



# Wing Drift

December 2022

## *Message from the Chairman*

### THE 447 WING IS HOST WING FOR THE ONTARIO GROUP RCAF ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE MAY 19-21, 2023

Hello Wing Members,

I hope everyone is ready for the Holiday Season. The Wing will be open on our usual days during the Christmas week but will close early on both Christmas Eve & New Years' Eve. Come out for the Aggie's Baskets draw Christmas Eve. The draw starts at 4pm and tickets can be bought that day right up to 3:59pm.

We had some great events the past two months. Starting with the Korean War Veterans Awards Banquet was a highlight to Week of Remembrance. The 447 (Hamilton) Wing, RCAF would like to thank Don & HooJung Kennedy for allowing the 447 Wing to host the Awards banquet and a special congratulations to HooJung Kennedy on receiving "The Republic of Korea Presidential Citation".

Mr. Jack Finan's 103<sup>rd</sup> Birthday party was a festive afternoon. Announced by the Town Crier. Even Santa & Mrs. Claus wished Jack a Happy Birthday with a bottle of Jack's favourite, Famous Grouse Scotch Whiskey.

Breakfast with Santa was 'a hit' with the kids. A lot of smiley faces that morning.

After a successful campaign earlier this month, the local Ukraine support group is holding another humanitarian aid campaign for the Ukrainian people, both here and abroad, and the 447 Wing will again assist and support. The 18-wheel trailer has returned to our parking lot with donations being accepted in the Burma Star (Games) Room to the end of the business day Wednesday January 11<sup>th</sup> (extended due to CargoJet Flt Schedule). The trailer and its contents will depart the following day for the next CargoJet flight destined for Europe. Let us help those struggling as best we can.

Bring in the New Year at the Wing's New Years' Eve Social from 7pm – 1am. Dance to the music of G.T. Entertainment. Champagne and a light night buffet will be served. Tickets are \$20/person and available at the Bar. The 447 Wing's New Years' Day Levee will follow (the next day) from 1 – 4pm.

Please remember that the Festive Holiday season is one that will have good memorable moments. Be mindful and do take care of yourselves. We want to see you back next year.

Fly Safe; Stay Healthy.

Respectfully Yours,

Michael Cuffe  
Chairman, 447 Wing RCAF

December 2022

## 2022 Air Force Day at CWHM attracted plenty of visitors

Photos and report by Gord McNulty

Beautiful weather helped to ensure the success of this year's Air Force Day at the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum on August 13. Museum officials were delighted with record attendance.



Air Force Day attendees on Aug, 13, 2022 toured RCAF CC-130 Hercules #130614 at CWHM

Strong representation by the RCAF included a CC-177 Globemaster III, a CH-147F Chinook and a CC-130H Hercules. Visitors enjoyed a chance to tour inside the aircraft and meet the crews.



RCAF CC-177 Globemaster III, 177704, was among highlights of Air Force Day at CWHM Aug.13, 2022



RCAF CH-147F Chinook. 147305, viewed from the observation deck at CWHM on Air Force Day 2022.

A colourful array of additional visiting aircraft included the familiar CT-133 Silver Star and de Havilland Vampire from the Waterloo Warbirds; HannuHalminen's immaculate P-51 Mustang in 424 (City of Hamilton) Squadron colours; and Great War Flying Museum biplanes from Brampton led by the Sopwith 1½ Strutter



Waterloo Warbirds attractive "Mako Shark" Canadair CT-133 in 1992 retirement colours of RCN VU32 Sqdn.

1



Waterloo Warbirds D.H. 115 Vampire Mk 55 C-FJRH in RCAF at CWHM Air Force Day, July 7, 2018

## Oct. 29 General Meeting Presentation:

### *A Canadian in 2 Group, Royal Air Force*

By Gord McNulty

Our October meeting featured an excellent guest speaker in David Poissant, Chairman of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tactical Air Force Medium Bombers Association Canada. David, a Burlington resident, is also a historian with the B-25 History Project (<https://b-25history.org>) and has researched 2TAF B-25 Mitchells for more than 30 years. He is also a longtime member of the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum.

David's presentation focused on the experiences of his father, Cyril, an RCAF pilot in 98 Squadron of the Royal Air Force flying wide-ranging operations over France, Belgium, Holland and Germany in 1944 and 1945. It was a moving and poignant presentation. Operations ranged from the routine to nerve-racking missions that involved sudden and unforgettable terror and could end in tragedy.

