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CANADIAN AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY



www.CAHS.ca

Hello,

Welcome to the October edition of the CAHS National Newsletter.

CAHS National News



NEWSFLASH

Time is marching on and the 2018 AGM is getting closer! Mark your calendar today for the AGM - **May 30 to June 3, 2018**. Take a look at our heading, a head-on view of a Mosquito, and stay tuned for more on that. Also we have a deal for you! Our host, the **Sheraton Cavalier Hotel** is offering the chance of a **free night** to someone who is an early bird registrant. Those who register **before March 15th** to stay at the hotel, will be eligible for a draw for a

free night. Check out the Sheraton Cavalier and to book your room, [CLICK HERE](#).

Book your airfare now or gas up your car. We look forward you seeing you in Calgary in 2018. You may even wish to come early or stay after the AGM, to visit other attractions like The Military Museums (also Cold War Museum) Wetaskiwin, Edmonton, Calgary Zoo (pandas and lemurs), Telus Spark Centre, Heritage Park, Glenbow Museum, Banff, Lake Louise, shopping – no provincial sales tax.

***See you in Calgary in 2018,
The 2018 CAHS AGM Committee***

CAHS Chapter News

The Regina Chapter, along with the RCAFA 600 Wing, are hosting the annual Snowbirds Dinner on November 3, 2017 at the Royal Regina Golf and Country Club. Click on the image below for more info.

SPECIAL EVENT NOTICE

Royal Canadian Air Force Association



*600 (City of Regina) Wing
Post Office Box 952
Regina, SK S4P 3B9*

ANNUAL

SNOWBIRD AIR CADET DINNER

Friday, November 3rd, 2017

Royal Regina Golf Club (5401 11th Avenue)

1800 for 1900 Dinner

Please sponsor a Snowbird or an Air Cadet (or more)

\$40.00 per sponsorship.

We will make every effort to have the persons you sponsor sit at your table.

R.S.V.P. No Later Than 25 October

To Sherry or Dorothy or Gary

*When reserving a spot for yourself and your guests, please
give names of everyone so that they can be placed on the seating plan.*

Cathy Swayze will be accepting all payments on the event evening.

If you wish to pay in advance,

you must contact Dorothy at 352-5963 to make arrangements.

Chapter Meetings

Chapter	Date	Location
Calgary	17 Oct.	Southern Alberta Institute of Technology
Manitoba	26 Sept.	17 Wing Chapel
Montreal	17 Oct.	Pointe Claire Legion Hall
New Brunswick	19 Oct.	Fredericton

Ottawa	27 Sept.	Canada Aviation and Space Museum
Regina	17 Oct.	Eagles Club
Toronto	5 October	Canadian Forces College
Vancouver	30 Sept.	Richmond Cultural Centre
Medicine Hat	14 Oct.	Patterson Armoury, Medicine Hat

In the News

RCAF Golden Hawks Celebrated at Miramichi

*Story and photos by John Chalmers
CAHS Membership Secretary*

From September 15-17, 2017, a "Celebration of Excellence" was held at Miramichi, New Brunswick, to honour the Golden Hawks, the legendary aerobatic team of the Royal Canadian Air Force, which flew Canadian built F-86 Sabres. Earlier, in June 2017 at the induction dinner and ceremonies of Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame, the Golden Hawks received the Belt of Orion Award for Excellence. The Award is given "to honour organizations, groups, societies or associations who have made outstanding contributions to the advancement of aviation in Canada."



Accepting the Belt of Orion Award was J.A.G. Fernand "Fern" Villeneuve, who as a Squadron Leader in the RCAF was the first team commander of the Golden Hawks. Fern retired as a Wing Commander with the RCAF and in 2006 was himself inducted as a Member of Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame. At left is Hall of Fame board chairman Rod Sheridan. At right is Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, Judith Guichon, a guest presenter and speaker for the event. (Rick Radell photo)



The Golden Hawks flew 317 incident-free performances from 1959 to 1963, but during preparations for the 1964 season, the team was stood down as a result of budget cuts to the air force. (RCAF photo)



The original Golden Hawks pilots, 1959, left to right: F/O Bill Stewart, F/O Jim Holt, F/O John Price, S/L Fern Villeneuve, F/L Ed Rozdeba, F/L Ralph Annis, F/L Jim McCombe, F/L Jeb Kerr. (RCAF photo)



On September 16, 1967, a Golden Hawks Appreciation Day was held at RCAF Station Chatham, New Brunswick, the original home of the team. At Miramichi, minutes away from the site of the former Chatham base (now the Miramichi Airport) fifty years later on September 15-17,

2017, celebrations were held to honour again the Golden Hawks and their place in Canadian aviation. Former Golden Hawks pilots and technicians seen with guest speaker Major General Blaise Frawley, Deputy Commander of the RCAF (in uniform) are, left to right: Jean St.-Pierre, George Miller, John Elmore, Blaise Frawley, Ed McKeogh, Mick Nordeen, Dick Clements and Gerry Homer.



