and Objectives second to none.

Ron Osborne has been active in many areas of Wing activity, as librarian, entertainments etc., and Ron also won Convention level awards for the Wing with his often very funny (if sometimes a trifle bawdy) brand of humour. Bill Gage, Board member, became very active, as did his wife Alma, with the Ladies Auxiliary. Bill also became an Award winner with the *Future* as his genre and after a short gap, very ably filled in by Ian Branagh, has taken on the job again for the current 1997/98 term.

Sketches

Ray and Win Bartlett have long been part of the scene. Win, as Ladies Auxiliary President, did a fine job for several terms. Ray served on the Executive for a long time and was also responsible for our Wasaga Beach connections, the fine collection of

pullovers (all crested appropriately) owned by so many of us, and also inaugurated the On Hundred Dollar a month draw which is still running today. Ray was also a strong adherent to the 'Fighter/Bomber' stand-up corner, which featured (among others) Bob Hayward, Bob Middlemiss, Terry Davis, Ron Merrow, Bill Jack and others who came and went. The alternate name for the group (one of them anyway) was the Smoker's Corner. The group has largely broken up, Ron Merrow died just recently, Terry and Joan Davis have moved to Wasaga Beach and we don't see them as frequently. Bob Hayward died a year or two ago but the rest are still very much with us and active in Wing affairs.

Al Chernysh, who lives in Angus, has played a role in the affairs of the Wing and seldom misses a GM. For years, the RCAF Benevolent fund representative was Bill Young in Sandy Cove. I took that on for a couple of years then handed it over to Al who has performed very capably as our representative in that capacity ever since.

Bob Hayward, (Squadron Leader, DSO, DFC) died a couple of years back and is greatly missed. His citation, earned as a teenager in the Maritimes, hangs on the wall of the lounge. Bob was active with the Board for a number of years, active with Air Cadets and with youth support in general. Bob, incidentally, commanded a Spitfire Wing and flew six sorties on D Day. He is remembered.

Pearl Copeland, who was elected to the Board for the 1997-1998 year, has served with the LA and their projects. She is also the undisputed Nevada Queen of the Wing, attending the Saturday and Monday darts and many other social functions where her contribution to the Wing's cash flow has meant many dedicated hours of participation.

Steve Coulson came to the Wing as an Associate Member and has proven himself to be an asset to be reckoned with. Apart from the draws on which he worked very hard at promoting, he has starred when he took over the Turkey Shoots from Fraser MacLeod. His success with these Shoots has benefited the cash flow in the Wing greatly. Steve was elected to the position of Second Vice President, this term, (having achieved Regular Member status some five years ago).

Jim Quinlan... snooker... billiards... pool... pool table recovering... shuffleboard... the interclub and in-club tournaments... Silver Cue Awards... Sports Officer on the Board... and there is Jim Quinlan, not just for one or two years but for the best part of twenty! (not to forget a couple or so golf tournaments and some miniature golf do's). And these activities bring up some memories. There are three trophies oriented to snooker and billiards in the Wing and vied for each year. Each is a Memorial trophy and perpetuate some very honoured names of past members, past in the sense that the trophies are in their memory, and rightly so in that they all contributed to the life and well-being of our Wing and the comradeship amongst us. The first trophy was in memory of Bill McKeever, quiet, friendly and an expert with the cue. Then 'Father' George Leitch, born in Glasgow, Scotland, loved by everyone in the Wing (wherefore the

Among Those Present

'Father'). Then 'Geordie' Gregg, originating from the Tyneside, long-time Associate, hard worker on committees, who became a Regular member and, with Betty Green, was omnipresent at Wing functions. Thanks, Jim, for the provision of these trophies. And we mustn't forget the Building Fund concept and the Memorial Board, it has brought results.

There has been a long line of Liaison Officers to our Wing, I can't remember them all but some tend to stand out as our relationship with Base Borden has been uniformly good. George Wood, of course, has already been featured as has Don Lefevre. In the line up, we were allotted (Major) Les Ball some years ago and he immediately joined the Wing as a member and 'doubled in brass' by first coming onto the Board and then assuming the position of Treasurer vide Bev English, who became CO of 102 Squadron, serving her full term in a very capable manner. Working with three Presidents and the current term, Les has been instrumental in getting us onto a real business footing, finance-wise, and has also been active on many committees such as Turkey Shoots and Men's Dinner preparation (yes-including dishwashing!). And, after his retirement in 1997, Les became the Central Region Vice President. His wife, Lois, has been active with the Ladies Auxiliary in their on-going Wing endeavours with particular appreciation to those sumptuous pies for Wing dinner meetings, etc.

