

971 RCAF AIR MARSHAL SLEMON WING

AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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Send inputs to: georgesweanor@comcast.net



The oldest university building still in use in Canada
See page 4

Social Calendar

- Aug 28 'Twas a great evening at Shirley and Jim Stewart's, a home that a short time ago was alone with the antelope, but is now surrounded by city and humans.
- Sep 12 Our Battle of Britain ceremonies were once more well organized and run by Darrell Levitt. The Regular Force turn out was good and we had the usual RAF contingent from Denver. We enjoyed terrific talks from Gen. Robert Chekan who told of ordinary people from fighter pilots to air raid wardens, much through the eyes of his mother who was a 10-year-old girl in the blitz on London. and F/L Edward Williams, RAF, who had very interesting statistics, many little known. Your scribe also spoke, but our Wing contributed only 9 men and 6 women - 36% of our local membership while we average over 90% for our socials. We are unworthy of being the organization we claim to be.
- 26 42 of us thoroughly enjoyed a great evening at Pat and Buzz Wilder's.
- Oct 16 43 of us, plus several Regular Force members enjoyed a great evening at Joan and Jim Peterson's,
- Nov 11 Armistice, Remembrance, Veterans' Day: 1100 at the Retired Enlisted Club, east off Murray. Dress, if you have them: Stetson, blazer, medals.
- NEW:** The newsletter has been invaded and a bridgehead established. Page 6 is now owned and occupied by Darrell, This scribe welcomes him and wishes him an appreciative audience.

Our best vibes to **MILES McMILLIAN** who went into hospital 15 October with a blood clot in his lung.

The Editor's Corner

ELECTION AND BASHING TIME

It is election time again in the USA, but, then, when is it not? They tell us that is the price of democracy. China, with as much internal dissent, is leaping ahead, but they suffer an authoritarian regime. Europe is ahead in many respects, but they are a bunch of socialists. The UK is reducing its debt by biting the bullet as it did in WWII, Malaya, and the Falklands, but they thrive on adversity. Canada is doing well but it does not rate mention, good or bad, as it never does anything exciting. Chile is doing amazingly well, but it had a horrendous earthquake that united it, whereas Katrina was used to sow conflict.

Sanctioned by voters to go to Washington, are hundreds of talented people, full of vim and vigour, to create the paradise the electorate knows it deserves. These dedicated politicians soon discover that survival demands little governing but much fund raising, making them beholden to those with the heavy purses. It remains, then, a democracy of the rich and powerful but, please, do not call it a dictatorship. We can still complain openly and, after all, there are mid-term elections that can toss out the poor performers if you can tell who is and who is not amid all that hate literature. In fact, since 1934, 127 House and 99 Senate seats have changed occupants mid term, providing even more obstacles to long-term good governance.

Both parties send me numerous request for funds. Having endured their wasteful spending on attacking each other with accusations of doubtful validity in endless TV sound bites that, this time, will cost \$3.7 billion, I consider it much better to contribute to 35 organizations like Amnesty International, Doctors Without Borders, International Red Cross, World Environmental and Wildlife groups, PBS, and so on. This spreads my donation funds rather thinly but they are selected from among the hundreds who seek my money.

Are 50 states too many to govern? Larger Canada can find enough problems with 12 divisions. But then the tiny UK has 101 counties. Smaller Switzerland has 26 cantons and 4 languages. How much independent power do politicians have? To rival the inflationary period after the Big Bang we have had, in one lifetime, a series of explosions: 1. Population with severe strains on the environment, 2. Women, curtailing their vital role in raising the next generation to surpass men in education, commerce, science, literature, politics 3. Job exports, destroying our manufacturing base, 4. Sinful profits and incomes of corporations, CEOs, Sports, and Entertainment stars, 5. Eternal Growth with no pause to relax, and 6. Terrorism as a revolt against all this.

