

CAAA Chapter President's Report for 2021

The Canadian Aerospace Artists Association (CAAA) is a virtual chapter of CAHS. The focus of the chapter is the creation and promotion of aerospace art in Canada, and our membership is spread across the country. We communicate with each other and with the public via email, *AerialViews* (our quarterly newsletter), by Facebook, and through our website. For the past year we've also been holding monthly Zoom meetings, which is something we expect to continue doing from now on.

This year marked Layne Larsen's 20th year as editor of our excellent quarterly newsletter, *AerialViews*. Layne writes the bulk of the content, with additional submissions and illustrations by chapter members and other guests. Each 16-page issue covers a wide variety of topics of interest to CAAA Chapter members: aviation history; art history, theory and technique; aviation news; and news and announcements about chapter members. Artists are always striving to learn more and improve, and this year we had a bumper crop of essays and articles not only on creating art, but also the business of art, as well as Canadian aviation news of interest to artists. The cost of printing and mailing *AerialViews* makes up the bulk of our annual expenses.

A very small sampling of article titles from this year's issues:

- Things to do When the Painting is Finished
- TLC For Your Brushes
- In Memorium: Dale MacMullin
- Getting Things Right - WWII paint colour variations
- Designing with Value
- Book Review: The Secret Lives of Colour
- Call for Entries for the 2021 CAAA Virtual Art Show
- How to Have a Show
- Making Your Own Canvases
- Canada's Engine Test-beds, the Avro/Orenda Years
- Perspective part VI – Ellipses
- Lively Greys
- Cropping for effect
- Taking Electronic Payments
- Making Prints

The CAAA Chapter of CAHS maintains a web site (www.aviationartists.ca/) and Facebook presence through which we communicate with the public. Understandably, our on-line gallery on the website gets a lot of attention and our members add new images regularly to keep it fresh. The gallery generates enquiries from the public and from institutions and we regularly receive questions regarding artists and their works, giving us a valuable opportunity to interact and educate. When fielding enquiries about particular paintings or artists, the CAAA Chapter does not speak for our member artists (CAAA does not act as their agent); instead, we refer enquiries to the artist concerned. In this regard, we assisted in connecting several people with artist members. For example, Chris Penney, from the Society of Friends of the Fleet Air Arm Museum was looking for a painting by Don Connolly depicting Lt Robert Hampton Gray's VC action to illustrate an article in their newsletter, *Jabberwock*. I was able to put him in touch with the Connolly family and the image appears on Page 27 of the November 2021 issue: <https://www.fleetairarmfriends.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/eJabberwock-105.pdf>

The front page of our web site lists announcements chronologically (newest at the top), and there are other pages on the site that describe CAAA's history, list relevant contacts and a list of

links related to aerospace history and art. The web page is, admittedly, starting to look a little basic and dated in style, but we maintain it ourselves to keep costs down and only pay for hosting.

Most of the announcements made on the web site are echoed on our Facebook page, which has a modest but respectable following of about 900 people. As one might expect, the most popular posts are those announcing new paintings in our gallery, and this helps to drive more visitors to our website, where they can also learn more about CAAA and what we do. In the past few years many of our new members have come to us through a first contact via the CAAA Facebook page. We also regularly 'like' and 'share' posts by other Facebook pages that promote aviation art and aviation history, that we feel might be of interest to our members and followers.

This year the CAAA put on a virtual art show on the theme: *Help from Above - Humanitarian Aviation*. The show was open to members of CAAA as well as CAHS members and was promoted on the CAAA website, the CAAA Facebook page, Twitter, Instagram and the CAHS monthly newsletter. Despite that, it only had 376 visits from the time it opened in August until the end of the year, which is quite disappointing. As this was intended as a 'trial run' for future virtual art shows, we plan to try again this year and see if we can improve on that performance. The show remains on the CAAA website under the "Special Galleries" section.

During the year, CAAA was contacted by two different military organizations regarding commissioning works to commemorate special occasions. Both were pursued vigorously but one sponsor appears to have lost interest before actually providing any specifications. The second provided a set of detailed specifications and at least two member artists have applied for the job.

