

the

OBSERVAIR

**Ottawa Chapter Newsletter
Canadian Aviation Historical Society**



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February 2017

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

For any of our members who attended our January meeting, you may have noticed a fruit tray in addition to the doughnuts. This healthy alternative was the brainchild (and treat) of our new refreshments person, John Crooks. John rejoined the Canadian Aviation Historical Society four years ago. He also volunteers at Vintage Wings of Canada as a tour guide, is an Experimental Aircraft Association member, and subscribes to the de Havilland Moth Club in the United Kingdom. His current research project involves gathering images of de Havilland DH.84 Dragons, DH.89 Dragon Rapides, and DH.90 Dragonflies which operated in Canada. If anyone has images or information about Dragons in Canada, please let him know! He hopes to bring the aircraft images alive with stories from those who worked with or on Dragons in Canada.



In his younger days, John spent his summers from 1970 to 1974 working for the National Aviation Museum (now the Canadian Aviation and Space Museum) cleaning aircraft, doing artefact inventory, working on the Curtiss HS-2L and Seagull restorations, and even swinging propellers for George Neal and Paul Hartman on some of the Museum's rotary engine aircraft (Sopwith Pup and Triplane, Avro 504, and Nieuport 17)! If you have a question about something in the Museum's collection pre-1974, John has likely cleaned or counted it. I am happy to welcome him to the Executive and thank him for getting involved!

Along with this issue of the *Observair*, you will find the list of books that the Chapter currently has left over from previous meetings. These titles will be available at the monthly meeting for the listed price while quantities last. If you see a title that catches your eye, feel free to e-mail me, and I will make sure we set aside a copy for you at the meeting. If any of our members are interested in a title but are unable to make it to the meetings, let me know and we can arrange shipping.

*Kyle Huth,
Chairman*

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: Colin Hine

All matters relating to membership should be directed to the Secretary/Treasurer: Mat Joost

Kyle Huth
Mathias Joost
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Refreshments

PAST MEETING: TIMOTHY DUBÉ – TIM'S PICTORIAL COMPENDIUM TO EAA AIRVENTURE OSHKOSH 2016* (* mostly, with a few images from 2015, 2013, 2009, and even one from 1992!)

There were 52 members and guests at the Thursday, 26 January 2017 meeting of the CAHS Ottawa Chapter to see and hear Timothy Dubé present his photographic record of *AirVenture Oshkosh 2016*, along with some images from previous events. Tim started his presentation by defining and justifying the word "Compendium" in his title: "a brief treatment or selection relating to an extensive subject, often including a collection of useful hints." EAA *AirVenture Oshkosh* is certainly extensive; Tim shot more than 1,600 images at the 2016 event (well down from his 4,375 in 2015). "If you've never been to *AirVenture*, perhaps you'll find some of the insights I have gathered over the past 25 years useful and maybe even compel you to attend this year!"

Tim began with a brief history of the Oshkosh air show: The Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) was started in January 1953 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, by Paul Poberezny as a local club for those who built and restored their own aircraft. It would hold its first Fly-in Convention in August of that year at the Curtiss-Wright Airport in Milwaukee, with 21 aircraft and about 150 people attending. The EAA's core interests quickly grew to include ex-military and classic civilian aircraft, along with aerobatics; each now a separate EAA Division. By 1959, the EAA Fly-in Convention had outgrown its convention site at Curtiss-Wright Field in Milwaukee and moved to Rockford, Illinois. Then in 1970, the annual Fly-in Convention moved to its present home in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Today, the EAA has more than 200,000 members worldwide. For one week each summer, EAA members and aviation enthusiasts, totalling more than 500,000 from around the globe, come together at Oshkosh, WI, for the WORLD'S GREATEST AVIATION CELEBRATION.

For many, getting to Oshkosh is accomplished by being one of the more than 10,000 aircraft flying in; landing at what becomes the busiest airport in the world. "But I'm not a licenced pilot, so IFR for me really does mean, *I Follow Roadways*," Tim said. There are several route options when driving from Ottawa to Oshkosh, but the northern route *via* Sault Ste. Marie is his most favoured and travelled. In 2016, Tim's wife, Phyllis, again accompanied him; her second *AirVenture*. A two-day drive, the Microtel Inn and Suites in the Sault is a good midway-point with nice big, quiet rooms, comfy beds, and a free hot breakfast. Tim has stayed at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh during all his visits going back to 1992, and has been in Taylor Hall since 2000. To secure air conditioned accommodation, a call to the University on 1 July a year before (e.g., 1 July 2015 for OSH 2016) and a one-night refundable deposit are necessary.

