

Old Guard Gazette



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Merry Christmas from the Old Guard!

Well, it would be an understatement to say that this has been a very unusual year and that many of us will be glad to greet 2021. Although we are still not out of the woods, the new Covid-19 vaccine brings hope and anticipation that by this time next year we all may experience the holidays in a more traditional way.

So, have yourself a merry little Christmas – joy, peace, love, hope and good health to all alumni and their families.



SQUADRON NEWS:

In-person training still has not resumed at 779 Squadron, so all cadet activities must be delivered virtually. Under the leadership of Maj Piotr Skrzypczak, Capt VanVroenhoven and 2Lt vander Velden, 779 has been running a flourishing virtual training program which includes instruction for all cadet levels. 779 has also been running a virtual ground school on Sundays, which is being attended by cadets from 826 and 713 squadrons as well. The squadron is currently at 105 cadets on strength and our virtual recruit drive added 7 new cadets - which is remarkable considering that the pandemic has slowed interest in most youth organizations.

BREAKING THE CANADIAN GLIDING ALTITUDE RECORD

*Excerpt from ASCent 2020, the
newsmagazine of the Alberta Soaring
Council with permission from Melanie
Paradis*

On October 6th 2020, Melanie Paradis, a Cardiovascular Perfusionist from Edmonton and Patrick Pelletier, a 419 Squadron Pilot took off from the Cowley glider strip in a two-seat glider belonging to the Edmonton Soaring Club and succeeded to break an almost six decades old altitude record. The previous record, which was set in 1961 stood at 29,799 feet. Melanie and Patrick soared well above that height and broke the record by almost 2000 feet. The height they achieved was 31,727 feet



The ability to soar so high in a glider depends on mountain waves. Mountain waves can be compared to water in a stream swiftly running over a boulder. Air is a fluid, and once winds crest over a mountain ridge and roll down the mountain's lee side they push up into a wave. Depending on the conditions, the wave can rise thousands of feet higher than the summit of the mountains. As far back as the 1930s, glider pilots discovered they could use the powerful updrafts to climb to great heights.

Melanie learned to fly gliders at a young age through the Royal Canadian Air Cadets and is a dual member at Cu Nim Gliding Club and Edmonton Soaring Club, where she has recently renewed her instructor rating. She is a mom to three boys and is excited to be back flying after taking time off to raise her young family. This was her second time in Cowley and the record-breaking flight was also her second time experiencing the mountain wave.

Patrick, who learned to fly gliders through the Royal Canadian Air Cadets as well, is currently serving his 29th year in the Royal Canadian Air Force and has over 4000 flying hours in military jets, 1000 hours flying general aviation aircraft and nearly 1000 hours flying gliders. He is also a member of the Lethbridge Soaring Club. Even though Patrick has flown many types of fast military jets including the CF-18, he still considers flying gliders as the most pleasant form of flying there is.

*An amazing feat was
accomplished with a
simple question –
“Wanna break a record?”*

Arriving at the Cowley camp on Sunday the evening of October 4th, Melanie was excited and nervous as this would be her first opportunity to experience mountain wave. She heard the sad news that a wing stand had given out while Patrick was rigging, rendering his glider unserviceable. She offered her sympathy and disbelief and told him that he would have to get in her

two-seater Perkoz so he could mentor the uninitiated. On Tuesday, Patrick said he thought it was going to be a great wave day and wanted to know if Melanie would like to go break the two-seat altitude record. Before she knew it, she was saying "Okay!"

Tasks were divided up. Melanie was to fly take-off, aerotow, initial wave climb to 20,000 feet, all air to ground communications and ATC clearance coordination through Cowley ground, descent from the wave, return to the airfield, circuit and landing. Patrick's tasks were pre-flight game plan coordinator and briefer, high altitude wave climb and navigation, crew safety coordinator, in-flight crew on-board communications and crew physiological monitor.

Takeoff was uneventful and initial climb out was great and they quickly rose to 5000, which is where they stayed for quite some time on their journey over to the mountains. The tow was rough at points once they were into the foothills. Full control deflections were needed at times. As they were approaching where they thought the primary wave should be, Patrick asked Melanie to call the tow plane and tell him to turn west (the tow plane pilot happened to be Melanie's husband Tyler).

