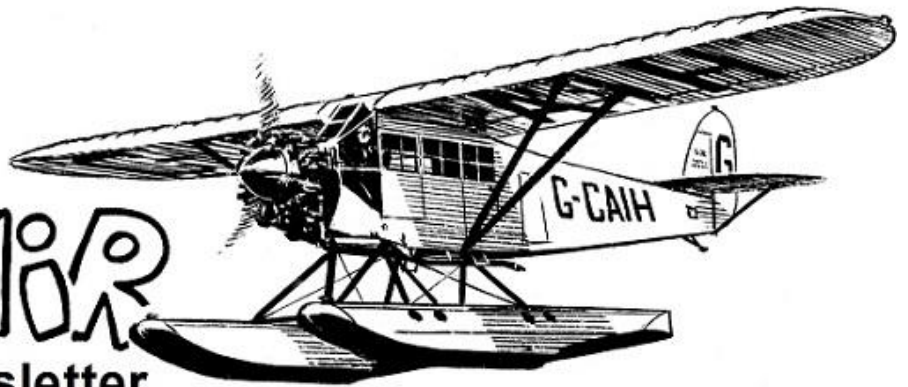


**the**  
**OBSERVAIR**



**Ottawa Chapter Newsletter**  
**Canadian Aviation Historical Society**

**Volume 55, Number 1**

**January 2018**

## **CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE**

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the first official airmail flight in Canada. On June 24th, 1918, Royal Air Force pilot Captain Brian Peck and mechanic Corporal C.W. Mathers took off at 10:12am in a Curtiss JN-4 Canuck from the Bois Franc polo grounds (later Cartierville Airport) in Montreal with 120 specially marked envelopes bound for Toronto. Flying at low level through poor weather, Peck and Mathers landed at Kingston to refuel and after being airborne for a short while, had to land at Camp Deseronto to take on better quality fuel and clean the spark plugs. The pair landed at the Leaside Aerodrome (North Toronto) at 4:55pm.



Peck and Mathers had initially flown to Montreal as part of a recruiting drive. Carrying mail on the return flight was arranged by members of the Aerial League of the British Empire with the approval of the Post Office and the RAF. A couple weeks later, on 9 July, Katherine Stinson would have the honour of being the first female pilot to fly airmail in Canada, when she flew mail from Calgary to Edmonton. This flight was arranged in conjunction with a local air show. Continuous airmail service would not be available in Canada until 1928. Peck's and Mathers' flight was recreated in 1968 by Trans-Canada Airlines captain Donald Chamberlin and ex-RCAF pilot Thomas Lee in a de Havilland Tiger Moth.

Thanks to the efforts of Don MacNeil, Glen Mathews, and the staff at the Canadian Aviation and Space Museum (CASM), the presentations delivered at Canadian Aviation Historical Society Ottawa Chapter meetings are now available on the Museum's YouTube webpage. So far it is just our September, October, and November 2017 presentations, but we plan to add future meetings. If you missed any of the above presentations, or want to watch them again, they can be found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/CanadaAviationMuseum/featured>

or, here:

<https://ingeniumcanada.org/channel/boards/canadian-aviation-historical-society-0>

*Kyle Huth*  
*Chairman/Editor*

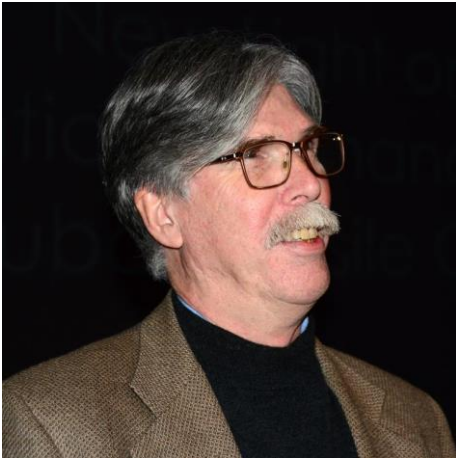
Find us on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/CAHSOttawaChapter>  
*The Observair* is the newsletter of the Ottawa Chapter, Canadian Aviation Historical Society (CAHS), and is available with membership. Membership fees are payable in September. Any material for *The Observair* newsletter should be directed to the Editor: Kyle Huth. All matters relating to membership should be directed to the Secretary/  
Treasurer: [Mat Joost](#)