Arriving in Oshkosh on the Saturday or Sunday before the opening of *AirVenture* allows one to catch the mass arrivals; flocks of Piper Cherokees, Beech Bonanzas, Cessnas, and Mooneys. Seeing their twinkling lights come into view over the lake or town and then taxi by you needs to be witnessed at least once. Access to the field is Free before the opening Monday, but Tim's first stop on Sunday morning was the Ticket Booth to purchase their weekly admission wristbands (\$123.00 USD), and a souvenir program and T-shirt before the Monday rush. Then, it was off to catch some of the early arrivals.

Tim's suggestions for surviving the week included: a Tilley Mash-Up or similar wide-brimmed hat to cover your scalp and shade your eyes and the back of your neck; a folding stool for when you need to sit – *and you will*; sunscreen, *apply it often*; lip balm, *ditto*; water, *lots of water, bring it from home because it's \$2.00 a bottle on the field*; fruit – *bananas are good and easy to transport and eat*; protein bars, *keep several in your camera bag*; and hand and face wipes to clean up and cool down. With all that in hand, it was time to think about hitting the airfield.

Wittman Field's two major runways – 18/36 is 8,002 feet and 9/27 is 6,179 feet – give you an idea about the scale of *AirVenture*. "You'll never see everything," Tim remarked. Amongst the points he drew attention to: the EAA Museum and Pioneer Airport; the North 40; Warbird Alley; the Boeing Centennial Plaza; the Fly Market and AeroMart; Vintage Aircraft; the South 40; the Ultralights' Field; and Camp Scholler, home to 35,000+ for the week.

Among the unique aircraft seen on Sunday morning was a Hamilton H47 (c/n 65) Metalplane, NC879H, the last of its kind, in the livery of Northwest Airways. Built in 1929 at the Hamilton Metalplane Division of the Boeing Aircraft Company in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, it was sold originally to the Ontario Provincial Air Service in 1930 with Canadian registration CF-OAJ and was used primarily as a floatplane, until sold to Northwest in 1945. The aircraft was purchased by Kevin McCoy for \$671,000.00 at the annual Barrett-Jackson Collector Car Auction in Scottsdale, Arizona, in January 2010.





The eight Spartan 7W Executives at AirVenture Oshkosh 2016. The first aircraft in that line, NC17634, c/n 7W-17, had in its early life been RAF KD102, one of three Spartan Executives pressed into service with RAF Ferry Command as communications aircraft at Dorval, Quebec.

Monday morning's activities included a trip around the airfield grounds photographing some of the award winning aircraft, including the only flyable Ryan ST-A (c/n 117), NC14985 (the eventual Antique Grand Champion at AirVenture Oshkosh 2016), and two beautiful Lockheed 12A Electra Juniors; N2633 (c/n 1281), and NC2072 (c/n 1208). 2016 was a banner year for Spartan Executives at Oshkosh. Just 34 Spartan 7W Executives were produced during the years 1936 through 1940; some 22 still exist and 10 are still flying. Eight of those 10 aircraft were displayed at AirVenture Oshkosh 2016 for the 80th Anniversary Gathering of Spartan Executives. This was the largest gathering of Spartan Executives that has ever been seen.

Canada had a real presence at AirVenture Oshkosh 2016 with the opening aerial display during Monday's airshow featuring the Canadian Harvard Aerobatic Team. "The Canadian aeroplane we wanted to see that day was Coulson Flying Tankers' Martin JRM-3 (BuNo 76823) Mars, C-FLYL, "Hawaii Mars." Several low passes along the 18/36 flightline culminated with a drop of 7,000 gallons of water on the centre of the field that day.

