



415 (Prince Edward County) Wing  
Royal Canadian Air Force Association  
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**CHOCKS AWAY**  
**January, February March 2014**

### **President's Message**



Winter is still here and the feedback I am hearing from everybody is that people are really getting tired of it! The good news is a Robin was spotted and so spring cannot be far behind the next storm.

Our 415 Wing Christmas party was a great success with a large turnout and the highest ever amount of food contributions to the Picton Food Bank. Rocky supplied his van for the delivery. Wing members who helped unload the donations were: Rocky Vanvliet, Ben Tinsley, Roberta Cullin, Ted Cullin and the Pres. The Food Bank staff were very appreciative of the variety and size of the contribution. There are over 280 people who depend on this food bank for support each year.

Our Wing also continues to make a significant financial contribution to the Picton Air Cadets. We are very proud of this group of young men and women who continue to impress all with their acquired military skills, growing maturity, and leadership which are developed during their time in the cadet program. Our financial contribution during 2013 was in excess of \$1600.00.

To demonstrate our ability in the digital age, (we are not dinosaurs after all) the Wing Executive for the months of February and March has moved to Virtual Executive Meetings utilizing the internet. On the normal date of the Executive meeting, we submit our reports via E Mail to John Jensen and he consolidates the input so we end up with meeting minutes. It has worked well and allows us to continue the Executive Meetings. We do this as there is a high percentage of the Executive who are away over the winter months.

The lunch meetings at Consecon have been well attended. Many thanks to those who have stepped in to lead these and other meetings in my absence.

More good news, 8 Wing Air Force Day will take place Saturday, 31 May 2014. It will include a parade from Trenton City Hall to the base and static displays on the north side. I will get more details from the public affairs officer and pass the information on to you. I promise to bring good weather back with me from Florida when I return April 15<sup>th</sup>, so hang in there.

***Per Ardua Ad Astra***

***Your 415 Wing President ... Bob***

## **WING NEWS**

Since the last Chocks Away, we had a successful Christmas Dinner that was a strictly fun filled night. The guess the number of mints 50/50 draw was won by yours truly, although it was all Roberta's doing.

Our 3 luncheon meetings held at Branch 509 RCL in Consecon were well attended considering how many snow birds have migrated for the winter. (What a bunch of wusses!) As usual, the soup and sandwiches were hearty and plentiful, and the home made deserts were delicious.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Glenwood Cemetery Veterans Day will be held on 20 September 2014. Plans are under way as I report this.

At the Quinte Regional Conference held 1 March 2014 at 413 Wing Headquarters in Trenton 415 Wing fielded a full sports team and tied for second place for the Temple Trophy again. First vice-president Alex presented our wing report, and afterwards reported on the progress of our Sergeant-at-Arms, Ben Tinsley who has suffered a brain aneurism. (See Jeanette's message below.) We host the next regional conference at Branch 78, RCL on 4 October 2014. Please keep that date open as your wing will need volunteers.

Ben Tinsley was transferred to Kingston General on Wednesday, 19 March 2014. He is being evaluated and is on the list to go to St. Mary's for rehab. I asked if he wanted visitors but he seems reluctant at this time.,

I apologize to anyone who may have phoned here to find out how Ben is doing. I know you are concerned and wish him well but I have so much on my agenda these days I often don't have the time to answer and/or reply. Email is much easier. *Jeanette Tinsley*

## **MEMBERSHIP**

Membership numbers as of this writing are 82 single, 1 dual for a total of 84.

## **PROGRAMS & SOCIAL**

Our next dinner meeting will take place at Branch 78, Royal Canadian Legion, Picton on Tuesday 8 April 2014. Timings are 1800 hours (6:00 p.m.) for 1900 hours (7:00 p.m.).

The dinner on 13 May 2014 will include elections for officers for the Wing Year 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015.

The annual wing barbeque will take place at McCauley Mountain Conservation Area aka Birdhouse City on Tuesday, 10 June 2014, from 1600 (4:00 p.m.) until whenever.

## **IN MEMORIAM**

It is with sorrow that we report the passing of fellow member Eldred "Rick" Heisler peacefully at Hastings Manor on Wednesday, February 12th, 2014. In keeping with Rick's wishes, a private family service was held. Rick was the last surviving 415 Wing Veteran of the Battle of Britain. "At the going down of the sun and in the morning we will remember them".

## **PADRE'S CORNER**

I think I speak for all of us when I say what a delight it is to see Padre Stan out at our luncheon meetings.

