

# **SPIRIT**

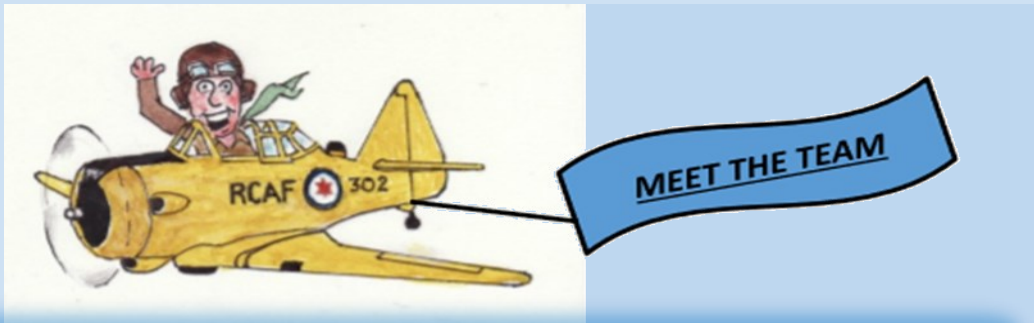
***783 (Calgary) Wing Newsletter***

***ROYAL CANADIAN  
AIR FORCE  
ASSOCIATION***



***The Wing meets the last  
Tuesday of the month at  
7pm in 285 Legion Horton  
Road (virtually as well)***

**783 Wing RCAFA | Home  
calgarywingRCAFA@gmail.com**



|                              |                               |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Chairperson                  | Scott Deederly                |
| Honorary Chairperson         | Col (Retd) Don Matthews       |
| Immediate Past Chairperson   | Michelle Gerwing              |
| First Vice Chairperson       | Vacant                        |
| Second Vice Chairperson      | Adriano Fisico                |
| Treasurer                    | Kenn Nixon                    |
| Secretary                    | Cecilia Brugma                |
| Past Chairs Advisory Council | Pat Sulek                     |
| Casino Chairperson           | Darlene Laroche               |
| Friends of Col Belcher       | Pat Sulek                     |
| Membership                   | Anna Lewis                    |
| Newsletter                   | Bev Spielman/Michelle Gerwing |
| Health and Wellness          | Michele Henderson             |
| Sergeant at Arms             | Kevin Knight                  |
| Entertainment Chair          | Muriel Mymko/Darlene Laroche  |
| Public Relations             | Bob Wade                      |
| Cadet Liaison                | Kevin Knight                  |
| Advocacy                     | Scott Deederly                |
| Webmaster/Social Media       | Charlee MacLean               |





## *Message from the Chairperson*

Summer is here again, bringing to a close another active six months for our Wing. Looking back, we had three great speakers and presentations at our monthly meetings over the Winter and Spring of 2026 with Lane and Kelsey Gibson of [Buffalo 9 Brewing Company](#) sharing their passion for beer that celebrates Canadian military history and veterans and literally sharing samples of their beer with the Wing; Brad Gordanier speaking about his Youtube Channel [Polyus](#) and his passion for creating and sharing video documentaries about Canadian aircraft and aviation; and our own 783 Wing member Tim Wall talking about his personal Spitfire aircraft that he owns and has lovingly rebuilt and maintains.

At the RCAFA Alberta Group AGM this April in Edmonton, 783 Wing members won several awards, and our Wing won the Wing of the Year Award from our National Association for all the work and activities we do together. It was an honour to accept the Award on 783 Wing's behalf, but this is recognition of our collective achievement for all the hard work everyone does at our events and work and impact 783 Wing has in the community, whether social, supporting Air Cadets, veterans, commemorative, or charity work, year in and year out. RCAFA Awards of Merit were awarded to Adriano Fisico, Bob Wade, Barb Mann, Keith Mann and Doug Eaglesham, and Bev Spielman was awarded the RCAFA Order of Excellence, our Association's highest award, for her 45 years of service and outstanding work in our Wing and within the RCAFA.