2.

This is going to be a long chapter so I rang in a station break - feel rested? OK, let's continue.

We can't leave out a number of folks who also must be recognized. Charlie Giordanni for example, who has been with the Wing from the very early days. Charlie has been active on the snooker teams and very ready to help out members quietly through his business. This was evidenced when the T- Bird was erected through his loans of equipment for aid in the installation. Charlie has also been on the Colour Party and, I believe, holds the record for having his wedge cap blow off (it can't happen!) while carrying the Colours at one of the Base Borden Battle of Britain parades. Then there is Bill Aitken, who has been on bar service volunteer duties for many years. He tends to disappear to Florida for the winter with his wife, Betty, who has also been active with many Wing activities across the years. Bill is unflappable and very patiently waits out the 'dog days' when business is slow. Watch out for his stories though, some of them are pretty broad!

A passing note or two about three other long time members, all well known as snooker 'whizzes' but also as strong Wing supporters. First off, Leo Berard, ex-Winnipeg Rifles, a Hong Kong POW who survived Japanese POW camps (in Japan) and, as a regular, went on to Korea (as if he hadn't had enough). He joined the Wing many years ago, making his camper home available for the 'away' trips of the snooker league and on other Wing affairs. Don Daley, Air Line Pilot very much available when time permitted and a very familiar face, together with Bob Danforth. Bob won the overall cash prize for the naming competition for the Project when he came up with *Ad Astral Place*. Also a cribbage player Bob has participated in the annual crib tournaments and chaired the tournament this Spring.

Talking of cribbage, the annual trophy donated years ago by my wife Phyllis and myself has been won more times than enough by Lesley Hughes. Lesley has been part of the Wing and the Auxiliary for over thirty years. Leslie has served on the Board, the Auxiliary and many committees, and probably her greatest contribution has been as the Bar Manager for at least fifteen years (with a break in between). Working right along with Lesley has been Terry Hamilton. Both, (like Leora), were widowed many years ago but stayed with the Wing organization and are highly respected for their association with the Board. In addition to Terry's bar duties and work with the Ladies Auxiliary, Terry has served the Wing as our Sick Committee chairperson for many years and would be sadly missed in that capacity. Two other ladies to be acknowledged in connection with their work with the Wing and the Ladies Auxiliary, in particular, are Dot (Dorothy) Mellow and Marlene Jack. Their work has been unobtrusive most of the time but has been of immense value in the scheme of things.

Among Those Present

Since we seem to be talking about the ladies, let's keep going. Lorraine McMaster was President of the Ladies Auxiliary in her time, very much assisted by her mother Pearl. They are not so active now but still show up now and again and are very welcome. Marion Hughes is another name to conjure with, in that she, often assisted by her husband, Larry, has carried various loads as the years went by, particularly as bar help and some years back as Bar Manager, a position she has again assumed this present term. Jean Debling served her term as Ladies Auxiliary President, as did Win Bartlett and so many others. The support of the Ladies Auxiliary in the operation of the Wing has been a history of very dedicated service. 'Oops'- almost forgot to mention Joan Davies, where the same dedicated service applies. And one final acknowledgement-Isabel Kelly, who has been featured in the early pages of this record, has never left the Wing or failed it when called upon for service. Isabel is still with us and as active as ever.

I was chatting with George Leitch a couple of days ago, and he reminded me of the years of service put into the Wing by Paul and Judy Schembri. Apart from Wing operations directly (Board and Auxiliary), they were active with Midget Juvenile League Ball and other activities. Paul still plays darts with the Intercity Pub League and we see him every now and again.