*Passing through FL280 (28,000 ft),
Patrick told me to look up and I was
shocked to see an
Airbus 330 passing overhead.
~Melanie Paradis*

After unhitching from the tow plane amazingly the VSI and altimeter quickly marched up. They worked their way north to get past Centre Peak before they reached 12,500 feet to clear Victor 300 airway and continued their strong steady climb. At 18,000' they switched over from cannulas to masks.

As each 1000 feet ticked by, their goal seemed possible. Through 22,000 feet, it became obvious to Patrick that the wave would likely reach above 30,000 feet and he asked that Melanie to call Cowley Ground to obtain clearance to FL350.

Within seconds of being at FL320, Patrick opened the spoilers, increased speed, and did a rapid descent using the rapidly descending air on the downward side of the wave to get down to 28,000 feet within a minute.

At 28,000 feet Patrick and Melanie discussed if they should continue to climb and decided that since other pilots were waiting for the Perkoz, they should head back. Control was handed back over to Melanie. Spoilers, speed and staying in the down-going side of the wave brought them down quickly and safely.

"Success is where preparation and opportunity meet."

~ Bobby Unser



Patrick Pelletier and Melanie Paradis after breaking the Canadian Gliding Altitude Record



Jack Finan watching the more than 100 vehicles, an ambulance and a horse drawn carriage parade by with birthday wishes.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY JACK!

On December 10th there was a Drive-By Birthday Bash for Former RCAF Pilot Jack Finan. Finan, a Stoney Creek resident and Second World War veteran, is the oldest surviving Avro Lancaster pilot. He turned 101.

The drive by proved to be highly successful with more than 100 vehicles including a horse drawn wagon participating. Jack was totally surprised, and the event was covered by CHCH TV and the Hamilton Spectator. The Spec had featured a front-page photo the following day. John Mayhew, the Treasurer of the 779 SSC, made up a card with the names of all the Cadets, Officers, Staff and SSC members as a show of

our support for Jack and his family. Click [here](#) to see video of the occasion.

Link (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=76GP9ssTTLQ>)

TOASTING THE NEW YEAR



Black Knight Shooter

Grenadine
1 oz. Kahlua
1 oz. Baileys Irish Cream
1 oz. Sambuca
1tsp. Advocaat

INSTRUCTIONS

Pour a thin layer of Grenadine in the bottom of a shot glass. Layer Kahlua, Baileys, and Sambuca in a shot glass and float Advocaat on top.

Black Knight Cocktail

1 ounce of vodka Eristoff Black
2 ounces of lemonade
1 lemon
ice cubes
1 slice of pineapple

Method: Take a lemon. Peel and cut the zest of lemon in star shapes. In an ice cubes tray, put the zest in and cover with water. Put the ice cube tray in freezer for 2 hours.

In a tumbler glass, put the ice cubes. Pour lemonade.

Then, slowly pour vodka Eristoff Black on the back of a spoon.

Cut a slice of pineapple and place it on the edge of the glass.

Your Black Knight Cocktail is ready to enjoy!



NASA'S INGENUITY: The First Off-World Helicopter

Nyle Armstrong

When the Wright brothers proved that powered flight in earth's atmosphere was possible did they ever imagine that within 117 years mankind would be attempting flight on another planet?

When NASA's Mars 2020 Perseverance rover launched from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida July 30th, an innovative experiment rode along attached to its belly: The Ingenuity Mars Helicopter.

Ingenuity is what is known as a technology demonstration – a project that seeks to test a new capability for the first time, with limited scope. It will be a flight test on the surface of Mars after Perseverance lands on Mars February 18, 2021.

Lift is difficult to achieve in Mars' thin atmosphere which is 99% less dense than Earth's, therefore Ingenuity must be light – it weighs only about 4 pounds (1.8 kilograms).

Ingenuity features four specially made carbon-fiber blades, arranged into two rotors that spin in opposite directions at around 2,400 RPM – many times faster than a passenger helicopter on Earth (typically about 400-500 RPM on a small helicopter or about 225 RPM on a huge Chinook). It also has innovative solar cells, batteries, and other components. Ingenuity does not carry science instruments and is a separate experiment from the Mars 2020 Perseverance rover.