At the April AGM in Edmonton, 783 Wing agreed to host the 2027 RCAFA Alberta Group AGM, moving forward our commitment by one-year to host the event than originally planned. Work will begin in the Fall to start planning for the 2027 AGM.

In May, Canadian Space Agency astronaut Colonel [Joshua Kutryk](#) visited Calgary to share insights into his [upcoming Crew-13 mission](#) to the International Space Station. He [spoke to Cadets](#) at the Jubilee Auditorium on Monday, May 25, 2026. 783 Wing moved quickly when asked to support and backstop the event. Our funding commitment, though ultimately not needed as the Jubilee decided to step-up and covered all costs, was critical in the event's initial planning stages to ensure it moved forward and happened. Several hundred cadets, and a few members of our Wing attended a

memorable night with an amazing Canadian.

Over May and June, we lost Wing members Gord Kelso and Raymond Wetmore along with 105-year old RCAF World War Two veteran Henry “Hank” Jackson. Our condolences go out to their families and friends. Bob Wade gave an eulogy at Henry Jackson’s funeral and Moe Hanberg was apart of a Calgary Police Service led flag party carrying the RCAF flag at the funeral and grave side service.

I also like to note our new Wing member, Corporal (retired) Heather Vanderveer, Co-founder of [Alberta Recoil](#), an organization that works with veterans, spoke as a witness before the Senate of Canada Standing Committee for National Security, Defence and Veterans Affairs on [June 9](#), regarding [Bill-11 An Act to amend the National Defence Act and other Acts](#).

The June 23, 783 Wing AGM was very well attended, with over 56 members in-person and several online attending. The present Board stood for re-election and we look forward to another year.

On July 5<sup>th</sup> Bev Spielman generously hosted the Wing again in her backyard for our annual Stampede Breakfast. Grateful for Bev allowing us into her home, for Barb Mann for organizing and for all the volunteers who help make the event one of the highlights of the year. At the 2026 783 Wing Stampede Breakfast, Brain Lewis was awarded the 783 Wing President’s Award for this year for his tireless work for our Wing, including building over a dozen wooden stands for our 2025 Remembrance Day, replacing our rickety metal wreath holders with sturdy new ones.

Looking ahead, a number of our Wing members will be helping the Air Force Museum of Alberta with their Casino on July 20 & 21; Peacekeeper Memorial Day is next month on the morning (10 AM) of Sunday, August 9th in Peacekeeper Park in the neighbourhood of Lincoln Park in Southwest Calgary; and in September we will host Battle of Britain Sunday with the Air Cadets at the Military Museums on September 20. With monthly meetings restarting at the end of September, hoping to have both Sergeant Shreeya Shenoy of 918 “Griffon” Royal Canadian Air Cadet Squadron (a Calgary top-16 finalist in the 2026 Alberta Air Cadet Effective Speaking Competition) and Dr. Elizabeth Evans of Mount Royal University, a Senior Strategist in MRU’s Aviation Program, speak to the Wing in the Fall.

I hope everyone has a fun and restful Summer and look forward to seeing you at events later this Summer, and if not then at the monthly 783 Wing meetings in the Fall.

Per Ardua Ad Astra

Scott Deederly  
Chairman  
783 (Calgary) Wing  
Royal Canadian Air Force Association



# The Picnic 6 Jun



The **Order of Excellence** is the highest individual honour awarded by the Royal Canadian Air Force Association. It recognizes members who have provided continuing, outstanding service to the association, their community, and the country. And the winner for 2026 is our very own Bev Spielman. Very well deserved, Bev!





