

Preface

This presentation of aviation history in the northwest differs from others in that it offers an in-depth historical review of each community's aviation presence along a predefined route.

Prior to the advent of modern air transportation, pilots of land based aircraft en route to the Yukon and Alaska sought an inland route through the interior of British Columbia to avoid the generally poorer weather and lack of airfields along the coast. Aircraft originating in the United States frequently departed that country via Spokane, Washington then proceeding north via central British Columbia. Aviation within the interior of British Columbia quickly developed following the first flights through this area and civic officials were quick to see the possibilities that air travel could bring to their often isolated communities.

The author has selected an airfield format for each community airfield, similar to those depicted in early pilot route manuals. Each describes its location and elevation, an airfield description, and often is accompanied by an airfield diagram and or a photograph. Much confusion exists in the description of aircraft landing areas throughout aviation's brief history i.e. landing ground, alighting area, landing field, air harbour, airfield, airstrip, and airport. The author has chosen to use the term airfield in reference to all but modern international airports. The term air harbour was used in the 1920's to describe both land and water landing areas and Canadian Air Board licenses were issued using this term. The author has also chosen to identify certain sea plane landing areas as air harbours as that term is fully descriptive of their purpose.

Historically, aviation uses the mile and the foot as its units of measurement and this format continues in use to this day. Therefore, to conform to this concept, the author has chosen to use these measures throughout rather than the metric system.

Many men and women have contributed to the historical information given here. Without their photographs, mementoes, and anecdotal stories this undertaking would not have been possible.

While this series attempts to fully record the aviation history of all the communities covered, I have chosen to place special emphasis on the smaller locations, often previously neglected by other historical presentations. Many, in fact, have no airfield today.

The title of this series stems from my previous publication *JERICHO BEACH and the WEST COAST FLYING BOAT STATIONS*. When the Canadian Air Board advertised for pilots to staff its Air Stations across the country in 1919, the job description was stated as *AIR PILOT NAVIGATOR*. So, in honour of these pioneer airmen, many of whom went on to become commercial aviation's trailblazers, the title *AIR PILOT NAVIGATOR* has been selected for this projected series of seven books.

Chris Weicht