434 Niagara BULLETIN



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General Meetings

3rd Saturday of each month at

Welland Optimist Club, 38 Patterson Ave., Welland, ON L3B 2C4 until further notice. Due to present Covid restrictions future meeting dates will be advised by email and telephone.

We proudly promote the glorious tradition of the RCAF 434 Wing Board of Directors 2020-2021

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ROYAL CANADIAN LEGIONS

Welland	Branch 4	Office	905-734-3611
		Canteen	905-734-6601
Port Colborne	Branch 56	Hall	905-834-9512
Fort Erie	Branch 71	Hall	905-871-8682
Fonthill	Branch 613	Hall	905-892-6293

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Royal Canadian Air Force Association of Canada

Chairman's Report March 2022

Hello to all near and far. We are already into the middle of February and we keep moving forward as we must amidst all that is happening around us.

As we all know we have not been able to hold any general meeting's for some time but, the hope is with things opening up a little that we will be able to get back on track soon as long as it continues to be safe to do so, perhaps in March but Secretary George will be in touch should things work out. With that in mind, if any member knows of someone that could be recommended as a guest speaker please let one of the Board members know so that we can make contact.

We have a few oars in the water so to speak. We are planning to hold another Big Red Meat fundraiser but as yet no specific date has been set but will advise once all is finalized and I again encourage all where possible to participate. We are again planning to attend Canal Days in Port Colborne where we will be setting up our booth with Kit Sop items for sale date for this is July29th through till August1st as usual we will require help in manning the booth over that period of time. Ted Barris has been secured to come and give a presentation, as you all know we had to cancel him in the past due to COVID the date arranged with Ted is Saturday October 22 with a 1pm start his presentation will be on his latest book 'The Battle of the Atlantic' more information will be forthcoming.

The Central Ontario Group Spring Meeting held at 447 Mount Hope is <u>"tentatively"</u> set for Saturday March 26th, our Regional Director will confirm shortly. The Ontario Group AGM is set for May 21, 22 & 23 in Cornwall information on attending is available from the Board.

The Board decided to offer to any graduating Air Cadet (aging out) a free 2 year membership effective September 2022, a certificate has been prepared to mark the occasion.

As you can see from the above we as a Board have been active and are trying to project as best we can with the limitations on us, so fingers crossed that all will work itself out

As always, I wish you all good health & please stay safe.

Bill Heron (Chairman)

Per Ardua Ad Astra

Tom Vance Approaching 100th Birthday!

July 2022 will witness the 100th Birthday for Spitfire Pilot and 434 Niagara Wing Honorary Director Tom Vance



Tom Vance today



Tom Vance in his Spitfire



Tom Vance WW2



Tom Vance at captured German Airbase

RCAF Squadron Leader Andrew Robert Mackenzie, North Korean POW

Squadron Leader Andy Mackenzie was born in Montreal August 10, 1920. He enlisted there June 6, 1940. After training he was commissioned March 31, 1942

Andy MacKenzie is the hero of the novel "Mayhem to Mayday" written by Norman Avery.

WW2

During the Second World War, he flew 257 combat missions in Spitfires in Northwest Europe with 421 which was formed at Digby, Lincolnshire, England on April 9,1942 and the with the 403 Squadron formed at Baginton, Warwickshire, England on March 1,1941 as the first of 35 RCAF squadrons to be formed overseas.

He was credited with 8 1/2 enemy aircraft destroyed and awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.



A month after being posted to 403 Squadron, he was shot down by American forces on June 14, 1944, over Utah Beach as he was providing ground support. Too low to bail out, he managed to land his Spitfire IX on its belly. He returned to Canada. He flew Kittyhawks with No.133 Squadron and No.135 Squadron. He took over 135 Squadron and trained his pilots for the invasion of Japan, but that became unnecessary after the Americans dropped the bombs. He transferred to Reserve, October 1, 1945; to Special Reserve (full employment), April 3,1946 and to to Regular Force, October 1946. Five years later, in 1951, by now promoted to squadron leader, Andy MacKenzie was given command of 441 Squadron, one of the dozen squadrons sent to Europe guipped with the new Sabre Jet.