Daily, my computer screen is polluted with vicious attacks on Muslims and President Obama. Mostly, they are lies or warped half truths, proving the senders are bereft of any sound solutions to world problems. Recently a dedicated, talented, and hard-working individual was elected president to change things. Then a divided nation erected obstacle after obstacle, attempting to bring him down. It is amazing he has accomplished as much as he has. Politicians are rewarded with high salaries and enormous perks the rest of us can only dream of, yet their main reason for going to Washington, job satisfaction, is denied them. But, Obama is not alone. Angela Merkel who also has done much to improve her country is slipping in the polls. Human gratitude leaves much to be desired. Even Hugo Chávez has lost popularity. Bring civility to our democracy or authoritarian regimes will swamp us.

Besides Obama-bashing there is Muslim-bashing. Deluded senders provide me with scores of accounts of Muslim atrocities. Yes, they should be exposed and condemned but I see little balance like praise for the Muslim General Congress urging the Canadian government to ban the burka and niqab, nor do I get continued condemnations of US Christian terrorists like the Oklahoma City bombing, the Arizona "Sons of the Gestapo" derailing trains, 230 killed by a bomb on TWA flight 800 in 1996, using Blacks and Guatemalans for medical experiments, Pastor John Hagee promoting "Christians United for Israel" and urging military strikes on Iran? Then we have the IRA murdering people in Ulster, London, and Manchester, plus crimes world wide, and, if I may add, sexual misconduct due to the celibacy forced on priests. As for Muslim-bashing this scribe is suspicious of all organized religions. All basic beliefs have been corralled by self-promoting groups we can generically call priests who inject dogmas, rituals, and fees to cement their dominance and control. They do provide some good services and promote peaceful co-existence but are too often corrupted by extremists. Agnostics argue, that in our ignorance, the only sensible approach is to maintain an open mind with tolerance to all beliefs that refrain from hostility to others, and with a thirst to join those who are making progress in ferreting out answers to How, When, and, above all, WHY.

LORD STANLEY'S LATEST NAMESAKE

Recently another major find of members of the Cambrian explosion of life forms 500 million years ago, and so well demonstrated in Alberta's Burgess Shales discovered in 1909, was made 40 km to the south in Kootenay National Park.



This predator has been named *Stanleycaris hirpex* as it was found near Stanley Glacier and Stanley Peak also named for the Governor. Caridids grew up to 2 metres in length. Also found in the Burgess Shales was our oldest known vertebrate ancestor, *Pikaia*.

When these animals thrived, Alberta and British Columbia were near the equator and under water.

Frederick Arthur Stanley was our Governor General 1888-1893.

RCAF KNOWHOW: Remember when we had that superb air force whose members could overcome problems in their stride?

One day two RCAF pilots ferried two aircraft from Calgary to Toronto with two tickets for return via commercial air. Checking in at Malton they were told they would have to pay extra to check their parachutes.

No problem! To avoid this expense they simply donned their parachute harnesses and started to board the aircraft.

There was an immediate change in airline policy. Our heroes were persuaded to come back and allow the airline to include their parachutes with their checked luggage - for free.

PREPARING FOR MARS. The team at the Haughton Crater site on Devon Island in 2008 successfully simulated the appendectomy performed by Leonid Ivanovitch Rogozov in April 1961 on the 6th Soviet Antarctic Expedition to Antarctica. With

a "snowstorm whipping through my soul wailing like a hundred jackals" he injected himself with novocaine, cut into his abdomen, taking 105 minutes to remove his appendix and stitch himself up. The following spring he returned to Leningrad safe and sound.

At the Haughton centre where would-be Mars explorers wear space suits, take long hikes carrying back rocks, and remain in isolation for up to two years, they simulated performing the Rogozov operation but with 20-minute delays built in to communications with a doctor in Detroit, the time needed for contact from Mars.