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Audio/Visual Setup  
Refreshments

## PAST MEETING:

# New Light on Atlantic Command in the Cuban Missile Crisis



Michael Whitby © Rod Digney

There were 55 members and their guests in attendance at our 30 November 2017 meeting to hear naval historian Michael Whitby's presentation *New Light on Atlantic Command in the Cuban Missile Crisis*. In October 1962, the ships and aircraft of Canada's Atlantic Command were deployed in support of the United States' quarantine of Cuba. The maritime patrol aircraft of the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) and Royal Canadian Navy (RCN), and the latter's surface ships were initially tasked to search for and keep track of Soviet naval activity in the Northwest Atlantic. This area of operations would be shifted south later in the crisis.

The main Soviet threat at the time were their unseen ballistic missile submarines, although it is now known that there were no such submarines in the NW Atlantic at the time of the Crisis. The unappreciated threat was from the vast number (nearly 300) of Soviet 'fishing vessels' in the area. These vessels included trawlers, oilers, factory ships, tugs and intelligence vessels. The behaviour of these vessels had become increasingly truculent and they had been involved in, or were suspected of, cutting underwater cables on several occasions. In wartime, it was

expected that these vessels would be used to monitor the activities of NATO warships, jam communication networks, provide guidance data to Soviet submarine-launched missiles, destroy the Sound Surveillance System (SOSUS) and Ballistic Missile Early Warning System (BMEWS) networks by landing commandos or cutting cables, provide navigational and logistic support to submarines, and conduct offensive mining operations.

During the Crisis, despite poor weather that hampered visibility and sensors, Canadian ships and aircraft blanketed the surveillance area for three weeks. The RCAF's Canadair CL-28 (later CP-107) Argus flew 96 missions totalling 1500 hours, with each sortie being approximately 17 hours. The US Navy had nothing at that time to match the capability and range of the Argus. The Canadian-built Grumman CS2F (later CP-121) Tracker of the RCN flew inshore patrols in support of surface groups.

An RCAF Lancaster from 408 Squadron even played a role in the Crisis when it was dispatched to hunt for three suspicious Soviet trawlers. The trawlers had been seen in an area off the northeast coast of Newfoundland where underwater cables for the BMEWS lay. No Soviet vessels were found.

The RCN destroyers and frigates were tasked with three objectives during the Crisis; surveillance of the Soviet fishing fleet, protection of SOSUS (although they didn't know that), and forming mini-anti-submarine barriers to back-up STONEWALL (the main anti-submarine barrier). Canada's only aircraft carrier at the time, HMCS *Bonaventure*, was in the UK at the start of the Crisis and was recalled on 25 October. Her Tracker aircraft were able to conduct surveillance operations once they got within range on the journey back to Halifax.

The Crisis would prove to be the first real test for SOSUS. SOSUS was a series of underwater microphones used to detect submarines by the sounds they make while travelling through the water. The key SOSUS stations for Atlantic Command were Argentia, Newfoundland, Shelburne, Nova Scotia, and Nantucket, Connecticut. The Canadian-run HMCS *Shelburne* was one of the most effective SOSUS Stations, winning several awards from the US Navy. Though effective, the Crisis demonstrated that SOSUS was not as reliable at the time as was thought – especially when it is considered that Soviet submarines used the same diesel engines as Soviet fishing trawlers!

The ships and aircraft of Canada's Atlantic Command played an important role during the Cuban Missile Crisis, a role not known to the Canadian public. It was kept secret. Records and OP Orders were destroyed after the Crisis had passed and there was no mention of the activities in the RCAF magazine *Roundel* or in the RCN magazine *Crowsnest*. Despite these challenges, Michael was able to piece together what documentation remains to better illuminate this story and even dispel the long-held myth that Ottawa was frozen in inaction during the Crisis and Rear-Admiral Ken Dyer, Flag Officer Atlantic Coast and CANCOMARLANT acted alone without approval.

To borrow a phrase from Michael's presentation, "If Atlantic Command's response to the 'exceptional circumstances' of the Cuban Missile Crisis can be seen as its most serious test during the Cold War, it can be judged to have done its job."