Liaison to the 102 Squadron Air Cadets has been omni-present and many have served in various capacities over the years, sometimes at the same time contributing to the Squadron in more active roles. Some members who should be mentioned: 'Westy' Westgarth-Taylor, certainly (Capt.) Bill Jack who was also Squadron CO, Lou Nemorofsky, Len Douglas (whose involvement has been continuous) as evidenced by the scholarship and trophy, Paul Schembri, John Winterick, and myself, whose position of Chairman of the sponsoring body was taken over by Duncan McLeish some five years ago and who continues into this term. Nearly forgot Ed Harman who preceded me.

Then Bill McCurdy should be acknowledged. Bill has been the business manager of the Barrie Pipes and Drums for many years. He instructed at Sky Harbour airport just north of Goderich during the war. He also served on the committee that made the first tenant's selection for Ad Astral Place.

It is a good time to mention some of the 102 Squadron RC (Air) CO's across the years (all Wing members). There comes to mind S/Ldr Jack Oates who headed the Squadron when we started to sponsor them, Harry Young, Lloyd Jensen, Terry Gilbert, Bev English, Bill Jack, and currently John-Paul Johnson (J-P). I hope I haven't missed anyone in the above two listings.

Although, for many years our daily cleaning and setup duties have been contracted, the key people covering at least the last fifteen years have many times, contributed 'over and above' the explicit job description. Fred Scaife, now living in Pictou, N.S. with wife Dee; Lloyd Sutton, a regular visitor with wife June; and currently 'Paddy' Patrick, who is continuing to provide better than average service. Debbie,

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Paddy's wife, has been recruited to assist Marian Hughes on bar duties.

Well! There you have it. I know I must have missed out some (if not many) and I can only say that I've tried to cover the turf. Members have read and added as appropriate, and hopefully we have made this tribute complete.

CHAPTER 19

Moving Right along - with Fraser MacLeod?

'Let's talk turkey'

The three year term served by Fraser MacLeod will bring us very much into the present day. Fraser started with us in the early eighties as an Associate Member. During the time that I was President, someone brought up the fact that our open outback field would be ideal for 'Turkey Shoots'. This was a new term to me, and I had to ask exactly what it was all about (visualizing heaps of feathers and perhaps other items littering the Wing premises). I was referred to one Fraser MacLeod, at that moment of time consuming a quiet beer in the Roundel games room before or after playing pool - a game at which Fraser is rather an ace. The obvious question was asked and behold Fraser said that he would run a shoot. So do projects start!

Shortly thereafter the 'back forty' sported targets and bales of hay, set up on the otherwise rarely used picnic tables, distances checked and the police contacted to make sure we were not going to be arrested for disturbing the peace or whatever, and Fraser was in business. The venture turned out to be not only a success but also an ongoing success. Fraser became more involved with Wing affairs, was elected to Regular membership and also to the Board of Directors and continued to run the financially successful shoots. Fraser then succeeded Leora to the Wing Presidency for the next term of office. At that time, Steve Coulson took over the Turkey Trots with which he had been working for some time.

One of the first projects that required attention during Fraser's early months as President was the proposed new building project. The fund had grown during the previous two terms of office and plans now justified an architect's planning with estimates, plus a model of the proposed building. Here a major snag developed which was (of course) financing. For a while, at least, the project was put on hold. Later in the term the atmosphere, caused by smoke and still air in the Wing, began to cause people to say that they could not take it and were not coming out because of smoky atmosphere. Les Ball, as Treasurer, (with help from committee members Ron Osborne and Ian Branagh among others who became involved) recommended an 'air exchange' system. This proposal was made at a General Meeting and approved, the funding being allocated from the Building Fund providing that any system installed could be moved to a new building as and when necessary. The negotiations on this are still ongoing as several systems are being considered and the provision of Natural Gas to the Wing is a

delaying factor.