Cyril Poissant, also known as Cy, enlisted in the RCAF in 1942 and was posted to 98 Squadron, RAF, at Dunsfold, Surrey in 1944. The squadron was part of 2 Group, Second Tactical Air Force, also known as 2<sup>nd</sup> TAF or simply 2TAF. TAF was the SWAT team with the RAF. It was called upon for rapid response to disrupt and destroy German communications, transportation systems, military targets and troop movements, as well as interdiction sorties. Cy's crew flew their first op on 12 July, 1944.

On 23 July, 15 aircraft of 98 Squadron attacked a railway yard at Glos-Montfort in Normandy. While there wasn't any flak, a tragedy occurred as the bombs fell. A Mitchell exploded in mid-air, killing the four crew members. Then another Mitchell in the same box was set on fire and was last seen flying into dense cloud, with another loss of all four crew. Two other Mitchells were damaged by the explosion and forced to land. Two crew members were wounded, with one man losing a hand and the other sustaining a serious leg injury.

An investigation determined the bomb load was jettisoned probably due to problems with a timing device. Some bombs had collided and exploded directly below the aircraft. Crews were then directed to jettison problematic bomb loads only over the English Channel and away from the main group.

On 9 Sept., after an attack on German gun positions at Boulogne, P/O Denis Loveridge, Cy's friend from training, had a 500-pound bomb hang up on his Mitchell. Despite all efforts, even to the extent of lowering a man into the open bomb bay to hack at the release mechanism, the bomb would not release.

Approaching Dunsford aerodrome, Denis attempted as soft a landing as possible. As the Mitchell's wheels touched down, the bomb jolted free and exploded. With a blinding flash, the blazing B-25 careened along the runway. Denis and his three crew members were killed. Shards of metal struck several ground crew members who had counted the bombers as they landed. One piece went across the airfield. It gravely injured one crew member who died shortly afterward.

Upon the explosion, Cy immediately hit full throttle, raised the gear, and flew through the blast. When David asked Cy many years later, shortly before he died in 2009, what life's memory stood out in his mind, Cy's answer was immediate: "Flying through the explosion of Denis Loveridge's aircraft."

Celebrities invariably made an appearance whenever young men were concentrated, especially in wartime. Ernest Hemingway, then a correspondent with Collier's magazine, was interested in the V-1 "buzz bomb." He managed a trip aboard a Mitchell flown by W/C Alan Lynn leading an attack by 21 B-25s on a heavily defended site. The bombing run was made from 12,000 feet and moderate to heavy flak was encountered. Hemingway wanted to go around again for a better look at the target, but Lynn's reply was unprintable.

The final Mitchell operation of Cy and his crew on 25 November, 1944, told a story in itself. Their B-25 had been battered by intense flak, all the way back after attacking railway marshalling yards in Germany. Its wind-screen had been shattered, hydraulic systems shot out, and the crew came to a stop only as the wheels of the Mitchell sank into a freshly filled bomb crater near the end of the runway. The ground crew counted 94 flak holes.

David concluded by paying tribute to the Canadians who served in 2TAF, "ordinary men performing extraordinary needs." Ranging in age from 18 to 27, they gave up an unreasonable part of their youth in the line of duty. We owe them a great deal for their heroic service.

447 Wing members thoroughly enjoyed David's presentation. We thank our guest speaker for an engaging and very informative presentation.



447 Wing Chairman Michael Cuffe thanking David Poissant, Chairman of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tactical Air Force Medium Bombers Association Canada for his presentation to Wing members.



Paul Laurinec presented a donation of \$500 from the Black Hawks Motorcycle Club to Fred Hopkinson Chairman of the 779 Black Knight Squadron sponsoring committee.

447 Wing Breakfast with Santa was held on December 10, 2022.



On December 10, 2022 a birthday party to celebrate Jack Finan's 103rd Birthday was held at 447 Wing.



Oyez! Oyez! Oyez!

My Lords! My Ladies! Officer's of the Crown!  
Good and Loyal Citizens! Gather Round!

Today, John Frederick Finan, turns 103.

Jack as he known, was born in Hamilton on a cold December 10 in 1919. He was raised on Frederick Street, the youngest, with 3 brothers and 1 sister.

In 1939 (under age) he enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force and began his career as an airframe mechanic, eventually becoming a pilot.

As a pilot, Jack trained on and flew 14 different types of aircraft, from the Tiger Moth up to and including the Avro Lancasters.