SMART AFGHAN WOMEN: Peter Tutt tells me that Martha Stewart in making an Afghan story before our invasion noticed how women walked behind their husbands. When she returned there recently she was disappointed to find women now quite happy to walk even further behind. When she asked why, she got the honest reply: "Land Mines!"

SASKATOON: The **John D. Diefenbaker International Airport (YXE)** rates a 6-page spread in the Jul-Aug 2010 *Airports of the World* magazine that starts with the facts that Saskatchewan grows half of Canada's exports of wheat, oats, barley, rye, flaxseed, and canola. It is the world's largest exporter of uranium and has 66% of the world's potash. It is the agricultural biotechnology capital of Canada.

This airport was started in 1928. Expansion came in 1938 as the RCAF built #4 Service Flight Training School that included 5 hangars. DOT took over in 1945 and Trans Canada Airlines moved in with Dakotas, replaced by North Stars in the 1950s. Canadian Pacific Airlines, Pacific Western Airlines, and Vickers Viscounts also serviced the base. Wardair began charter services to London in 1967 with Boeing 707s, expanding to Honolulu in 1977 as DOT doubled the size of the airport. In 1981 Frontier Airlines linked Denver to Saskatoon. In 1993 the Diefenbaker name was chosen and service to Minneapolis began with DC9s. 2001 saw an \$18 million renovation, In 2008 annual passenger traffic was 1,135,113 and a further \$32 million improvement was started.

Over a dozen airlines frequent this modern airport with Asian, European, Latin American, and Caribbean connections.

BRAIN SURGERY: Önder Bilgi, director of excavations at İkiztepe on the Black Sea, Turkey, tells of such surgery 4,000 years ago. Very sharp double-sided blades made from imported obsidian have been found along with 14 skulls that had healed after the removal and replacement of rectangular sections to permit treatment of haemorrhages, cancer, and wounds.

IT IS THE RICH NOT THE MUSLIMS who fail to integrate. German writers point out that Muslims mingle, go to school, and work amicably with other Germans while the rich go to private schools, have their own clubs, and discourage their women from participating in the work force. The rich are the aliens and the menace.

AN AVIATION FIRST: Some 20 PhD students at the University of Toronto, led by Todd Reichert, built and Todd piloted, on 02 Aug 2010, a human-powered flapping-wing aircraft for 19 seconds covering 145 metres at a speed of 25.6 kmph. This ornithopter has a wing span of 32 metres. It is made of carbon fibre tubes covered with a thin polyester skin. Total weight 45 kg. Before the flight Todd fasted to lose 20 pounds. In a small cockpit beneath the wing, he pumped a bar with his feet that moved the wings up and down. It needed a tow to get airborne.

Using Leonardo da Vinci's 1,485 sketches they built this machine in a barn near Tottenham, naming it The Snowbird. They crashed several times last October, made modifications, and finally succeeded for a world's first human-powered flight.

The flight was observed by an official from the International Aeronautical Federation.

ARE ANGLO-SAXONS STILL RELEVANT?

In reading numerous scientific publications I am often surprised to find so many Asian names among the scientists working in Western institutions so I chose one weekly publication at random to investigate. It happened to be the 06 Aug 2010 issue of New Scientist, a UK magazine of 40 pages containing 37 articles and 3 book reviews. Discussed were the works of 87 scientists from: UK 33, USA 27, Canada 5, France 5, Japan 3, Switzerland 3, South Africa 2, and one each from Australia, Austria, Brazil, China, Germany, Israel, Italy, New Zealand, and South Korea.

Only 19 of the 69 scientists working in Anglo-Saxon countries had non Anglo-Saxon names, so it

appears we are still contributing.

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK now celebrating its 225th anniversary, was founded in October 1785 by United Empire Loyalists fleeing the revolt of 13 of Britain's 29 American colonies, making it the oldest of Canada's English-speaking universities. The oldest is Laval founded in Quebec in 1663.