Pipes and drum from the 5th Canadian Division Support Base Gagetown in New Brunswick added colour and drama to the celebration dinner on September 16.



Retired RCAF Captain Kevin Anderson, the executive director of the New Brunswick Aviation Museum, with support from his committee, organized the historic celebration. The event brought together pilots, ground crew and family members of Golden Hawks personnel. Activities for the 90 people attending included a tribute dinner on September 16, 2017, to honour the team as the high point of the celebration.



Bringing greetings from Quinte West, Ontario (formerly Trenton), the final home of the Golden Hawks, was Mayor Jim Harrison at the microphone and city councillors left to right, Don Kuntze, Keith Reid and David McCue. Also speaking at the dinner was local Member of Parliament, Pat Finnigan. The Government of New Brunswick and Quinte

West were major financial supporters of the celebration.



John Chalmers, left, represented Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame at the celebration, as Historian for the Hall. At right is featured dinner speaker, Gerald Haddon. He is a grandson of J.A.D. McCurdy, who was the first person to fly in Canada, and spoke of McCurdy's contributions to aviation. McCurdy's historic first flight was with the Silver Dart at Baddeck, Nova Scotia, on February 23, 1909. Gerald has served as RCAF Honorary Colonel of the Canadian Forces School of Aerospace Technology and Engineering, 16 Wing, Borden, Ontario.



Retired RCAF Lieutenant Colonel Dan Dempsey, a former team commander of the Snowbirds, and author of *A Tradition of Excellence: Canada's Airshow Team Heritage*, spoke of the development of Canadian aerobatic teams and the reputation and influence of the Golden Hawks upon teams that followed – the Golden Centennaires in 1967 and the Snowbirds since 1971.



Former Golden Hawks pilots, F/L Ed McKeogh, left, and F/L George Miller both took the microphone at the celebration to pay tribute to the dedicated and talented ground crew technicians who kept the team's F-86 Sabres in the air.

George later served as team commander for the Snowbirds and retired with the rank of Colonel.

