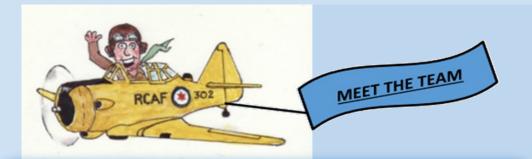
# SPIRIT

783 (Calgary) Wing Newsletter

ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION



Wing Meets the last Tuesday of each month at 7pm 285 Legion Horton Road (virtual version also available)



Honorary Chairperson Immediate Past Chairperson First Vice Chairperson Second Vice Chairperson		
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Newsletter		
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Webmaster/Social Media		
Directors at Large		

Michelle Gerwing Col (Retd) Don Matthews Rob Caswell Scott Deederly Adroano Fisico Kenn Nixon Cecilia Brugma Pat Sulek Darlene Laroche Pat Sulek Anna Lewis Bev Spielman/Michelle Gerwing **Michele Henderson** Kevin Knight Muriel Mymko Bob Wade Bob Wade Kevin Knight Scott Deederly Kent Anderson Norm Harvey and Brian Lewis



# Happy Birthday to you (Nov/Dec)



Garry Mellor	2 Nov
Ruth Mascaro	8 Nov
Betty Wonnacott	9 Nov
Kearra Peterson	13 Nov
Walter Wakula	15 Nov
Andrea Chant	16 Nov
Donald Ward	18 Nov
Dylaney Thompson	22 Nov
Nadine Spielman	22 Nov
Don Matthews	24 Nov
Doug Eaglesham	26 Nov
Lorne Fleming	27 Nov
Cyndy Guidinger	27 Nov
Fran McCarthy	27 Nov
Mike Ricketts	28 Nov
Joan Embleton	30 Nov
Gene Kushnir	2 Dec
Kenn Nixon	3 Dec
Adriano Fisico	4 Dec
David Leggo	5 Dec
Charlie-Mae Wilson	5 Dec
Mike Ter Kuile	6 Dec
Thom Gordon	9 Dec
Michele Henderson	13 Dec
Keith Spielman Jr	16 Dec
Art Hill	23 Dec
Arline Charier	31 Dec

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# Message from the Chairperson

We are almost upon our two biggest events of this year: Remembrance Day and the Christmas party. Plans for Remembrance Day are all set and we will be holding the event at the Genesis Centre again this year. The Christmas Party will be held at the Blackfoot Inn. Please see the flyers for both in the newsletter for more details.

I find this year is always a time of reflection for those who gave the ultimate sacrifice for our country. When I look at the ages on the crosses on Memorial Drive, I am always saddened at how many lost their lives at such a young age. And then I look at the ages of those we lost in Afghanistan and I am equally saddened.

I also find I reflect on those pioneers who have helped to create the current military and cadet organizations we have today. Some of our members were instrumental in creating and shaping the Cadet Squadrons we see today in the Calgary area. Personally, I look at the women who joined during the two great wars and how they shaped the military career I had. They were trailblazers.....

Lastly, we celebrated Thanksgiving a few weeks ago. There is so much to be thankful for in our great country, but I wish to add that I am very thankful for each and every one of you who support the Wing, our Air Force and the Cadet Program. It is commendable work that you do, it does not go unnoticed and I am very proud to be a part of this group that adds so much to our community. Thanks for all you do!

PS: I am always looking for member profiles for the newsletter. If you could send me one , I would appreciate it

Per Ardua Ad Astra Michelle Gerwing Chairman 783 (Calgary) Wing

## The Christmas Truce of 1914

The First World War had been raging on for only four months. The weather that December was cold and wet. Many of the trenches were continually flooded, soldiers were covered in mud and exposed to frostbite and trench foot that seemed impossible to get rid of. They were dreading having to spend Christmas away from their families. Then something incredible happened on December 24, 1914. Soldiers from both sides put down their weapons, stepped out of their trenches and enemy really did *meet* enemy between the trenches. For a short time, there was peace.