Phyllis and Tim made the trip to the AirVenture Seaplane Base on Tuesday morning. Nestled deep in the trees in a picturesque cove along the Lake Winnebago shore a few miles south of Wittman Field, buses make regular runs between the AirVenture grounds and the Seaplane Base (\$3.00 round trip for this shuttle). "While Wittman Field often sees 100,000 people on the field in a day, only about 10,000 people will visit the AirVenture Seaplane Base during the week. With the Martin Mars flying boat anchored just outside the lagoon on Lake Winnebago, attendance was likely much higher this past year," Tim said. Included in Tim's photos from that day were some from Tuesday's airshow featuring large formations of aircraft – another AirVenture Oshkosh tradition.

Wednesday morning started with another tour of the field. Amongst the aircraft pictured were several Globe GC-1 Swifts, part of the 70th Anniversary gathering. 2016 was also the Centennial of U.S. Coast Guard aviation. Amongst the several U.S. Coast Guard aircraft on display during the week was the CASA CN-235-300 (msn C-167), in U.S. Coast Guard parlance, an HC-144A, Ocean Sentry, Tail Number 2301, from CGAS Mobile in a blue scheme representing colour schemes of the past.

With low clouds and darkening skies by 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday morning, Tim and Phyllis decided to do the indoor displays and pavilions, as well as the EAA Museum, taking in a forum or two. "The most reliable source for everything AirVenture, including exhibitor locations, forums and workshops schedules is the EAA AirVenture Oshkosh Visitors Guide, Free with admission," Tim said. Tim and Phyllis attended Dr. Leo Murphy's presentation on "The Battle of Britain" in the EAA Museum's Vette Theatre, and Dick Rutan's account "The World's Longest Flight," detailing his and Jeana Yeager's round-the-world-flight in 1986 delivered next to an exact replica of their Voyager fuselage pod in the EAA Museum. With a collection of more than 200 aircraft, along with world-class galleries and displays, the EAA Museum is a year-round destination. Admission is Free if you are an EAA member or with your daily or weekly wristband.

The skies were again threatening on Thursday morning, so Phyllis and Tim drove to Appleton for a little shopping at the Fox River Mall.



Among Tim's images from the EAA Museum was this one featuring an impressive display of early pylon air racers.

Returning to the field on Friday, Tim's images that day included several de Havilland Canada DHC-1 Chipmunks, which were also celebrating their 70th Anniversary, including one of N26JH, a British-built machine (msn C1-0887) originally operated by the Oxford University Air Squadron that was imported to the USA in 1975 and restored in 2006 with a Canadian bubble canopy and painted in RCAF colours as RCAF 18010. Also pictured was another British-built de Havilland Canada DHC-1 (msn C1-0103) Chipmunk, NX146DK, wearing the RCAF Station Centralia code DA, and the RCAF number 18003.

AROUND THE FIELD ON SATURDAY



Big Sky Stearman's 1929 Bellanca CH300 (c/n 133) Pacemaker, NC688E, with its 420-hp Wright R-975-11 Whirlwind engine.

NWT, now owns the aeroplane and he has acquired the registration CF-ATN, a well-known Canadian Pacemaker that met its end in 1938. Some of ATN's remains served as models for a number of the details Big Sky Stearman had to resolve during its restoration. The aircraft won the Silver Age Outstanding Closed Cockpit Monoplane award at *AirVenture Oshkosh 2016*.

Saturday's airshow included the cast of Tora, Tora, Tora Air Shows; a Val, two Kates, five Zeroes, and a P-40. The Snowbirds closed both Saturday and Sunday afternoon airshows. Thumping his chest, Tim proclaimed "It was good to be Canadian those days."

Planning for EAA's 65th annual fly-in convention in July 2017 has already begun. Already confirmed are the U.S. Navy's Blue Angels. 2017 is the 90th anniversary of the Lockheed Vega, the 80th anniversary of the Piper Cub, the 70th anniversary of the U.S. Air Force, and the 40th anniversary of the Christen Eagle, and the evening lineups will kick off on Monday, 24 July 2017 with a concert by the Canadian band the *Barenaked Ladies*. If you aren't already excited for *AirVenture Oshkosh 2017*, you should be by now. Tim already has his air conditioned bedroom reservations at the University; a four-bedroom suite with two semi-private baths and a shower in the Horizon Village (\$325.00 USD a night), and a bedroom in Taylor Hall with two beds (\$125.00 USD a night). Who wants to join him?

