# 434 Niagara BULLETIN



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**General Meetings** 

3rd Thursday of each month at

**Branch 4 RC Legion** 

383 Morningstar Avenue Welland ON

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**Royal Canadian Air Force Association of Canada** 

# **Chairman's Report October 2021**

As we approach the winter months it has become all too apparent that this pandemic will be with us for sometime yet. It is my hope to all members that guidelines that are designed to keep us as safe as possible are followed so that we can look ahead and move toward to our regular agendas.

434 (Niagara Peninsula) Wing held our Battle of Britain ceremony on Sunday September 19<sup>th</sup>. We used a different venue this year due to not knowing what the situation was at our local Legion. The Cenotaph at Chippawa Park provided the ideal setting and we had many dignitaries and guests in attendance which included our RCAFA Regional Director Brenda Wilson who laid a wreath on behalf of the Association. We also had a flyover by member Alf Beam who piloted his T28 Trojan accompanied by a second T28 and a Harvard trainer, many thanks to Alf and the other 2 pilots. Thanks to the Committee and to all those that helped make the day a success. The event was taped by our local cable Co. Cogeco for later broadcast.

We are managing to hold our Board meetings the dates of which have now been changed to the first Saturday of each month this can only be achieved provided we are allowed to continued temporary use of the Optimist hall arranged by our secretary George Groff.

We are in preparations to produce our 2022 wall calendar as a fundraiser and will bring for discussion whether or not we want to produce Christmas cards as in past years, stay tuned for a progress report.

We are very glad to report that member and our Kit Shop manager/Audio Visual Technician Rod Lee is making progress following surgery he was in good form working the sound for the Battle of Britain ceremony, thank you for that Rod and we all wish you success in your ongoing recovery.

Our 411 Squadron Spitfire pilot Tom Vance is making progress following eye surgery. Tom is 99 years old and a remarkable man.

In an email from one of the Cadet Squadron C.O's I was informed that they are still under restrictions regarding Parades and Ceremonies but are still hopeful to be able to take part in Remembrance Day services

I wish you all good health, stay safe.

Bill Heron Chairman

Per Ardua ad Astra

# The Cost of A War

# **Human Lives**

# **Afghanistan**

# At least 47,000 civilians killed

While estimates vary, Brown University's Costs of War project has calculated that at least **47,000 Afghans** were killed over the course of the war. Even now that the fighting has stopped, the consequences of the conflict are still being felt: Unexploded ordnance continues to kill and maim civilians, in many cases children. The war has also exacerbated the effects of poverty and poor sanitation and healthcare in the country.

# At least 64,000 Afghan military and police killed

More than 64,000 members of the US-trained Afghan National Army (ANA) and the country's police force perished in the war.

# **Nearly 6 million displaced Afghans**

The US-led conflict in Afghanistan has fueled a refugee crisis that continues to reverberate across Europe. In a nation of 38 million, around 5.9 million Afghans have either been displaced internally or have fled the country since war broke out in October 2001.

In the last three years alone, more than 395,800 Afghans have been displaced, according to Afghan government figures released in early July.

# Representative Numbers for some NATO Participants

## USA

Current estimates put total US military casualties at more than **2,400 killed, with 20,000 others wounded**. An additional 3,800 private contractors died during the 20-year war. More than 1,100 allied service members, including those from NATO states, also lost their lives.

"We lost 2,461 troops in that war, and tens of thousands of others suffered wounds, seen and unseen. The scars of combat don't heal easily, and often never heal at all," said Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin III.

More than 800,000 American service members and 25,000 civilians served in Afghanistan over the almost 20-year mission.

# Canada

Canada's role in Afghanistan, consisting of operations against the Taliban and other insurgents in southern Afghanistan (Kandahar Province), has resulted in the largest number of fatal casualties for any single Canadian military mission since the Korean War. More than 40,000 Canadians served in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2014. **The war killed 165 Canadians — 158 soldiers and 7 civilians**. Many others came home injured or suffered psychological wounds from the war. According to the Canadian Armed Forces, 191 veterans have taken their own lives since 2011. Canada's combat role ended in 2011 and shifted to one of training. The last Canadian troops left Afghanistan in March 2014.