Flight controllers will not be able to control the helicopter with a joystick and there will be communication delays. Commands will need to be sent well in advance, with engineering data

coming back from the spacecraft long after each flight takes place. Ingenuity will have a lot of autonomy to make its own decisions about how to fly to a waypoint and keep itself warm.

Ingenuity has a long list of “firsts” that the team needs to pass before the helicopter can take off and land on the Martian landscape. These milestones include:

- Surviving the launch from Cape Canaveral, the cruise to Mars, and landing on the Red Planet
- Safely deploying to the surface from Perseverance's belly
- Autonomously keeping warm through the intensely cold Martian nights which plummet to minus 130 degrees Fahrenheit (minus 90 degrees Celsius) so the cold will push the design limits of many of Ingenuity's parts.
- Autonomously charging itself with its solar panel

And then Ingenuity will make its first flight attempt. If the helicopter succeeds in that first flight, the Ingenuity team will attempt up to four other test flights within a 30-Martian-day (31-Earth-day) window.

Ingenuity is intended to demonstrate technologies needed for flying in the Martian atmosphere. If successful, these technologies could enable other advanced robotic flying vehicles that might be included in future robotic and human missions to Mars. *(excerpt and information from <https://www.nasa.gov/feature/jpl/6-things-to-know-about-nasas-ingenuity-mars-helicopter/>)*

More information is also available on Ingenuity's web page:

<https://mars.nasa.gov/technology/helicopter>





Corner

Events

VIRTUAL BOTTLE DRIVE

Due to COVID-19 we cannot go door to door at this time, but we still would appreciate your donation.



We are asking that you return your empties and donate the proceeds to 779 Air Cadets in one of three ways:

1. Click [Here](#) to donate using a credit card or PayPal (**BONUS get a charitable tax receipt with this option**).
2. Contact johnmayhew779@gmail.com to arrange a cash or cheque drop off on west mountain.
3. Mail a cheque (made out to 779 Air Cadets) PO Box 375 Mount Hope, ON, L0R 1W0

Campaign runs the month of January 2021

Let your family, friends and neighbours know or collect the empties from them.

Share on social media.

Stay safe, practice social distancing and hand washing



VIRTUAL SPRING TAGGING – MONTH OF APRIL 2021

Thank you to all that participated in the Virtual Fall tagging session. together \$3,087.05 was donated. This is short of our goal of \$7,000 but is a huge increase from the May 2020 Virtual tag where \$1,166.00 was donated. Tagging remains one of the primary ways in which the squadron fundraises for activities and purchases (not paid by DND) such as annual trips, band equipment, and more.

We greatly appreciate the cadet families that made personal donations and everyone that reached out to family, friends, and social media. We will be doing a Spring Tag during the month of April. It looks like it will be another virtual tag where we hope we can reach out to a much broader base for donations. If you have any suggestions to reach out to a broader base, please send them to us.



50/50 DRAW IN SUPPORT OF ONTARIO CADETS

Looking for a great gift, that also gives back. Purchase a 50/50 ticket to support Air Cadets across Ontario. It is a WIN/WIN! Visit www.aclopc5050.com to read the rules. #AirCadets #50/50 #GreatGift@ACLOPC



(Direct link to 779 purchasing page [Here](#))

[Buying tickets as a gift](#)

If you are looking to purchase a ticket as a gift, it is as simple as:

1. Enter the name of the recipient in “Step 2”
2. Either place your email address in the required field if you want to hold the ticket for future gifting, or for immediate gifting, enter the recipient’s email address directly.
3. In “Step 3” use your info as the purchaser.

If you have any questions, ideas, or concerns, please e-mail lottery@aircadetleague.on.ca.



GIFT IDEAS FOR CADETS

This may be a little late for Christmas delivery but there are several great gift ideas for Cadets or Cadet enthusiasts at the OPC Kit Shop

<https://www.aircadetleague.on.ca/Kit-Shop>



OPC LOTTERY TICKETS

Stay tuned for more updates on the annual OPC Lottery Tickets.