Colin Hine,
Editor



RAMBLING THROUGH RECORDS

April 2017 marks the 100th anniversary of the iconic Battle of Vimy Ridge. It marked the first (and only) time when all four Divisions of the Canadian Expeditionary Force fought as a single formation. While it may not have been the most important Canadian battle of the war, some have noted that Vimy was the successful opening of what was ultimately a failed battle (Arras), while Amiens (August 1918) began an epic campaign now known as "Canada's Hundred Days." Nonetheless, the Vimy myth has taken hold; in large measure because of Walter Alward's amazing and moving memorial design.

Most commemorative writings emphasize the land battle, but we would be remiss if we did not spare some thought for the air side of the battle. In the run-up to Vimy, the German air arm was inflicting heavy losses on the Royal Flying Corps (RFC); April 1917 would go down in history as "Bloody April," when the force lost 245 aircraft, with 211 aircrew killed, and some 108 taken prisoner. Given what the RFC faced, its achievements that Spring are all the more impressive; German Albatross D-III fighters, equipped with two machine guns, outclassed most RFC fighters. But the Germans still lost 66 aircraft.

The Canadian Corps attack was preceded by careful preparation and executed with skill on the part of several arms: infantry, signals, artillery, engineers, and air units. Beginning in March 1917, miles of tapes and hundreds of flags were laid out to trace the maze of German trenches and strong points, punctuated by shell craters. Canadian battalions trained with these life-size maps, learning every twist and turn they would have to make. Most of the information was derived from aerial photographs systematically acquired by RFC crews. These were not the "Knights of the Air" beloved by Hollywood and popular authors. They were pilots and observers tasked to fly mundane sorties day after day in two-seat reconnaissance aircraft, many of them verging on obsolescence.

By early March, the entirety of the German defence complex had been photographed and continuing flights ensured the information was kept up to date. Locating German artillery was especially important; 180 of 212 hostile batteries were pinpointed and their coordinates plotted on Canadian Corps maps, waiting to be shelled. On April 2, the total bombardment of Vimy Ridge began. A detailed plan of trench destruction, wire cutting, and counter-battery work had been laid out, however, RFC accomplishments were limited by weather. Sunny periods alternated with low clouds, rain and snow showers. Many "shoots" were either abandoned or failed for reasons of weather, wireless problems, or engine failure.

Immediately before the attack, the RFC attempted to destroy the enemy's kite balloons. Nieuport Scouts of Nos. 1, 29, 40 and 60 Squadrons, and Sopwith Pups of No. 54 Squadron, were tasked with this work. Le Prieur rockets were initially used, soon discarded in favour of Buckingham incendiary ammunition. Because the balloons were buckled down quickly, the campaign had only limited success. Over four days – April 5 to 8 – the RFC destroyed five balloons, including one downed by Lieutenant William Avery "Billy" Bishop. The force, in turn, lost a similar number of aircraft. In several instances, balloons were attacked at altitudes of 200 feet or less, and pilots re-crossed the lines at about 100 feet in machines riddled by rifle and machine gun fire.

No. 16 Squadron (BE-2e aircraft) was assigned specifically to assist the Canadian Corps and about a dozen of its pilots and observers were Canadian. Among its observers was Lieutenant Cecil George "Bull" Durham. Born in England, he had been residing in Drumheller, Alberta, when the war began and he joined the CEF. In 1916, he was wounded, awarded the Military Medal, and transferred to the RFC. Colleagues remembered him as being a "character." An observer, first with No. 10 Squadron and then with No. 16, he was later awarded the French Croix de Guerre. In the Second World War, he rose to the rank of Group Captain and was awarded an OBE.

Reconnoitering continued up to the last minute. On April 7th, No. 16 Squadron reported a "Special Mission", descending as low as 400 feet to repeatedly sweep the front. On the 9th, the redoubtable "Bull" Durham, with his British pilot, flew another "Special Mission" to examine the enemy wire.