F-86 Sabre of the 51st Interceptor Wing USAF

KOREA

He volunteered to do a tour of duty with the 51st Interceptor Wing of USAF in the Korean War.

The following are excerpts from Squadron Leader Andrew Mackenzie's own account of events as told to Stanley Handman in 1994; December 5, 1952, "...We did not hit the air until 1220 hours. I was second to take off. I was flying No. 2 to Major Jack Saunders, our squadron operations officer, piloting an F-86F Sabre. We quickly climbed to about 42,000 feet, following the west coast of Korea over the Yellow Sea towards the mouth of the Yalu River.

... We finally reformed and started eastward on our patrol which had been laid down as parallel to and about 20 miles south of the Yalu River. Mine was the top flight and we were to patrol at 42,000 feet, the others operating at slightly lower levels, ranging from 40,000 feet down to 30,000 feet. There were three squadrons on this mission, with four flights each. (A flight is four aircraft.). . . the pilot flying No. 3 reported: "Cobra One, this is Cobra Three, there are some trails at 10 o'clock and slightly above." This indicated to Major Saunders and to others in the flight (we were all tuned into the same frequency) that there were some Migs about.

RCAF Squadron Leader Andrew Robert Mackenzie, North Korean POW

Saunders quickly snapped back: "Roger, I see them, keep your eyes on them." By now, it was about 1255 hours. Though my aircraft was moving along fairly well, I had reported to Saunders just a few seconds earlier that my main hydraulic control system had failed and that I was now operating on my auxiliary system. (The much less powerful back-up system kicked in and MacKenzie elected to continue the patrol. The back-up system was designed to get the aircraft home but was not powerful enough for maneuvering in combat. At this point MIGs appeared westbound at 50,000 feet on the opposite side of the Yalu River.

There were approximately twenty to thirty in pairs with the pairs following each other. The first pair dove on the lead formation, shooting as they approached. They passed under MacKenzie, southbound, and he called Cobra One that he was going to pursue them.) Under normal conditions I should have returned immediately, but because of the arrival of the Migs and my eagerness to tangle with them for the first time, Saunders agreed that we would have a quick go and return to our base as soon as possible. I could now make out about 20 Migs flying west over the Yalu in a sort of string formation in two's. . . . As I watched the Migs streaming along, I saw two peel off, cross the Yalu and make for us in a rearing dive. I cocked my wing to the left as I saw them approaching us and they passed underneath me, with their guns blazing away. I was in a perfect position for a bounce - that is an attack from above. I reported this over the radio, saying: "Cobra lead, this is Cobra Two, two Migs below going to three o'clock, cover me!" This indicated that I was going to lead an attack on these planes and that Cobra One should protect me against enemy attacks while I was firing. As I started into a dive for the attack, I suddenly realized that I had received no reply from Saunders. I dropped a wing for an instant to see if he was coming with me and to my astonishment found he was turning the opposite way.

This meant we would be split up and that I would be going into the attack alone. Normally, we fight in pairs. When I saw what had happened, I decided to reverse my turn and join Saunders. He was now off my left wing and from that direction I could see more Migs coming in, which Saunders apparently had decided to go after. . . . At that moment, Saunders started to fire, engaging not the two aircraft which had dived under me, but two others which had come in during this interval. As I was coming up I was watching the guys behind me because I knew the Americans had a tendency to be a little trigger happy. Just as Saunders started to fire, I noticed fighter fire over my canopy. Before I could take any evasive action, my canopy was blown off. Simultaneously, there were two strikes on my right aileron, followed by three more in rapid succession on the fuselage. I tried to break to the left to evade more fire but found that my aircraft had gone out of control and I was starting to roll to the left.



I couldn't stop. In a few seconds I was barrelling to earth. Since there was no point in staying in the aircraft any longer, I bailed out. I was at about 40,000 feet when I hit the air. Luckily my ejection seat had worked like a charm and I found myself tumbling through space at about 500 miles an hour, my arms and legs thrashing about. At this speed, the air tore at my body, pulling off my wrist watch, my helmet, gloves, oxygen mask, and an escape kit which had been tightly tied to the seat of my parachute. As quickly as possible I released my seat (to which I was still attached) and kicked it away. I had not yet pulled my chute . . . Normally, if you bail out at that altitude and lose your oxygen supply, it is advisable to free drop to about 15,000 feet. But I decided not to wait and pulled by chute immediately. . . . Underneath I could see the Yalu River, part of north-east China and the big power station on the Yalu and the mountainous terrain of North Korea. . . .