There were many truces along the Western Front that Christmas, but the truce was not total. Shelling and firing continued in some parts and there were deaths on Christmas Day. Some of the truces had been arranged on Christmas Eve while others were arranged on Christmas Day. There were even arrangements which included a ruling as to when the truce would end. Along many parts of the Front Line, the truce was brought about by the arrival of miniature Christmas trees in the German trenches. Jovial voices could be heard calling out from both friendly and enemy trenches, followed by requests not to fire, then shadows of soldiers could be seen gathering in no man's land, laughing, joking and exchanging gifts. Amongst the joy, there was sadness to the truce as both sides used this opportunity to seek out the bodies of their dead comrades and give them a decent burial.

The Christmas Truce of 1914 was not a unique occasion in military history. It was a return of a long established tradition. It is common in conflicts with close quarters and prolonged periods of fighting for informal truces and generous gestures to take place between enemies. Similar events have occurred in other conflicts throughout history—and they continue to occur.

While the Christmas Truce of 1914 did not involve any Canadian battalions or regiments, we thought it was a story worth sharing and many of our military personnel have <u>similar</u>





### Grant Whitson 17 Aug, 1938—17 Sep, 2023

Captain Grant George Lewis Whitson, age 85, took his Final Flight on September 17, 2023. He served as a navigator, fighter pilot, and helicopter pilot in the RCAF. Grant will be fondly remembered as a loving husband, devoted father, doting grandfather, great-grandfather, caring uncle, supportive brother, and cherished friend.





### Walter Empey July 27, 1934—October 2, 2022

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of our dear husband, father and grandfather, Walter Allan Empey on October 2, 2022. Walter was in his 88th year, beloved husband of Myra (Lee), together they shared 65 years of marriage. Loving father of Walter Jr. and Christopher (Cory). Cherished grandfather of Tyler, Derek (Courtney) and Clayton (Gracie). Predeceased by his parents Charles and Claire and 9 brothers and sisters. Walter was born in Montreal, Quebec on July 27,

1934. He then joined the RCAF in 1952 as an Aircraft Armourer and after 25 years of service he retired in 1977.





# REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE NOVEMBER 11, 2023



Please join 783 (Calgary) Wing Royal Canadian Air Force Association (RCAFA) and the Air Cadet Squadrons of Calgary as we commemorate

REMEMBRANCE DAY – SATURDAY NOVEMBER 11th, 2023

Starting 10:30 AM in the Feature Gym of the Genesis Centre



783 (Calgary) Wing RCAFA 783wingrcafa.ca

You are invited to the 783 (Calgary) Wing Christmas Party!

DATE AND PLACE

Friday, November 17th, 2023 Hotel Blackfoot 5940 Blackfoot Trail SE, Calgary

> Cocktails at 5:30 pm Dinner at 6:30 pm

> > ale

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### TICKETS

\$25.00 per person, available by cash or cheque at the door, or by e-transfer to kbnixon@shaw.ca

#### RSVP

To Kenn Nixon by November 10th kbnixon@shaw.ca

### Schools acknowledging Veterans

Once again, Georges P. Vanier is recognizing Remembrance Day through a community-created war memorial. We are inviting you and your family to share in this

solemn day by contributing to our school's Hall of Heroes. Please bring in photographs, letters, news articles and other memorabilia of Canadian heroes you are related to or who you were close to in some way. We are accepting contributions from Thursday, October 26<sup>th</sup> – Wednesday, November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Items may be donated, emailed, or borrowed and copied to Mme Cos-

grove <u>hscosgrove@cbe.ab.ca</u>. The Hall of Heroes will be available for viewing until December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023.







#### From your Membership Director:

Please contact Anna Lewis, our Director of Membership, if you change any contact info at bandalewis@shaw.ca



#### From your Health and Wellness Director

All Wing members already receive birthday cards. Do you know of anyone in our membership who would appreciate receiving a card of congratulations, or perhaps a card to raise their spirits? Greetings could be sent for many reasons, such as:

- a "milestone" birthday
- best wishes for someone in hospital or convalescing at home
- bereavement on the passing of a Wing member
- retirement
- graduation
- marriage
- a special wedding anniversary
- receiving recognition and/or winning an award