



Royal Canadian Air Force Association

RCAF 441 (Huron) Wing Inc.

September - October 2025 Newsletter

Vol 9 Edition 6



1. RCAF Association Mission Statement:

The Association is a national not-for-profit aerospace and community service organization composed of aviation-minded citizens established to remind Canadians of their country's rich aeronautical tradition and history, to support Canada's Air and Space Forces, to support and encourage the civil aviation component within Canada and support the Royal Canadian Air Cadet program.

2. Chairman's Message:

The RCAF Association has undergone several changes at the National level since the beginning of the year. LCol (ret'd) Brook Bangsboll has taken over as the Association's Executive Director and has worked hard to provide a solid operating framework for it. The 9-member National Executive Committee (NEC) is being led by Terry Chester with Henri Levasseur as the new Vice-Chair. David Farnsworth is the Chair of the Finance Committee, Manager of the Kit Shop and OPI of the RCAFA Auction (he is looking for volunteers to assist him if you are interested). All 9 board members are up for re-election at the AGM in November, including the Chair. If you are interested in volunteering to be on the NEC, please let Brook Bangsboll know. The new RCAFA website is progressing well, as is the Kit Shop. Peter Evans is to be commended for his hard work to set it up again and fulfill the orders along with David Farnsworth.

3. Last Flight: **Rita Reimer** – 04 September 1936 – 21 August 2025



LAW Rita MacNeil – RCAF 1956



Cllr Ann Marie Kungl, LCol Ben Beaulieu, Rita Reimer, and Lt Heather Beaulieu – 1 Nov 2024

4. CT-133443 and Rudy Mak's Parkette:

There have been many favourable comments received about having CT-133443 on display at Rudy's place on Hwy 90. For those of you who have driven past it lately, you will notice that it is firmly on its concrete pads and lifted off the ground with the wheelbases as designed by Mike Lindsay. Rudy has had all the paint and decals removed and has done the final cleaning and polishing. He has all the missing parts including elevators and speed brakes ready for installation, as well as the new RCAF 1965 pattern decals. Mike Lindsay is hoping to receive a copy of the application instructions for the decals so that he can prepare for his next visit to Rudy's in the coming month or so. Rudy already has a plan to paint the required areas black and red when the weather permits.

Michael is also working on a plan to be in Borden for a CF-5 Freedom Fighter job at the Museum sometime in September or October and is just waiting for confirmation. The PSS RSM (CWO Guigue is keen to move the CF-5 airframe out of the Air Annex Museum (E-145) and place on its intended spot in front of Croil Hall in October. He is looking for assistance from the 441 Wing / Air Force volunteers and possibly the Recovery and Salvage Section (RASS) from the 8 Wing.

5. Honours and Awards:

It is a pleasure to announce that two members of 441 Wing have been honoured by Her Excellency, the Right Honourable Mary Simon, Governor-General of Canada with the Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers. They are Murray Conley and Monika Sergeant. Their medals will be presented to them at the upcoming Wing meetings. Both of these members are very deserving of this recognition.

6. Commemoration of the 85th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain:

The Battle of Britain Flag Raising ceremony is planned to take place at Barrie City Hall on Wednesday, 10 Sept 2024 at 1100 hrs. All are welcome to attend and should be there by 1050 hrs. Dress is blazer and medals. We are also planning to commemorate the 85th Anniversary with a parade at 16 Wing Borden on Sunday, 21 Sept 2025. 16 Wing has the lead for organizing the parade. Spectators should be seated by 1045 hrs at the RCAF Memorial near Croil Hall. The parade and ceremony are being organized by Murray Conley and will



feature our Colour Guard and two military flights from 16 Wing, Borden. Members of 441 Wing and other Air Force veterans are invited to attend. Seating will be provided for you. If you are available, please come out to the commemorations of this pivotal air battle of the Second World War.