The 8th Barrie Scout Group has already been mentioned while talking about Don Lefevre's work with the Wing. This association developed during Fraser's term to the extent that we not only started financial support but also became the official sponsoring body vide one of the Barrie Churches. The previous sponsoring body had really paid only 'lip service' to the Group Committee running the 8th Barrie Scouts and Cubs and more concrete aid was needed. The Scout Group had strong and viable leadership for the various units and was in capable management hands. Because of a long-time Scouting background as a Cub, then Scout in England, uniformed Scouter of 5th Barrie in the late 1950's and as a Group Committee member with St. Giles Church sponsorship of the 5th Troop in Barrie, I was asked to become Liaison member to the 8th Barrie Group Committee. My father had been involved with the Scout movement on a continuing basis from 1910 until he reached the age of 81, when he took his Troop to camp for the last time. This background enabled me to cheerfully accept this duty and (it is no rumour) I continue to enjoy same very much. Several of the Scout Leaders have joined the Wing and helped on a special Turkey Shoot, sold tickets on our draws and at least one Scout is now in. Len Douglas has also set up glider participation for them. The participation was awarded on merit achievement in the Troop. Seven went out to Base and are reported as being very enthusiastic for the program.

The Wing has long had a good relationship with the Vespra (now Springwater) Fire Department. We have, across the years, sponsored cash-wise the educational Bear that walks and talks its way through the schools and has also visited a Wing GM. We have helped, as requested, in other matters and in Fraser's term we actively provided cash toward the provision of a 'state of the art' rescue vehicle. In return, this vehicle displays our 441 Wing RCAF crest on the doors of the cabs. Nice piece of advertising, Fraser!.

One major project of the National body of the Association has been the marking of sites of ex RCAF units and also Commonwealth Air Training Plan sites by memorial plaques. The Edgar Radar detection site, once part of the Dew Line, was one such and a committee composed of Fraser and Leora Westgarth-Taylor commissioned a memorial plaque which was unveiled on the site during Fraser's term of office.

Fraser was elected for a third term to complete some of his projects and participated in the social and formal functions demanded of a President. The Wing very much held its own and, under the last three Presidents, it is apparent that liaison with CFB Borden has increased. Among other things, following a request from Les Ball before he retired, several of our members give talks to the courses going through the Professional Development Program on the Base. The general theme of these talks has been 'How It Was Then'. Participants from the Wing in this program include Bill Jack, Bill Gage, Len Douglas and me.

Moving Right Along - With Fraser MacLeod

A final program was the participation by the Wing in the Charity Casino's program during Fraser's term which was a lucrative project for us. We should not leave this area without mention of Fraser's involvement with the Charity Bingos ongoing since Bill Jack started the ball rolling so long ago. Fraser has very ably handled the Charity accounts as well as the Wing account connected with the Project 441 for a number of years.

CHAPTER 20

Whatever Next ?

'per ardua ad infinitum'

Loosely translated - through adversity to the limitless future - and we have the team, challenging programs, plant and the willingness to go forward together. The ups and downs of this history says that. The best part of it is that our current team, not just the Board, but our active membership, is a combination of comparatively young members with a leavening of 'old hands'. Between the two, there is a wealth of experience, skills and knowledge that, properly used, will bring us to the doorstep of the year 2000 very ready to step over the threshold and go into the 'millennium' as some people are already dubbing it. Let's hope they are right! There is a real challenge ahead. There are major events being planned for early September 1997. By that date, this history will be heading into the publishing stage, some events will have already become part of this history, such as the Battle of Britain parade, previously held at CFB Borden with representation only from CFB Borden at the 441 Wing parade in Barrie. This year, the focus of the parade will be with 16 Wing Air Command, CFB Borden, conducting the parade in the City of Barrie. 441 Wing is, of course, fully involved, but it is a significant shift of emphasis.

For nearly six months now, a committee appointed by the Wing and under the Chairmanship of myself and Leora Westgarth-Taylor, has been making the arrangements for the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Wing. A full weekend of activities in February 1998 is in the works. The refurbishing of the present quarters is ongoing with Ron Osborne helped by one of our recently joined, but very enthusiastic, Rollie Parks, and others.

So much for the present, let's take a look at the people at the helm for the 1997/98 term and see the potential that they bring to the scheme of things. (You may refer to the photograph on the Wing notice board, and included with the text herewith).

Whatever Next?

Your Executive

President: Ian Branagh

Service Member, Regular Member, Construction and Costing Experience, Administrative Experience (and He Knows How to Run a Meeting!)

1st Vice: Bill Blakey

Warrant Officer, about to Retire after 35 Years Service, Liaison Officer to CFB, Active in all aspects of the Wing since he came on the scene.

2nd Vice: Steve Coulson

Master Mechanic, Turkey Shoot Mogul, has experience on other committees, writes in his spare time (if any).

