



*Royal Canadian Air Force Association
RCAF 441 (Huron) Wing Inc.
January – February 2024 Newsletter*

Vol 8 Edition 1



2023 – Happy New Year – 2024

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 Force, and to support and encourage the civil aviation component within the country.

2. Chairman's Message:

Happy New Year everyone. This is the big year for the RCAF as we proudly celebrate its 100th anniversary. There are numerous events planned for this year at the local and national level as indicated in our upcoming Wing activities chart (para 8). I would like to thank Jane Connolly, Lorraine Carney, Michaela Jakobi and Wally Capsticks for the outstanding job they did making the Wing's Christmas Social fun and memorable for all. In closing, I pray that 2024 brings peace to the areas of the world that are currently at war. May common sense prevail once more and the suffering of those affected by it cease.

Per Ardua Ad Astra.

3. Last Flights:

Denis Gerald Lajoie: October 18, 1963 – December 6, 2023

A loving son, brother of **Carole Hartzell**, uncle and great uncle, and a member of 441 Wing for 10 years, Denis passed away at age 60. Denis made fast friends everywhere he went and those who knew him well called him Gars.

Gars worked at the National Archives in Ottawa for 30 years before moving to Barrie. He took immense pride in his work; however, his passion was sport. Gars competed in a myriad of Special Olympics sports, most notably at Canadian Nationals as a member of the Ontario swim team. A long line of trophies and medals attest to his athletic prowess. In truth, Gars loved everything life had to offer with a joie de vivre that was contagious. He loved traveling, music and was a devoted lifelong Montreal Canadiens



fan. He will be remembered as the consummate trickster with an amazing sense of humour; the ultimate housekeeper; and amateur performer. Gars' Elvis impressions were LEGENDARY!

Deeply saddened by his passing are his sister **Carole and brother-in-law Brian Hartzell**, niece Stephanie (Travis Gaudet), nephew Bobby (Renee Lapointe) and great nephew and niece, Weston and Bria. He is also survived by his godparents Gerald and Therese Spenard, uncle Georges Lajoie (Lucie Piecki) and aunt Louise Bergeron (Paul). Denis is predeceased by his mother Claire (Spenard) Lajoie. The two were inseparable - now, together again. Thank you to all the devoted staff of the IOOF in Barrie Ontario for their kindness and care. The family will always remember everything you did for him. Elvis has left the "IOOF" building.

Cremation has taken place. A private family internment will follow at a later time at Notre-Dame Cemetery in Ottawa.

Nancy Jean van Hintum, (nee Johnston):



It is with great sadness that we share the passing of Nancy at RVH on Nov 9, 2023. Nancy was surrounded in love by her husband and family. Born in Barrie, on October 29, 1959, to Clayton Johnston and **Isabella (Leece) Johnston**. Nancy grew up on a farm in Stroud, where she lived with her parents, brothers and sisters. She worked as a Customs Rater for many years, then as a Court Reporter later in life.

Nancy is the cherished wife of Michael van Hintum. They shared a joyful life of 32 years filled with family, friends, travelling and adventure.

She is survived by her mother **Isabella Johnston (Ken Stacey)**; her children Laura Lockyer (Gary), Corey Lockyer; her grandchildren Kodey (Giovanni), Aurora (Broderick), Amber and Noah; her great-grandchild Abbi. She was predeceased

by her father Clayton Johnston. Nancy is the treasured daughter-in-law to Bill and Francine van Hintum; sister-in-law to Wilma, Johanna (Scott) and Christine. Nancy is the much-loved sister of Susan, Barry (Karen), Jeffery (Kim), Wayne (Kathie) and Cathy (David).

4. Wing Christmas Social:

A great time was had by all at the Wing's Christmas Dinner and Social held at the Barrie Legion on Friday, Dec 1, 2023. Members of 441 Wing, 429 Georgina Wing members and spouses, as well as members of the Air Cadets sponsoring

committees were in attendance. Michaela Jacobi welcomed everyone at the door and thanked them for coming.

During the social time before the meal, Tom Carney sold the tickets for the lucky draw and the 50/50 draw. He was very busy during that time.



The evening was called to order by Wing Deputy Chair Wally Capsticks with the opening ritual. Wing member Randy Rice explained the symbols of the Missing Aviators Table. After toasts to our Fallen Comrades, the King, the Royal Canadian Air Force and the Royal Canadian Air Force Association, the Airman's Grace was said.