Kyle Huth



## RAMBLING THROUGH RECORDS

In my last *Ramble*, I described the career of Bernard Conrad Hartman, who was unsuccessfully nominated for the McKee Trophy but, nevertheless, won international honours for his prowess in skeet shooting. This month, I wish to recount the story of another McKee Trophy “also ran,” but also to demonstrate how documentary sleuthing and on-line research can complement each other.

We begin with the DND file 821-4-52, “McKee Trans-Canada Trophy Nominations” for 1952 (Library and Archives Canada, Record Group 24, Box 17797) and a document dated 6 April 1953. The subject of the nomination was Charles H. Pentland (1910-1953). Sponsoring him for the trophy was the President of Canadian Pacific Airlines, Grant McConachie (himself a former McKee winner) and virtually the whole senior staff of CPA. Indeed, Pentland had been killed in a crash only a month before his nomination.

The submission set forth his background and credentials. Born in Vancouver, he had been educated at Trinity College (Port Hope) and the University of Manitoba, served in the RCAF Reserve (1933-1936), then made his way to England. He joined Imperial Airways and in the next two years became familiar with European routes, plus those to Syria and Palestine. Transferring to British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC), he spent the years 1939 to 1941 flying routes to South Africa and the Asian extremities of the Empire. Experience like that meant an easy transfer to Ferry Command. By the end of 1945, he had completed 150 Atlantic deliveries, including a few to Russia.

BOAC resumed its civilian operations in 1946; Pentland was charged with training crews in new types such as the Lockheed Constellation. In 1949, he moved to Canadian Pacific Air Lines (CPA), again in the training role. CPA was beginning its trans-Pacific program. As Director of Overseas Flight Operations, he was the man to make it happen, both in route exploration (Hong Kong and Japan, *via* the Aleutians, Australia) and flight training. McConachie wrote, “He deserves most of the credit for the efficiency of Flight Operations by Canadian Pacific Air Lines on the Pacific.”

As CPA contemplated jet aircraft, Pentland was chosen to lead in that field. In 1952, he became the first Canadian to be licensed by the Department of Transport to operate a commercial jet aircraft. That year, he studied potential operational problems, working closely with American, Australian, British and New Zealand authorities. He made several trips to England, conferring with de Havilland and BOAC as the “Comet Project” developed. He made a familiarization flight in the BOAC Comet from London to Singapore and return in preparation for CPA’s adoption of the type.

We leave the DND file for other sources, notably an Internet narrative by Ronald Keith (McConachie’s biographer) [http://www.nts.gov.au/Wiringcargodoorlite/Additional%20Aircraft%20Accident%20Reports\\_files/CometAAR-1.pdf](http://www.nts.gov.au/Wiringcargodoorlite/Additional%20Aircraft%20Accident%20Reports_files/CometAAR-1.pdf) regarding the crash of CPA’s first jet, de Havilland DH.106 (msn 06014) Comet 1A, “Empress of Hawaii,” CF-CUN, at Karachi, Pakistan, on 3 March 1953, killing all five flight crew and six de Havilland technicians aboard.

It was to have been a routine positioning flight. CPA intended to base its two short-range Comet 1s in Australia, flying to Hawaii to connect with Vancouver-based DC-6B machines. The first outward flight was publicized as a planned record-setter for an England-Australia flight. The fatal crash itself is described in great detail by Ronald Keith, and is summarized on the Aviation Safety Network (ASN) <https://aviation-safety.net/database/record.php?id=19530303-1>, a website devoted to major aviation accidents. For all his experience, Pentland and his co-pilot, bush veteran Clarence Sawle, had received only brief training at Hatfield, England. The wing and air intake designs of the DH.106 Comet necessitated a different take-off technique from that of propeller-driven aircraft. Neither man had ever made a night take-off in the Comet, nor had they ever flown it so heavily loaded. At a crucial point in the take-off, Pentland forgot much of what he had been taught. By the time he realized his mistake, he had run out of runway and run out of time. The Comet plunged into a dry canal, and at a speed of more than 138 mph impacted a forty-foot embankment on the canal’s far side. CF-CUN was the first passenger jet airliner to suffer a fatal accident.