Treasurer: Les Ball

Major Retired, Central Region Vice President, Presently on Board of Project 441, 40th Anniversary Committee, puts up flag poles (The Right Way).

Past President: Fraser MacLeod

You've just had a complete chapter on Fraser - 'nuff said.

Secretary: Patricia Mitchell

Worked for the RCAF in 1941, served in CWAC, WWII, can type, has computer, has an interest (of sorts)!

And Your Board of Directors

Ken Mitchell

Special Events, Sunnybrook, 40th Anniversary, 8th Barrie Liaison, Wing History, Whatever!

Allan Hodgson

HOUSING - that's housing in capitals - and he does and has done a great job.

Beth Thompson

Co-chair Bingo (with Fraser), President Ladies Auxiliary, long serving Wing member.

John-Paul Johnson

CO L02 Silver Fox Squadron, started into Air Cadets many years ago and has really never left.

Gordon Steane

No committee yet - that's yet Gordon!

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Pearl Copeland

Co-chair Nevada sales...and that takes up a lot of time but sure pays off.

Mario Williamson

Sports. Good for you, Mario - it's a big area of activity.

Duncan McLeish

Chairman Air Cadet Sponsoring Committee, has gathered a strong support committee.

Leora Westgarth-Taylor

Need you ask? Membership (of course).

Your Ladies Auxiliary

President	Beth Thompson
Vice President	Isabel Kelly
Secretary	Terry Hamilton
Treasurer	Marlene Jack