One of the original UNB buildings is still in use. Among many distinguished graduates is Lord Beaverbrook (Max Aitken) who was a chancellor who subsequently made impressive donations to it. Today it is noted especially for its science, engineering, and computer programs.

NEWFOUNDLAND and BETTY: It is said that, in Heaven, it is easy to distinguish those from Newfoundland. They are the only ones who want to go back. Although not yet in Heaven, Betty Davis again went home but, this time, only for 2 weeks. In all respects the island is doing very well. They are now cleaning up from a heavy blow from Igor which hit after she had left. While there her brother, Wilson Russell, escaped his North Star Electric company in Vancouver to join her as did her nephew, David Desroches, who set aside his CBC duties in Toronto.

THE LITTLE MOSQUE ON THE TUNDRA:

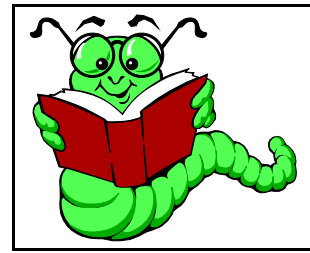
Of the 3,500 inhabitants of Inuvik, 100 are Muslim. They ordered a 1500 sq ft mosque from a Winnipeg firm so designed as to be transportable across Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and the NWT on all types of roads en route as well as by barge down the Mackenzie River, the world's longest haul for a church.

After several, almost disastrous perils, they completed the 23-day, 4,000 km, haul in September, off-loaded it from the barge and began placing and preparing it for worshippers by 31 October, the world's most northerly mosque.

Inuvik in the Mackenzie delta is 100 km from the Arctic Ocean. It has 56 days of continuous daylight in the summer and 30 days of continuous night in the winter. It is connected to the outside world by the Dempster Highway.

THE CANADA COLORADO ASSOCIATION plan to invite us to join them in a hockey night in Denver. TBA

Book Reviews



~ AVIATION IN CANADA - EVOLUTION OF AN AIR FORCE ~ By Larry Milberry, Canav Books, Toronto, 2010, 336 pages

Yet another magnificent book from Larry, to whom a huge debt is owed for over 30 books giving an unparalleled account of Canadian aviation. This current book, measuring the usual 24 x 31 cms, contains 807 photographs, including one of LGen Bill Carr, in Boy Scout shorts, escorting Queen Elizabeth during the Boy Scout Jamboree of May 1970 in Churchill, Manitoba. This is part of a 2 ½ page summary of his career.

This volume covers the Canadian Air Force from the end of WWI with good coverage of Camp Borden's history and carries on through the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, and Ferry Command.

It is a big book but it is still amazing just how much Larry has squeezed into it. Far too much for an adequate review. Go buy your own copy. You will not regret it.

~ THE GRAND DESIGN ~ by Stephen Hawking and Leonard Mlodinow, Bantam Books, NY, 2010, 199 pages

On the first day of sale I bought a copy of this most-readable book. Immediately, Keith Greenaway leaped out of the first chapter as Stephen used the same charts and words that Keith used frequently to emphasize how our view of the world can be greatly distorted by familiar displays such as the Mercator chart. Moving away from the point of projection and its accuracy, new projections are needed. Stephen uses this to move away from a single unifying theory to his embracive M-Theory that could allow for 10^{100} universes. This is such an enormous number that it guarantees at least one just like ours.

For the first 100 pages I learned nothing new, but it was a well-written review of our understanding of physics from the Ionian Greeks to the present day. In spite of all his disabilities Stephen retains an inquisitive mind along with a good sense of humour. In this book he is well assisted by Leonard.

Physicists have been unable to incorporate gravity into a single theory with matter and energy. Stephen explains that matter and energy are the same thing with positive energy, but ruled by temperature. Gravity has negative energy. Over the whole picture they cancel each other out becoming nothing, so our Big Bang started from nothing and because of tiny imperfections here and there energy became more abundant than gravity, was able to create matter and eventually you and me, but the balance of zero remains in the overall picture. Once this cycle starts it is on auto pilot with no intervention possible so no need for a supreme being.

