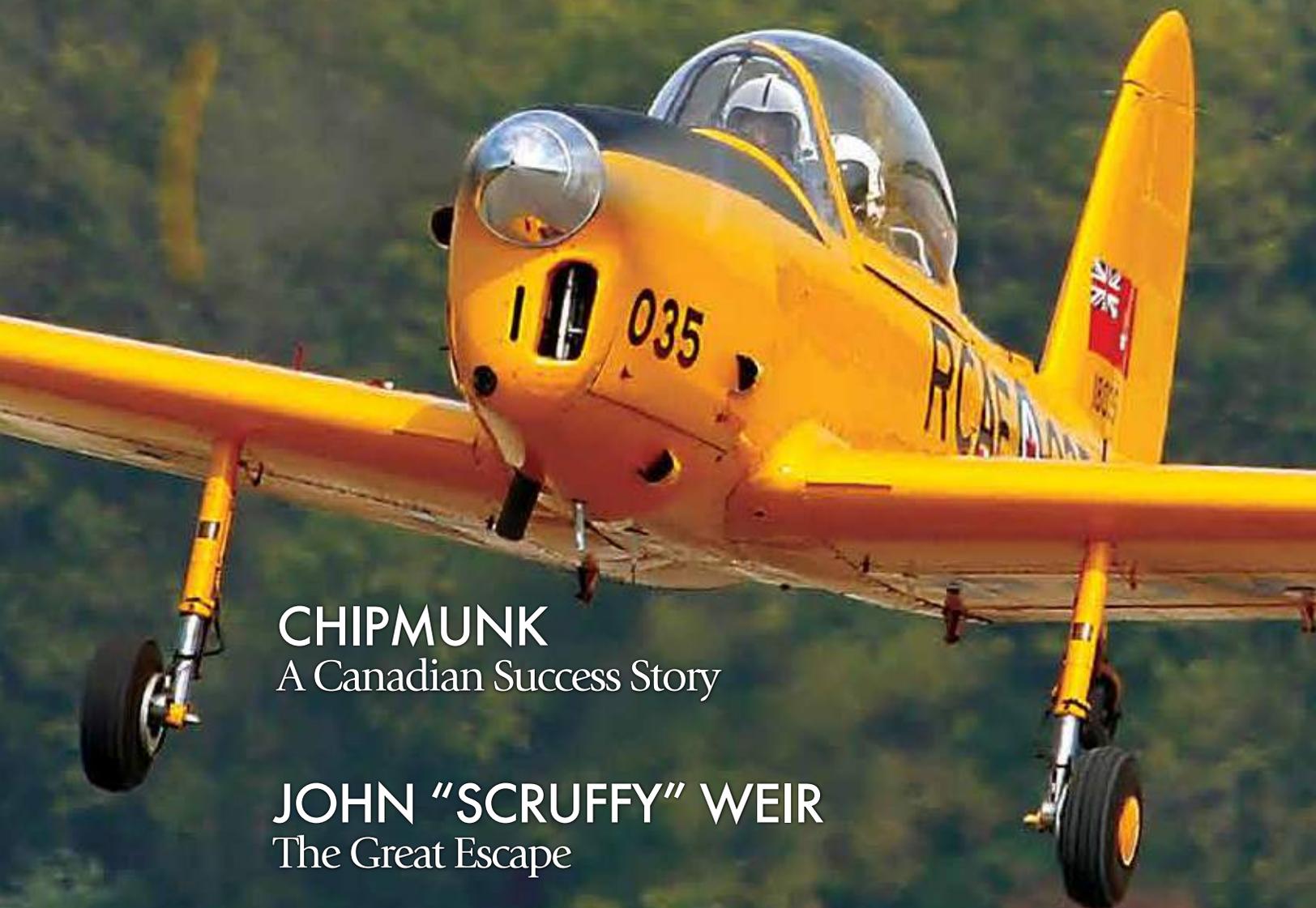


JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2018

FLIGHT LINES

CANADIAN WARPLANE HERITAGE MUSEUM



CHIPMUNK

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JOHN "SCRUFFY" WEIR

The Great Escape

RUHR EXPRESS

Connections



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Cover:
The Museum's de Havilland Canada Chipmunk on the take off roll.
KOOL SHOTS