British and Canadian troops were more than twice as likely to get killed in Afghanistan as their US counterparts, according to a study that looks at the scale of the sacrifice made by Nato allies over the course of the 20-year war. As reported by Julian Borger in Washington for The Guardian, May 12, 2021, The Costs of War report looks at fatalities as a percentage of national troop levels at peak deployment in Afghanistan. The US losses were 2.3% of its vast military presence. The UK lost 455 lives, which was 4.7% of its peak deployment level, while the 158 Canadians killed represented 5.4% of their total.

# UK

As at 23 July 2015, a total of 454 British forces personnel or MOD civilians have died while serving in Afghanistan since the start of operations in October 2001. As of 11 October 2015, the British forces have suffered 456 fatalities and 2,188 wounded in action, another 5,251 have suffered from disease or non-battle injuries. As of 22 February 2020 there has been a total of **457 fatalities** of British Forces personnel including Ministry of Defence (MoD) civilians.

# Germany

As of October 3, 2019, **59 German soldiers and 3 policemen died in Afghanistan**, raising the death toll to 62. Among them are the first German reservists to fall in hostile actions and the first German policemen to die in a deployment abroad since World War II. In addition to these fatalities, 245 German soldiers and 4 police officers suffered injuries of varying degree caused by hostile activity.

# **Equipment**

# \$85 billion in US weapons and equipment abandoned to the Taliban

According to Congressman Jim Banks (R-Indiana), due to the "negligence" of the Biden administration, the Taliban is in possession of 75,000 vehicles, over 200 airplanes and helicopters, 600,000 small arms and light weapons, as well as night vision goggles and body armor. He claimed that the Taliban now have more Black Hawk helicopters than 85% of countries in the world, including close US allies. He estimated that equipment was worth \$85 billion, but some have suggested a far higher figure.

# Countless thousands of US bombs and munitions dropped on Afghanistan

As the war entered its final years, the US military radically ramped up its bombing campaign in Afghanistan. In 2019, US warplanes dropped 7,423 bombs and other munitions on the country, a nearly eightfold increase from 2015.

# Hundreds of thousands of hectares of opium poppies

According to a UN estimate, Afghanistan's opium production was estimated at 6,300 tons in 2020. That year, the total area under opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan was estimated at 224,000 hectares, an increase of 37% compared to 2019. Afghanistan is once again the world's leading source of opium poppies. Under Taliban rule, the crop had been nearly completely eradicated by May 2000.

# Incalculable levels of grift and waste

With a price tag of more than \$2 trillion, the war in Afghanistan suffered from a seemingly ceaseless stream of profiteers and grifters.



Abandoned Embraer A-29 Super Tucano attack aircraft (Super Tucano—see 434 Niagara Bulletin Nov-Dec 2019) in background behind piles of armoured vests—all left for the Taliban.

# Amelia Earhart's Flying Career Started in Toronto

Amelia was born in Atchison, Kansas on July 24, 1897. As the daughter of a railway lawyer, she had a very comfortable upbringing. After completing high school, she studied at the Ogontz School, a finishing school in Philadelphia. She travelled to Toronto during her Christmas break in 1917 to visit her younger sister Muriel, who was studying to be a teacher at St. Margaret's College on Bloor Street East. While sightseeing in the city, Earhart was moved by the injured veterans she encountered. "For the first time I realized what the World War meant," she later remarked. "Instead of new uniforms and brass bands, I saw only the result of four years of despair and struggle; men without arms and legs, men who were paralyzed and men who were blind." Earhart hadn't seen anything like it — the United States hadn't entered the war yet. These wounded warriors inspired her to drop out of school and secure a position that would enable her to use her energies to help care for these veterans.



Amelia in Toronto at 20 years of age.



