



Tell us about yourself!

Name: Thomas Taborowski

OPC Position: First Vice-Chair
Chair - Honours and Awards Committee
Chair - Recruiting and Retention Committee.

OPC National Member: Provincial Delegate
Member Recruiting and Retention Committee
Member Aviation /Flying Committee

Squadron or Committee Affiliation: OPC Executive Committee member.

Years involved with the Cadet Program:

- Involved since 1975
- Air Cadet 246 Canadian Progress Squadron
- Civilian Instructor 818 Downtown (Toronto) Squadron
Officer at following Squadrons: 818 Downtown Squadron / 166 Bulldog Squadron /
- 94 Newmarket Sqn.
- Also served as Chairman of Toronto Air Group for Several years/ Parades special events co-ordinator
- Served as an Officer at Whitehorse Cadet Camp in Whitehorse, Yukon, three summers
- Instructor at Regional Cadet Instructor School CFB Borden
- Member of 180 Mosquito Squadron Sponsoring Committee
- Assigned Squadron Director for 800 Black Forest Squadron Mississauga
- Area Vice-Chair "Toronto" and OPC Board of Governors member
- Chair Fundraising Committee. Committee Produced Fundraising Manuel 2008
- Served on following OPC Committee's: Finance/Fundraising/Recruiting/Public Affairs/AGM/IACE/Squadron resource Committee

1. How did you get involved in the Cadet program?

I had a friend and neighbour who attended the same high school as I did. Each day on the way to school, I would hear stories of his cadet adventures. He became a member of the band, drill team and hobby club. His first squadron weekend away was a survival weekend at CFB Borden. He came back to school that Monday and could not stop talking about how great a time he had. A few weeks later he convinced me to try out cadets and I went down to the squadron with him and became a recruit making some of the best friends a person could ever have.

2. What is the most memorable experience you've had with the Cadet program?

Wow, this is a hard one to narrow down to one specific event, since the age of 13, the Air cadet program has been a huge part of my life.

My first memory / experience was as a recruit. When our training officer then Steve Wallace sat me down and explained the importance of selling OPC Lottery Tickets, each week I would go to his office to hand in the sold books of lottery tickets and each week a pep talk, with confirmation of my action plan for sales. Four months later I sold over 100 books of tickets winning a 10 speed bike that annual inspection. Thanks Steve! You gave me a skill set I carry even today.

Next memory / experience was attending Power scholarship 1980 at CFB North Bay. Week two finishing my first Solo, taxiing back to voyageur airways tie down area, getting out of the Cessna 152 and being hosed down on the runway by the base fire dept with my colleges watching in enjoyment as I passed through this ritual.

As a young Officer I had the pleasure of serving for three summers at Whitehorse Cadet Camp in the Yukon. One of three band officers, with 100 Tri- Service cadets, travelling all over the territory playing concerts and parades with a final performance for the official Royal visit of Princess Margaret.

3. What would you say is the most rewarding part of volunteering?

Paying /giving back to the program. When I was a cadet the Canadian progress club was a very active sponsor in our squadron. Those business men gave so much to each of us. Yes they paid for squadron trips and purchased all our band instruments and much more. But outside of the financial portion, they gave of their time and knowledge. At squadron events they would take the time to get to know each of us as cadets and young Canadians, offering guidance, words of encouragement and praise. They helped make me who I am today. 35 years ago Mr Doug Vincent was a member of that sponsor and still remains a loyal member of the OPC, after years of service to the OPC and the young men and women of the Air Cadet program in Ontario he still continues to give the next generation.

4. Do you have any advice for people who would like to join or become more involved in the OPC and cadet program?

Pick a level of involvement that is comfortable for you and have fun. It doesn't matter what level you choose, if its grass roots at the squadron or more of a management role with the OPC. The work that we do assists the youth of our communities in developing skill sets that they can carry through their entire lives. They are shown a value system where they respect themselves and others. They are encouraged and given guidelines to increase communication methods and the ability to transfer thoughts and ideas to others. Leadership and discipline are common factors in the program, leading them into tomorrow confidently and capably to accomplish goals and targets they set for themselves.

Get involved as we are making a difference in building the leaders of our communities, who will continue to make this a caring community, a great province and country.