De Havilland DH.106 (c/n 06104) Comet 1A , CF-CUN  
© <http://www.edcoatescollection.com/ac4/CF-CUN.jpg>

McConachie claimed that the company was preparing to nominate Pentland even before his death. Concluding his submission on behalf of Pentland, he wrote, “The fact that he met an untimely death in the midst of his pioneering of the Jet Age, in our opinion, only enhances his worthiness of the Trans-Canada (McKee) Trophy.”

*Hugh Halliday*



## YOWza – Images of recent sightings at Ottawa’s Macdonald-Cartier International Airport (MCIA) (YOW)

*This page is contributed and coordinated by CAHS Ottawa Chapter member Rod Digney*



Transport Canada’s de Havilland DHC-7-150 (c/n 102), C-GCFR, returns to its home base at YOW on 24 Nov 2017. At this time of year, the Dash-7 flies ice patrol missions over the St Lawrence River, the Great Lakes and other Eastern Canada waterways.

© Rod Digney



The San Jose Sharks came to Ottawa on 5 January 2018 aboard this Boeing 737-59D (c/n 23065), N732KA, named “Victoria” operated by charter, maintenance and FBO operator KaiserAir of Oakland, California. © Rod Digney



RCAF Lockheed CC-130J Super Hercules 130607 lands back at YOW after dropping the Canadian Forces’ Skyhawks parachute team into Lansdowne Park during Grey Cup pre-game activities on 24 November 2017.

© Rod Digney



Air Canada has begun using its Boeing 787 Dreamliners on occasional short-haul runs between Ottawa and Toronto. Here, Boeing 787-8 (c/n 35259), C-GHPU, FIN 803, awaits takeoff clearance for a run to YYZ on 19 December 2017. © Rod Digney



The recent weather bomb that struck the east coast of Canada and the US caused major disruptions to air traffic. One result was the diversion of Kuwait Airways’ Boeing 777-369 (c/n 62561), 9K-AOC, “Failaka” to Ottawa from its intended Shannon to JFK route on 4 January 2018.

© John Buffam



With the NHL hockey season in full swing, a number of interesting charter aircraft arrive with the visiting teams. Delta Airlines’ Boeing 757-232 (c/n 24395), N655DL, brought the Minnesota Wild to town for a game on 19 December 2017.

© Rod Digney

# HURRICANES AT GREENWOOD, NOVA SCOTIA



Canadian Car and Foundry built Hawker Hurricane Mk. XII, RCAF 5625, similar to those at No. 1 ATTD

The following story is a brief history of No. 1 Advanced Tactical Training Detachment (ATTD), which was part of No. 1 Operational Training Unit (OTU) of Bagotville, Quebec, and was located at No. 36 (re-designated No. 8, 1 July 1944) OTU Greenwood, Nova Scotia. No. 1 ATTD was formed at Greenwood, Nova Scotia, on 1 March 1944 and was equipped with 33 Hurricanes and one Harvard aircraft. The Detachment's existence was short, lasting only a bit more than eight and one half months, and it was disbanded on 18 November 1944.

## The Origin

Late in 1943, the Royal Air Force had a requirement for fighter-bomber and rocket projectile trained fighter pilots with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tactical Air Force. These pilots would require specialized training to provide close air support for army ground forces. As a result, Royal Canadian Air Force Headquarters perceived the need to extend the length of its Hurricane pilots' courses by four weeks to provide the close air support training. The extended training was to be comprised of two weeks flying Hurricanes at Greenwood on air to ground firing, low-level formation flying, and additional sequences, followed by two more weeks at Camp Borden, Ontario, for familiarization of armoured formations and how they were organized and operated to aid the pilots in close air support operations.

The first Officer in Command of the Detachment at Greenwood was Flight Lieutenant F.E. Jones, J15327, an experienced fighter pilot having flown combat in No. 249 Squadron over Malta from 3 June to 27 October 1942, scoring six kills. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, effective 19 September 1942, but had to wait until 12 June 1944 before he was presented with the medal by Air Vice Marshal G.O. Johnson, AOC of Eastern Air Command in a ceremony at No. 1 OTU Bagotville. In October 1944, F/L F.E. Jones departed Canada on a posting to RCAF Overseas Headquarters in London, England.