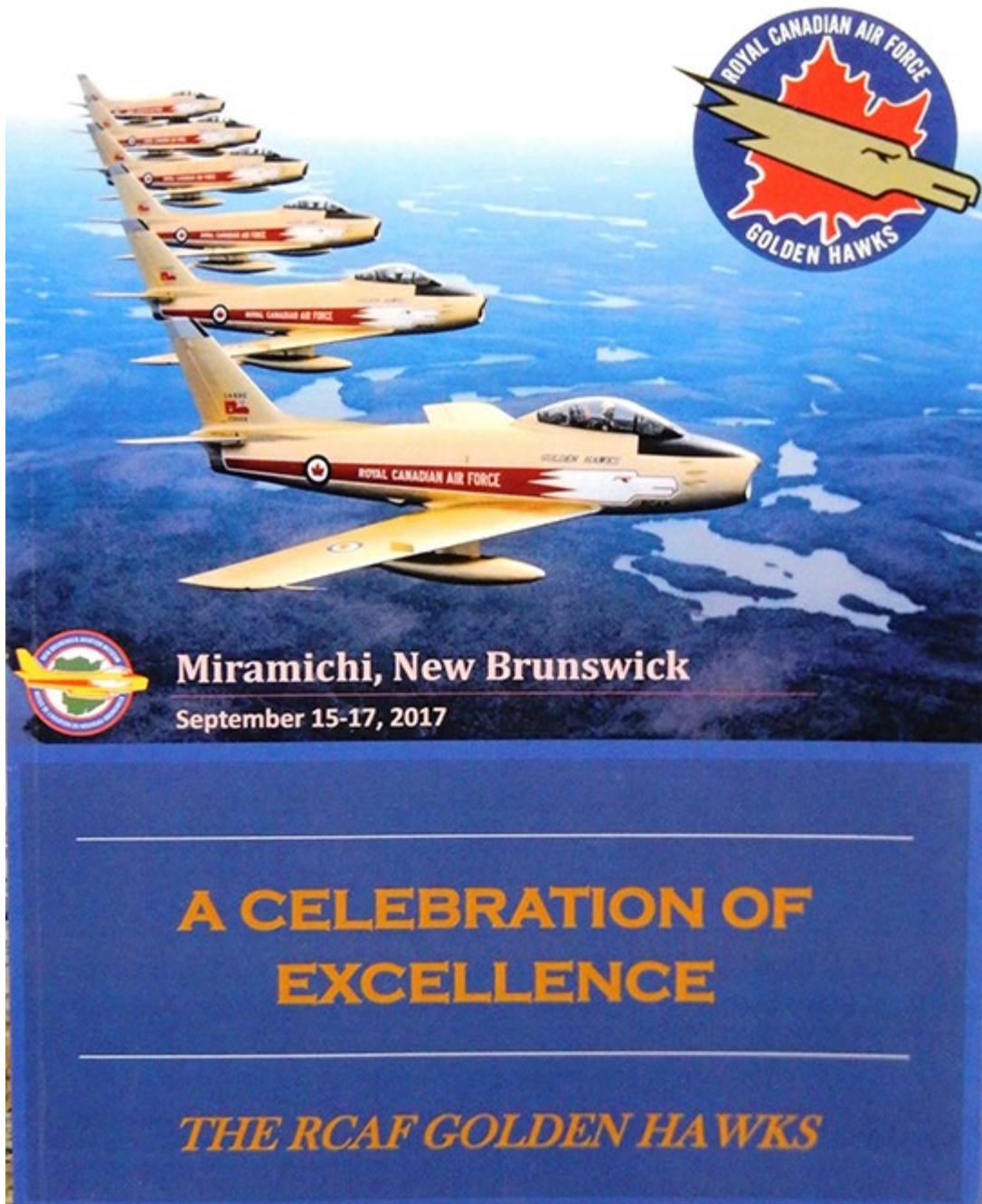


While Kevin Anderson holds the container of tickets, John Elmore draws one for another door prize at the dinner. Retiring as a Corporal with the RCAF, John had served as a crew chief for all the years of the team's operation.

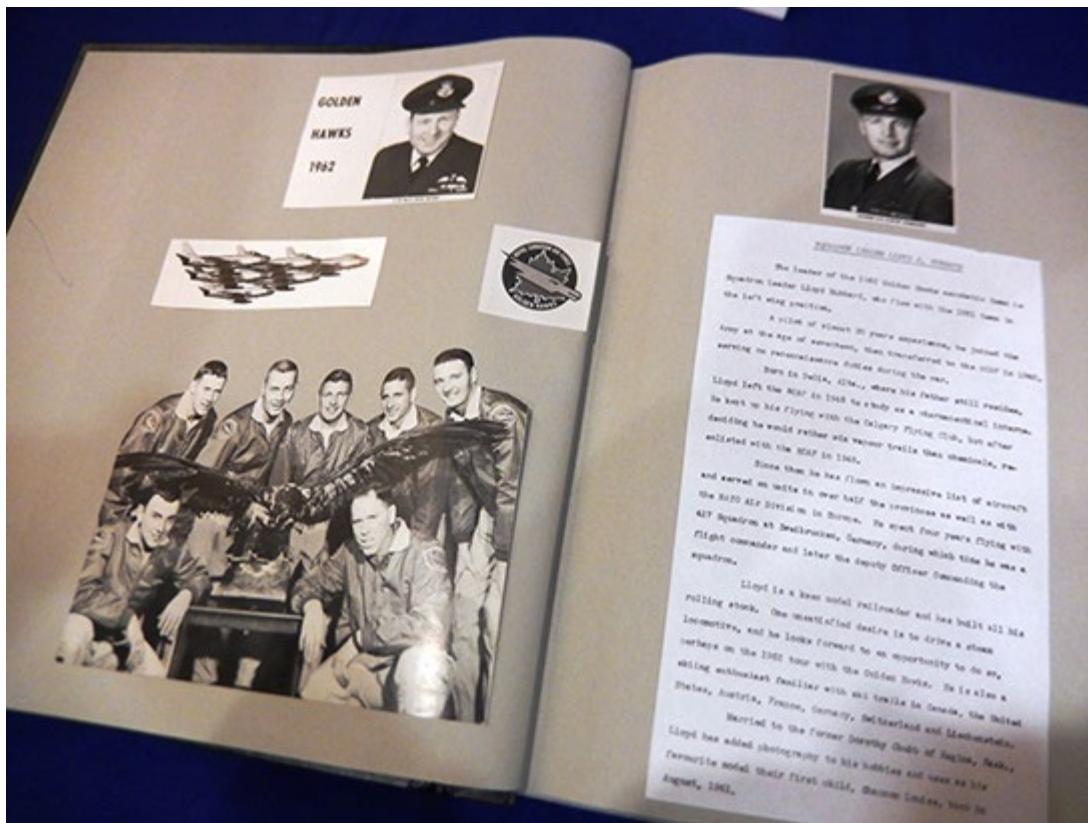


Fifty-four years after he flew as a Golden Hawks pilot, Ed McKeogh donated his flying suit to the New Brunswick Aviation Museum. An extensive exhibit of Golden Hawks memorabilia from the New Brunswick Aviation Museum was displayed throughout the weekend. Flying suits, prints of