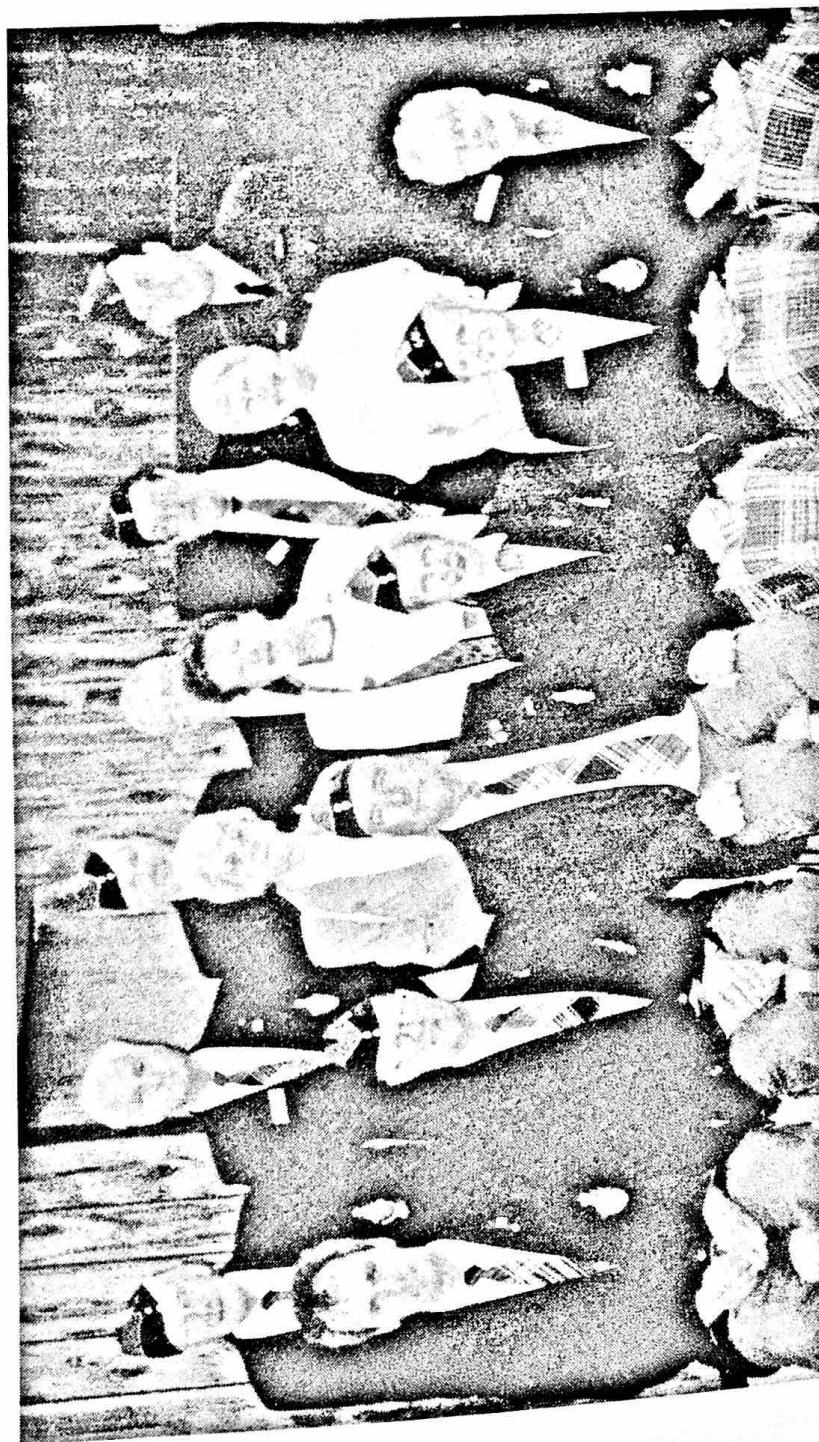
Other Committees Not Above

Entertainment	Ann Broomer
Bingo/ Nevada	Fraser MacLeod
Welfare	Terry Hamilton
Purchasing/advertising	Ron Osborne
Bar Supervisor	Marion Hughes
Rental/reservations	Fraser MacLeod
Custodian	Paddy Patrick
Bulletin/Future	Bill Gage

A Misquote Follows :

**'It Seems to Me That I Have Heard Those Names Before'
A Strong Team!**

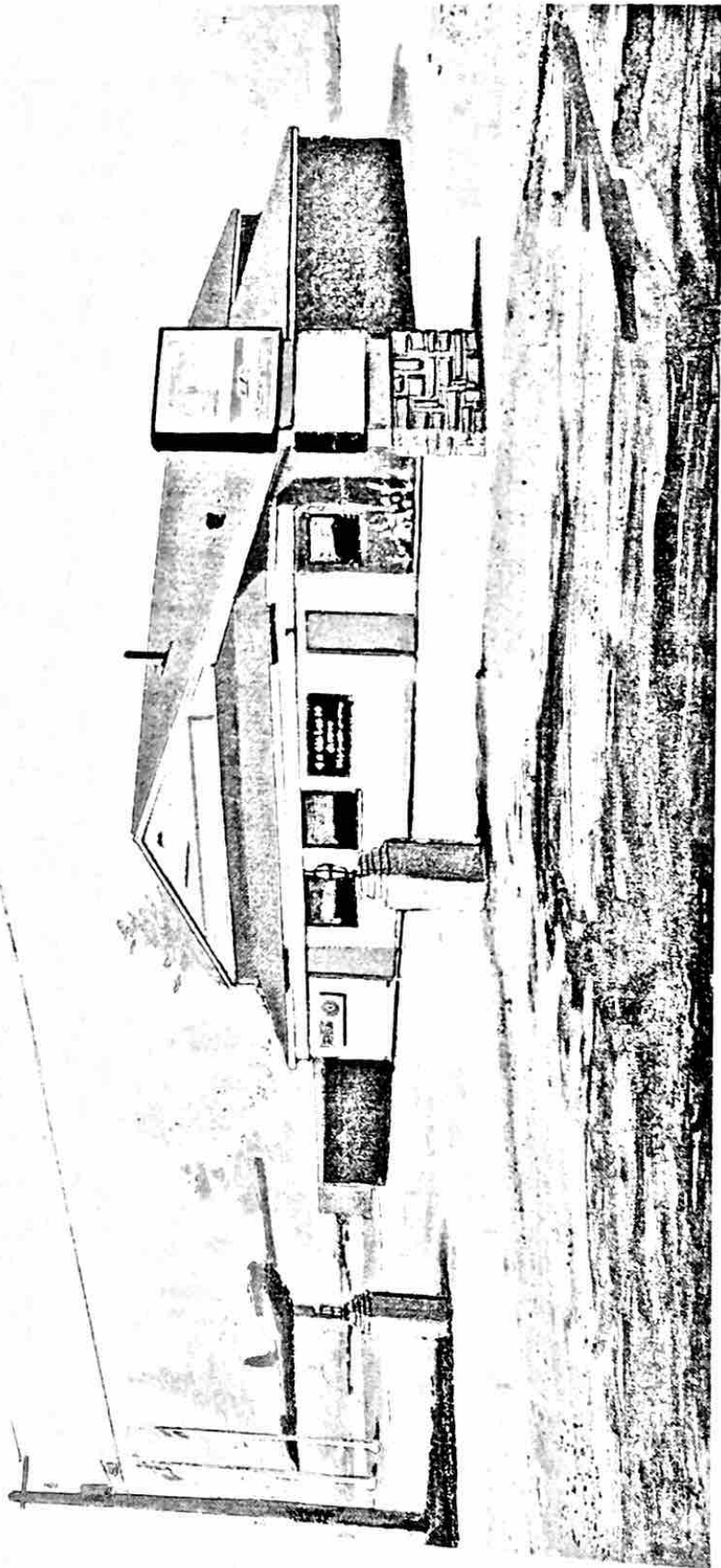
This, then, is the History of 441 Wing completed, to the best of my knowledge and ability. To round it out, there will be one or two appendices listing, among other things, events and as many of our awards through the years, together with a listing of the members who served and have died and a listing of past presidents with dates of their terms. It has been a labour of love and I hope to go forward with the Wing and its comradeship for a few more years (correction-a *lot* more years) into the future.



