



Wings & Tails

611 at No. 6

We always look forward to seeing the cadets of 611 Harvard Mark II Squadron out at the museum. This past February they held a 2 day event showcasing their love of flight. According to their social media feeds, they joined forces with 128 Flying Dragons for a two day exercise. Rockets, kites, 3D printing, drones, fitness, games and marksmanship rounded out the itinerary. Through it all, I'm sure laughs and camaraderie created an amazing atmosphere. It is hard not to compare events like this to the daily activities that occurred when the station first began operations in 1940. Young men and woman coming together to learn skills that will benefit their future as they proudly represent their families, towns and country. We look forward to many more events with 611 Squadron!



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If you have been out to the museum during our operating hours, or on a morning when we're closed, or an afternoon when we're closed, during the week, or on a weekend, you've likely seen Paul. You've likely seen him, because he's there ALL THE TIME! Paul has been diligently building an electronic database of our artifacts for the archives. This is a daunting process that began with him creating a unique cataloging process involving ID numbers, photos, digital scans and spreadsheets. This is a painstaking process, that although not necessarily arduous, is time consuming. Paul states that it's not difficult and anyone who is willing to help out can easily participate, and let's be honest, who wouldn't want to spend an afternoon with Paul! The work that he is doing will ensure that we will have a digital record of every item in the museum. This will help with research, preservation and administrative projects and to solidify the future of No.6 RCAF Dunville Museum. Well done Paul, thank you for all of your efforts.



TEAMWORK





Questions or comments? Contact the newsletter at no6newsletter@gmail.com or on our **Wings & Tails** Facebook Page

Guardians of the Fallen

Thanks to a dedicated group of museum members, thirteen RCAF graves have been rescued from the quiet obscurity of overgrown beds and expanding weeds. Acting as modern-day sextons—the traditional term for those who tend to veterans' graves—these members have transformed these resting places into vibrant monuments of gratitude.



Of the thirteen graves being tended to, eight belong to young men who hailed from New Zealand, Australia, and England. They crossed oceans to serve, only to lose their lives in training accidents while stationed here in Dunnville.

The remaining five graves belong to local residents—homegrown RCAF members who stepped up to serve their country and died between 1939 and 1945. Though their origins were vastly different, they now rest side-by-side, united by their uniform and their ultimate sacrifice.

The group's meticulous care involved:

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- Reclaiming old flower beds that had become overgrown and defined by time.
- Adding fresh, nutrient-rich soil and dark mulch to give the plots a clean, dignified foundation.
- Planting vibrant flowers to bring life and colour back to the grey stone markers.



The culmination of the group's hard work was timed perfectly for the local Decoration Day ceremony. Thanks to the nightly watering and dedicated upkeep, the plots stood out as vibrant, beautifully manicured tributes during the memorial services.

A Stellar Display

The spirit of community was on full display on April 17th and 18th at the Dunnville Home, Garden and Craft Show. With a bustling atmosphere and an impressive turnout, the event proved once again to be a cornerstone of the spring season for the area.

This year's show featured a diverse lineup of 130 vendors, ranging from expert landscapers and home improvement specialists to unique local crafters. Beyond the commercial booths, the event served as a vital platform for numerous community organizations and non-profits to connect with residents.

Our members were proud to contribute to the weekend's success with a magnificent display of historical artifacts and photographs. The curated collection offered attendees a nostalgic journey through our local heritage, sparking many engaging conversations.

The true star of our exhibit, however, was "Little Harvey." At the special request of the event organizers,



we showcased this scaled-down version of a Harvard aircraft. Little Harvey was an absolute hit, drawing crowds of all ages and serving as a popular

backdrop for photos throughout the two-day event.

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to our booth sponsors:

- Hines Electric
- Pete's Engine and Rental Centre
- Royal Irish Tours

Their contributions ensured we could share our passion for history and aviation with the hundreds of visitors who walked through the doors. We look forward to seeing everyone again next year!



Clear Skies and Crowded Lines: Annual Hangar Sale Soars Past Goals

The early morning mist hadn't even cleared before the crowds began to gather. By 0630 on opening day, an impressive lineup of eager shoppers stretched down the driveway, waiting for the doors to swing open at the highly anticipated Annual Hangar Sale (May 16-18). By the time the weekend wrapped up, hundreds of attendees had flooded the venue, turning the event into a massive success that blew past initial expectations.



Bargain hunters arrived by every means of transportation imaginable. The parking areas were packed with a steady stream of cars, trucks, vans and even golf carts.

The vibrant, high-energy atmosphere was a testament to the community's dedication, drawing folks from all over to browse the massive selection of items on display.