## **PICKED UP IN PASSING**

### **Canada's Lancaster bomber to cross Atlantic for U.K. tour**

### **Chance to see two Lancasters flying in formation again called a 'once in a lifetime opportunity'**

By Ian Johnson, CBC News Last Updated: Feb 24, 2014 7:16 AM ET

Canada's WWII Lancaster bomber will soon be heading across the Atlantic to join the only other airworthy plane of its kind for a series of special flights over the U.K.

The Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum in Hamilton revealed Monday that it plans to fly its vintage Avro Lancaster to England in August. Together with the Royal Air Force's Battle of Britain Memorial Flight (BBMF) Lancaster, it will be involved in a month-long flying tour in the U.K. before returning home to Hamilton in September.

"To see these two aircraft flying at events together will be a unique sight, and also the opportunity to truly commemorate those who paid the ultimate sacrifice," said Squadron Leader Dunc Mason, the officer commanding the RAF Battle of Britain Memorial Flight.

The last time Lancasters flew together was 50 years ago over Toronto, at RCAF Station Downsview. The RCAF flew a special formation of three of the bombers in April 1964 to mark their retirement from service.

The sight of two Lancasters flying in formation once more is a "once in a lifetime opportunity, something that will never happen again," said Al Mickeloff, spokesman for the museum in Hamilton, which owns the Canadian Lancaster. "We don't expect to ever do another trip like this."

Hamilton's WWII bomber, known as the Mynarski Memorial Lancaster, is an Avro Mk X built in 1945 at Victory Aircraft in Malton, Ont. Used to train air crews and later for coastal patrols and search-and-rescue work, it was retired in 1963. The museum bought it in 1977 for about \$10,000 and a team of volunteers restored it and returned the plane to the air on Sept. 24, 1988.

PA474 was built by Vickers-Armstrongs Ltd at Chester in 1945 and was to be part of the British Tiger Force for strategic bombing in the Far East. With the end of the war with Japan the aircraft was not needed and PA474 entered storage. With gun turrets removed it was assigned to Photographic Reconnaissance duties with 82 Squadron in East and South Africa.

On return from squadron service PA474 was loaned to Flight Refuelling Limited to be used as a pilotless drone.<sup>[2]</sup> Flight Refuelling used an Avro Lincoln instead and PA474 was then transferred to the College of Aeronautics, Cranfield, Bedfordshire to be used for trials on the Handley Page laminar flow wing.<sup>[2]</sup> The test wings were mounted vertically above the rear fuselage.

In 1964 she came under the control of the Air Historical Branch for possible display in the proposed RAF Museum.<sup>[2]</sup> During this time she appeared in two films: *Operation Crossbow* and *The Guns of Navarone*. Following a request from 44 Squadron the Lancaster moved to RAF Waddington for restoration back to wartime standard including fitting back the front and rear turrets.<sup>[2]</sup>

PA474 was transferred to the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight in 1973.<sup>[2]</sup> In 1975 a mid-upper turret was found in Argentina and fitted.<sup>1</sup>

Museum president and CEO David Rohrer said he and the RAF have talked about the possibility of bringing the planes together for more than a decade, but serious discussions started just a few months ago - partly because both groups wanted to do something to mark the 100th anniversary of WWI and 70th anniversary of D-Day this year.

The RAF wanted to arrange a formation flight before its own Lancaster is grounded next year for a planned overhaul. The Hamilton Lancaster was at a perfect point in its maintenance cycle to take on a trip like this, so the museum sent a planning team to the U.K. in January.

"A window of opportunity was identified to bring the last two flying Lancasters in the world together in tribute to the crews who flew it, the people at Victory Aircraft who built it, and all the veterans of the war," Rohrer told CBC News. "We always would have regretted it if we hadn't tried our best to make this happen when the window presented itself."

Hamilton's Lancaster bomber is a flying monument to the Allied bomber crews of WW II. It was bought in 1977 for about \$10,000 and a team of volunteers led by Norm Etheridge spent 11 years restoring it to airworthiness. (Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum)

The Mynarski Memorial Lancaster is scheduled to leave Canada Aug. 4. The five-day transatlantic trip to England is being done in four- to five-hour hops, with refuelling and rest stops in Goose Bay, Labrador; Narsarsuaq, Greenland; and Keflavik, Iceland.

The flight legs are actually shorter than those flown on the plane's last major trip, to western Canada in 2010.

There's no oxygen system aboard the unpressurized aircraft, so the entire flight will be done at less than 10,000 feet.

When the Lancaster arrives at Royal Air Force base Coningsby on Aug. 8, a maintenance crew will check the aircraft over. It should start a busy series of special flybys and appearances with its U.K. twin and a number of WWII fighters on Aug. 14 and will be based mainly out of Humberside Airport.