He went from Corporal to Sergeant to Flight Lieutenant. His postings were all across Canada and England where he met and married his wife Eileen.

Jack finished his working career as Apprenticeship Program Director at Mohawk College.

Happy 103<sup>rd</sup> Birthday Jack!!!  
Canada's oldest living Bomber Pilot.

Given at 447 Wing Air Force Association.  
This 10<sup>th</sup> of December 2022.

God Bless Canada! God Save The King!



The  
Finan  
Family  
with  
Santa  
and  
Mrs  
Claus

The Editor would like to thank the following people for providing the pictures for both the Breakfast with Santa and Jack Finan Birthday:

Aidan Finn , Sandra Wells ,  
Taylor Hyslop , and Jim Grahlman



**The 447 Wing is OPEN**

<b>Sunday &amp; Monday</b>	<b>CLOSED</b>
<b>Tuesday &amp; Wednesday</b>	<b>11:30am to 10:00pm</b>
<b>Thursday &amp; Friday</b>	<b>11:30am to 11:00pm</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>11:30am to 8:00pm</b>

**Kitchen Hours**

<b>Tuesday &amp; Wednesday</b>	<b>11:30 am to 8:00pm</b>
<b>Thursday &amp; Friday</b>	<b>11:30am to 9:00pm</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>11:30am to 7:00pm</b>

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**<https://www.facebook.com/The-447-Wing-140212226825200/>**

The Wing Drift is published quarterly. If you have any articles, suggestions, etc for future editions, they can be sent to the 447 Wing email address ([447winghamilton@gmail.com](mailto:447winghamilton@gmail.com)).

## **447(City of Hamilton) Board of Directors 2022– 2024**

Chairperson	Michael Cuffe	(905) 574-4163
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice Chairperson	Robert Wilson	(905) 745-2097
Secretary	Linda Smith(Volunteer)	
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	Harry Hodder	(905) 679-5300
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## **779 Air Cadet Sponsoring Committee**

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Vice Chairman:	Peter Armstrong	(647) 273-6635
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Member:	Cheryl Jackson-Checkley	
Black Knight Squadron HQ:		(905) 679-6485
Commanding Officer:	Major Piotr Skrzypczak	(905) 220-4588



**447 (City of Hamilton) Wing*****Past Presidents***

<b>Aiden Finn CD</b>	<b>(1983)</b>
<b>Gord Rowland</b>	<b>(1995—1998)</b>
<b>Judy Brown</b>	<b>(2000, 2008)</b>
<b>6 Presidents served during</b>	<b>(2003 &amp; 2005)</b>
<b>Bill Grahlman CD</b>	<b>(2008-2017)</b>
<b>Jim Hooton CD</b>	<b>(2017-2019)</b>