7. New Commander 16 Wing – Colonel J.W. Cunningham, CD:

Colonel Wesley Cunningham took over command of 16 Wing Borden on Thursday, 24 July 2025 from Colonel Gabriel Dore. Wesley joined the Canadian Armed Forces in 1993 as an infantry soldier in the Algonquin Regiment. Following his commissioning as an AERE officer at Royal Military College, his first posting was to 427 Tactical Helicopter Squadron, followed by 1 Wing Headquarters in Kingston,



ON. Following a quick succession of postings to Ottawa, Edmonton, and Winnipeg, he attended the Joint Command and Staff Program at the Canadian Forces College in 2012-2013. Upon promotion to lieutenant-colonel, he was the first Weapon System Manager for Canada's CH147F Chinook helicopter. After a year as the Executive Assistant to the Commander of the Royal Canadian Air Force he spent a year as a student at the Univ of Ottawa, and another year as Director of Air Plans. This was followed by a subsequent posting as the Director of Aerospace Equipment Program Management (Tactical Aviation & Simulation), then as Director of A4 Maint at 1 Cdn Air Div. Colonel Cunningham deployed to 2002 G8 Summit in Kananaskis, AB;

Bosnia-Herzegovina; and twice to Afghanistan. He has a bachelor's degree in Chemical and Materials Engineering, as well as master's degrees in Business Administration, Military Studies, and Complex Project Leadership.

Col Cunningham was born in New Brunswick, the son of a veteran infantry officer. He and his wife have two daughters. He enjoys competitive shooting, hunting, and geopolitics.

8. RCAFA Executive Director's Month-End Report July 2025:

General Overview

- July marked Brook Bangsball's sixth month as Executive Director.
- Key meetings included engagement with both outgoing and incoming RCAF Commanders, strengthening ties between RCAFA and RCAF.
- Planning is underway for major fall events: Battle of Britain Parade (21 Sept), Vimy Awards Gala (5 Nov), RCAFA AGM (24 Nov), and Air Force on the Hill (25 Nov).

Publications & Communications

- Second digital edition of Airforce Magazine released (3 July); next edition due late September featuring an interview with new RCAF Commander.
- Monthly bilingual communications to members initiated, starting August.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Positive meeting with new RCAF Commander, who endorsed RCAFA's proposals.
- RCAFA met with RCAF Foundation CEO; mutual advisory roles established and financial support pledged for Battle of Britain Parade.

Event Planning

- Battle of Britain Parade (21 Sept): RCAFA coordinating veteran and cadet participation, guest of honour, and contributing \$1000 for refreshments.
- Vimy Awards Gala (5 Nov): RCAFA table reserved; RCAF Commander invited and accepted.
- Air Force on the Hill (25 Nov): Dean Black contracted as lead planner; venue site visits scheduled.

Strategic Initiatives

- RCAFA Business Plan for FY 2025–26 in development; to be ratified at AGM.
- “24 Wing” stakeholder network concept revived under RCAFA leadership, led by MGen (Ret) Colin Keiver.
- RCAFA website revitalization project launched with eLearnza Inc., completion expected by November.

Upcoming Priorities (Aug–Sept)

- Finalize business plan and AGM preparations.
- Continue planning for Battle of Britain and Air Force on the Hill events.
- Develop next Airforce Magazine edition and expand sponsorship.
- Support monthly communications and annual awards nomination process.

9. RCAF Association Annual General Meeting (AGM) — 24 November 2025:

The RCAF Association will be holding its 2025 AGM (virtually - by Zoom program) at 7pm EDT on 24 November 2025. All members in good standing are invited / encouraged to attend. Zoom invitations will be emailed to all RCAFA members two weeks in advance of the meeting. For more information about the AGM or other RCAFA activities, please send an email to: Info@airforce.ca. Nominations to elected positions on the RCAF Association's Board of Director are now being accepted. If interested, please go to the RCAF Association's website or contact the RCAFA office at: info@airforce.ca or director@airforce.ca.

10. Upcoming Wing Activities:

Date	Event	Time
9 Sept	Wing Directors’ Hybrid Meeting – Barrie Legion	1800 hrs
9 Sept	Wing Members Hybrid Meeting – Barrie Legion – Guest speaker – Mark Aiken talking about the Wounded Warriors Program;	1900 hrs
10 Sept	85 th Commemoration of the Battle of Britain flag raising at Barrie City Hall flag poles	1100 hrs
17 Sept	Veterans Social at the Barrie Legion – Speaker Mr Keith Gillespie of CASKETMART.	1000 hrs
20 Sept	Central Region Directors meeting – online and at 447 Wing Mount Hope	1000 hrs
21 Sept	85 th Commemoration of the Battle of Britain Parade at 16 Wing Borden	1045 hrs
25 Sept	VCB Dinner Meeting at the Barrie Legion – Guest speaker Former OPP Commissioner Chris Lewis	1700 hrs
13 Oct	AC1 Stanly Peacock Memorial Service Veterans Park on waterfront near Orillia RCL Branch #34	1100 hrs
14 Oct	Wing Directors’ Hybrid Meeting – Barrie Legion	1800 hrs
14 Oct	Wing Members Hybrid Meeting – Barrie Legion – Guest speaker – Dr. Bob Banks – Barrie’s 9-Mile Portage and its significance.	1900 hrs