The trip will mean changes to the Lancaster's maintenance schedule. The museum usually flies the aircraft about 50 hours per year before it goes in for regular maintenance, and it expects the trip to Europe to add about 75 to 100 hours of flying time to the plane's schedule this year.

'The aircraft is old but is in top condition and flying very well, or we wouldn't be undertaking this trip.' - *Al Mickeloff, Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum*

Rohrer said the museum is seeking sponsors to help with expenses, but adds that a share of the proceeds from the Lancaster's involvement in events in the U.K. should help cover most of the costs. The museum is also negotiating a deal for a documentary covering the flight and tour.

To prepare for this summer's flight, the Mynarski Memorial Lancaster is undergoing its regular winter maintenance at the museum's hangar in Hamilton, including a scheduled engine swap. Special equipment is also being installed, including an HF radio, a satellite phone system, improved navigation and GPS equipment, and a number of other avionics upgrades.

Mickeloff said the museum has carefully assessed all the factors involved with taking the 70-year-old Lancaster across the Atlantic. The timing was chosen for the best weather, the flight legs are short, the aircraft can fly for up to eight hours fully fuelled, and can maintain altitude on as little as two of its four engines in an emergency.

There will also be three pilots and a flight engineer aboard, using the latest in modern avionics.

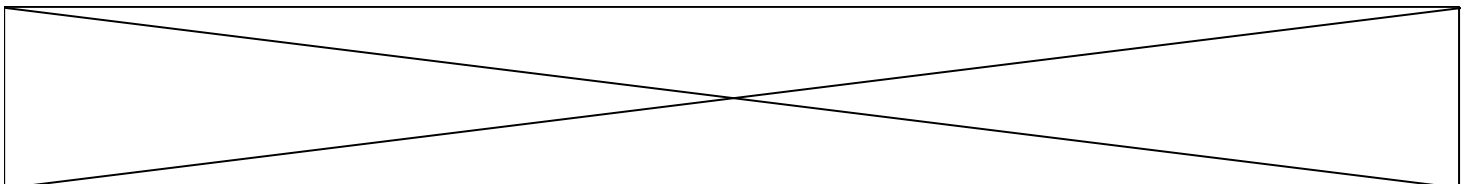
“The aircraft is old but is in top condition and flying very well, or we wouldn’t be undertaking this trip,” Mickeloff said. “We have the most experienced Lancaster pilots in the world, and they’re also pilots with commercial experience who have crossed the Atlantic many, many times.”

Rohrer added, “We have weather delays built into our schedule and will only fly under ideal conditions.”

Mickeloff said big audiences are expected at appearances in the U.K., pointing out that the BBMF is a military plane and off-limits to the public, whereas the museum's Lancaster is a flying exhibit that people can get up close to and even book a flight on. “We are going to give the general public that same access in the U.K. – access that they’ve never had to a Lancaster before. They’ll be able to get right up to it.”

“It’s a real honour to be invited to fly with the Royal Air Force,” Rohrer added. “It’s a recognition of the confidence they have in the museum, and in the talent and dedication of the staff and volunteers, that they’re willing to be our host.”

The Hamilton warplane museum’s Mynarski Memorial Lancaster is dedicated to the memory of Pilot Officer Andrew Charles Mynarski of the RCAF’s 419 Squadron. On June 13, 1944, the Winnipeg native's Lancaster was shot down. Instead of bailing out, Mynarski – his clothes burning – stayed and tried to free the trapped rear gunner. The gunner survived the crash, but Mynarski died from his burns. He was awarded the Victoria Cross for his bravery.





Hamilton's Mynarski Memorial Avro Lancaster Mk X bomber was built at Victory Aircraft in Malton, Ont., in 1945. (Rick Radell)

### **Wing Executive – 2012/13**

**Position**

**President**

**Immediate Past President**

**1<sup>st</sup> Vice President**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President**

**Secretary**

**Treasurer**

**Membership / Regalia**

**Housing Officer**

**Public Relations**

**Wing Padre**

**Bulletin Editor / Wing Historian**

**Sergeant at Arms**

**Sports Officer**

**Telephone Committee**

**Telephone Committee**

**Incumbent**

Bob Bird

George Court

Alex Chambers

Dennis Margeuratt

John Jensen

Don Janes

Malcolm Campbell

Don Bengert

David Edward

Rev Stan Whitehouse

Ted Cullin

Ben Tinsley

Spike Gammon

Lise Rolsky

Dorothy Heisler

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