43 CURRENT WING EXECUTIVE 1997
FRONT: L-R 2ND VP STEVE COULSON, 1ST VP BILL BLAKEY, PRES. IAN BRANAGH, PRES. LA BETH THOMPSON, IPP LEORA WESTGARTH-TAYLOR, SECT. PATRICIA MITCHELL
CENTRE: TERRI HAMILTON, ISABELLE KELLY, MARLENE JACK
BACK: L-R KEN MITCHELL, AL HODGSON, DUNK MCLEISH, GORD STEANE, FRASER MACLEOD, J.P. JOHNSTON, LES BALL

441 (Huron) Wing History

44 ARTIST'S CONCEPTION OF THE WING TODAY



Appendices

Personal Notes

**Please take some time to record
your thoughts, memories and comments
to enhance this history**

Deceased Members of 441 (Huron) Wing

Adams, Harry B.	1993	Leitch George S.	1993
Allen, Gerald	1995	Leigh, George	1997
Anstead, John C.	1992	Lunan, George	1995
Ayers, Frank H.	1981	Lynch, Jim	1988
Balderer, Gustav A.	1977	Lynch, Mildred	1987
Barber, John	1979	Matetiche, Maxim P.	1980
Blogg, William (Bill)	1991	McCurdy, Verna	1996
Bowen, Norman	1978	McGibbon, Peter D.	1991
Bowen, Irene	1988	McGraw, George T.	1995
Brice-Graham, Norah, G.L.	1990	McKeever, William E.	1988
Cadden, Stephen	1996	McLean, Harry L.	1995
Chapcatp, S.W.A.	1983	McLellan, Donald A.	1994
Collin, Randy	1981	Melnychuk, Paul	1983
Collins, Douglas	1984	Morrow, Ron	1997
Corkan, Cecil	1987	Mitchell, Phyllis G.	1993
Corkan, Lynda	1992	Morris, Leonard, O.	1996
Denney, David	1991	Neyvatte, Cyril E.	1994
Elliott, Eileen	1995	Nugent James	1986
Elliott, Frederick A.	1992	Oates, R.J.	1987
Elrick, Hugh	1978	Partridge, Harold (Hank)	1987
Fitzpatrick, M.J.	1994	Peace, Ernest L.C.(Lee)	1996
Forbeck, Ted	1986	Potter, Cyril Charles	1994
Gough, Owen	1982	Purcell, Gary R.	1988
Gregg, Geordie	1995	Rainey, John	1981
Gugeon, Thomas	1994	Rainey, Henry J.	1989
Hamilton, Jack, F.	1987	Raven, Norman T.	1984
Hand, Jerry	1984	Robson, James F.	1984
Hayward, Robert K.	1993	Scott, Clifford M.	1994
Harris, Burton	1997	Shapcott, F.W.A.	1983
Heppleston, Jack	1975	Stubbs, Joyce	1990
Hook, W. Leslie	1995	Taylor, Arthur H.	1994
Inglis, Daniel H.	1976	Thormin, Philip	1992
Keenan, Cleve	1981	Traynor, Michael	1978
Keene, Jack, F.C.	1996	Wardle, Wilf	1977
Kell, Charles H.	1989	Westgarth-Taylor, Clifford	1975
Kelly, Delmar A.	1994	White, Wesley	1975
Kelly, Donald E.	1992	Wills, Robert T.	1992
Kelly, Kerrie K.	1978	Wood, Miriam LE.	1979
Knight, John A.	1982	Woodstock, William C.(Pop)	1974
Ladouceur, Frank J.	1989	Woodward, James H.	1979
Lapere, Alex R.	1996	Woodward, Sydney F.	1989
Lavin, Robert J.F.	1989		