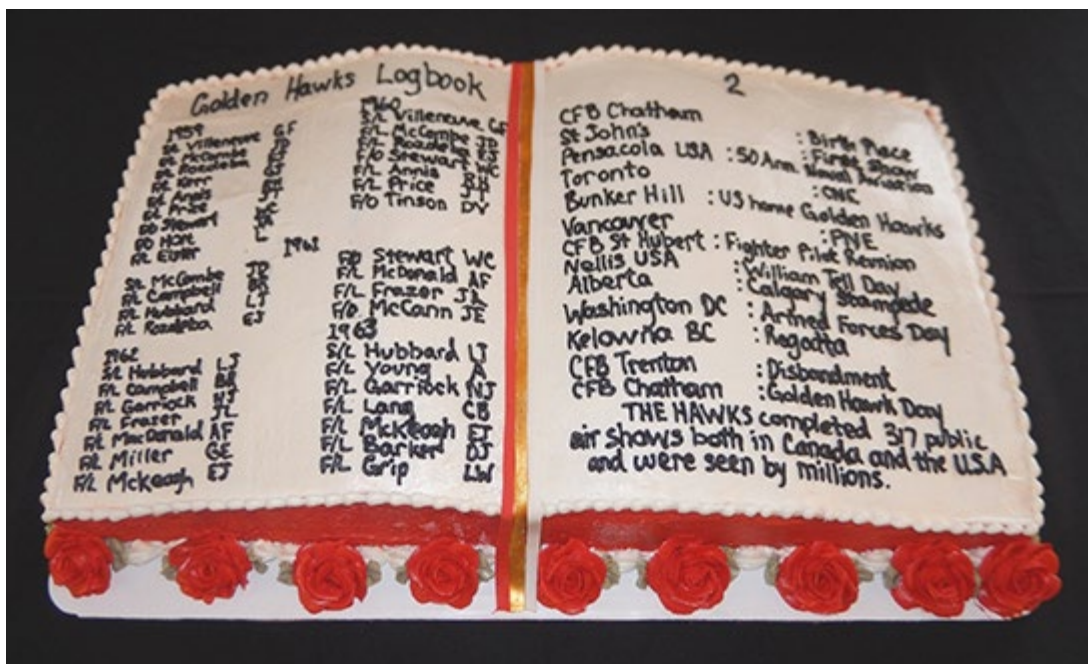
the team, the Belt of Orion certificate, models, display panels, log books and other artifacts were included.



All in attendance received a copy of a new 94-page history about the Golden Hawks, *A Celebration of Excellence*, which includes photos, names of all pilots and ground crew who served on the team, articles about the Golden Hawks that had appeared in the former RCAF journal, *The Roundel*, and first-person accounts by team members.



Notable among the items on display were five massive volumes of Golden Hawks history, photos, documents and news clippings compiled by the late crew chief Bill Briggs, who had donated them to the Museum. Many of the photographs included in the albums were taken by Bill himself.



A "logbook cake" replicating one made for the 1967 Appreciation Day for the Golden Hawks at RCAF Station

Chatham names all pilots of the 1959-1963 teams and many of the places where they flew at air shows.



Unveiling a new painting by Peter Robichaud are left to right, George Miller, Blaise Frawley and former LAC Mick Nordeen, an RCAF ground crew technician for the Golden Hawks.



The new Golden Hawks history book and a print of Robichaud's painting can be ordered from the New Brunswick Aviation Museum: nbamdirector@outlook.com.

A challenge ahead for the museum is to locate a permanent home. See: nbaviationmuseum.com.



The final event of the weekend honouring the Golden Hawks was a memorial service on September 17, conducted by an RCAF Chaplain, Major Al Murphy. The service was held to remember Golden Hawks pilots who lost their lives while flying in accidents during training or practice sessions: F/L Leonard "Sam" Eisler; F/L Jeb Kerr; F/L Jim McCann; and F/O David Barker, who was flying later with the Golden Centennaires when an accident took his life.

Information about all individuals and organizations that have been honoured by Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame can be found at the Hall's web site. The Hall encourages nomination of individuals as Members and nominations of organizations for the Belt of Orion Award. CAHS chapters and their members are invited to consider nominations for the Hall of Fame. Details and nomination forms can be found at the Hall's web site: www.cahf.ca. Note: The deadline for submission each year is May 31. The 2018 gala

dinner and induction ceremonies will be held in Calgary on June 7.