Volunteer Editor: Bill Cumming

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75th Anniversary Flight

by Bill Cumming

On 1 September 2017, long time member 93 year-old George Stewart was flown in a DH.82C Tiger Moth piloted by his grandson, Yves Stewart. On this date in 1942, George, as a young RCAF flight student, took his first flight in a Tiger Moth and first flying lesson at #12 EFTS, Goderich, Ontario. George went on during the war years to fly 50 daytime and night intruder operations in the Mosquito aircraft with No. 23 Squadron, RAF and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) for his duty during the war. After the war, George served with 424 Squadron at RCAF Station Mount Hope, flying the Mustang, and instructed Nationalist Chinese Air Force pilots on flying the Mosquito.



George Stewart in the front seat of the Tiger Moth with his grandson Yves Stewart as they prepare for the 75th Anniversary flight.
PETER STEWART

George Stewart is one of the original members and pilots of Canadian Warplane Heritage when the museum was first formed, and has flown many of the Museum's aircraft, including the Corsair, Firefly, Harvard, Mustang, Avenger, B-25, Chipmunk, Tiger Moth, and Anson just to name a few. George also checked out many of the CWH's pilots in those early days (including myself). George enjoys visiting the CWH Museum with his son Peter, who is also one of CWH's current pilots. It is always a pleasure to be in the company of George; he is humble, approachable and a gentleman.



Community Charity Airshow

The Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum recently presented the Rotary Club of Brantford \$21,000 for their support of the Community Charity Airshow in Brantford this summer. This year CWH partnered with them to put on the show, agreeing to split any profit 50%. Congratulations to everyone involved and a huge thank you to everyone who supported the show! See you at the 2018 show on August 29th!! Pictured left to right: Dave Rohrer, Pam Rickards, Lance Calbeck & Sherry Kerr.

2017 Birchall Leadership Award Gala

Astronaut Chris Hadfield was honoured with the prestigious Birchall Leadership Award on October 28th at the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum. The award celebrates the ability to stand up in the face of difficulty or adversity and to promote the welfare and safety of those under his command. The successful fundraising event was held in partnership with Royal Military Colleges Foundation. The truly inspiring evening included emcee Peter Mansbridge, entertainment by John McDermott and featured recipient and keynote speaker Colonel Chris Hadfield, who did not disappoint.



DAVID BLAIS

RICK RADELL



DAVID BLAIS



RICK RADELL

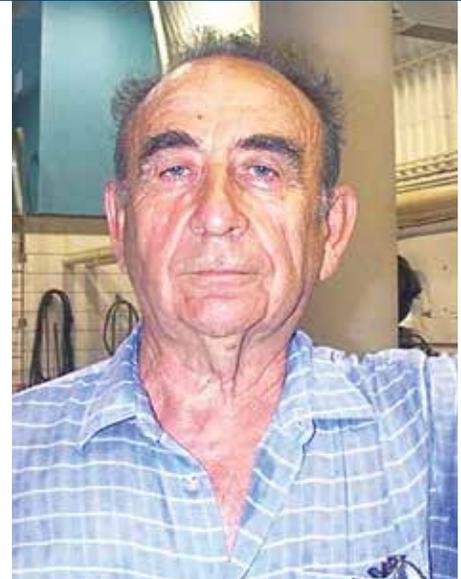


Member Profile

Heinz Hormann by Mo McIntosh

Since joining the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum in 1976 as a volunteer, Heinz Hormann has worked tirelessly behind the scenes manufacturing parts and components for most of the museum's aircraft. In addition to his talent for machining components, Heinz also served as crew chief on the museum's DC-3 and B-25 Mitchell aircraft.

Heinz's hometown was Nuremberg, Germany and in March of 1956 he moved to Toronto, where he resided for many years. He briefly lived in Fredericton, New Brunswick before finally settling in Burlington in 1974. For most of his working career, Heinz was employed as a machinist with Champion/Siemens. Since becoming a member of the museum, Heinz used his skill as a machinist to manufacture hundreds of parts for some of the CWH aircraft, with many of the components produced to MOT specifications.