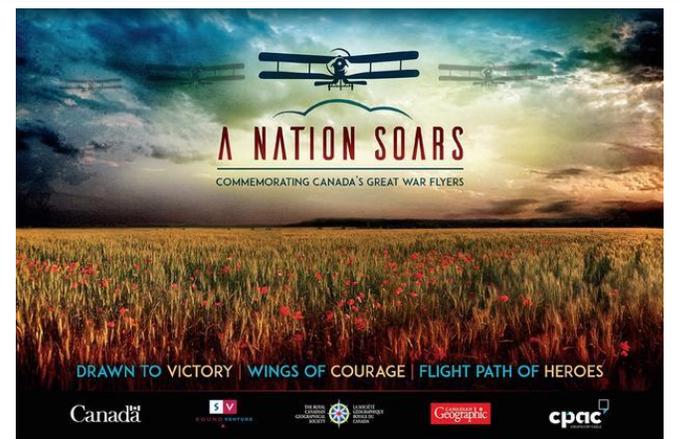
The Canadian Corps artillery quickly achieved dominance over German guns; enemy counter-battery fire was spasmodic on the morning of the 9th, and further diminished thereafter. This allowed the RFC Corps squadrons to shift from artillery cooperation to contact patrols.

Once troops went "over the top," generals received little intelligence as to how far their troops had advanced. Even units on either side of a battalion were unsure of progress made by their neighbours. In 1916, all armies hit upon the "contact patrol" by which aircraft descended through smoke and shellfire to monitor infantry progress and report the state of opposition ahead. During the Vimy battle of April 1917, aircraft were hampered by low cloud, mist, rain, snow and even hail. However, they were intercepted only occasionally by enemy fighters who faced the same problems.

The RFC's record at Vimy was mixed. Mapping of enemy defences from February to early-April 1917 was an undoubted success. However, the RFC accomplished less during the actual battle, largely because weather hampered operations at every turn. Contact patrols were useful, but were needed less than had been anticipated because Canadian Corps signalers succeeded in maintaining telephone and visual contacts between front and rear throughout the assault.

Vimy was proof that whatever other arms may contribute to success, only infantry can take and hold ground.