Sunday, 5 Jul: Stampede Breakfast at Bev's

Sunday, 9 Aug: Peacekeeper Memorial Day at Peacekeeper Park, 3031 Dallaire Avenue SW

Sunday, 20 Sep 2pm: Battle of Britain Commemoration at The Military Museums, 4520 Crowchild Trl SW

Tuesday, 29 Sep 7pm: monthly meeting of 783 Wing

Tues, 27 Oct 7pm: monthly meeting of 783 Wing

Wed, 11 Nov 1030am: Remembrance Day Ceremony at Genesis Centre , 7555 Falconridge Blvd NE

## LEMON SUGAR COOKIES

Enjoyed at Air Force Assoc. Old Fashioned Picnic 2026

### Ingredients:

2 ¼ cups all-purpose flour

1 cup sugar + extra for rolling

¾ cup butter, softened

1 egg

2 Tbsp lemon juice

1 Tbsp lemon zest (1 lemon)

1 tsp. vanilla extract

½ tsp. baking soda

½ tsp baking powder

Pinch of salt

### Instructions:

Preheat oven to 350F. Line baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone mats.

Beat butter and sugar until light and fluffy, about 3 minutes. Add egg, lemon juice, zest, and vanilla extract. Mix well. Mix all dry ingredients together and add to butter mixture until combined.

Roll dough in small balls and coat in sugar. Do not flatten balls. Bake 10-12

minutes until edges are set. Cool on pan 5 minutes and then store in air-tight containers



## *We will remember them*

Gordon Kelso July 17, 1934 – May 15, 2026

Gordon passed away peacefully at the Dulcina Hospice at St. Marguerite Manor in Calgary, AB, on Friday, May 15, 2026, at the age of 91.

Born in Brockville, ON, Gordon was raised on a small dairy farm in nearby Roebuck. He was the valedictorian of his graduating class at Prescott High School in 1953.

Recognizing that the family dairy farm would be unable to support three families—his parents', his brother's, and his own—Gordon sought other opportunities. After some trial and error, he joined the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) as a pilot in 1954. When asked why he chose the RCAF, he would say it seemed like the most glamorous option. During his 25-year RCAF career (1954–1979), Gordon held nine postings, served in five squadrons, and fulfilled roles as a pilot, flight instructor, recruiter, and standards officer. He flew 23 different aircraft types. In addition, he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree with Distinction from Carleton University in 1973.

After retiring from the RCAF as Major Gordon Kelso, he continued his aviation career in the civilian sector, working for two oil companies and flying an additional five aircraft types.

Gordon was deeply committed to Freemasonry. He joined Trent Lodge No. 38 in Ontario before moving to Alberta, where he affiliated with Elbow River Lodge No. 180 and later Glenbow Lodge No. 184. He maintained continuous membership for more than 60 years. He served as Worshipful Master in 1990 and 2005, and as District Deputy in 1994, always willing to step in wherever needed. Right Worshipful Brother Gordon was also a member of the Royal Arch Alberta Chapter and the Scottish Rite.

In retirement, Gordon enjoyed many pursuits. He served as office manager for his wife Jean's thriving real estate business, was an avid golfer at the Elks Golf Club, curled at the Calgary Curling Club, and enjoyed afternoon libations at the Kensington Legion, to name just a few.

Gordon was predeceased by his parents, Robert and Vera Kelso; his brother, Allan, and his wife of 57 years, Jean (Morton), whom he first met in high school while tutoring her in Latin. They were married in 1955 and raised three children together. He guided Jean through her battle with Alzheimer's disease with grace and devotion until her passing on May 14, 2013.

He is survived by his children, Mark (Connie) of Trenton, ON, Julie (Ron Jackson) of Smiths Falls, ON, and Carolyn (Russell Murray) of Calgary, AB; his grandchildren, Robert of Mount Albert, ON, Gordon (Amanda) and Ryan (Courtney), both of Trenton, ON, and Connor of Calgary, AB; his great-grandchildren, Michael, Evan, Grayson, Jack, and Charlotte; many nieces and nephews and their descendants; and his long-time companion, Louise Lippert.



Gordon is remembered by friends and family as a man of integrity—honest to a fault, dependable, and always willing to help. He will be deeply missed.

The family would like to thank the Dulcina Hospice staff and volunteers for the wonderful care and attention Gordon received during his final days.

A private funeral service and interment will be held in Ontario in the near future.

To celebrate and remember Gordon, the family asks that you raise a toast in his honour with your next afternoon libation.