Meetings held in 2021. All meetings were conducted via Zoom and all CAAA members were invited to participate. Attendance varied between seven and 14 with an average of 11 (one third of the active artist members). Meeting dates and topics discussed:

January 16

Present: Eric Mitchell, Pres. And Webmaster; Elizabeth McRae, Secretary/Treasurer; Ardell Bourgeois, 1st V.P. and B.C. Regional Rep.; Layne Larsen, Editor of Aerial Views; Martin Myers; Paul Seguna; Sam Cole; Wes Lowe; Harold Skaarup, Eastern Regional Rep.; Doby Dobrostanski, Public Relations.

Topics: CAAA-CAHS Logo for the CAHS website; 2024 RCAF Centennial; Compiling a list of important Canadian Aviation events and dates; Initial suggestion of mounting an on-line art show.

February 20

Present: Eric Mitchell, Pres. And Webmaster; Elizabeth McRae, Secretary/Treasurer; Ardell Bourgeois, 1st V.P. and B.C. Regional Rep.; Layne Larsen, Editor of Aerial Views; Martin Myers; Jeff Stephenson; Wes Lowe; Harold Skaarup; Eastern Regional Rep.; Doby Dobrostanski, Public Relations; Grant Gulland.

Topics: Proposed increase in dues deemed unnecessary at this time; thanks to CAHS we can now accept charitable donations; news from CAHS; List of historical Canadian aviation events; Discuss virtual art show.

March 27

Present: Eric Mitchell, Pres. And Webmaster; Elizabeth McRae, Secretary/Treasurer; Ardell Bourgeois, 1st V.P. and B.C. Regional Rep.; Layne Larsen, Editor of Aerial Views; Martin Myers; Paul Seguna; Jeff Stephenson; Wes Lowe; Harold Skaarup, Eastern Regional Rep.; Doby Dobrostanski, Public Relations; Grant Gulland; Martha Southwell; Ken Mallett; John Walmsley.

Topics: RCAF 100th Anniversary; List of historical Canadian aviation events; Discuss virtual art show; Reminder that prices for artwork may be indicated on the CAAA website gallery; encourage members to help boost CAAA social media posts; CAAA business card template.

April 24

Present: Eric Mitchell, Pres. And Webmaster; Elizabeth McRae, Secretary/Treasurer; Ardell Bourgeois, 1st V.P. and B.C. Regional Rep.; Layne Larsen, Editor of Aerial Views; Martin Myers; Paul Seguna; Jeff Stephenson; Wes Lowe; Harold Skaarup, Eastern Regional Rep.; Doby Dobrostanski, Public Relations; Grant Gulland; Ken Mallett; Jake Fowell.

Topics: Virtual Art Show details firmed up; Lifetime achievement award to Don and Liane Connolly, plus a dedication to them on the Virtual Art Show page.

May 22

Present: Eric Mitchell, Pres. And Webmaster; Elizabeth McRae, Secretary/Treasurer; Ardell Bourgeois, 1st V.P. and B.C. Regional Rep.; Layne Larsen, Editor of Aerial Views; Martin Myers; Paul Seguna; Wes Lowe; Harold Skaarup, Eastern Regional Rep.; Grant Gulland; Ken Mallett; Jake Fowell.

Topics: Virtual Art Show; using copyrighted materials as references; Giclée printing.

June 26

This was a social meeting and no official business was discussed

August 07

Present: Eric Mitchell, Pres. And Webmaster; Elizabeth McRae, Secretary/Treasurer; Ardell Bourgeois, 1st V.P. and B.C. Regional Rep.; Martin Myers; Paul Seguna; Jake Fowell; Ken Mallett.

Topics: Virtual art show is now 'live'; Proposed changes to streamline the CAAA on-line gallery; a request for assistance from LCol J. Doubrough, representing the Winnipeg Officers' Mess, to assist with dissemination of a forthcoming RFP for an artwork commission to commemorate the RCAF 100th.

Oct 16

This was a social meeting and no official business was discussed