No, neither Hawkin nor Mlodinow are Atheists. Rather they are Agnostic. You come up with better ideas and they will be the first to listen. They lament "Our mental concepts are the only reality we know."

Perhaps you can explain all this to this dimwit who remains confused over Nothing. If it is simply positive energy and negative gravity cancelling each other out with no Space-Time, should it not have started at Absolute Zero rather than the enormous temperatures of the Big Bang? And what provided the space, empty or not, to accommodate the expansion? And if I create reality by observing it, why did I create this reality and the aeons of past history necessary to make it what it is? And why can I not control it? I do not recall volunteering so why was I drafted?

What, besides Woe, is Me?

And, as for You - how can I believe you are real when I fail to get requested newsletter inputs from you?

DARRELL'S PAGE

We North Americans often take for granted the privileges of life that we so enjoy. We go through our day giving very little thought, if any to how we came to be the beneficiaries of these bounties. Some even believe (wrongly) that these perks of life are RIGHTS! This cannot be any further from the truth.

The next time you happen to have the wing roster in your hand to find a phone number or address of a fellow wing member, or watch the TV on any given day, STOP and remember those that have given their lives or their youth to defend us from invasion, threat, terrorism, and oppression. We owe them an unmeasurable debt of gratitude.

Once a year, some of us take time from our busy lives to remember these individuals. Others seem to think that November 11 is a holiday. That it is meant to hold BBQs or to go sightseeing, never once thinking of those that served. Yes this is your PRIVILEGE to ignore this day. It was given to you by a great many selfless individuals.

We are the keepers of their legacy. We must never let ourselves or other forget that what we have is a direct result of their actions and love of country. So if you chose to attend a Remembrance Day ceremony outstanding, if you chose to host a BBQ or go sightseeing for the day, at exactly 11:00 A.M. stop what you are doing and take a few minutes to reflect on the gift that they have given us.

LEST WE FORGET

THE ROYAL FLYING CORPS (CANADA) was a training organization of the British Royal Flying Corps located in Canada during the First World War. It began operating in 1917.

As the war progress, Great Britain found that it needed more trained aircrew and more training facilities. Training was provided both by the *Curtiss Aviation School* at Long Branch near Toronto (land plane training) and Hanlan's Point on Toronto Island (for flying boat training), and in the United States.

The British realized that thousands of Canadians and Americans had joined British flying operations and more wanted to join, so it made sense to open British air training stations in Canada. Canada also had space for such facilities. After much negotiation with the Canadian government, the RFC, commanded in Canada by Lt Col (later Brig Gen) Cuthbert Hoare, began operating several training stations in southern Ontario. Stations were opened at Camp Borden (main training site), Beamsville, Hamilton (armament school), North Toronto (Armour Heights, Leaside, and Long Branch), and Deseronto (Mohawk and Rathburn). The Curtiss JN-4 (Jenny) was used for training; 500 Avro 504Ks had been ordered, but they were not used before the war ended in November 1918.

Hoare made several agreements with U.S. Brig Gen George O Squier (US Army Signal Corps) and the us Aircraft Production Board. Squier had overall responsibility for the US Army's air service, which was short of flight instructors. The RFC released five experienced American pilots to the US Army, where they became squadron commanders. The US Air Board acquiesced in the British, opened a recruiting office in New York City, ostensibly to recruit British citizens, but in fact also soliciting US citizens, of whom about 300 were successfully signed up. The RFC would also train many US Army flight personnel: 400 pilots; 2,000 ground-crew members; and 20 equipment officers. These Americans would then collect aircraft and equipment from the UK, before coming under RFC control in France. Ten American squadrons would be trained in Canada during the summer of 1917, while RFC squadrons were allowed to train during the winter in Forth Worth, Texas.