Spadina Military Hospital

Since she didn't have any professional training or experience, Amelia signed on as a nurse's aide with the Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD). Most of the women who belonged to this organization were affluent, AngloProtestants who wanted to contribute to the war effort. Unlike nurses who had completed at least a couple years of training in their field, the volunteers typically received two to three days of instruction in first aid

from the Red Cross or St. John Ambulance. Once she finished her course, she became a nurse's aide at the Spadina Military Hospital, located on the University of Toronto campus. the sheer number of wounded soldiers swamped the medical system, so several public buildings were converted into military hospitals. One of them was the Knox College building at Spadina Circle, which became the Spadina Military Hospital in 1916. Amelia resided at the St. Regis Hotel, on Sherbourne Street. She likely took the Carlton streetcar to get to and from work each day. Amelia and the other volunteers at the hospital wore a uniform that included a three-quarter length white cotton dress with a cap in the form of a triangular white veil. The patients referred to them as "sister". She worked at the hospital from 7 a.m. until 7 p.m., with a two-hour break. The work entailed a variety of tasks, from scrubbing the floors to playing tennis with the ambulatory patients.

Amelia also spent considerable time assisting in the kitchen and the medical dispensary. Historian Linda Quiney revealed that Ameila was likely regarded by her superiors as a reliable individual, since those working in the dispensary were entrusted with the supply of whiskey kept in stock for medicinal purposes. Amelia and her sister soon became acquainted with some of the Royal Flying Corps (RFC) officers headquartered at Wycliffe College at U of T. The sisters would frequently venture to the aerodrome to watch the young pilots practice their manoeuvres. Amelia later revealed that these airfields were where she caught the "aviation bug" that became the all-consuming passion in her later life.



St Regis Hotel where Amelia resided



For 17 months, the St. George Campus was the location for all classroom training in North America for military pilots and aircrew. This photo, taken on back campus, shows some of the tents used by the airmen-in-training.

Photo from U of T Archives

At 21, Amelia and a friend visited an airshow. She and her friend were watching a stunt pilot when his plane dove straight for them. "I am sure he said to himself, 'Watch me make them scamper,' " she later recalled. But she didn't. "I did not understand it at the time, but I believe that little red airplane said something to me as it swished by."

At the time, the Canadian branch of the Royal Flying Corps was headquartered at the University of Toronto. The campus was crowded with air cadets, along with a handful of airplanes used as teaching aids. There were also several airfields in and around Toronto, giving Amelia plenty of opportunities to explore her new passion.

"I think that I can attribute my aviation career to what I experienced here in Toronto," Amelia said in a speech to The Canadian Club in 1932. "Even though I worked from 7 o'clock in the morning until 7 o'clock at night, I found time to visit — well, they were hardly airports, they were flying fields . . . I had a chance to see the fliers. During the war, Toronto was one of the major training hubs for the RFC, boasting two airfields, in Leaside and Armour Heights. The sisters would frequently venture to the aerodrome to watch the young pilots practice their manoeuvres. Amelia later revealed that these airfields were where she caught the "aviation bug" that became the all-consuming passion in her later life.



Curtis JN-4 Canuk, the training aircraft for Royal Canadia Flying Corps pilots. This aircraft with its daring pilots first stirred the imagination of Ameila Earhart.

The Royal Flying Corps was also in need of a trainer and contracted with Curtiss to produce a variant of the Jenny called the JN-4 (Canadian) or "Canuck". This aircraft was manufactured by Canadian Aeroplanes Ltd. of Toronto under license from the Curtiss Aeroplane Co. The Canuck differed in a number of ways from the standard JN-4 Jenny: it had a lighter airframe, ailerons on both wings, a bigger and more rounded rudder, and a joy stick instead of a control wheel for piloting the aircraft. Its tail units were primarily of metal construction in place of the wood construction in the Jenny. For a detailed outline of the JN-4-Canuk see *Wing Mate Newsletter*, October 2021.

# 434 Niagara Battle of Britain Ceremony 2021

This year's service was held at the Cenotaph in the beautiful Chippawa Park, which despite its name, is in Welland. Sunday, September 19th was a bright, warm day which encouraged everyone present to stay and enjoy the entire ceremony.



Chippawa Park, Welland, Ontario







Cenotaph depicting Service and Sacrifice of members of Canada's Armed Forces





is made from Lecasse grantle and was designed by noised Canadian sculptor, Elizabeth Wyn Wood. Its unique design incorporates two heroic figures, a solder and a woman, along with a trench morter and stylized elements of the Canadian landscape. The theme represents "service and sacrifice".