441 Wing Member of the Year Awards

Known Listings

Unfortunately, the available records for the above are 'among the missing' for the early years of presentations. The listings therefore are not complete and perhaps recipients could provide their names for later listings.

Regular Members

1972/73	Ken Mitchell
1979/80	Leo Berard
1980/81	Frank and Mary Ladoucer
1981/82	George S. Leitch
1982/83	Leora Westgarth-Taylor
1983/84	Ken Mitchell
1984/85	Leo Berard
1985/86	Bernie Latimer
1986/87	Collie Sutherland
1987/88	Ron Osborne
1988/89	Ray Bartlett
1989/90	Bill Jack
1990/91	Anna Mae Sutherland
1991/92	Randy Burry
1992/93	Duncan McLeish
1993/94	Al Hodgson
1994/95	Terry Hamilton/Lesley Hughes
1995/96	Les Ball

Associate Members

Dennis Slack
Ted Forbeck
Marian Hughes
Marian Hughes
Win Bartlett
Beth Thompson
Fraser MacLeod
Fraser MacLeod
Pearl Copeland
Jim Quinlan
Ian Branagh
Betty Hays
Steve Coulson
Anita Feaver
Sharon Collins

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About the Author



45 KEN MITCHELL, AUTHOR

H. Kenneth Mitchell was born in England. He completed High School equivalent at 16, and at 17½ he was commissioned into the *Royal Air Force* on March 4, 1939. Ken completed basic pilot training and received his Wings the week before war was declared on September 3rd, 1939. He served as a *Staff Pilot* training Air Gunners and Bomb Aimers until posted with his unit to open *31 Bombing and Gunnery School* at Picton, Ontario as part of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan. It was there that he met and married his wife, Phyllis, who inspired his first book, *A Journey Together*.

Ken served with the *School of Air Navigation* as a Staff Pilot at Port Albert near Goderich, and completed the General Reconnaissance Course at Charlottetown PEI and the Torpedo Bomber Operational Training Unit at Patricia Bay B.C. Returning to England, he completed the Heavy Bomber conversion training and flew on Operations on Sterling bombers with *299 Squadron in 38 Group* until the end of hostilities in Europe. Posted to the Middle East in 1945, Ken served in Egypt, Italy and Austria where he commanded *87 Spitfire Squadron* until it was reduced to number plate. Ken's final posting was as *Air 1 at Air Headquarters Aden* in South Arabia. In 1950, he joined the *RCAF Primary*

Reserve until reaching discharge age. Returning to Canada as an emigrant in 1948, Ken worked in Bradford, Niagara Falls and Toronto before coming to Barrie in 1956 with his family. Until 1970, Ken was a Divisional Manager with Confederation Life in Owen Sound, Orillia and finally in Barrie. His final 15 years before retirement was with what is now the CEC in Barrie where he was a Labour Market Analyst.

A member of Branch 147 Royal Canadian Legion since 1957, his primary interest has been 441 (Huron) Wing of the Royal Canadian Air Force Association for the past 33 years. His active participation, and his love of the written word, made him a perfect candidate for documenting the history of the Wing. Ken continues to reside in Barrie with his lovely bride Patricia.