## *We will remember them*



### Raymond Grant Wetmore 6 May, 1948 to 25 Jun, 2026

It is with heavy hearts we announce that Raymond Grant Wetmore, a resident of Cherry Point, Alberta passed away peacefully in his sleep on Thursday, June 25, 2026, at the age of 78 years.

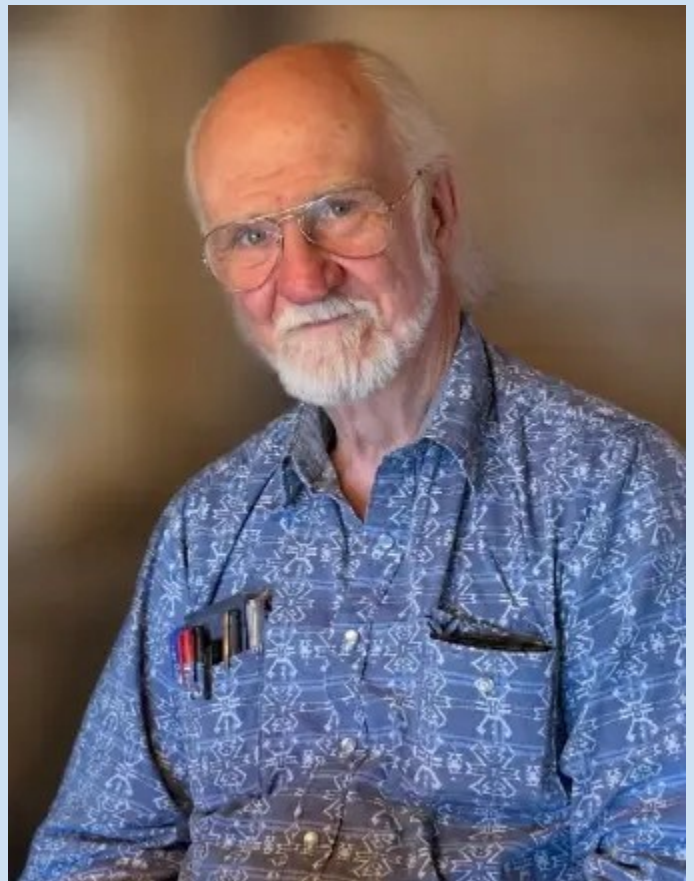
Ray is lovingly remembered by his wife Barb Wetmore; children Juanita Kerbrat and Richie Wetmore (Agnieszka Mokrzan); grandchildren Cody Fonda (Heather Fellers), Allyssa Fonda (Dustin Bradbury), Rachel Fonda (Cole London), Eden Kerbrat, Shea Kerbrat; sisters Janice Maxwell and Mary Kurelek; as well as many extend family and friends.

Ray, the third child of Grant and Ruth Wetmore, was predeceased by his parents and his sister Gail Forseth.

Ray held many titles throughout his life like veteran, preacher, and business owner. However, those who were lucky enough to know him knew he was so much more. He was an inventor, a problem solver, a handy man, a mentor, a loyal friend, and a trusted confidant.

To his family he was a husband, a father, and a grandfather, but on a deeper level he was our constant. He stood steadfast in his faith, loved his family fiercely, and spent his life fighting battles for us we did not always see. In every moment, small or large, you could trust Ray to be close by — fixing, building, laughing, telling stories, or napping on the nearest chair. While he maintained a steady and strong presence, you could see his soft warm heart and soul in the in-betweens.

One thing that was evident to anyone who knew him was that he was happiest on the farm. It was his safe haven, the place he could be outside, create, work, and where love surrounded him, either with family and friends or his beloved cats. Ray was born in Cherry Point and died in Cherry Point, living his life entirely in the place that he loved the most.





***From your Membership Director:***

*Please contact Anna Lewis, our Director of Membership, if you change any contact info at [bandalewis@shaw.ca](mailto: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*

*If you do, please contact Michele Henderson at [michlorr@shaw.ca](mailto:michlorr@shaw.ca)*