At each place setting everyone received either a mug rug or a jar gripper. These were cut out by Jane Connolly and sewn by Lorraine Carney. There were also two aviation games at each place and a bag of Doughnut Seeds (fruit loops). The table centre pieces were red poinsettia doilies with a decorated tea light glass. The person sitting in a chair with green tape on the leg won the centre piece.

During the dinner, everyone had the fun of solving the Aviation related games. Wally thanked the Legion Ladies for the terrific meal of turkey with all the trimmings including dessert. Nobody went home hungry.



After dinner, Jane Connolly gave the answers to the aviation games and handed out prizes to the ones who had the most correct answers. Jane also recited a poem written by her father called "Oo Knows?" which asked questions about different parts of the body. Many laughs ensued.

Lorraine and Jane then conducted the Lucky Draw with many great gifts being won. The 50/50 was won by Steve Wallace. The Closing Ritual was conducted by Wally Capsticks after which everyone went home after having had a terrific time.



5. Honours and Awards:

Within 441 (Huron) Wing, we have numerous members who have actively supported the Wing to achieve its mission and goals in 2023. I would ask that you take time to nominate these deserving members for Wing, Provincial or National awards such as Member of the Year, Award of Merit or a Certificate of Appreciation. Please send your nominations to the Chair of the Honours and Awards Committee, Andy Galton, at < galtonandrew1@gmail.com >.

6. Wing Fund Raisers:

"Dinner for 2 Anywhere in the World" Tickets:

Bob Debling has books of tickets for members to sell. They are \$10.00 each or a \$100.00 for a book of 11 tickets. Contact Bob to purchase tickets or to sell tickets. He can be reached via email < robert.debling@sympatico.ca > or phone 705-737-4765. Last year, the Wing received a donation of \$2,500 from the Kiwanis Club of Barrie as a tribute to Michael O'Shea and to support both of our Air Cadet Sqns. Ticket stubs and funds are due back to Bob no later than 1 Feb 2024 or you can bring them to our January 9th meeting.

7. RCAF 100 – Project Blue Light:

A nation-wide project to light the exterior of significant buildings in blue light has been proposed to mark the 100th anniversary of the RCAF on 1 April 2024.

Several local Royal Canadian Legion branches have agreed to take part, including Branch #147 in Barrie. The city of Bradford has agreed to have its city hall and public library participate in this project too. As a side benefit of this project, should sufficient municipalities and organizations participate in it, it could be considered for a Guinness Book of World Records entry.

You can read about what the city of Moose Jaw is considering for celebrating this milestone. <https://www.moosejawtoday.com/local-news/city-hall-starts-prepping-to-celebrate-rcafs-100th-birthday-in-2024-7835510>

7. Upcoming Wing Activities:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Time</u>
09 Jan	Wing Directors' Hybrid Meeting – Barrie Legion	1800 hrs
09 Jan	Wing Members Hybrid Meeting – Barrie Legion – Guest speaker – HCol Rory Mackinnon – RCAF 100 th Anniversary Beacon Project	1900 hrs
13 Feb	Wing Directors' Hybrid Meeting – Barrie Legion	1800 hrs
13 Feb	Wing Members Hybrid Meeting – Barrie Legion – Guest speaker – Barry Mitchell – World Scout Jamboree in South Korea	1900 hrs
24 Feb	The Toronto Garrison Officers' Ball 2024 – Sheridan Hotel, 123 Queen Street West Toronto Hosted by 400 Tac Hel Sqn.	1730 hrs
12 Mar	Wing Directors' Hybrid Meeting – Barrie Legion	1800 hrs
12 Mar	Wing Members Hybrid Meeting – Barrie Legion – Guest speaker F/O (ret'd) Hal Taylor talking about his flying career in the RCAF	1900 hrs
TBC - April	Dedication of the Rudy Mak's RCAF 100 Parkette	TBC
TBC - April	RCAF 100 th Anniversary Dinner / Dance	TBC
TBC - April	Dedication of the Orillia Obelisk in memory of Stanley Peacock, the Fire Fighters and Hunter Boats – RCL #34 Orillia	TBC
TBC	441 Wing Charter and Awards Banquet	TBC
01 May	Display RCAFA Memorial Banners in Barrie	6 weeks
11 Jun	Bradford - History of RCAF Presentation	1830 hrs
12 Jun	Bradford RCAF members / veterans talks	1830 hrs
14 Jun	Bradford's RCAF 100th Anniversary Celebration Parade with the Governor-General of Canada	1000 hrs
15-16 Jun	Borden Airshow-Snowbirds and CF-18 Demo A/C	Weekend