MESSAGE FROM THE NORTH POLE

Cheryl Jackson-Checkley

There have been many letters of concern received by Santa this year due to the COVID-19 virus. With the ever-evolving changes safety measures and zone restrictions, Santa wanted everyone to know that he has been deemed an essential service worker and will be working Christmas Eve. He will be following all safety protocols. Santa will also take a COVID-19 Test prior to departing the North Pole to make sure that he is not asymptomatic and is COVID-19-free. Santa asks the children of the world to not wait up to catch a glimpse of him because of physical distancing stipulations. He does not want anyone rubbing their eyes in disbelief or touching their awe-filled faces. Santa would appreciate it if hand sanitizer was left next to the milk and cookies. Santa will self-isolate after he returns home in respect for the well-being of his elfin employees.



Santa has also been working hands on with NORAD to ensure that the tracking system is working efficiently. Keep an eye open on Christmas Eve on NORAD's system so you can see where Santa is located and what the time is in that part of the world by logging on to Noradsanta.org

Santa reminds everyone to stay positive and test negative!

SLEIGH COOKIES

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup old fashioned oats
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened
- 3/4 cup light brown sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/2 cup mini chocolate covered candies
- 1/2 cup crushed pretzels
- 1/2 cup white chocolate chips

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 350°F.

In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, oats, baking soda, baking powder and salt. Set aside.

In the bowl of an electric mixer, beat the butter and brown sugar until smooth. Add the egg and vanilla and beat until well combined. Slowly add the dry ingredients and mix until just combined. Stir in the candies, pretzels and white chocolate chips.

Place heaping tablespoon balls of dough a few inches apart on parchment-lined baking sheets. Slightly flatten each ball of dough. Bake for 10-12 minutes or until cookies just start to brown. Let cool on baking sheets for 5 minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.

SOME VIEWING SUGGESTIONS FOR A COLD WINTER'S NIGHT:

WW1 CHRISTMAS TRUCE

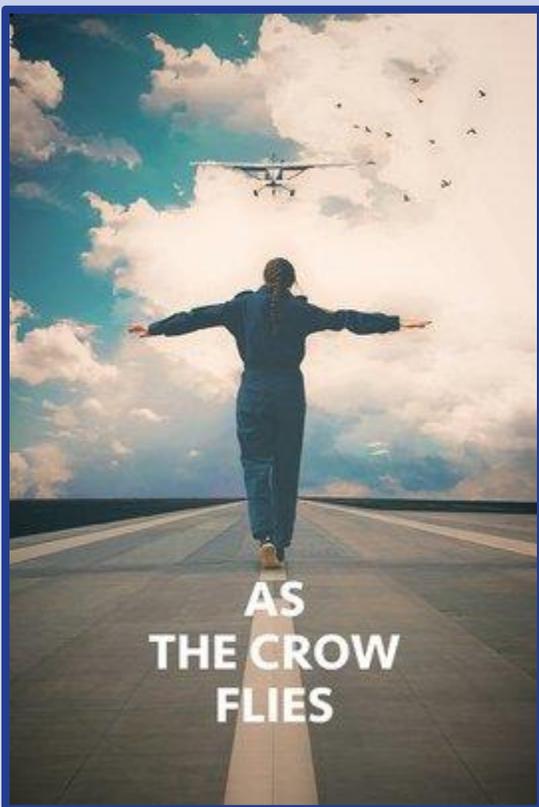
Last year in our Christmas Old Guard Gazette we featured an article about the Christmas Truce of 1914. Cheryl came across this amazing video from Celtic Thunder.

Click [Here](#) for the video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JG3I-OBdcPI>)

I came across a poignant folk ballad video from Catherine Rushton about the Truce. Rushton has been trying to raise funds for UK soldiers suffering from PTSD.

Click [Here](#) for the video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W5PqXn-KXak>)

AS THE CROW FLIES



Every summer, the Royal Canadian Air Cadets offers its top cadets the chance to participate in an elite flight-training camp. As the Crow Flies follows a group of these young men and women as they undergo seven weeks of training to get their pilot's license in an intense program that normally takes six to eight months. Click [Here](#) to go the NFB website to view the film directly. (<https://tinyurl.com/y8z2aw2g>)

Happy New Year!