An event of this scale doesn't just happen on its own. The true heartbeat of the weekend was the army of hard-working volunteers who dedicated their time, energy, and smiles to the cause. From managing the sunrise lines on the first day to keeping operations running smoothly through Monday afternoon, their tireless efforts did not go unnoticed.

Thanks to the incredible turnout and the generosity of everyone who attended, the event officially exceeded its financial goal. Every dollar raised during the three-day sale has a vital purpose. The proceeds will directly fund crucial operating expenses and upcoming projects in the coming year, ensuring the museum can continue its mission with strong financial tailwinds.

Thanks to the incredible efforts of our members, the hangar was cleaned up and ready for a venue rental within 4 days of the completion of the sale!



50 Years of Mudcat

This past June, our members participated in the 50th annual Mudcat Parade in Dunnville. Once again, Little

Harvey promoted the museum as he was escorted along the parade route by the 611 Harvard Air Cadets. Special thanks to Richard for providing the horse power to get Harvey through the parade. The Museum was well represented at the car show as well, promoted by John and his classic Plymouth.

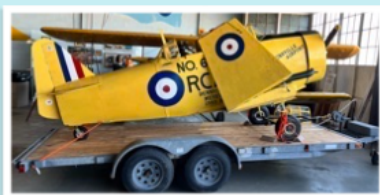


Harvey's Getting Some New Wheels (and a Makeover!)

To help Harvey make it to his increasingly busy schedule of public appearances, the museum has officially purchased a dedicated transport trailer. But it wasn't quite ready for the road just yet. Thanks to some hard work from the talented guys down in the shop, the trailer was treated to a brand-new, heavy-duty wooden deck, ensuring it will safely haul Harvey around for years to come.



You can expect to see Harvey out and about at more event now that he has his own custom ride. But the perks of fame don't stop there.



Once his summer social calendar winds down, Harvey is scheduled for a well-deserved makeover this fall.

Staying this popular takes work, and he'll be freshening up to ensure he keeps looking his absolute best for his adoring public.



If you think Harvey would be a great addition to a local event, let us know and we'll see if he can make an appearance.

Camilla's Corner



WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO?

In my relatively short time volunteering at the museum, I've been struck by the dedicated and enthusiastic fundraising efforts of members of our organization. It is a genuinely heroic effort to put on our annual 3-day Hangar Sale; three months of Tuesday "work parties" setting everything up in an uncomfortably cold environment. But this year it really paid off: we exceeded our goal of raising \$15,000! Various lottery initiatives throughout the

year bring in funds. Our upcoming Open House & Car Show is another significant fundraising event, and membership fees, occasional venue rentals, and donations for museum visits and organized tours also contribute to our bottom line.

Someone I know asked how we did at the Hangar Sale this year. She was delighted we did so well. Then she asked: "Where does the money go?" I didn't have a good answer. I explained that much of what we raise goes toward operating expenses to maintain the status quo of the museum, but wish I could have identified a specific fundraising "goal."

I have a sense of the enormous effort of time and resources required to "make the museum happen" in the first place. Individuals came together with a common vision and the energy and passion to see their goal accomplished. But I don't believe that was the end game; our corporation's By-law envisioned a culture of continuous improvement, facilitated through the creation of a variety of committees, including "Future Planning Committee," "Fundraising Committee," "Building & Property Committee," "Aviation Museum & Archives Committee," etc.

Without doubt there have been many changes and upgrades through the years, but also over time considerable turn-over in the membership and leadership, and changes in priorities (due to internal and external forces). The identification of specific goals for fund-raising and the targeted expenditure of any surplus revenue may have taken a backseat to ensuring enough money is raised to pay for operating expenses, unexpected repairs, and/or ad hoc opportunities that occasionally present themselves, such as acquiring new artifacts or equipment. When looking through the local paper each week, I am amazed by the outpouring of community support for special causes. Query whether our fundraising efforts would benefit if we have a compelling answer when asked: "Where does the money go?"

As a suggestion, some of us have talked about making it a goal to give the interior of the museum a significant "refresh." Our Treasurer Katie recently mentioned a grant opportunity that covers some capital improvements that could help kick-start a bigger objective. If successful, that grant could give us as much as \$50,000, some focussed on improving accessibility. I suggest we dream big and seek to independently raise at least \$25,000 for "Operation Refresh," with donations going to new floors, new paint, new cabinets, new lighting, and an audio guide (my favourite!). Alternatively, we can continue to rely on the ongoing effort of members who contribute more than their fees by giving their time to ensure the museum's continued success, and paint one wall at a time.