8. Humour in Uniform: Drawn by Randolf Rice while at CFB Trenton 1986



9. TIME CAPSULE: “Sqn Ldr Andrew Mackenzie DFC”: By Randolph Rice

This past year marked the 70th anniversary of the end of the Korean War. Few members of the RCAF could claim to have engaged in aerial combat in WW2 and in the airspace over Korea. One member, however, did exactly that and has the distinction of being the only RCAF POW of the war. His name was Squadron Leader Andrew Mackenzie DFC.

However, there is much more to his story. It reads like a Tom Clancy novel and begins on 10 Aug 1920 in Montreal, the city of his birth. As a young person of his time, Andy's dream was to fly, and he got that wish when he enlisted in the RCAF on 3 Apr 1940. He went overseas in 1943 serving with 403 and 421 Spitfire squadrons earning a DFC and credited with 8 ¼ enemy aircraft kills and a promotion to Squadron Leader. It was also his first encounter with friendly fire over Utah Beach supporting the D-Day landings when he was shot down by American ground fire. Fortunately, Andy guided his plane to the ground and belly flopped on the beach. This was not to be his last encounter with friendly fire.

At war's end, he transferred briefly to the reserves and in late 1946 was back in the regular RCAF. With the outbreak of the Korean War, Andy was itching to see action, this time flying the F-86 Sabre. After the war, he flew Sabers and was the Commanding Officer of 441 Squadron. Squadron Leader Andrew Mackenzie volunteered to do a tour of duty with the USAF's 51st Interceptor Wing flying sabers. He was one of 22 RCAF pilots to serve with units of the USAF during the Korean conflict.



Flying at 42,000 feet on 5 Dec 1952 along the coast of western Korea over the Yellow Sea he spotted two enemy MiG-15 jets. After informing his flight leader, a Major Saunders, he went in hot pursuit for a kill. Unfortunately, his flight

leader didn't hear him and headed in the opposite direction. Without cover as procedure dictated, Andy broke off the attack and attempted to rejoin his leader when another USAF Sabre raked his aircraft with fire. This type of incident infrequently occurred due to the similar configurations of the Sabre and the MiG-15.

As his leader engaged the enemy aircraft Andy noticed streaks of bullets passing over head. Before he could take evasive action, his canopy was blown off. In addition, his aircraft had suffered extensive damage and, in a few seconds, he was barrelling to earth requiring him to bail out. His second encounter with friendly fire had determined his next life experience.

Meanwhile on the ground the Chinese were in situ waiting for touchdown and for Andy almost two years as a POW. During his confinement, he endured harsh treatment but wasn't physically tortured. Always cold and hungry, he refused to co-operate and provide military secrets. As punishment, he was forced to sit at attention for three long months all day on the edge of his bed. Every day his captors reminded him he could be shot, and nobody would know the difference. He did not know whether his wife and kids knew if he was dead or alive. His mother passed away during his captivity not knowing what had become of him. Much of his confinement was in total isolation.

In Apr 1953, things changed for the better for Andy as peace talks intensified. Finally, two years to the minute he was shot down, Squadron Leader Mackenzie, 70 lbs. lighter walked to freedom on 5 Dec 1954.

Once back in Canada, Andy's life resumed, he remained in the RCAF holding various staff positions and retired in 1967 after serving 27 years. He never rose in rank above Squadron Leader, possibly due to a confession he made while a POW. He passed away due to cancer in Kemptonville, Ontario on 21 Sep 2009.

Squadron Leader Andrew Mackenzie's, DFC, courage in combat and his time as POW puts him in a category that few can or have equalled in RCAF history. He was the only RCAF veteran who flew in for the Second World War and the Korean War and was a POW. He has never been properly recognized by the Canadian government for what he sacrificed and endured for our freedom.

