

## EDITOR'S

## MESSAGE

It has been a few years since I was a spry, young 50-year old. However, except for a few more aches and pains, the occasional loss of a word or wondering why I had entered a particular room, I still feel much like I did when I first put on a uniform ... sort of like the CH124 Sea King. It has been five decades since this Sikorsky helicopter first put on the "uniform" of the Royal Canadian Navy, and it is still going strong.

Just to put things into perspective, in 1963, the Conservative Government of John Diefenbaker would lose an election to Liberal Lester B. Pearson; the top movies at the box office were *Dr. Strangelove*, *The Birds* and *Tom Jones*; favourite television shows were *My Favorite (sic) Martian*, *McHale's Navy* and *Petticoat Junction*; 12 cents would buy you a litre of gas; a new house would set you back \$20,000; 5 cents would buy you a candy bar or a comic book; and the cost of a new Sea King helicopter was approximately \$6.5 million.

In 2013, the Conservatives, under Stephen Harper, are in power (although his wife was born in 1963); the top movies at the box office (so far) are *Iron Man 3*, *Despicable Me 2* and *Man of Steel*; favourite television shows are *NCIS*, *Monday Night Football* and *The Big Bang Theory*; in Ottawa, a litre of gas will cost you \$1.24, a new house in Ottawa may cost you \$382,248; a pocket full

of nickels is required to buy either a candy bar or a comic book; and the cost of a CH148 Cyclone helicopter is ... still being debated.

What is not up for debate is the ongoing requirement for a combat-capable, multi-mission maritime helicopter. In 1963, they were a necessary part of the defence "toolbox" to deal with issues such as the assassination of a president, the cold war and Cuban Missile Crisis. Five decades of failing states, the global war on terrorism and trans-border crime will make the Sea King and the Cyclone mighty handy to have on hand.

So, in the way of a "Happy Birthday," the articles in this issue of *The Royal Canadian Air Force Journal* pay homage to the aircraft and to the men and women who designed, fixed and flew them in peace and war.

Oh, in case you were wondering, the Maple Leafs won the Stanley Cup in 1963 ... it seems like only yesterday.

Enjoy the read. ☺

Sic Itur Ad Astra



Major William March, CD, MA  
Senior Editor