HEINZ MANUFACTURED AND INSTALLED THE DUMMY FIFTY CALIBER MACHINE GUNS INCLUDING THE NOSE GUNS, AND INSTALLED THE MID UPPER TURRET AND TAIL GUN ASSEMBLY

On the Lancaster he built and installed all the dummy .303 machine guns plus the pre-oiling fittings for the four Merlin engines and new plastic guides for the wing flaps, as well as other small components. Heinz redesigned and built a new disc brake system for the Lysander, as well as redesigning the tail wheel strut to operate efficiently. He also built all the track rollers for the Lysander's canopy, and manufactured new control rod links and designed a new mounting bracket for an alternator instead of the old generator. On the B-25 Mitchell, Heinz manufactured and installed the dummy fifty caliber machine guns including the nose guns, and installed the mid upper turret and tail gun assembly. He also reworked the hydraulic brake system to accept oversize seals according to the proper specifications on the B-25.

Other significant components Heinz provided were new tail mounting brackets to replace all the corroded parts for the new tail arrester hook on the Avenger and a special tool to balance the Firefly propeller. Over the years Heinz has manufactured numerous other components for many of the museum's aircraft.

Today Heinz still regularly participates at the museum and enjoys conversing with members about aviation. Heinz currently resides in Burlington with his beloved wife Else of 59 years.

Drag Strip Memories

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Ruhr Express Connections

by Peter Allam



227 Squadron Allam crew. The author's father with his 227 crew at RAF Strubby in early May 1945 with their regular Lanc, 9J-J PA283 'The Jabberwock'. Left to right: Len Stevens (FE), Harry Wilson (Wop), Bert Allam (P), Bob Lillico (RG), Harry 'Tiger' Gaunt (N), Denzil 'Matt' Matthews (BA), Dick Langley (RG). BERT ALLAM/PETER ALLAM

The May/June 2017 issue of *Flightlines* featured David Clark's excellent account of the story of the first Canadian built Lancaster KB700 'Ruhr Express', and the scratch crew headed by S/L Reg Lane which ferried the aircraft to the UK. As the piece described, KB700 then served briefly on 405 Squadron before moving to 419 Squadron with whom the aircraft was sadly destroyed in an accident on its 49th operation. So much for the history of the pioneering Canadian Lancaster, but what became of its crew after they went their separate ways at RAF Northolt on that overcast day back in September 1943?

KB700 THEN SERVED BRIEFLY ON 405 SQUADRON BEFORE MOVING TO 419 SQUADRON WITH WHOM THE AIRCRAFT WAS SADLY DESTROYED

As is well documented, after a posting to PFF Navigation Training Unit Reg Lane went back on Ops for a third tour, took over command of 419 Squadron from Johnny Fauquier and finished the war with a richly deserved DSO and DFC to his credit. Of the other crew members their stories are rather less well known but two of them, P/O Steve Boczar and F/S Reg Burgar (KB700's second pilot and mid-upper gunner respectively) both crossed paths with my late father Bert during his own service in RAF Bomber Command in 1944 and '45. The following is a brief account of how my father became tenuously connected with two of the original crew members of the 'Ruhr Express'.



The author's father Bert Allam. The photo was taken in early 1942 just after he received his wings. BERT ALLAM/PETER ALLAM



Stephen 'Steve' Boczar, the son of Ukrainian immigrants, was born in 1921 in Manitoba and raised in Saskatoon. He joined the RCAF in 1941 and after the usual training both in Canada and the UK, was posted to No. 9 Squadron RAF, which was then based at RAF Waddington in Lincolnshire ('Bomber County', or 'Nissen County' as it was perhaps inevitably also known).

The rear gunner in Steve's crew on 9 Squadron was Reginald Kenneth 'Reg' Burgar, also born in 1921 but in Landis, SK. Reg volunteered for the RCAF soon after the outbreak of the war in 1939 and trained as an air gunner, eventually being selected for heavy bomber training.