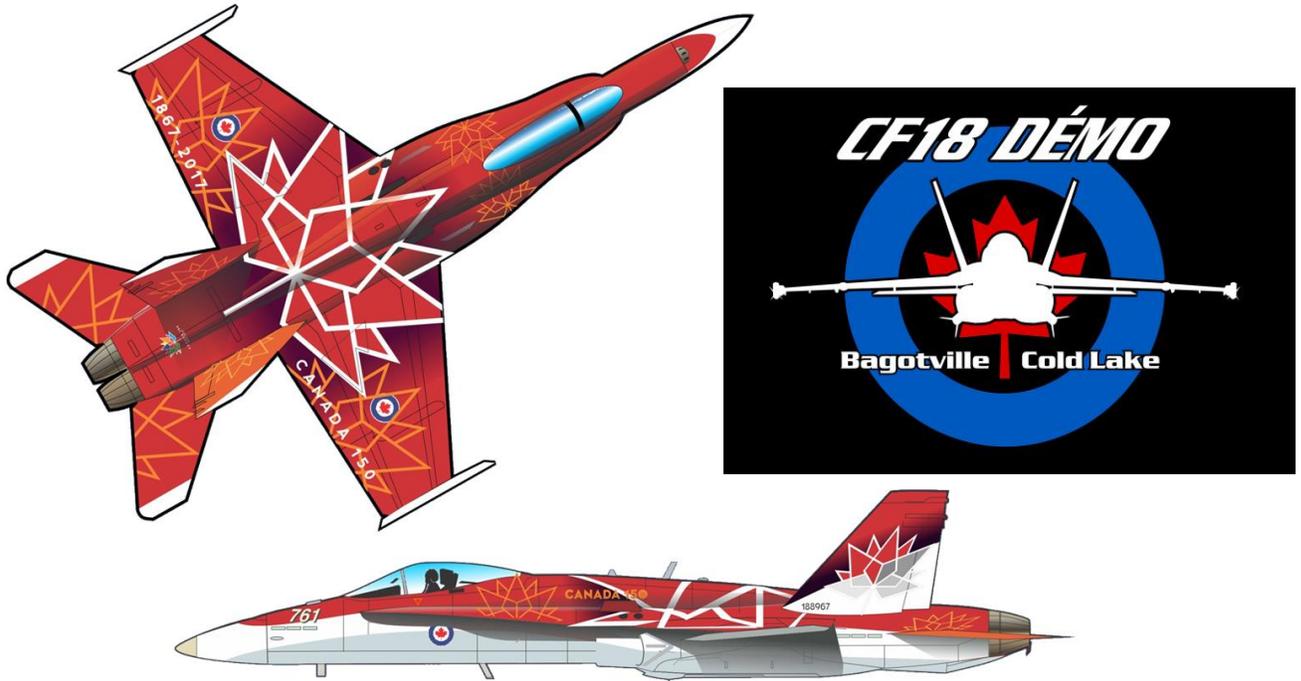
Hugh Halliday



A Nation Soars, a trilogy series of documentaries, explores how aviation changed the course of the First World War. The first two parts of the trilogy, narrated by Dan Aykroyd in English and Bernard Voyer in French, have already been broadcast; **Drawn to Victory** explores the revolution of mapmaking during the First World War, and **Wings of Courage** explores the stories of Canadian aviators in that conflict. (Available now on the CPAC website archives: <http://www.cpac.ca/en/digital-archives/?search=A+Nation+Soars>) The final documentary of the series, **Flight Path of Heroes**, will focus on the air war contribution at the Battle of Vimy Ridge, and is currently in production to be broadcast during the Fall of 2017. A key element of **A Nation Soars** is its **Vimy Flight**, a team of pilots and builders who are planning a commemorative biplane fly-past over the Vimy Ridge Memorial in France on 9 April 2017, followed by a cross-Canada tour during the Summer months to celebrate Canada's 150th year of nationhood. For more details, see: <http://www.vimyflight.ca>

CF-18 DEMO TEAM HORNET SCHEME AND AIRSHOW SCHEDULE

The Royal Canadian Air Force has released the airshow schedule along with images of the paint scheme for the 2017 CF-18 Demo Team Hornet. The 2017 CF-18 Demo Team Hornet celebrates the 150th Anniversary of the Confederation of Canada with a paint scheme featuring the Canada 150 faceted maple leaf logo. The aircraft will be flown by Captain Matthew "Glib" Kutryk of 425 Tactical Fighter Squadron at 3 Wing Bagotville, Quebec. The CF-18 Demo Team Hornet and the Snowbirds are scheduled to be in Gatineau, Quebec, on 30 June 2017, and to do a flypast of Parliament Hill on 1 July 2017.



2017 CF-18 HORNET DEMO AIRSHOW SCHEDULE

April 29-30th: Lake City, FL

May 6-7: McEntire ANGB, SC

May 13-14: Montréal, QC

May 20-21: Seymour Johnson AFB, NC

May 27-28: Windsor, ON

June 3-4: TBD

June 10-11: Dundurn, SK

June 16-17: North Bay, ON

June 24-25: Bagotville, QC

June 28: Barrie, ON

June 30: Gatineau, QC

July 1: Ottawa, ON

July 8: TBD

July 9: Yellowknife, NWT

July 15-16: Lethbridge, AB

July 19: Grand Forks, BC

July 22-23: Fort St. John, BC

July 29-30: Springbank, AB

August 2: Rocky Mountain House, BC

August 5-6 : Quesnel, BC

August 9: Penticton, BC

August 11-13: Abbotsford, BC

August 16: White Rock, BC

August 19-20: Rivière du Loup, QC

August 26-27: Greenwood, NS

August 30: Brantford, ON

Sept 2-4: Toronto, ON

Sept 9-10: Kingston, ON

Sept 16: Bromont, QC

Sept 17: TBD

Sept 23-24: London, ON

Sept 30-Oct 1: Grand Junction, CO

Oct 7-8: Minden, NV

Oct 14-15: Atlanta, GA

NOTE: For the latest news and updates, see:

<http://www.airforce.forces.gc.ca/en/cf-18-demo-team/index.page>

Kyle Huth



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



This unmarked McDonnell Douglas MD-11F, N435KD (s/n 48435), operated by Miami-based Western Global Cargo, left MCIA on 29 November 2016 with another load of freshly minted New Zealand currency. Routing to Auckland was via Hawaii. © John Buffam.