During the last two years of the wars 3135 pilots and 137 observers trained in Canada and Texas for both the RFC and the new Royal Air Force. Of those trained, 2624 went to Europe for operational duty.

ON APRIL 1, 1924, The RFC ceased to exist and the newly formed Royal Canadian Air Force was born.

PER ARDUA AD ASTRA

LAST FLIGHT by HARRY CREASE

An RCAF Hurricane pilot, Harry was shot down by flak in October 1941 while escorting a daylight raid of 18 Blenheim bombers. He was captured and taken to the nearest Luftwaffe base. Harry was their first prisoner so was treated like royalty. There was a dance in the mess that night and they found an English-speaking girl to be his companion. Harry was enjoying being a kriegsgefangenen (POW) until the station Gestapo officer came in, saw what was going on, blew a fuse, and ordered the Luftwaffe to immediately pack him off to a POW camp where I was to meet up with him 17 months later.

Harry had taken up writing good poetry and, when I published my book on my RCAF career in 1983, he let me include 3 of his poems. Here is the one I recited at the Battle of Britain ceremonies:

Like migratory birds they soared aloft,
Making geometric plan in flight;
And though the flesh within was warm and soft,
The eyes that searched the sky were hard and bright.

But Hate with hellish speed and guns that reek
Can fool the quickest eye; and burning steel
Softens the hardest heart, and make it weak -
Warm flesh alone can know the pain to feel.

The eager youth, curling beneath the lash
Of hailing lead borne on the breath of Hell,
Watched his bright dream become a blinding flash;
And lifted up his head to say Farewell.

Granted one glance before a flaming death,
He traced the brilliant outline of the cloud;
A knew then, as he vainly fought for breath,
The darkening pall of night would be his shroud.

BIRDS, MYTHS, and WIND TURBINES: To her article on bird kills due to wind farms in the September issue, Trish Sweanor adds:

There are a number of long-standing myths about what birds can or cannot hear. One is that birds hear better at high frequencies than do humans or other mammals. Another is that birds have exceptionally acute hearing. A considerable amount of work over the past 50 years has repeatedly shown that neither of these notions is true. When hearing is defined as the softest sound that can be heard at different frequencies, birds on average hear less than many mammals, including humans (R. Dooling 2003).

Birds hear best between about 1 and 5 kHz. Acoustic deterrents or “scarecrows” are not generally effective because birds habituate to them and eventually ignore them completely. Devices that purport to use sound frequencies outside the hearing range of humans are most inaudible to birds as well as birds have a narrower range of hearing than humans. A review of the literature on how well birds can hear in noisy (windy) conditions suggests that birds cannot hear the noise from wind turbine blades as well as humans. In practical terms, a human can probably hear a wind turbine blade twice as far away as can the average bird. It is entirely possible, however, that as birds approach a wind turbine, especially under high wind conditions, they lose the ability to see the blade (because of motion smear) before they are close enough to hear the blade. The hypothesis that louder (to birds) blade noises result in fewer fatalities is untested. Making the necessary noise measurements and comparing fatalities at turbines with noticeable whistles with those having no whistles provide one test of this hypothesis.

WE HATTI

May I share with you a small fraction of my 70-year-long hunt for my roots and take you back some 4,500 years? Genealogy is a time-consuming, frustrating, full-of-blind-alleys, expensive hobby, but with great rewards. Knowing little when I started I now have 45 different surnames in 14 villages in 5 counties in England back to 1515 for Joan and 36 different surnames in Ireland, New France, France, and Germany for myself. Fascinating stories have been uncovered but let me just relate how I found the Hatti and their influence especially on Germany: First, I stumbled across my Chouinard origin, finding that George, a great uncle, anglicized his name to Sweanor on getting patents for his fog horn and farm implements inventions in Sherbrooke, QC, in 1876, and my grandfather also changed on moving to Ontario. Tracing my line back, without a break, to 1650 in New France, and to 1570 in the Tours area of France, I discovered the Chouinard name originated with a family of Schweinhardts who had fled Lutheran persecution in Hatti (now Hesse). Searching for the Hatti took me to Anatolia (Turkey) some 4,500 years ago. My ancestral certainty ends in 1570. The rest is the best probability I can deduce at the moment.