2017 Community Charity Air Show at Brantford a huge success

Photos and report by Gord McNulty

Record-breaking crowds and hard-working volunteers ensured a successful inaugural Community Charity Air Show at Brantford Airport (www.CommunityAirShow.com) on August 30. This year's event, inspired by the former Rotary Charity Air Show that started in 1999, was held under sunny skies. It raised funds for both the Rotary Club of Brantford and the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum.

The CWHM participation was highlighted by a fine demonstration of the B-25 Mitchell, the DC-3 Dakota that dropped jumpers from the Hamilton Sport Parachute Club to open the show and the PBY-5A Canso. Spectators also enjoyed the CF-18 Demo Hornet painted to celebrate Canada's 150th Anniversary of Confederation; the Snowbirds; the Great War Flying Museum World War I replicas; Gord Price in the Yak-50; Trevor Rafferty in his "Rafferty Javelin," Danny Richer's BAC Strikemaster; Danny and Alf Beam in T-28 Trojans; and the Waterloo Warbirds, 'Mako Shark' CT-133. The GWFM Nieuport 28 couldn't be flown when the engine failed to start. Volunteers identified a problem in the primer line and fortunately were able to repair it.

The family-oriented show was co-chaired by Dave Rohrer of the CWHM and Sherry Kerr of the Rotary Club of Brantford, leading the team, volunteers and sponsors whose commitment made the show possible. For excellent coverage by Eric Dumigan and Gus Corujo, check out www.airic.ca and www.gusair.com.



Capt. Matthew Kutryk flew the 2017 Demo Hornet in a paint scheme for Canada's 150th Anniversary at Brantford on Aug. 30.



The Great War Flying Museum's replica Fokker Dr. 1 Triplane and Nieuport 28 were among four GWFM aircraft in the Brantford Air Show.



GWFM volunteers worked hard to repair the engine of the replica Nieuport when it failed to start. They successfully completed the task.



The Consolidated PB5A Canso of the Canadian Warplane Heritage taking off at the Brantford Air Show.



The Canadian Warplane Heritage DC-3 taking off at Brantford with jumpers from the Hamilton Sport Parachute Club.



Trevor Rafferty performed aerobatics in his Rafferty Javelin at the Brantford Air Show.



A jumper with the Maple Leaf flag from the Hamilton Sport Parachute Club at Brantford.

Brampton-Caledon Airport Day proves popular

Photos and report by Gord McNulty

The colourful replica aircraft of the Great War Flying Museum highlighted a full day of aviation at the Brampton-Caledon Airport Day on Sept. 10. Sunshine and warm temperatures helped to attract a typically large crowd of Brampton-area residents to this annual event.

It's encouraging that excellent progress is being made in completing the lengthy rebuild of the museum's Fokker D. VII, C-GWWI. In fact, if all goes well, the aircraft is expected to fly next spring. This will be a much-anticipated occasion, as the D. VII was heavily damaged in an accident at Geneseo, NY, after an engine failure in 2007.

The aircraft is being painted in new camouflage colours representing a combat veteran with an unexpected Canadian connection. Lt Richard Kraut flew in these 'RK' markings over the Western Front in 1918. 'RK' was taken

by Canada as a war trophy, flown from France to England in 1919, and then shipped to Canada. It became part of a growing collection of captured enemy equipment under the stewardship of Arthur Doughty, Dominion Archivist and Director of War Trophies.

'RK' remained in storage at Leaside/Armour Heights in Toronto, as depicted in artist Russell Smith's fine portrayal, *Spoils of War*, commissioned by historian and vintage aircraft display pilot Edward Soye. Only a handful of war trophy aircraft were deemed at the time to be in fit condition to be kept. 'RK' wasn't among them and was last seen in a scrap heap at Camp Borden.

The latest paint scheme will be the third for C-GWWI. It was originally painted in the white colours of Herman Goering, then in a blue and red scheme representing another famous German ace, Rudolf Berthold. It was in the Berthold identity when the misfortune occurred at Geneseo.

The history of 'RK' is described by Edward Soye in a new booklet by the Vintage Aviation Team (vintageaviationteam.com), of Caledon. It's also making good progress in constructing a full-scale flying reproduction of another war trophy, Fokker D. VII 8609, that was flown by William Barker, VC, out of Armour Heights.

The most surprising aircraft at Brampton was a Sikorsky S-58T twin turbine helicopter, C-GFXP, fresh from a recent demonstration at the Canadian International Air Show. The rugged and versatile helicopter is flown by Four Seasons Aviation Ltd. (www.fourseasonsaviation.com) of Toronto, together with mechanical construction firm Sprint Mechanical, to perform lifts on aerial construction projects in Toronto. Four Seasons acquired the newly rebuilt chopper from Texas-based California Helicopter Airways and began operating it in October 2016. It can lift cargo of up to 4,500 pounds. The S-58T, powered by a Pratt and Whitney Canada PT6 twin pack turboshaft, first flew in 1970. California Helicopter Airways has specialized in the support program for the S-58 and S-58T since then. Four

Seasons is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year.