25 Oct	RCL Poppy Campaign Kick Off at the Barrie Legion	1100 hrs
04 Nov	Remembrance Week Flag Raising - Barrie City Hall	TBC
06 Nov	VCB Dinner Meeting at the Barrie Legion – Guest speaker topic – CWO (retired) Darcey Elder, MMM, MSM, CD, Wounded warriors of Canada and Veterans Mental health programs	1700 hrs
11 Nov	Remembrance Day Parade – Barrie Cenotaph	1030 hrs
18 Nov	Wing Directors’ Hybrid Meeting – Barrie Legion	1800 hrs
18 Nov	Wing Members Hybrid Meeting – Guest speaker – Joep Dienen – The Liberation of Holland in 1945	1900 hrs
24 Nov	RCAF Association Virtual Annual General Meeting	1900 hrs
25 Nov	The RCAFA hosting its annual Air Force on the Hill event in Ottawa. This event is by invite only.	1700 hrs
TBA Dec	441 (Huron) Wing Christmas Social	TBD

11. TIME CAPSULE: “The RCAF and the Gulf War”: By Randolph Rice

The Middle East had always been a hotbed of troubles and war in the region was anticipated. In the summer of 1990, conditions had escalated to a point where Iraq invaded Kuwait in an attempt to occupy and seize its oil resources. As a result of this incursion the UN passed three Security Council Resolutions which demanded the immediate withdrawal by Iraq of its troops. When this did not happen, the UN mandated the use of force against Iraq via UNSCR 678, a rare action by the UN.

Canada, sticking to its policy of restoring peace in the Middle East, joined a coalition of American, British, Australian, Dutch, French and other nations to restore peace through military action against Iraq.

Canada sent 4,500 troops as part of Operation FRICION including 441 Wing’s own Norm Marion as part of the Canadian Photographic Unit’s Motion Picture Section to record for posterity Canadian Forces in action.



439 “Tiger” Sqn CO, Lt-Col Don Matthews, prepares for a mission over Kuwaiti in 1991. (Credit: DND ISC91-5385).



The Desert Cats Maintenance team in Doha, Qatar during Op Friction in 1990-91

Canadian personnel represented all three branches of the Canadian Forces. In September, the RCAF's 409 Squadron, augmented by aircraft and personnel from

421 and 439 Squadrons flying out of Baden-Soellingen, Germany arrived in Qatar and took up its combat station.

The 26 CF-18's assisted the Royal Canadian Navy warships, with their Sea-King helicopters on board, in the gulf with "sweep and escort" patrols. The combined CF-18 force was nicknamed the "Desert Cats". Operating in a difficult climate to say the least and with limited resources the skill of ground crews and pilots proved second to none. On January 12, 1991 the Desert Cats armed their 26 CF-18 fighters in 12 hours and were acknowledged by General Horner, USAF, for being the first Wing in the Middle East to achieve 100% "ready to launch".

Also involved were 412 Squadron with a CC-144 Challenger providing transport missions to Qatar, 437 Squadron deploying its Boeing CC-137 air-to-air refueling tankers supplying over 2,000 tonnes of fuel to coalition aircraft in addition to the Canadian CF-18's.

Not to forget the workhorse the CC-130, meaning the entire fleet providing a bridge from Trenton to Baden to Qatar carrying food, parts, personnel for rotation and just about everything else to keep the troops functioning.

The operation would be the first of many to come for the RCAF in the years ahead and once again the RCAF would prove itself battle ready in time of conflict.

Lest We Forget

12. RCAF 100th Anniversary – Dedication of the Memorial Stain Glass Window:



On Sunday, 31 August 2025, a special RCAF stain-glass window was dedicated at St. Joseph's Catholic Chapel, CFB Borden to honour RCAF Veteran Corporal Joseph Alban Marcel Pigeon, CD and Mrs. Sieglinde Pigeon as well as all who served in the Royal Canadian Air Force during the years 1924 to 2024 in Borden - "Birthplace of the RCAF".

This project was started over two years ago by Jean Maurice Pigeon and all expenses associated with it were borne by him and his family. He is the oldest child of Cpl and Mrs. Marcel Pigeon and his family lived in Borden on School Street between 1969 and 1972. His father was stationed in Borden as a member of CFSAOE, which later became CFSATE. He died in December 1971 at the age of 41 years old. They had all worshipped in the Catholic Chapel in Borden, thus the significance of placing the stain-glass window there. Some of the best years of their childhood were spent as Air Force

dependents in Borden. They also have many sad memories that affected their families during those years.

