

Gliders Soaring Tell Tale of Aviation History

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students and trains them for several weeks. From what I gather the training of both flight and ground school seems to be pretty intense.

One of the things that surprised me was the size of the organization. Air Cadets can join the League as early as 12, They leave when they are 18 and there are approximately 23,000 cadets in 450+ squadrons across Canada! There is a fleet of approximately 27 tow planes and 50+gliders shared across the country. The fleet is operated by the Department of National Defence for the Air Cadets.

Another surprise was the age of the fleet which testifies to how wise the original fleet choices were and how well they are maintained. Of the local aircraft, I have seen

none younger than a manufacture date of 1979. These aircraft were all manufactured at least 20+ years before the current cadets were even born! The company making the Schweizer gliders only makes helicopters today after being acquired by Sikorsky some years ago. Their production of the gliders was suspended in 1982. The tow planes, Bellanca 8GCBC, are still in production. Many of these small rugged planes are manufactured for short take-off and landing (STOL) bush flying.

The world is rapidly changing and some of these young men and women cadets may indeed be in harm's way in future years. Whether going on to commercial aviation, flying the familiar Hercules frequently seen overhead in



South Marysburgh, or in the cockpit of the F35s that are currently being purchased, Picton is contributing to laying the foundation for their future careers.

If you would like to better understand what kind of people these cadets are, as well as their their training, I'd recommend watching the NFB's documentary "As the Crow Flies", currently on

Amazon Prime. You'll see typical teenagers, with clear goals and ambition transition to being very focused young adults while doing their studies and flying. It's both impressive and inspiring.

Doug McGregor is a retired engineer and full-time County resident.



Thank you for a fantastic Summer!

We will be closed the week following Labour day (Friday and Saturday, Sept. 9 & 10) to allow our staff some much needed time off, and so we can keep bringing you new and exciting treats!

We look forward to seeing everyone along the Parade Route for the Milford Fair.

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