The two airmen crewed up at No. 14 Operational Training Unit (OTU) at RAF Cottesmore in the tiny English county of Rutland, and having completed their heavy bomber conversion training Steve, Reg and their crew went on to survive a full tour of 30 Ops on 9 Squadron including multiple trips to Berlin and the heavily defended Ruhr Valley. Declared tour expired in mid-1943, the two friends were in the right place at the right time to be selected for the prestigious delivery flight of KB700. After their brief dalliance with fame they were posted, as were the majority of tour expired bomber aircrew, to training units in the UK in order that they could pass on their hard-won knowledge and experience to trainee crews, prior to themselves commencing second tours.

Steve Boczar was posted as an instructor to No. 1669 Heavy Conversion Unit, a feeder unit for Bomber Command's 4 Group, based at RAF Langar in Nottinghamshire, and it was at this point that my father made his first 'Ruhr Express' connection. His own crew having completed their OTU training on Wellingtons at Lossiemouth in Scotland, they soon found themselves flying Halifaxes on 1669 HCU, as this short excerpt from my father's unpublished wartime memoirs recalls:

"Even when compared to the Wimpy, which itself was quite a large aircraft for a twin, the Halifax seemed huge. It had an impressive appearance standing as it did high off the ground on that solid heavy looking undercart and with the four Merlins spread out along its 99 feet span. The squarish, almost box-like fuselage with the rather pugnacious nose and the large rectangular fins and rudders gave it a business like air, and it looked every inch an instrument of war. We christened it the 'Battle Wagon' and it looked the part.

The Halibag, as it was rather oddly referred to by its crews, was considered to be an exceptionally good aircraft in its Mk 3 form with Hercules engines, but at Langar we had the usual 'hand me downs' in the form of Mk 2s and 5s which were long past their best. They regularly had problems which made the flying programme somewhat erratic, but rarely was any trouble of a very serious nature."

On 1669 HCU my father flew with a number of different instructors, one of whom turned out to be none other than Steve Boczar, as the page from one of my father's log books shows. Training passed by (mostly) uneventfully and soon dad's crew were posted to their first operational unit, not a Halifax squadron in 4 Group as they were expecting but to Lancaster equipped 227 Squadron in 5 Group, then based at RAF Balderton in Nottinghamshire. It was on 227 that my father made his second 'Ruhr Express' crew member connection.

After a year spent as a gunnery instructor, Reg Burgar was posted to 227 Squadron for his second tour, joining the crew of ex-fighter pilot F/O Albert 'Gilly' Gillegin as Rear Gunner. The Gillegin crew's Flight Engineer was a gentleman named Peter Munson and I was privileged to be in contact with Peter for several years before his passing. Peter kindly gave me a lot of background information about Reg and the Gillegin crew and also their Mid-Upper Gunner F/O Bill Rothernel, who was also an experienced second tour RCAF man.



9 Squadron Boczar crew. Location and date unknown. Reg Burgar is extreme left, Steve Boczar is third from right. STEPHEN BO CZAR

Thankfully Reg Burgar, Steve Boczar and my father all survived their service in Bomber Command and the war, and all three went on to lead long and prosperous lives. Reg made his home in Peace River, AB where along with his sister he founded and ran the local newspaper 'South Peace News' for many years. He passed away in High Prairie, AB in May 2003. Steve Boczar worked as a government civil servant for over thirty years based in several cities across Canada. Aged 95, he passed away in Ottawa in July 2016. My father resumed his pre-war job with the Dunlop Sports Company, retiring as one of the company directors after nearly forty years of service. He passed away in Kenley, UK in May 2011 aged 90. Just three of the many brave young men who served in Bomber Command in World War II.