Jean Maurice has always admired stained-glass and the use of it to honour the memory of persons who have served. The history of this particular window is not completely known, however, this stained-glass-window dates from the Second World War and honoured fallen RCAF personnel. Jean Maurice became aware of this particular stained-glass window for sale at a business called the Stonehouse of Campbellville, located in Campbellville, ON. The window features St. John the Evangelist and was made by the Robert McCausland Limited company, which is the oldest stained glass window company in the Western Hemisphere. The company was founded in 1856. Michaela Helliwell of Stonehouse of Campbellville was very helpful throughout the project. As well, Mr. Gord Hawthorne of Huronia Art Glass in Barrie was instrumental in stabilizing the panels that make up the window by reframing the individual segments. Last but not least, were the efforts of Mr. Matthew Heffer, cabinet maker in Victoria Harbour who orchestrated the framing and who hand carved the eagle that is part of the frame. Their talents were instrumental in the restoration of this artefact that is estimated to be approximately 80 years old or more.

For the dedication service, St. Joseph's Chapel was filled with parishioners, family members, and friends for the dedication. Leading the service was LCol (Father) Alex Varga, RCAF Command Chaplain who was assisted by Maj (Father) Patrick Arpani, Capt (Father) Antony Werunga, and Father Andy Mayer. During the service HCol Rory MacKinnon, HCol 16 Wing, played three heartfelt tunes on his pipes. This was followed by a poignant speech by Col Wesley Cunningham, 16 Wing Comd, that highlighted the Pigeon family's contribution to making the stained-glass RCAF Centennial window a reality in memory of their parents and all RCAF members who served throughout its first century and those who continue to serve Canada into its second century.

It was a great honour for the Pigeons to fund and donate this RCAF memorial to the community. They trust that the window will provide many generations to come with inspiration about the contributions of RCAF veterans to the freedoms that Canadians enjoy.

Per Ardua Ad Astra - Sic Itur Ad Astra

13. Verification of the 441 Wing Financial and Membership Records:

Each year we ask for three non-executive volunteers from the Wing membership to review and verify the financial and membership records for the Fiscal Year that ends at the end of June. This summer, Lorraine and Tom Carney and Peter Levedag stepped up to review the records and found them to be in order. Many thanks to them, as well as to Andrea Sloan for her diligence in overseeing our Wing Finances and the Membership records. Lorraine, Tom and David will be signing the acceptance letter prior to Bill sending it to our Regional Director and Group Chair for their information. Thank you to each of you for all that you have done.

14. RCAF Association Auction – Looking for Volunteers to Assist:

The RCAF Association National Online Auction has been approved by the NEC and our Wing member, David Farnsworth, is the OPI. He is looking for volunteers to

assist him with this undertaking, particularly people with good computer skills. Although the Association is once again on a good financial footing and a successful Auction should make that solid. Please contact David if you are interested in assisting with this important project < bavo572@gmail.com>.

15. Contact Information:

Wing Mailing Address: 77 Violet St, Barrie, ON, L4N 9N3

Wing E-Mail Address: 441wing.rcafa@airforce.ca

Telephone: 705-481-1453 (messages only)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/441Wing/>

Website: <https://www.rcaf441wing.com/>

16. 441 Wing Board of Directors (BoD)/ Executive for FY 2025-2026:

The Wing had half the directors stand for election for two (2) years from June 2025 to June 2027, thereby fulfilling our requirement under ONCA (Ontario Not for Profit Corp Act).

POSITION-TIME	NAME	PORTFOLIO(S)
Chairman-2027	Bill Sergeant	Newsletter, H&A Committee Member
Vice Chair-2026	Wally Capsticks	Special Events, H&A Committee Member
Treasurer-2027	Andrea Sloan	Membership Chair / 16 Wing Liaison O
Secretary-2026	Andrew Galton	Honours and Awards Committee Chair
Vice Treas-2026	Tammy Dupuis	Membership Vice Chair
Director-2027	Art Cameron	RCAFA Ad Astral Project Board Chair
Director-2026	Murray Conley	Director of Ceremonies
Director-2026	Joep Dienen	Wing Web Master
Director-2027	Norm Marion	Public Relations / Facebook
Director-2026	Randy Rice	Veterans Groups Liaison
Wing Padre	Maj Randy Hicks	Wing Padre