The Nieuport 28 replica of the Great War Flying Museum at Brampton on Sept. 10, 2017.



Fokker D. VII C-GWWI outside the GWFM on Sept. 10. The bottom wing was in the hangar when this photo was taken.



A trio of Great War Flying Museum replicas line up for demonstration at Brampton-Caledon Airport Day, Sept. 10.



CHAA pilot Allan Paige in Harvard Mk 4 C-FWPK takes a passenger for a flight at Brampton Caledon Airport Day.



Sikorsky S-58T, C-GFXP, of Four Seasons Aviation Ltd. at Brampton-Caledon Airport, Sept. 10, 2017.

Malton CF-100 Rededication Ceremony 24 Sept. 2017: A tribute to teamwork

Photos and report by Gord McNulty

An impressive restoration of Avro Canada CF-100 Mk 5 Canuck, tail number 18619, was celebrated during a Rededication Ceremony at Legion Memorial Gardens at Paul Coffey Park in Malton on 24 Sept. To see this aircraft looking resplendent once again is a tribute to excellent teamwork and vision by people who recognize the importance of the CF-100 to Canada's aviation history. The aircraft was first erected on a concrete pedestal in the gardens in 1972, a fitting location not far from the Avro plant where 692 CF-100s were built between 1950 and 1958.

Sunny, albeit sweltering, skies prevailed as Mississauga Councillor Carolyn Parrish, who spearheaded the restoration with the help of generous sponsors and the City of Mississauga, presided over the ceremony. The Toronto Scottish Regiment and a colour party from Streetsville Legion Branch 139 participated. A warm and sincere thank you is owed to the long list of sponsors who made what Carolyn described as an incredible restoration possible.

The aircraft entered service in 1956 with 433 Squadron. It served with No. 3 AW(F) Operational Training Unit at RCAF Station Bagotville, Quebec, until early 1962. Taken on strength by (reassigned to) the Canadian Armed Forces at CFB Borden in 1968, the aircraft retained its RCAF serial number and markings. It became an instructional airframe in 1969 and was struck off strength in 1972.

Originally destined for display at the Barrie Legion, the airframe was purchased for \$500 by the Malton Royal Canadian Legion Branch 582. The CF-100 was then erected on a pedestal in the Legion Memorial Gardens at Wildwood Park (now Paul Coffey Park) and officially unveiled in

October 1972. It was first restored in 1994 but over time it continued to deteriorate and either had to be moved to the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum in Hamilton or completely stripped and repainted.

The City was fortunate to find Jim Hurlburt & Sons Heritage Restoration of Barrie, who had refurbished a CF-100, No. 18683, displayed at Haliburton, ON. They concluded the Malton CF-100 was structurally sound but badly in need of preservation. To accelerate the project, more than \$45,000 was raised from donors and \$6,000-\$7,000 in donated paints came from PPG Paints. Magellan Aerospace, the lead donor, gifted two significant parcels of land at the park, where the CF-100 and the Malton War Memorial are located. Magellan has long been an important part of the Malton community.

The CF-100 was stripped to bare metal by blasting with fine glass particles. A primer of 16 gallons of paint was applied, then 16 gallons of silver, exact duplicate decals and eight gallons of clear coat. A solar panel to light the cockpit, wing tips and tail provided a unique finishing touch. The job was completed on 5 August, 2017. For more coverage of the ceremony and information about the restoration, check out Carolyn Parrish's website at www.carolynparrish.ca/cf100.



CF-100 18619



Avro Canada CF-100 Mk 5, 18619, rededicated at Malton on Sept. 24, 2017.



The colour party from Streetsville Legion Branch 149 marches off as Mississauga Councillor Carolyn Parrish watches at the podium.



The Toronto Scottish Regiment participated in the CF-100 Rededication Ceremony with Streetsville Legion Branch 139.



The Toronto Scottish Regiment.



Korry Frew of lead sponsor Magellan Aerospace spoke at the ceremony.



Two excellent plaques at the base of the CF-100 in the Legion Memorial Gardens in Malton.

