

Aurora, Legion mark 100th anniversary of Royal Canadian Air Force



Monday, April 1, marked the 100th anniversary of the Royal Canadian Air Force and the anniversary was marked with style in Aurora.

Before the Aurora Cenotaph and Armoury were bathed in blue light that evening, celebrations began at Town Hall where a commemorative flag was raised in a ceremony led by the Aurora branch of the Royal Canadian Legion and attended by Newmarket-Aurora MPP Dawn Gallagher Murphy, Mayor Tom Mrakas and Councillors Ron Weese (Ward 1) and Rachel Gilliland (Ward 2).

Throughout the day, dignitaries paid tribute to those who proudly wore the iconic blue uniform in the First and Second World Wars, the Korean War, and in modern conflicts since ? and to the men and women who continue to fly for Canada today.

?Today, I would like to offer my most sincere congratulations to the Royal Canadian Air Force (R.C.A.F.) as you celebrate one hundred years of serving Canada, Canadians and the world,? said the King in a message shared by Governor General Mary Simon. ?Over the past century, the R.C.A.F. has contributed to peace and security across the world, thanks to the skill and professionalism of its many dedicated members. I honour those who made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of their country, as well as extending my deepest appreciation to all R.C.A.F. members, both past and present, and their families.

?Over the years, my family and I have had opportunities to meet many dedicated R.C.A.F. members. My wife and I remember with great fondness our own visit to an R.C.A.F. Wing in 2017, to meet those whose tireless efforts to search for and rescue those in distress have saved countless lives. On this centennial anniversary, and throughout the coming year, my family and I send our most heartfelt congratulations to you all.?

Sentiments were also shared by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who said members of the RCAF have ?dedicated their lives to defending our peace, freedom and prosperity.?

?In times of war and peace, members of the RCAF have shown unwavering courage,? he said. ?The Second World War marked the first significant challenge for the RCAF, with over 200,000 Canadians joining the Air Force to fight against tyranny and fascism. Since then, generation after generation of Canadians have served ? from Afghanistan to the Arctic. The RCAF's contributions to the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Canadian Space Program, and United Nations peacekeeping operations demonstrate its enduring commitment to service. Here at home, the RCAF has supported Canadians by delivering disaster relief, including during last year's devastating wildfire season.?

At a time of threats to ?global stability,? Trudeau said the Federal government has invested \$44 billion over the last 16 months for

138 new or refurbished aircraft for the Force, which will result in a new fleet of fighter jets to new multi-mission aircraft? the largest investment in a generation.

In February 2023, the RCAF launched the Royal Canadian Air Force Strategy to help build a more agile, integrated, and inclusive air and space force that can face tomorrow's challenges. By investing in the professional and personal growth of RCAF members, we are giving them the tools they need to achieve excellence at home and abroad. Our people are our number one priority and are the foundation upon which we build the RCAF.

On this centennial occasion, I invite Canadians to learn more about the RCAF's many achievements and to take part in activities celebrating this milestone anniversary. My heartfelt gratitude goes out to the families who have stood behind RCAF members over the last century, sharing in their sacrifices and triumphs. To all Royal Canadian Air Force personnel, past and present: thank you for your service. Your dedication, courage, and selflessness have kept and continue to keep our country safe.

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