JOHN “SCRUFFY” WEIR

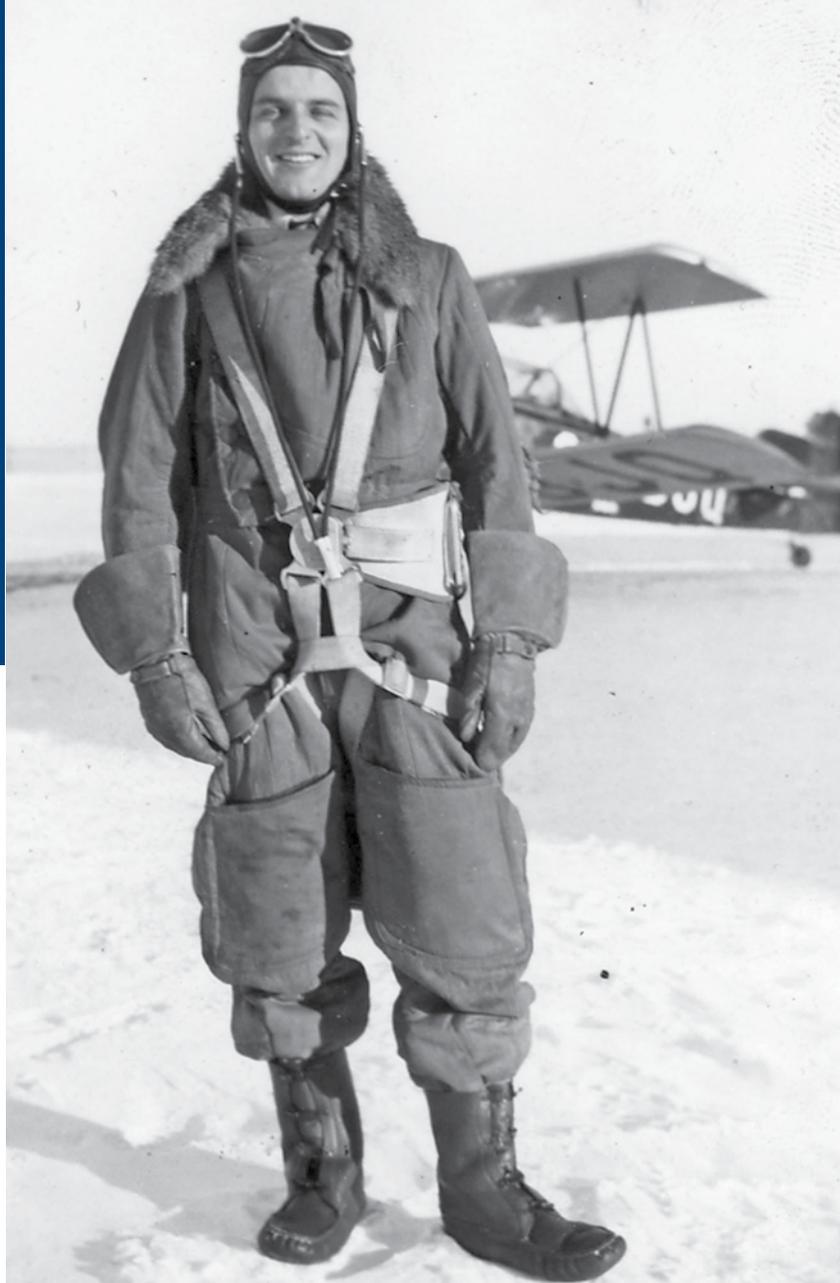
and the role he
played in the real
Great Escape

by Sandra Martin

John Gordon Weir was born less than a year after Germany signed the armistice ending the First World War, a war that had scarred the life of his father, Colonel James Gordon Weir.

The elder Weir, a Presbyterian of Scottish descent, served on the front lines of the trenches in a machine gun battalion. By the time the guns stopped firing, he had been gassed twice, awarded the Military Cross and the Distinguished Service Order, and risen, literally through the ranks, from trooper to colonel. After the war, he married a Canadian nursing sister, Mary Frederica (Freda) Taylor, and settled in Toronto, where their son John and daughter Nancy were born.

Unlike his father, John grew up in an affluent household and went to Upper Canada College. School was a humdrum part of a much larger education, orchestrated by his father: How to survive in the natural and political wilderness. As a youngster, John spent time in Algonquin Park under the tutelage of an Ojibwa fishing guide; as a teenager he was sent to France during school breaks to learn the language and customs; and every couple of years his father took him along on European business trips, where he observed the rise of Nazism in the



John Weir at the civilian flying school in Winnipeg. The aircraft in the background is a civilian registered Fleet Fawn. CANADIAN WARPLANE HERITAGE MUSEUM

mid-1930s and, on a couple of occasions, carried covert messages to desperate clients who were trying to escape from Germany.