** The following news articles are gathered from the Internet, and are provided for your interest. They are not reviewed to the same standard that Journal articles are reviewed, and may contain errors of fact, style, or grammar.*

Edmundston Lancaster Moved to New Home



Lancaster KB882, displayed outdoors since 1964 at Edmundston, New Brunswick, has finally been relocated to its new home at the National Air Force Museum of Canada. Shown above is the aircraft as dismantling begins to transport it to Trenton. Earlier, plans were afoot to move the bomber to the Alberta Aviation Museum in Edmonton, but that failed to happen. However, the venerable veteran has now been rescued, relocated and has a secure future. The fuselage, engines and propeller arrived at the museum on October 4, following previous arrival of the wings. Dismantling of KB882 was carried out by military and civilian technicians from the RCAF's Aerospace and Telecommunications Support Squadron and the National Air Force Museum of Canada. Target date for completion of restoration and unveiling is the 100th anniversary of the Royal Canadian Air Force on April 1, 2024. Photo above shows the nose section loaded for moving to its new location. (Joanna Calder photos) [Click here](#) to see the story.



Museum News

Secrets of Radar Museum (Not-so) Secret Reopening

London, ON—The Secrets of Radar Museum is happy to announce its Grand Reopening that took place on Saturday, September 16, 2017, at our brand new location: [2155B Crumlin Side Road](#). Canadian radar veterans joined members of the Museum Board of Directors for the official ribbon cutting ceremony at 1p.m.

The Museum, previously located behind Parkwood Hospital by the Westminster Ponds, closed in early May in order to pack up its collection and move across the city. After a lot of hard work by staff and exceptional volunteers, we have moved 75+ years worth of Canadian radar history to our new site on the grounds of London International Airport. Now, after almost 6 months of sweat and toil we are ready to re-open our doors to the public.

Why not make a day of it?

For further information on the Secrets of Radar Museum please 'like' us on Facebook www.facebook.com/SecretsofRadar or visit our website, www.secretsofradar.com.

Museum Hours: Thurs-Saturdays 10AM-4PM.



WWII RCAF radar mechanics Charlie Jackson (left) and Jim Sands catch up at SoRM's grand reopening, Sept. 16, 2017. *Photo by Maya Hirschman*



Visitors exploring the museum's new exhibits at SoRM's grand reopening, Sept. 16, 2017. *Photo by Corbin Lippert*

Canadian Aviation Moments

The **Canadian Aviation Moments** were submitted by

Dennis Casper from the *Roland Groome (Regina) Chapter* of the CAHS. **Spoiler alert** - if you read any further than each question, you will find the answer to the questions directly below. Good luck and have fun!

The Canadian Aviation Moments questions and answers for October are:

Question: Who was the Canadian pilot from Lethbridge, AB, who in 27 days had destroyed 10 and 1/2 aircraft in the air and one on the ground? This feat has never been equalled by any RCAF or RAF pilot. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and Bar and was killed in combat March 1945 at the age of 23 years old.

Answer: "Dick (Richard Audet) had set an incredible record. In 27 days, December 29 (1944) to January 24 (1945), he had destroyed 10 ½ enemy aircraft in air-to-air combat and one more on the ground. No RCAF or RAF pilot has ever equaled this feat."

Source: *Canada's World War II Aces* – Larry Gray - Page 18

Question: Why did the American and Canadian authorities impose a news blackout, during World War II, on the Japanese incendiary balloons that were sent to the west coast of North America? How successful were they?

Answer: "American and Canadian authorities imposed a news blackout on balloon arrivals to deny the enemy any intelligence about the effectiveness or non-effectiveness of the devices. This proved so successful that only one report of balloon landings filtered back to Japan, even though thousands of persons witnessed balloons passing overhead or saw balloon debris lodged in fence lines or treetops."

Source: *Legion Magazine* – July and August 2009 - Page 46

Question: How many SFTSs and E&RFTSs (EFTSs) did the RAF have in 1939? How many trained pilots did they turn out each year and how many part-timers were in various

stages of training in the RAF Volunteer Reserve?

Answer: "By 1939, the RAF had 15 SFTSs (two overseas – Egypt and Iraq) and more than 45 E&RFTSs – Some barely started. It was also turning out about 750 trained pilots per year for the regular force and had thousands of part-timers in various stages of training in the RAF Volunteer Reserve. On the outbreak of the Second World War, the E&RFTSs were renamed Elementary Flying Training Schools (EFTSs)."

Source: *CAHS Journal* – Winter 2009 – Page 139

Reader's Feedback

From Bill Cameron:

I enjoyed the article in the CAHS Summer Newsletter by Gord McNulty, about his visit to the North Atlantic Aviation Museum in Gander NL. It was a delight to see the photo in the story of Canso CF-CRP, and to re-visit an old friend, CF-CRP. The Museum in Gander is rather outside regular tourist itineraries, and I was pleased to see important and iconic aircraft preserved there.