We Hatti (Hessians), or Chatti, had female gods and spoke a language now extinct. A peaceful herding society living on a dry plateau surrounded by mountains, we had no alphabet of our own but used the Sumerian cuneiform for trade. About 4,300 years ago, groups of Aryan Indo-European stock started to arrive, then Semites. We helped them but they multiplied becoming Assyrians, Hittites, Mitanni, and Hebrews. In turn they absorbed us, stole our name and our cities, especially Hattusa which they expanded. They fought among themselves and with Egyptians. Hittite kings lived and perished by the sword, usually wielded by their own sons impatient for power. They left many cities burning ruins. The Hittites and Assyrians built great empires and we contributed towards the success of such places as Ashur, Nineveh, Babylon, Memphis, Jerusalem, Damascus, and Tyre. Somehow we retained our identity but to others were often indistinguishable from particularly the Hittites and Assyrians. Yes, our King Sargon II (722-705 BC) did uproot our former rulers, the tribes of Israel, resettling them on our outskirts. But, like the Hebrews and so many others, Assyrians have roots to Abraham through Keturah, one of his wives. As the Assyrian empire waned, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon (605-562 BC) exacted heavy tribute from us.

Suffering persecution hardened us into warriors, resulting in us being called Men of War, *Chatti* by the Hebrews and *Kermans* by the Germans. We then called ourselves "The Master Race", had kings known as Kaisers, and invented the double-eagle symbol (all copied from Bismark to Hitler). We helped the Trojans in their wars. After 323 BC, when the heirs of Alexander the Great fought among themselves, we Hatti thought it time to leave. We were still Hatti but our genes were now all mixed up with those of all our occupiers. Migrating westward we settled in Silesia (East Germany) then many of us went further west to found Trier in Pfalz and to settle throughout Pfalz and Hesse which we originally named Hatti. The Gauls opposed us, but in 83 AD we united to defeat Emperor Domitian's 9th Legion, recalled from Britain in a vain attempt to pacify us. Successful pacifiers were St. Boniface and his Irish monks who started in 755 to convert us to Christianity. Protecting our female God, Boniface was murdered in Fulda, Hesse, but his stubborn monks carried on. Hebrews had forced Yaweh on us and the Hittites and Assyrians their male gods, but loyalty to our female gods lingered until the Irish completed our conversion. In the 1100s surnames were introduced and my family was given the name Schweinhardt. In 1526 Philip, Count of Hesse, adopted Lutheranism, so we fled to Feilbingert, Pfalz, but in 1563 Frederick III embraced Calvinism, so we fled again, this time to Catholic Tours where we took the French name Chouinard.

The Hatti or Hessians we left behind: In the 1600s and 1700s Trier was burned a dozen times by the French and Prussians, while Karl Marx was born there in 1818. Their troubles were far from over. Many in Hesse became farmers and craftsmen but were conscripted by their magistrates to serve as mercenaries. The British hired a lot of them but their pay was funnelled through their magistrates who kept most of it. Of the so-called Hessians in the American Revolution and the defence of Canada only 12,992 were Hessian while 17,000 were Russian. Of the Hessians 2,400 remained in Canada and 2,500 in the US. Of the 7,500 killed, 6,354 were from disease. Also, through long years of religious wars, many Hessians were persecuted by Lutherans and Calvinists. During WWII our cities of Mainz, Koblenz, Worms, Kassel, and Frankfurt all suffered enormous damage. As a POW, I was interrogated in Oberursel, Hesse. Had I come home? Hesse and Pfalz are now part of a peaceful and prosperous Germany. May it remain that way.