RCAF Squadron Leader Andrew Robert Mackenzie, North Korean POW

I was beginning to wonder where I would land and what my chances of evading capture would be because it looked to me from where I sat dangling in the sky that I might drop into enemy territory. The line of battle was far south, in the area of the 38th parallel and I was over North Korea. . . . As I neared the ground, I could see two trucks coming around a bend in the road and obviously heading in my direction. . . I finally hit the ground, landing on the side of a mountain, . . . The trucks had now arrived at the bottom of the hill where I was busy removing my parachute, and dropping every piece of gear I could to make it easier for me to run for it. . . . as I scrambled on all fours up the side of the mountain I glanced over my shoulder and saw the two trucks screech to a halt, the soldiers jump out and come running after me, shouting as they ran. . . . I realized that in my weakened condition I would never be able to reach the top of the mountain. So I stopped, got to my feet, turned to face my pursuers and waited .

Postscript by Bruce Mcintyre

After MacKenzie was shot down, he was transported by truck from village to village, never making contact with other UN personnel. After six days of constant movement, MacKenzie was transported to a prison camp inside Manchuria. It was here that MacKenzie would spend the next two years, quite often in solitary confinement. Andrew MacKenzie was the only Canadian prisoner of war who was interned inside Chinese territory. . .

Similar to American pilots taken during the war, MacKenzie's ordeal became a daily ritual of questioning regarding all aspects of western and eastern ideology, and the presence of the United Nations in Southeast Asia. Along with the questioning, MacKenzie experienced a three month period of solitary bed arrest. For eight hours a day he was forced to sit on the edge of his bed with his hands on his knees and stare at the wall six feet in front of him. During this time he was not allowed to move or sleep, the guards dealing harshly with any infractions. After he was released from solitary confinement, MacKenzie came into contact with an American pilot, and one of his best friends, Hal Fischer. MacKenzie, Fischer, and two other American prisoners remained in China long after the truce had been signed on 27July 1953. MacKenzie was not released until a further 16 months had passed. . .

In November 1954 MacKenzie was informed that he was going to be released. With only two hours notice he and three others had a special meal with two bottles of beer and a bottle of wine. Then he bid farewell to his friends. With an interpreter and a guard he travelled for four days all the way to Canton. At 8 a.m. on December 5th they travelled for four hours to the Hong Kong border. Two years to the minute that he had been shot down MacKenzie bid farewell to his captors and crossed into Hong Kong territory where he was met by his brother-in-law, Wing Commander Don Skene (R.C.A.F.) and escorted away. They had his R.C.A.F. uniform there and, although he had dropped from 200 to 130 pounds, it still fit him.

He served thirteen more years in the service, a portion of which was as Intelligence Staff Officer in NORAD and ending his career as CADO, Chief Administrator Officer at Rockcliffe. After retirement, he was hired as an ad hoc Commissioner of the Canadian Pension Commission for some years. He is a past president of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 604, the founding president of the Korean Veterans Association Capital Unit 7, the first official president of C.F.P.A. (Canadian Fighter Pilots Association). A director of SPAADS (Sabre Pilots Association Air Division), a member of 410 RCAFA W. Barker, V.C. Wing and the POW (Prisoners of War) Association.

Andrew MacKenzie passed away on Monday, September 21, 2009 in his 90th year in Kemptville, Ontario. He was interred in the National Military Cemetery in Ottawa.

RCAF Squadron Leader Andrew Robert MacKenzie, North Korean POW



To his credit, MacKenzie did not cave in to Chinese demands. It was not until December 1980, in a Toronto Star feature, that MacKenzie finally acknowledged to the public that he had indeed been shot down by an American. Though the incident was unfortunate, a number of factors conspired in its occurrence. These include the similar appearance of the Mig-15 and F-86, the speed of the encounter (over 700 knots) and the attack-like maneuver which took MacKenzie's aircraft through a friendly formation.