Finally, Col. Weir sent his son to Timmins in northern Ontario, in July 1938, to work underground in the gold mines to earn tuition money for university and get toughened up with hard physical labour.

On Sept. 4, 1939, the day after Britain declared war on Germany, John, barely 20, enlisted in the nascent and ill equipped Royal Canadian Air Force. He was called up in November, sent to a civilian flying school in Winnipeg and then shipped back east, eventually being posted to Trenton, to train on fighters. After appearing on dress parade wearing a uniform stained with glycol, a visiting RAF group captain observed that F/O Weir was “rather a scruffy looking individual.” And “Scruffy” he remained.



About this time he met Fran McCormack on a blind date. "We just hit it off; it was quite magical," she said nearly 70 years later.

F/O Weir shipped out in August, 1940, arriving on the south coast of England, in the middle of the Blitz, and at the apogee of German invasion fears. He was posted to RCAF 401 Squadron, which had sustained heavy losses in the Battle of Britain, and had been re-assigned to Thurso, Scotland, to regroup while protecting the skies over Scapa Flow, the main British naval base.

By October, 1941, 401 Squadron had been posted to Lancashire and re-equipped with Spitfires. F/O Weir, who had accumulated 1,000 hours of operational flight time, had far exceeded the life expectancy for new fighter pilots. His luck was about to expire.

Flying sweeps with a rookie tail man over Abbeville, one of the main Luftwaffe bases in Normandy, he was shot down by a coven of Messerschmitts. In the melee, the cockpit and fuel tank burst into flame. F/O Weir bailed out at 26,000 feet, a dangerously high altitude without an oxygen mask, and landed - burned, battered and bootless - about 30 km southwest of Caen.

His eyes were almost fused shut and the skin on his hands, face and neck was seared. A French farmer led him, nearly blind and in shock, to a tree stump and told him to wait for the Germans. That's how he began his nearly four years as a POW, first in a German hospital, then in Stalag Luft I on the Baltic.

THEY WEREN'T COUNTING ON THE DETERMINATION AND ORGANIZING SKILLS OF RAF SQUADRON LEADER ROGER BUSHELL.

"It was a nightmare," said Mrs. Weir about the three dreadful weeks that her fiancé was missing in action. She was working at Simpsons (now the Bay) as a personal shopper when she received an urgent message to go to the office. Thinking she was about to be fired, she was overjoyed to learn the real news - F/O Weir was alive, albeit in a POW camp. Her relief was so palpable that she quit her job and began working for a research facility in the war effort.

Overseas, hatching escape plots was the primary conversational currency - tunnelling, sneaking under the wire, or jumping from trains when being transported from one camp to another. And escape is what F/O Weir did a couple of days later when hundreds of Allied airmen were marched to the local train sta-

tion, bound for Stalag Luft III, the "escape-proof" POW camp deep in Poland. But freedom lasted only a couple of days before he was rounded up in the local whorehouse, marched to Gestapo headquarters, brutally beaten, and loaded aboard another train.

With 300 other prisoners, he arrived at Stalag Luft III, near Sagan (about 160 km southeast of Berlin) in mid-April, 1942, and immediately joined the 'X' or escape committee, even though the camp had been deliberately designed to thwart tunnelling. The barracks in the four compounds were raised several inches off the ground so guards could observe covert digging; the sandy subsoil, which was structurally fragile, was bright yellow and easily detected against the grey surface soil; finally, the Germans had embedded seismograph microphones around the perimeter of the camp to amplify digging sounds.

But they weren't counting on the determination and organizing skills of RAF squadron leader Roger Bushell. He was shot down in March, 1940, and had survived at least four POW camps and several escape attempts before arriving in Stalag Luft III in October, 1943. He immediately developed an ambitious master plan for three tunnels - Tom, Dick and Harry - and an escape strategy to spring more than 200 men, equipped with civilian clothes or uniforms, identity papers and travel documents.