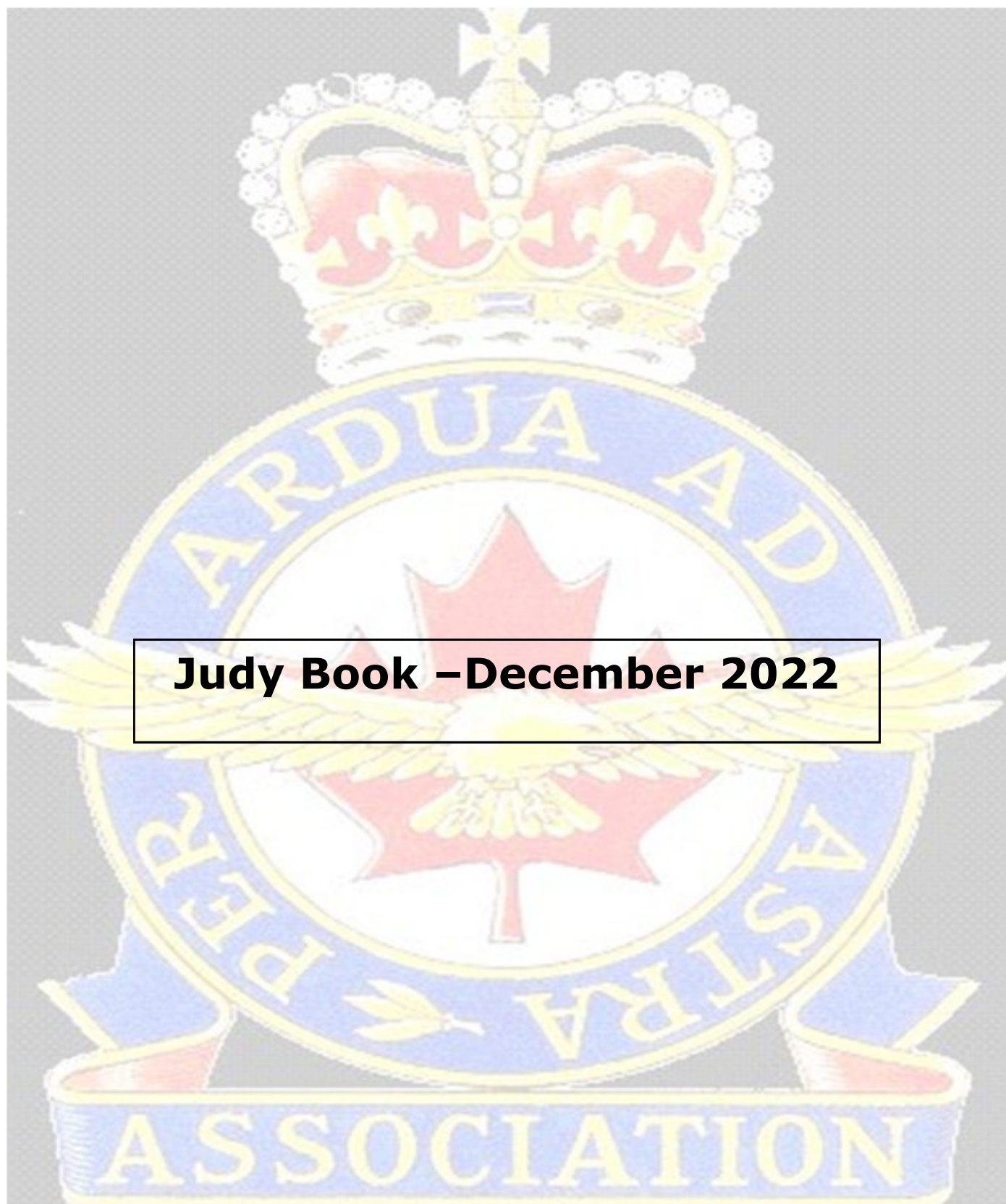
<b>Bill Whiteside</b>	<b>(1962)</b>
<b>Russ Newton</b>	<b>(1963,81,91)</b>
<b>Jim Robbins CD</b>	<b>(1964-65)</b>
<b>Carl Whaley CMCD</b>	<b>(1966)</b>
<b>Sterling McAllister CD</b>	<b>(1967)</b>
<b>Doug Thornewell</b>	<b>(1968)</b>
<b>Ken Lenz</b>	<b>(1969, 1975)</b>
<b>Bill Carey</b>	<b>(1970)</b>
<b>Innes Anderson</b>	<b>(1971)</b>
<b>Sid George</b>	<b>(1972)</b>
<b>Ken Read</b>	<b>(1973)</b>
<b>Bob Hayes</b>	<b>(1974)</b>
<b>Bill Thompson</b>	<b>(1976)</b>
<b>Rob Gillies</b>	<b>(1977)</b>
<b>Nels Smith CD</b>	<b>(1978, 1984)</b>
<b>Jack Lightfoot</b>	<b>(1979)</b>
<b>Scott Lumsden</b>	<b>(1980)</b>
<b>Syd Buckles</b>	<b>(1982)</b>
<b>Alex Barrett DFC</b>	<b>(1985)</b>
<b>Clare Hansen</b>	<b>(1986, 1994)</b>
<b>Harry Rasmussen</b>	<b>(1988-89)</b>
<b>Bob Hide</b>	<b>(1990)</b>
<b>Bill Ryckman</b>	<b>(1992-93)</b>
<b>Arthur Young</b>	<b>(2004,2006)</b>
<b>Harry VanZeben</b>	<b>(1997-99,2001-02)</b>
<b>Frank A. Begley</b>	<b>(2007)</b>

MERRY  
CHRISTMAS

AND

Happy  
New  
Year!

# IN MEMORIAM



**Judy Book - December 2022**



### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Royal Canadian Air Force Association of Canada is a national aerospace and community service organization to: commemorate the noble achievements of the men and women who have served as members of Canada's air forces since its inception; advocate for a proficient and well equipped air force; and support the Royal Canadian Air Cadet programme.