MacKenzie's release on December 5, 1954 was long after the 27 July 1953 cease fire,

Sparky MacKenzie



Alison Hope "Sparky" MacKenzie– was a Wireless Operator at Canadian Bomber Command Headquarters No. 6 Group in Yorkshire, England during WWII. Married twice, her second husband was Squadron Leader Andy MacKenzie,

The following are excerpts from a news article of August 31, 2016 by Ross Lees

For nearly three and a half years, beginning in 1942, Canadian Allison "Sparky" MacKenzie served as a wireless operator and, she says, loved her work.

She was given the best wireless set and the most powerful transmitter in England and sent the time signal to bombers flying missions over Germany.

"I would send out the signal every half hour (BV9QTF, and the time)," she recalls during an interview from her apartment in Belleville, Ontario. "I would repeat it every half hour, then I would listen for SOSs, or "O" for emergency. Otherwise, they couldn't send [messages] to headquarters unless it was something like that."

Sparky MacKenzie

Because her set was so powerful, the Germans could pick it up and monitor it, so messages were kept to an absolute minimum, she says, recalling often getting messages from downed aircraft in the ocean. "It was always in code." She was trained in Morse code at 24 words per minute. "It went straight up to operations. It was quite exciting, but we kept our cool.

"D-Day was fantastic. We never went off duty. We stayed on duty the whole 24 hours and we could hear and see the bombers. The sky was just black coming from all our satellite stations. We were headquarters for a lot of stations and it was pretty exciting."

She did not see them coming back because she was in headquarters. "All I saw was the fellows going out. When they came back, it was pretty scraggily," she recalls hearing. "Some of our girls lost their husbands in the war

When Andy MacKenzie's wife, Sparky's best friend, died, Sparky married him and they enjoyed several years together. He earned 15 medals, which she still has. She also has a picture of him with England's leading ace, Johnny Johnston, taken at the last fighter pilots' reunion at the Chateau Laurier in Ottawa

Sparky describes him as a "wonderful man" and takes every opportunity to talk about him. "He really had a distinguished career. He was the squadron commander of 441 (Squadron)," she says. "He enjoyed himself and never took himself too seriously. The men just loved him. When he went missing, they were really upset. He stayed missing and nobody cared here. His wife said, he isn't dead and she wouldn't sign any papers, so she kept getting his pay. She had four children. Eventually, he turned up. She spoke to a diplomat and he spoke to Zhou Enlai, and he said he would look to see if they had him as a prisoner. He let them know they had him and they said they would let him go in due course. Two years to the day, to the hour to the minute, they let him go in Hong Kong."

She joined the military at 19, and continued the tradition of her family having someone in every war. "Somebody in my family had been in every war since the Crimean War," she says. "I've got [a picture of] my grandfather in the living room and he was in the Crimean War and his commission is signed by Queen Victoria. I have her signature there. My Dad was in but he had a tubercular gland, so they put him out, but two of his brothers served.

"I was stationed at Uplands," she says. She did her basic training in Rockcliffe and was unhappy about it because that was home and she wanted to travel. But Sparky and her friends made the most of that period of their careers. "We took part in swimming against other stations in the Montreal Athletic Association, and we played basketball and won over Rockcliffe. We were busy, physically." She recalls a very long route march through Montreal in freezing cold temperatures, before being shipped overseas. There were 32 in her course and they were the first graduation of women in March of 1943.

Sparky MacKenzie passed away in Belleville on Thursday, January 26th 2017 in her 94th year



In the News

US F-35 Jet Upgrade is "Immature & Deficient" Bloomberg reports



The \$14 billion software upgrade has led to "critical warfighting deficiencies" in the jets, but is still being installed.

The Pentagon is continuing to install a fresh software upgrade on its F-35 fighter jets, even though the programming turned out to be riddled with flaws, Bloomberg reports, citing a military testing report soon to be published. The fighter jet operators discovered deficiencies "in weapons, fusion, communications and navigation, cybersecurity and targeting processes," following the upgrade, the 13-page assessment viewed by the media says.

It adds that the software required further "modification and additional time and resources, which caused delays." The Lockheed Martin jet is heavily reliant on onboard software that includes more than eight million lines of code. The upgrade "does not adhere to the published best practices" and had "consistently failed to deliver the capabilities contained in their master schedule," the assessment notes.