The summer that F/O Weir had spent in the mines in Northern Ontario had taught him the significance of shoring up tunnels so they wouldn't collapse and bury the diggers. Luckily, his old pal Wally Floody from Toronto and the mines, was also a POW. He became X Committee's master tunneller - his first decision was to use *Klim* tins (the packages of powdered milk sent in by the Red Cross) as scoops to dig straight down for 30 feet, (thereby making a smaller sound field for the guards) before levelling and stretching ahead horizontally. The tins were also modified and strung together to form air ducts to bring fresh air from the surface into the tunnel, a bonus for F/O Weir, who was inclined to veer left and downward. The row of tins helped keep him from digging in a circle.

Despite the ingenuity and the perseverance of the POWs, the Great Escape was stalled more often than not. In December, 1943, with Tom and Dick abandoned and the obvious dumping grounds exhausted for the mountains of yellow sand coming out of Harry, the ambitious escape plans were put on hold.

That's when Wally Floody persuaded his pal to consult a visiting Red Cross doctor about his deteriorating eyesight. Because his eyelids were gone, he did everything - including sleeping and digging - with his eyes wide open, leaving

them vulnerable to disease, damage and fatigue. The doctor convinced him that he would eventually go blind if he didn't seek treatment. Consequently, F/O Weir agreed to be transferred to a German hospital for plastic surgery.

He thought he would be away for a couple of weeks. In fact, he was there for several months serving as a guinea pig under the experimental care of David Charters, an extraordinary Scottish ophthalmologist with the Royal Army Medical Corps, who had been captured in Greece in 1941. By 1943, having turned down an opportunity to be repatriated in a prisoner exchange, he was the chief medical officer at Stalag IXB at the spa town of Bad Soden, near Frankfurt.

Major Charters did a series of experimental skin grafts on F/O Weir, slowly rebuilding his upper and lower eyelids - without anesthetic. Before operating, he trained F/O Weir in self-hypnosis, as that was the only way the patient could withstand the pain of the scalpel and keep his eyes still enough to avoid being blinded during the multiple surgeries. It took until late spring, 1944, for F/O Weir to heal enough to be sent back to Stalag Luft III.

SELF-HYPNOSIS, AS THAT WAS THE ONLY WAY THE PATIENT COULD WITHSTAND THE PAIN

Major Charters saved his sight, and probably also his life, for without the long hospitalization in Bad Soden, F/O Weir would surely have been crawling through Harry on Friday night, March 24, 1944. Of the 76 men who slithered through the tunnel before the Germans discovered the escape attempt, only three made it to safety. Defying the Geneva Convention, 50 captured prisoners were executed either singly or in pairs. F/O Weir arrived back in Stalag Luft III (about the same time as D-Day) to learn that many of his fellow prisoners had been murdered.

By this time, the Germans were clearly facing defeat. Camp conditions deteriorated, with Red Cross parcels of food and medicine frequently disappearing into German hands and open hostility breaking out between the guards and the prisoners. As the Russians advanced from the east in the bitter January weather, the Germans, fearing retaliation for earlier atrocities, forced the hungry and ill clad prisoners to march westward deeper into war-ravaged Germany.

F/O Weir, his survival instincts in overdrive, decided making a break for freedom would greatly increase his chances of staying alive until the end of the war.

He bribed a guard to organize a cart and horse and to pretend he was escorting four POWs to a prison camp near

the coast. In exchange, F/O Weir invented an amnesty agreement, scribbled it on a piece of paper, had his three pals sign it, ripped it in half and gave one portion to the guard.

If they made it to Lubeck, on the Baltic, and linked up safely with the invading Allies, the POWs would rejoin the pieces of paper and vouch for the guard. F/O Weir never told his family the worst of the horrors he had witnessed or what he himself may have done to survive that trek through war-ravaged and SS-infested Germany.

Considering he left Sagan weighing 124 pounds and had gained nearly 40 pounds by the time he was liberated by the Allies in Lubeck three weeks later, he had clearly drawn upon his ingrained survival instincts to make the appropriate decision.

After the war, F/O Weir returned to Canada, married his sweetheart, cashed in nearly four years of back pay from his truncated flying career, and embarked on a profitable career as a bond salesman for Wood Gundy. By the time he finally retired from a very successful career with Wood Gundy, long past the age most people call it quits, he had helped found the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum and African Lion Safari, near his father's birthplace in Flamborough, Ontario.