US Vice-President Joe Biden made an official visit to Ottawa on 8 and 9 December 2016, travelling aboard this USAF Boeing C-32A 80002 (a militarized Boeing 757-200, msn 29026/787). With the VP aboard, the aircraft uses the call sign “Air Force Two.” At least two USAF C-17 Globemaster III transports accompanied the C-32. © John Buffam



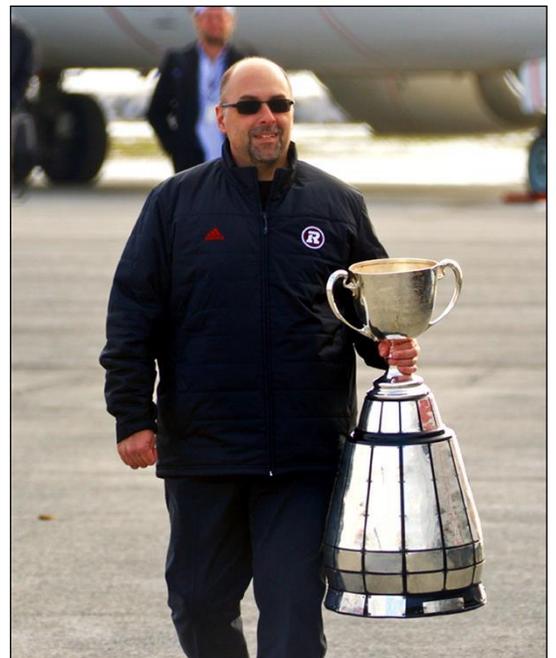
Another ‘money flight,’ this time Kelowna Flight Craft Douglas DC-10-30F (s/n 46917), C-GKFT, took a load of new currency from the Canadian Bank Note Company to Paraguay, South America. © John Buffam.



Air Canada Jetz Airbus A319 (s/n 773), C-GBHN, FIN 275, gets de-iced before departing to Newark, NJ with the Ottawa Senators on 18 December 2016. © John Buffam



The victorious Ottawa Redblacks football team returned to Ottawa aboard Canadian North’s CFL-themed Boeing 737-36N (s/n 28596), C-GCNO, FIN 598, on 28 November 2016. © Dean Hoisak.



The General Manager of the Ottawa Redblacks, Marcel Desjardins, disembarks from Canadian North’s CFL-themed Boeing 737-36N, C-GCNO, carrying the Grey Cup to awaiting fans. © Dean Hoisak, 28 Nov 2016.

A SHORT HISTORY OF RCAF STATION GIMLI

No. 18 Service Flying Training School (SFTS) opened at Gimli, Manitoba, on 6 September 1943. This unit was part of the RCAF's No. 2 Training Command within the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan (BCATP). The school initially operated Anson II and later Anson V aircraft, as well as a few Harvard II trainers. On 1 June 1945, No. 18 SFTS moved to Souris, Manitoba, and continued to operate there until the unit was disbanded on 5 September 1945.

While at Gimli, some eleven of the unit's Anson aircraft were written-off in crashes. One of the more sensational events occurred on 7 December 1943 when two Ansons, JS193 and JS167, were approaching the airfield in preparation for landing. Both pilots lost sight of one another while turning into the wind on final approach. This resulted in a piggy-back landing with JS193 landing on top of JS167. Neither of the pilots, LAC G.F. Adams in JS193, nor F/Sgt P.J. Cooper in JS167, was injured and the aircraft involved received only minor damage.



On 27 October 1944, Harvard II No. 3770 failed to recover from a spin, killing both pilots on-board; F/O J.W. Hoad and F/O J.R. Lawlor.

On 28 March 1944, No. 1 Winter Experimental Training Flight moved from Kapuskasing, Ontario, to Gimli. The unit operated Battle, Hudson, Ventura, Spitfire VIII, Mosquito, and Lancaster aircraft in cold weather trials. This flight moved to Edmonton, Alberta, on 1 October, 1945.

No. 1 Pilot Conversion School was formed at Gimli on 12 August 1945. No other information regarding this unit appears to be available.

Gimli then became a reserve equipment maintenance satellite for No. 3 REMU located at Carberry, Manitoba, and later became a detachment of No. 10 Repair Depot, Calgary, Alberta, being used for aircraft storage. In July 1948, Gimli was the site of an air cadet summer camp.

The first post-war unit to occupy Gimli was No. 2 Flying Training School, formed on 1 December 1950. This school operated Harvard II aircraft. In June 1953, No. 2 FTS, along with its Harvards, moved to Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan.