The upgrade was designed to provide the jets with new capabilities and increase their computing power and memory. It should have also allowed the fighters to carry new munition types, such as AIM-9X Block II air-to-air missiles, all-weather Small Diameter Bomb II munitions or radar-killing AARGM-ER missiles, and even the B-61 nuclear bomb.

However, the new processes "often introduced stability problems and/or adversely affected" other functions, as discovered by active-duty military units that frequently reported "critical warfighting deficiencies," the document said. The report blamed the slew of issues on inadequate funding, which resulted in testing that was not comprehensive enough to ensure "unintentional deficiencies [were] not embedded in the software prior to delivery." The cost of the upgrade has already amounted to \$14 billion, according to Bloomberg.

The US Defense Department's F-35 program office has so far refused to comment on this information, saying it would issue comments once the report was officially published. The F-35s, which were touted by arms manufacturer Lockheed Martin as one of the most advanced fighter jets ever developed, have been plagued by a string of technical issues and a series of developmental delays, cost overruns, and malfunctions.

Most recently, an F-35C Lightning II suffered a "landing mishap" during drills in the South China Sea. The incident saw seven US Navy personnel injured. In early January, South Korea grounded all the F-35 jets it bought from the US after a landing gear glitch forced a pilot to perform a risky crash landing near a military base in the country's west.

In the News

Russian Su-30SM Fighter Jet Repels NATO F-35



Su-30SM

As reported in pravda.ru, during a NATO provocation that was staged near the Russian borders, when an F-35 fighter attempted to approach Russia's western borders, a Russian Su-30SM fighter jet appeared next to the NATO aircraft all of a sudden. After several attempts to drive the fifth-generation aircraft away from the Russian borders, the Su-30SM unexpectedly used the Khibiny onboard complex against the F-35 (the Khibiny is a standard non-lethal weapon of the Russian fighter). This led to a partial loss of control for the NATO aircraft.

The pilot of the F-35 fighter later noted that it was the first time he had to confront a Russian Su-30SM fighter aircraft, *Avia.pro* reports.

The incident ended as quickly as it started - the Russian fighter jet returned to the airbase, and the NATO fighter was forced to return to the airbase in Estonia.

After the incident, the Alliance countries stopped using fifth-generation fighters near the Russian borders, to not provoke the Russian Aerospace Forces to further action.

Khibiny is installed on the Su-30, Su-34 and Su-35 fighter jets. It is a Russian aircraft electronic countermeasures (ECM) system. The system is designed for radio direction-finding and probing signal source irradiation allowing it to distort reflected signal parameters. This helps to

- Delay aircraft detection;
- Mask the true subject against false reflections;
- Cause range finding difficulties, namely in speed and angular positions;
- Degrading Maintenance Mode "on the aisle" when scanning antenna beam radar;
- Increase the time and difficulty of capturing an object during real-time active scanning.

China to Export FC-31 Stealth Fighter Jet



China's Shenyang Aircraft Company (SAC)has offered to set up assembly lines abroad to find export markets for its FC-31 stealth fighter. In order to gear up export of its stealth jet, China has established an office dedicated to promoting the country's FC-31 stealth fighter, according to Zhan Qiang, Deputy General Manager of SAC, a subsidiary of the Aviation Industry Corporation of China.

The move to export the FC-31 is aimed squarely at the F-35 by offering a cut-price stealth fighter jet.

FC-31

Compared to the United States' F-35 China's FC-31 has its own advantages including advanced technology, acceptable pricing, the lack of political restrictions and complete service. The F-35 mainly targets US allies and partners, and while many countries want to procure it, they lack enough budget or face a wide range of export restrictions set by the US.

The FC-31 is a single-seat, twin-engine, medium-sized multi-role fighter jet with outstanding stealth capabilities, strong situational awareness, high maneuverability, advanced integrated logistics and good cost-effectiveness

The Angel of the Outback, Nancy-Bird Walton

Born in Kew, New South Wales, Australia on 16 October 1915 as **Nancy Bird**, she was educated at Brighton College, Manly. Nancy Bird wanted to fly almost as soon as she could walk. As a teenager during the Depression in Australia, Nancy-Bird found herself in the same position as many other children of the time, leaving school at 13 to assist her family. In 1933, at the age of 18, her passion drove her to take flying lessons. Sir Charles Kingsford Smith, who was the first man



to fly across the mid-Pacific, had just opened a pilots' school near Sydney, and she was among his first pupils. Most women who learned to fly did so for recreation, but Nancy-Bird planned to fly for a living.