## Flying Exercises

Flying Hurricanes cross-country in formation at low-level proved very challenging for some pupil pilots, as three mid-air collisions resulted in the loss of six Hurricanes and five pilots during the period 27 April 1944 to 16 November 1944. These aircraft were: 5437, 5701, 5715, 5730, 5734, and 5736.

## Aircraft Markings

The Hurricanes flown by No. 1 ATTD carried two-digit unit side numbers painted on the sides of the fuselage. The numbers ran from No. 66 to No. 96. These unit side numbers bore no relation to the RCAF serial numbers on the aircraft.

## The Termination

As the war in Europe progressed following D-Day, the RAF discovered it had a large surplus of trained fighter pilots in the United Kingdom, and by August 1944 the British Air Ministry refused to accept any more fighter pilots from Canada. This event spelled the end of No. 1 ATTD at Greenwood and Camp Borden, and later the closing of No. 1 OTU Bagotville on 31 January 1945.

*R.H. "Bob" Smith*

**REFERENCES:** ORBs of No. 1 OTU, Bagotville, Nos. 36 and 8 OTU, Greenwood; Log book of F/O R.H. Wilson; and, *The Official History of the RCAF, Vol. II: The Creation of a National Air Force.*

*The Author wishes to thank Hugh Halliday for information on F/L Frank Everett Jones.*



## RESEARCH CORNER

Please consider submitting summaries of your own research interest to the Editor for inclusion infuture issues of the *Observair* Research Corner. Maybe you might be interested in joining the Research and Projects (*aka Prayer*)Group? We usually meet the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 pm in the Board Room of the Canada Aviation and SpaceMuseum. Please contact John Henderson if you are interested in attending.



## Pubs & Mags

**Airways** (December 2017)

- 8pp. on Chinese airlines serving Vancouver International Airport (YVR).

**FlyPast** (December 2017)

- 6pp. on 408 Squadron RCAF in the Second World War and Postwar.



Syd with Chris Hadfield, 2015.

© Lesley Law

## SYDNEY BAKER, 1915-2017

Sydney Baker passed away at 10:30 pm, Saturday, 30 December 2017. Syd will be remembered by many volunteers and employees at the Canada Aviation and Space Museum, by members of the Ottawa Chapter of the Canadian Aviation Historical Society, and by ex-employees of Spartan Air Services.

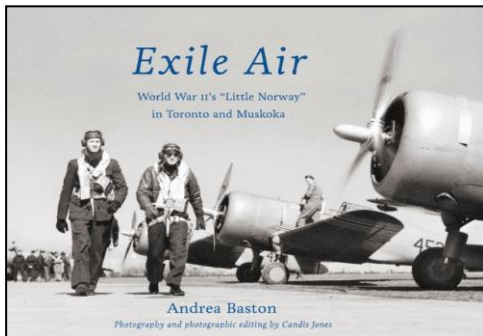
The attached picture of Syd with Col. Chris Hadfield was taken at the Canada Aviation and Space Museum in 2015 during a 100th birthday celebratory tour of the Museum, a day many of us will not forget.

Syd might have been old in years (102) but his memory was remarkable. People doing research into Spartan Air Services' history and into de Havilland Mosquito aircraft that Spartan operated continued to consult Syd on issues, technical and historical, even in 2017!

Syd was a dear friend and I will sadly miss visiting him at his Alta Vista Manor residence. My thoughts go out to Syd's close friends and family at this sad time. Syd you will be missed and remembered by many.

Colin Hine

## UPCOMING EVENTS



**January 17, 2018** Andrea Baston will be speaking to the Canadian Nordic Society about her 2017 book *Exile Air*, a history of Little Norway in Toronto and Gravenhurst during WW II, at the Army Officers' Mess, 149 Somerset Street West, Ottawa at 1930 hours. Please note, there is a dress code for the Mess. For men, it's a sports jacket and trousers with a shirt and tie or turtleneck. For women, it's a dressy blouse or sweater and dress slacks or

skirt, or a dress. Jeans are not permitted. More information can be found here:

<http://www.canadiannordicsociety.com/upcoming-events.html>

**January 26-28, 2018** ski equipped Challenger ultralights will be descending on Montebello, Quebec, for the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Challenger Winter Rendezvous. It takes place at the Fairmount Le Chateau Montebello with the ultralights using the frozen Ottawa River as the runway and the Chateau's marina dock cleats for tie downs. Registration for Saturday's daytime events is FREE, but the Saturday night banquet is \$60.00 and reservations for this must be made with Claude Roy before 19 January. If you are interested in attending or would like more information, you can contact Joan Armstrong and Claude Roy at 613-836-7243, or visit the Challenger website:

[http://www.challenger.ca/icoa\\_18W\\_\\$montebello\\_announce.html](http://www.challenger.ca/icoa_18W_$montebello_announce.html)



## REQUESTS FOR HELP



**Patrick Gilmore** is trying to write the story of the start of trans-Atlantic air mail by Imperial Airways Ltd in 1939 at Boucherville, QC. If anyone has any information that might be of help, please feel free to contact him at: \_\_\_\_\_

**Dave Hoffman** from Smiths Falls is trying to learn the history of a photo he recently acquired at a flea market. It shows three Canadair Sabres in formation with a flying saucer (he knows it's not a real flying saucer). He has identified the closest Sabre as s/n 19144, coded AM-T, first delivered to 410 (F) Squadron (St. Hubert PQ). It was with No. 1 FW in Europe. It was taken on strength 16 July 1951 and struck off 18 June 1954. The other two Sabres are also coded AM but he can't make out more details. He would like to trace the story of this photo, before and after the flying saucer was added. If anyone out there might be able to shed some light on this photograph, please contact him at: \_\_\_\_\_

**George Fuller**, a long-time CAHS National, Montreal, and Ottawa Chapter member has offered his collection of research notes on the Ottawa Flying Club to any interested member who wants to turn them into an article for *the Observair* or *CAHS Journal*. There are eight pages of notes covering aircraft registered to or pertinent to the Ottawa Flying Club, various newspaper articles, plus a listing of book and magazine sources. Please contact Kyle Huth if you are interested in undertaking the project.

## PHOTOS FROM THE NATIONAL AERONAUTICAL COLLECTION FLYING PROGRAM c.1970s



John Crook has once again dug out some photographs to share with us. This time they are of the National Aeronautical Collection's (*today's Canada Aviation and Space Museum*) flying program in the 1970s.

Left: Avro 504 being piloted by Paul Hartman at Rockcliffe in 1972. This aircraft is currently on loan to CFB Borden.

Above Left: Nieuport 17. From left to right: Bruce Lockhart, Bill Merican, George Neal, Jim Hazen, Brian Crook (John's brother), and John Crook. The aircraft is currently on loan to the Canadian War Museum.

Above: Sopwith Triplane, *Black Maria*, being prepared for flight in 1972 at Rockcliffe. Edmund Patten is on wing tip; Jim Hazen and Bob Bancroft are on the tail. Paul Hartman is at the controls. This aircraft is currently in the Museum's Reserve Hangar.



# NEXT MEETING OF THE OTTAWA CHAPTER CANADIAN AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY



## DEVELOPMENT, FLIGHT TESTS AND CERTIFICATION OF THE CANADAIR CL-600 CHALLENGER

The year 2018 marks the 40th anniversary of the first flight of the Canadair CL-600 Challenger. The aeroplane has become a Canadian success story with well over 1000 various models sold. The latest model, the Bombardier CL-650, is in active production. The initial development and flight test program, however, was not without its challenges.

### JIM MARTIN

Jim Martin is the retired Superintendent of Flight Test Engineering at Transport Canada Aircraft Certification, where he was involved in multiple aircraft flight test certification activities. He has a BSc in Aeronautical Engineering from the Queen's University of Belfast in 1969 and is a Graduate Flight Test Engineer of the Empire Test Pilot's School in 1976. He worked on the Harrier and Jaguar flight testing in the UK and as a Flight Test Engineer on the initial Canadair CL-600 Challenger flight test program.

**LOCATION:** M. Bélanger Theatre, Canada Aviation and Space Museum, Rockcliffe

**DATE/TIME:** Thursday, 25 January 2017 – 1930 Hours

**LANDING FEES:** \$1.00

Meetings include guest speakers, films, slide shows, coffee and donuts

Visitors and guests are always welcome