This plaque was unveiled on September 11, 1999

by His Excellency the Right Honourable Romeo Leplanc P.C., C.C., C.M.M., C.D., Governor General and Commander-in-Chief Canada and the Honourable Gilbert Parent M.P., Speaker of the House of Commons,

Le Monument eux morts de Welland-Crowland a d'ét inauguré le 4 septembre 1939, un jour après le début de la Deuxième Guetre mondiales. Dernière Guerre mondiale sux morts de la Première Guerre mondiale érigé su Canada, c'est un ouvrage national important dans le domaine de la sculpture canadienne. Œuyre de la Canadienne Elizabeth Wyn Wood, il est sculpré dans du granti Lacasse. Son dessin unique se compose de deux personnages héroïques, un soldat et une femme, ainsi que d'un mortier de citantier et d'éléments stylisés du paysage canadien. Il a pour thème «le service et le sacrifice.» Son Excellence, le très honorable Roméo LeBlanc, C.P., C.C., C.M.M., C.D., Gouverneur général et commandant en che du Canada et l'honorable Gilbert, Parent d'éputé, président de la Chambre des communes, ont dévoilé cette plaque le septembre 1999.



# 434 Niagara Battle of Britain Ceremony 2021

continued



Timber, 434 Niagara's mascot, was on hand to greet attendees.



The ceremony included a flyover by Alf Beam and fellow pilots, of two T-28 Trojans and a Harvard



Master of Ceremonies, 434 Niagara member Jim Hutchinson



Padre, Reverend John Cathcart



Vance Badawey, MP

Invitees were invited to speak; some brought greetings and many gave meaningful accounts of events leading up to the Battle of Britain and highlighting the importance to all of us of winning the Battle of Britain.

# 434 Niagara Battle of Britain Ceremony 2021



Jeff Burch, MPP



Frank Campion, Mayor of the City of Welland



Marv Junkin, Mayor of the Town of Pelham





Brenda Wilson, Regional Director, RCAFA



**Wreaths** 



Colour Guard, Branch 56 Royal Canadian Legion, Port Colborne



434 Niagara Chairman Bill Heron with Master of Ceremonies, Jim Hutchinson

# In the News

# **Duxford Battle of Britain Air Show**



Spitfires and Hawker Hurricanes in flypast at IWM Duxford for Battle of Britain Airshow 2021 held September 18-19th, 2021

# **Airshow China**

The 13th China International Aviation and Aerospace Exhibition, or Airshow China 2021, was held in Zhuhai, South China's Guangdong Province, running from September 28th to October 3rd.



The Red Falcon Air
Demonstration Team
of the People's
Liberation Army Air
Force conducts an
aerial performance at
the opening ceremony



Photo: Xinhua



China's J-20 stealth fighter jets with domestically made engines also made their debut at the airshow. Indigenous engines are also being installed on China's Y-20 large transport planes.



Photo: Yang Sheng/GT

A J-16D electronic warfare aircraft is on display at the Airshow China 2021. In addition to two electronic warfare pods on the wingtips, it carries four jamming pods under its wings and air inlets, as well as two missiles under its belly.

# Valentina Tereshkova, First Woman in Space

Valentina Tereshkova, was the first woman to go into space. In 1963, she spent almost three days in space and orbited Earth 48 times in her space capsule, Vostok 6. That was her only trip into space. Valentina later toured the world to promote Soviet science and became involved in Soviet politics.

# Early life

Valentina Vladimirovna "Valya" Tereshkova was born on March 6, 1937, in Maslennikovo, a village near the Volga River about 170 miles (277 kilometers) northeast of Moscow. Her parents worked on a collective farm, and her father was killed during World War II. Valentina was first enrolled in school at age 10 and graduated at 17. She began working at a tire factory, and later at a textile mill, but continued her education by correspondence courses to graduate from the **Light Industry Technical School** in 1960. Valentina also became interested in parachuting from a young age, and



trained in skydiving at the local Aeroclub, making her first jump at age 22, on 21 May 1959. While still employed as a textile worker, she trained as a competitive parachutist, which she kept a secret from her family and worked at a textile factory, but continued her education through correspondence courses. Tereshkova joined the factory's Young Communist League (Komsomol) and soon advanced to the Communist Party. She became interested in parachute jumping after joining the Yaroslavl Air Sports Club.