LEST WE FORGET

10. RCAF Association Cairn in Honour of the RCAF 100th Anniversary:

On 1 January, 2024, the RCAFA Ontario Group Chair, Walter Peckham, sent a letter out to all the Regional Directors asking them to talk with their Wings about providing monetary support for the proposed RCAFA Cairn. Our Wing had passed a motion in June 2023 to contribute \$10.00 per member towards it. Other members of the Wing said that would make personal donations towards it. Subsequent to that meeting, there was some doubt about the Cairn going

ahead. In September, discussions took place with the RCAFA NEC in Ottawa about support from them. ON Group Chair would like Wing's to re-commit their pledges by 31 Jan 2024 so that a decision can be made as to whether to have the Cairn made and dedicated in 2024.

11. RCAF 100th Anniversary Lapel Pins:



Following a well-established Borden tradition, commemorative pins are to be produced again in 2024 to mark the 100th anniversary of the birth of the RCAF on April 1st, 1924. This year's pin, selected by the membership, is the Armstrong Whitworth Siskin. It was a new advanced bi-plane fighter aircraft that entered service in 1928. The Siskin was used as a training aircraft at Camp Borden (the birthplace of the RCAF) and was Canada's first aerial display aircraft. Norm Marion has ordered 200 lapel pins for the Wing that will be sold during 2024.

12. RCAF 100th Anniversary Memorial Banners for Barrie:

The Wing's Committee overseeing the procurement of the RCAF 100th Anniversary Banners are Randy Rice, Les Ball, Jean-Maurice Pigeon, Dave Farnsworth, They had 19 names nominate for the banners. They met in November to discuss the names and what they needed to do to get the required information for Barrie's city staff to produce the banners by the end of April 2024. The greatest challenge is locating photos, info on people and getting family approval. The committee is asking members who may have photos and/or information on any of the nominees to provide it to the committee. 13 outdoor sites have been made available to 441 Wing with the possibility of having 6 more sites in Barrie City hall's rotunda. The nominees are: Tom Carney Snr, Bob Middlemiss, Alan Frederick Smerdon, Bill Jack, Fraser Muir, Gord Steane, Jean Steane, Ken Mitchell, George Mitchell, Rob Warman, Bill Coyle, Jim McPhee, Jill Taylor, Bob Moisey, Alister (Mac) Mac Donald, Stan Bieniawski, Michael O'Shea, Peter Levedag and Isabella Kelly. Three additional names were added during their meeting.

13. RCAF 100th Anniversary T-33 Parkette – Status Update:

After months of no information or contact, in the past week, there have been some very encouraging events. In mid-December, Rudy Make had an e-mail from LCol Wong relating to the obelisk and he commented that he was aware of the T-33 status and would assist in pushing it through this last step. Once cleared, and we have possession, the issue of a place to work on it, now over the winter,

may be an issue. In the event we cannot get one on Base, Rudy has a hangar at Edenvale that can be used, however, it's not heated and would involve trucking twice, but at least it's a backup.

The site preparation work is as ready as it can be before we move the aircraft on site. The bases for the flag poles and info signs were installed. The front 3 gardens have been planted with 1200 tulip bulbs. Randy Rice brought in some additional posters and uniforms for inside display which we're trying to complete before Christmas. He has an amazing collection of photographs courtesy of Dr Andrew Gregory. Current software and printing technologies have allowed us to clean and enlarge images with incredible detail.

14. Contact Information:

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

New 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/>

15. 441 Wing Board of Directors (BoD)/ Executive for FY 2022-2023:

The Wing had half the directors stand for election for two (2) years from June 2023 to June 2025, thereby fulfilling our requirement under ONCA (Ontario Not For Profit Corp Act).

POSITION-TIME	NAME	PORTFOLIO(S)
Chairman-2025	Bill Sergeant	Newsletter, H&A Committee Member
Vice Chair-2024	Wally Capsticks	Special Events, H&A Committee Member
Treasurer-2024	Andrea Sloan	Membership Chair / 16 Wing Liaison O
Secretary-2024	Andrew Galton	Honours and Awards Committee Chair
Vice Treas-2025	Tammy Dupuis	Membership Vice Chair
Director-2025	Gerry Pepler	RCAFA Ad Astral Project Board Chair
Director-2025	Art Cameron	RCAFA Ad Astral Project BoD Member
Director-2024	Murray Conley	Director of Ceremonies
Director-2024	Joep Dening	Wing Web Master
Director-2025	Norm Marion	Public Relations / FaceBook
Director-2024	Randy Rice	Veterans Groups Liaison
Wing Padre	Rev Doug Crocker	Wing Padre

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