On 1 October 1962, the Central Flying School moved into Gimli from RCAF Station Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. On 8 June 1964, the first Canadair CL-41 Tutor aircraft arrived at Gimli to begin a new era of basic flying training. On 31 July 1964, the Central Flying School moved to RCAF Station Winnipeg, Manitoba.

On 31 August 1964, No. 3 Advanced Flying Training School was re-designated as No. 1 Flying Training School (FTS) for basic training on Tutors and advanced training on T-33s.

On 1 April 1966, RCAF Station Gimli became Canadian Forces Base Gimli. On 1 February 1967, No. 1 FTS became No. 1 Canadian Forces Flying Training School.

On 18 March 1970, the last course to receive training on the Tutor at Gimli graduated and the Tutor aircraft were transferred to Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan. Following this event, Gimli was left with only T-33 training.

On 19 June 1971, the last wings parade was held at Gimli which saw the combined graduation of courses 7002 and 7003. All flying training at Gimli ended. On 24 June 1971, the last T-33, 21458, departed Gimli. The gates to CFB Gimli were finally closed on 1 September 1971.



Gimli Industrial Park on the original site of RCAF Station Gimli
© michaelprophet.com

R.H. "Bob" Smith

Author's Note: Gimli is located north of the City of Winnipeg, on the west side of Lake Winnipeg.

SYDNEY BAKER – Part VIII

The End of the Line

Around 1982, I was becoming quite concerned at the cost-cutting direction that the company appeared to be taking. Management seemed to be suggesting that some of the aircraft maintenance was unnecessary and was costing too much. Consistently, aircraft were being sent to fly on extended field contracts without maintenance engineers. I had written two letters to management on this subject, one in 1974 and the other in 1976. I made it known I was not happy with their plans; I was getting close to retirement, but had not intended to do so for a while. However, under the circumstances, I thought it best for me to resign and avoid further confrontations.

In July 1982, I handed in my resignation, suggesting that, if my services were required, I would continue to make myself available on an hourly basis. This proposal was accepted by management and I continued work on a part-time basis for about one and a half years, doing much of the work in my own basement.



Sydney Baker's Spartan employment anniversary pins. © C. Hine

Looking back now, I feel I must have known that things were not as they should be. By 1986, there was not much left of Kenting; the hangar had been sold to Esso Oil Company, who had enlarged it to make an executive service centre.

The Thailand contract was completed and the helicopters were sold, as were the fixed wing aircraft, and Klondike Helicopter was wound up. I then lost contact and exactly when the whole thing closed down, I do not know, but what was left, along with the few of the remaining staff, were taken over by Interra, another Ottawa survey company.

Editor's Note: This is the last installment of Sydney's aviation industry memoir. I hope everyone has enjoyed it. Sydney is now 101 years old and still going strong. His memory of his career events continues to be remarkable. Hopefully, we will see him at a future chapter meeting when weather conditions improve!

Edited by Colin Hine



Pubs & Mags

FlyPast (Jan 2017) - 4pp. on the ditching of a 429 Sqn Halifax III (LW685) in March 1944 during a "Bullseye" training mission.

Brace for Impact: Air Crashes and Aviation Safety by Peter Pigott (Dundurn: 2016), soft-cover, 7"x10", 272pp, illustrated, endnotes, index, \$29.00. An historical review of crashes and their effect on aviation safety, with an emphasis on Canada.

Bill Clark

NEXT MEETING OF THE OTTAWA CHAPTER CANADIAN AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY



The Sultan of Oman's Air Force in the 1960s William "Ceri" Harris

William Harris, also known as Ceri, was a Flight Lieutenant in the Royal Air Force, commissioned in 1965. He flew transport aircraft, served on a missile squadron in Germany and instructed with the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm and the University of Wales Air Squadron. Ceri was also a "Naqib Tayar" (or Flight Lieutenant) in Oman for 2 years. In 1983, he joined the Royal Hong Kong Auxiliary Air Force and in 1997, when the Chinese took back the colony, he became the Chief Pilot of the newly created Hong Kong Government Flying Service. Ceri retired in 2000.

LOCATION: Bush Theatre, Canada Aviation and Space Museum, Rockcliffe

DATE/TIME: Thursday, 23 February 2017, 1930 Hours

LANDING FEES: \$1.00

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

Visitors and guests are always welcome