# Inspired by Gagarin

After Yuri Gagarin became the first man in space in 1961, Valentina volunteered for the Soviet space program. Although she did not have any experience as a pilot, she was accepted into the program because of her 126 parachute jumps. At the time, cosmonauts had to parachute from their capsules before they hit the ground on returning to Earth.



Vostok 6



**Vostok 6 Interior** 

Since they had no military experience, they started with the rank of private in the Soviet Air Forces. Training included isolation tests, centrifuge tests, thermo-chamber tests, decompression chamber testing, and pilot training in MiG-15UTI jet fighters. Valentina underwent water recovery training at sea where several motorboats were used to agitate the waters to simulate rough conditions. She also began studying at the Zhukovsky Air Force Engineering Academy and graduated a few years after her flight. She remained as an instructor at the Yuri Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Center.

The group spent several months in basic training and, after they finished their training and passed an examination, Kamanin offered them the option to be commissioned as regular Air Force officers. With advice from the male cosmonauts, they chose to accept the offer of Nikolai Kamanin, director of cosmonaut training, as it would make it harder for the program to get rid of them after the first flight. All five women became junior lieutenants in the Air Force in December 1962. Tatyana Kuznetsova became ineligible for the first flight due to illness and Zhanna Yorkina was performing poorly in training, leaving Tereshkova, Irina Solovyova, and Valentina Ponomaryova as the leading candidates. Along with four other women, Tereshkova received 18 months of training. Of the five women, only Tereshkova went into space.

Originally, a joint mission profile was developed that would see two women launched into space on solo Vostok flights on consecutive days in March or April 1963, and it was intended that Tereshkova would launch first in Vostok 5 while Ponomaryova would follow her into orbit in Vostok 6. However, this flight plan was altered in March 1963. Vostok 5 would now carry a male cosmonaut, Valery Bykovsky, flying alongside a woman aboard Vostok 6, both to be launched in June 1963. The State Space Commission nominated Tereshkova to pilot Vostok 6 at their meeting on 21 May. Kamanin called her, "Gagarin in a skirt." Tereshkova was chosen to pilot Vostok 6. It was to be a dual mission. Cosmonaut Valeriy Bykovsky launched on Vostok 5 on June 14, 1963. Two days later, Tereshkova launched. She remains the only woman to fly to space solo, and the youngest at 26 years of age. Her call sign in this flight was Chaika. The two spacecraft took different orbits and came within 3 miles (5 km) of each other. The cosmonauts exchanged communications.

As planned in all Vostok missions, Tereshkova ejected from the capsule during its descent at approximately 4 miles above the Earth landing some 620 km north east of Karaganda, Kazakhstan at 8.20am June 19. Her fellow cosmonaut Bykovsky landed some three hours after her. Valentina logged more than 70 hours in space and made 48 orbits of Earth. Soviet and European TV viewers saw her smiling face and her logbook floating in front of her. She returned to earth, having spent more time in space than all U.S. astronauts combined to that date.

Her mission was used to continue the medical studies on humans in spaceflight and offered comparative data of the effects of space travel on women. She did experience nausea and some physical discomfort for much of the flight.

By the time of her retirement in 1997 she had attained the rank of Major General, received 38 Awards which included a number of certificates and was twice awarded the Order of Lenin.

Valenyina was a prominent member of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, holding various political offices including being a member of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet from 1974 to 1989. She remained politically active following the collapse of the Soviet Union but twice lost elections to the national State Duma in 1995 and 2003. Valentina was later elected in 2008 to her regional \_\_\_\_\_parliament, the Yaroslavl Oblast Duma. In 2011, she was elected to the national State Duma as a member of the United Russia party and re-elected in 2016.