That aircraft was flown by CPAL from Prince Rupert Harbour to Sandspit, BC, from 1954 to 1960. A connecting flight of a CPAL DC-4 operated from Vancouver to Sandspit, daily –

and cargo and passengers were exchanged at that airport. The runway at Prince Rupert, on Digby Island, was not constructed until the early 1970's.



I was assigned as Flight Dispatcher for that operation in 1955 – and with another Canso CF-CRR (that went on to have further adventures in France). The pilots, engineers, stewardesses, and myself were all in our mid-twenties in 1955, and Prince Rupert was a very happy Base!



The photo of Nina Youngman with CF-CRP was taken at Sandspit in 1955. Nina was a local Prince Rupert girl, and both Nina and her sister Madeleine went on to have long and successful careers with Canadian Pacific Air Lines. Both ladies were exemplary flight attendants, and greatly respected by all us in that airline. Nina later became Nina Morrison, and on her retirement from CPAL at mandatory age she was interviewed on CBC Radio by Peter Gzowski.



Prince Rupert map

Consolidate 28A5- Canso CF-CRP CPAL

Canadian Vickers – Cartierville, QC – Works No. CV271
Sep. 7, 1943 – Taken on Strength, Eastern Air Command, RCAF Serial No. 9837
Oct. 21, 1944 – No. 162 (BR) Squadron, RCAF – Reykjavik, Iceland
Jun. 2, 1945 – No. 6 RD – to Storage
Nov. 29, 1945 – Struck off Strength RCAF - To Aircraft Industries, Montreal
Nov. 29, 1945 – Canadian Pacific Air Lines, Vancouver, BC as CF-CRP No. 231
Operated from Seven Islands to Knob Lake, QC 1946 to 1953
Operated from The Pas to Flin Flon (Schist Lake) 1953 to 1955
Operated from Prince Rupert (harbour) to Sandspit

(runway) 1955 to 1957

May 9, 1957 – Trans-Labrador Airlines, NL

1970-1973 - Eastern Provincial Airways – Halifax, NS

1979-90 – Government of Newfoundland & Labrador

1990 – North Atlantic Aviation Museum

The 'Good Old GHX'

When I read in the September CAHS newsletter that Gord McNulty had visited the North Atlantic Aviation Museum, I just had to respond. Because one aircraft that wasn't mentioned was the Douglas C47 whose nose graces the front of the museum and whose tail takes you out.

The C-47 has been called The Greatest Aircraft of Its Time and the people from a small uranium mine on the shores of Lake Athabasca in northern Saskatchewan in the 1950s and '60s would agree.

Nestled into a rocky bay, the town of Gunnar Mines was 400 miles from the nearest centre - Edmonton. Our lifeline was a battle-hardened C-47 that had carried American troops and supplies in the fierce battles against the Japanese in WWII, then helped rescue American and European prisoners in the Philippines.

Relieved of its war duties, it flew cargo in the Philippines, United States and northern Ontario before landing on the ice of St. Mary's Channel in 1953. Its war-time camouflage had been replaced by a sleek silver and what a beauty it was. The great old workhorse carried mining supplies, employees, families, and food to and from the mine. Passengers sat along the sides in the original troop seats until forward-facing seats were finally added. But the aircraft's most important role was to carry cargo. When ice returned to the lake, and tugs and barges could no longer transport the barrels of uranium concentrate destined for the United States for its Cold War battle against the Soviet Union, the barrels were simply tied into the centre of the plane, alongside the passengers.

Known by its call-letters GHX and distinguished by its lack of creature comforts (bare fuselage, no heating, calamitous plunges in air pockets, air sickness bags, and noise), nonetheless this plane's arrival and departure was marked by the town's residents as if it were an old friend. The GHX faithfully and safely (with no small credit going to its pilots) made daily flights back and forth to Edmonton, weather permitting, until the mine closed in 1964.

As one of those former Gunnar residents, I like to think of this important contributor to world and Canadian history as still in flight, mounted as it is on the NAAM.

Article contributed by Patricia Sandberg, former passenger on GHX and kid at Gunnar, and author of *Sun Dogs* and *Yellowcake: Gunnar Mines, A National Story*. For more details, see www.patriciasandberg.com.



GHX's cockpit has been restored to its familiar green. *Photo courtesy of North Atlantic Aviation Museum*



The flight out to civilization – Edmonton – was full of anticipation. Everyone dressed their best, regardless of the weather. *Photo courtesy of the Schorn family*



GHX taxiing on a runway in Alberta – *Photo courtesy of J Botsford*



As described by one former Gunnar resident, the 'good old GHX' now bears the colours and initials of Eastern Provincial Airways and is permanently on the NAAM flightpath. *Photo courtesy: North Atlantic Aviation Museum*

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Secrets of Radar Museum

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