She helped set up the Royal Flying Doctor Service, and trained women pilots during WW2. Although Nancy wasn't the first qualified female pilot in Australia she was the first to gain her commercial licence, allowing her to carry passengers. She held a pilot's licence for most of the rest of her life. Two years later at the age of 19. With a legacy of A£200 from a great aunt, plus money loaned from her father



De Havilland Gipsy Moth

(which she paid back), Nancy-Bird bought her first aircraft, a de Havilland Gipsy Moth. Soon after, Nancy-Bird and her friend, Peggy McKillop, took off on a barnstorming tour, dropping in on country fairs and giving joyrides to people who had never seen an aircraft before, let alone a female pilot.

Royal Far West Children's Health Scheme

While touring, Nancy-Bird met Reverend Stanley Drummond in 1935. He wanted her to help set up a flying medical service in outback New South Wales

In 1935, she was hired to operate the service, named the Royal Far West Children's Health Scheme. Nancy-Bird's own Gipsy Moth was used as an air ambulance. She bought a better-equipped aircraft and began covering territory, including Queensland, not yet reached by the Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia. and later was appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire in honour of her dedication to this service in 1966. The prefix Royal was granted by Queen Elizabeth II in 1970. She told others that it was rewarding but lonely work.

In 1936, Nancy Bird entered an air race from Adelaide to Brisbane, and won the Ladies' Trophy. In 1938, she decided to have a long break from flying. A Dutch airline company (KLM) invited her to do some promotional work in Europe, where she stayed for a couple of years. She returned to Australia soon after World War II broke out. She began training women in skills needed to back up the men flying in the Royal Australian Air Force.

The Angel of the Outback, Nancy Bird Walton

Australian Women Pilots' Association (AWPA)

In 1950, she founded the Australian Women Pilots' Association (AWPA),^[1] where she remained president for five years. Nancy-Bird Walton became Patron of the AWPA in 1983, following the death of Lady Casey, the original Patron.



Honours

Throughout her life, Walton was notable for her support of charities and people in need. As a result, she was invested as an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 1966. She was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) in 1990. She was the inspiration for generations of female pilots. She was never involved in an accident, despite the risks of early aviation.

The Nancy-Bird Walton Memorial trophy, sponsored by the family, is presented by the Australian Women Pilots' Association for the "most noteworthy contribution to aviation by a woman of Australasia". [5]

The National Trust of Australia declared her an Australian Living Treasure in 1997, and in 2001 she was inducted into the Victorian Honour Roll of Women.

The first Airbus A380 (VH-OQA) delivered to Australian airline Qantas was named in her honour.

In March 2019, Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced that the new Western Sydney Airport will be named Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport.

She was 24 when she married an Englishman, Charles Walton, and had two children. .

On 13 January 2009, Nancy-Bird Walton died at the age of 93.



Qantas first Airbus A380 named Nancy-Bird Walton. It entered service September 2008. Nancy Bird was aboard its ceremonial flight above Sydney.

Board of Directors Meeting Saturday, February 12, 2022

All directors were on hand to discuss a full agenda of exciting coming events.













Kit Shop Sell Out

With the generous support of Sobeys in Port Colborne Mall, our **Kit Shop Chairman Rod Lee** was allowed to set up a display of 434 Niagara Wing items on hand for sale within the Sobeys store. Rod held the display on two separate days in December and most of the items on hand were completely sold out. **Congratulations Rod!**





Rod Lee's Display in Sobeys

Birthdays

March
Rod Lee
Janice Bruneau



<u>April</u> Ron Bentley

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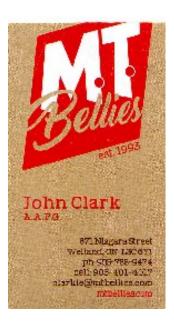
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