# Edward Carter-Edwards, 1923-2017, a Story of Determination and Survival



Edward Carter-Edwards (Ed) was born April 2, 1923 in Montreal but grew up and lived in the Hagerville, Hamilton and Ancaster areas. In 1994 Ed and his family moved to Smithville area where he became a member of 434 Niagara Wing for many years. At the age of 19, he signed on, training as a wireless operator and eventually being assigned to a Halifax bomber in the 427 RCAF squadron in England. In June 1944 on his 22nd bombing run, many of them to bomb Berlin, his aircraft was hit about 50 kilometres west of Paris. Following the pilot's orders, he bailed out. Surviving the bailout, he managed to connect with the French Underground, but while trying to work his way back to Britain, he was betrayed to the Gestapo by a collaborator.

The SS refused to believe he was a Canadian airman, and he and 167 other captured Allied fighters were thrown into the Buchenwald concentration camp, branded as spies and saboteurs.

Ed arrived at Buchenwald on Aug. 20, 1944. As many as 80,000 occupied Buchenwald. Many were worked or starved to death, some were murdered outright — shot or hung by their necks from hooks in the basement of the body disposal plant, then burned, at a rate of nearly 400 a day by the end. Within a month of arriving, Ed developed pneumonia and pleurisy and was placed in what he called "the death house" but was saved by a French university professor who got hold of a syringe to drain the fluids out of his lungs. A German doctor came through about every fourth or fifth day. "If he thought you are not going to make it, he had somebody following him and they would inject a chemical into your heart right there while you were lying on this cot and kill you," Ed said. "Because if you couldn't work in Buchenwald, you died. You either worked or you died, there was no in between." At night the orderlies moved the Canadian, delirious with fever, bed to bed so that the doctor would not recall him from the day before and order his death. "So that's how I survived," said Ed.

He was then placed on a work party laying railway tracks outside the camp, working 12- to 14-hour shifts. When he complained, Carter-Edwards said he was told "I could always report to the crematorium."

A Dutch Underground captive, forced to keep a head count of the dead, took pity on him and placed him on the dead list. He was told to keep on the move and be as unobtrusive as possible. He mingled with the other prisoners and recalled seeing "a great hut full of bodies stacked like cord wood, ready for the crematorium which operated day and night."

Five days from execution, Ed and the other airmen were spotted by a German air force official who had them transported to military PoW camps. Just in time. Ed and the other airmen were removed from Buchenwald by the German air force, the Luftwaffe. He was taken out in November 1944 and transported under guard to Stalag Luft III in Sagan, Poland. "Life there was rough - no heat, little food and continuous harassment - but to me it was heaven compared to Buchenwald," said Ed.

When Ed returned home to Canada, he met and married Lois in 1946 and started a family. At the time of his passing, Ed was survived by his wife of 70 years, two of their children, (a third child predeceased him) four grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

# Edward Carter-Edwards, 1923-2017, a Story of Determination and Survival

continued

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II talks to Ed Carter-Edwards a former member of Bomber Command from Canada, after unveiling the Bomber Command Memorial in Green Park, London, 28 June 2012. The memorial remembers the sacrifice and bravery of the 55,573 RAF crew who lost their lives in the Second World War.



In 2014 Ed revisited the Buchenwald concentration camp to mark the 69th anniversary of the liberation of the camp and also the 70th anniversary of his incarceration there. "Thoughts of this place are never ones of forgiving and forgetting, although I try. And I try very hard," he said. "But I think I have mellowed to the point where I'm prepared to forgive. Forget ... no you'll never forget. I'll never forget."

Ed was a co-founder of the Hamilton/Burlington chapter of the National POW Association, member of the Konzentrationslager Buchenwald (KLB), Association Française Buchenwald Dora et kommandos, the RCAF Association, RCAFA 434 Wing, 427 Lion Squadron, Smithville Legion Branch 393, 6th RCAF Museum in Dunnville, and Honorary member of the OPP Veterans Association.

# October Jim Hutchinson



November
John Bruneau
Chuck Leguerrier

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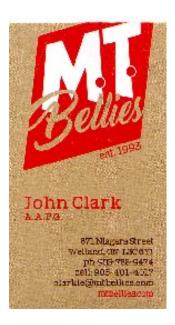
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