John Gordon Weir was born in Toronto on July 22, 1919, and died there on Sept. 20, 2009. He was 90.

Editor's Note: This article was originally published in the Globe & Mail in 2009 and has been modified to suit Flightlines. It is presented with the kind permission of the Globe & Mail.



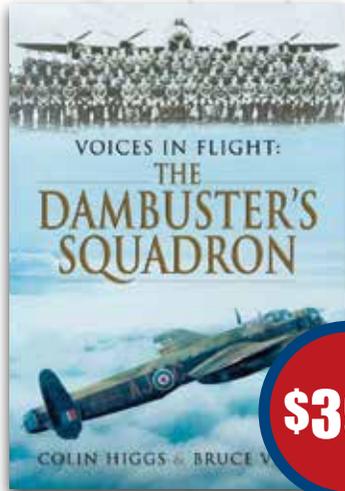


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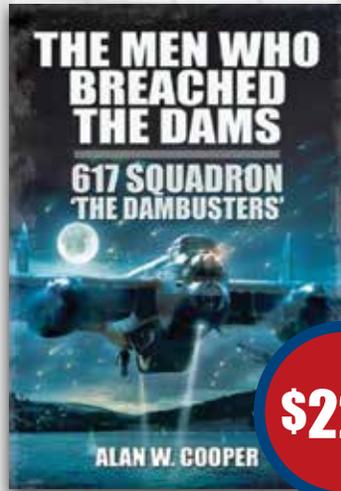
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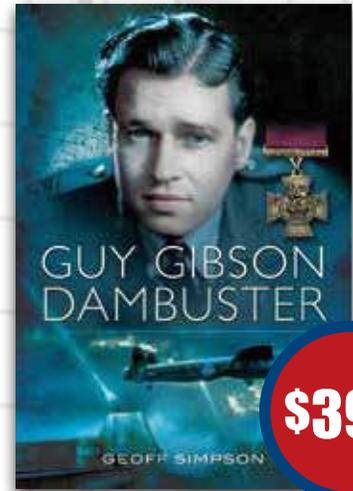
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A Canadian Success Story: The Chipmunk



by Bill Cumming

ERIC DUMIGAN

The second aircraft to join the collection of the Canadian Warplane Heritage was the de Havilland Canada DHC-1B Chipmunk, which was donated to the museum in 1973 by one of the museum's founding fathers, John Weir (see the separate article about John Weir in this issue of Flightlines).

Three months after VE Day, the Canadian government granted permission for de Havilland Canada to resume commercial work at Downsview. De Havilland Canada started to manufacture the DH.82 Tiger Moth in 1937 and during World War II, the company received orders for the Avro 652A Anson and the DH.98 Mosquito. When the war ended, in order to keep its doors open, de Havilland Canada introduced a "Canadianized" version of the DH.83 Fox Moth and was involved in overhaul work, mainly with the Canso and Catalina aircraft.

allocated de Havilland Canada type designation DHC-1. Although the design office had dropped from a wartime staff of 700 to only 30 people, the key men in the department were still available. They rounded off the team with a new breed of specialists, some who specialized in metal techniques.

The design of the Chipmunk, the name that was subsequently assigned to the new trainer, was headed up by de Havilland Canada's Chief Engineer, Wsiewolod J. Jakimiuk. Jakimiuk was a Polish aeronautical engineer who played a major role in the wartime designs at de Havilland Canada.

Drawings were turned out at a great rate and production planning proceeded along at an equal pace. The production of the detailed parts began 21 December 1945, only a few months after the go ahead was given. The prototype

ALTHOUGH THE DESIGN OFFICE HAD DROPPED FROM A WARTIME STAFF OF 700 TO ONLY 30 PEOPLE, THE KEY MEN IN THE DEPARTMENT WERE STILL AVAILABLE.

In 1945, the Tiger Moth was over 14 years old and no longer a strong contender in the trainer market. De Havilland's parent company saw the development of a new trainer aircraft as an ideal Canadian project to enter the post war market with. If a good aircraft resulted, the parent company would help to market it worldwide. The design of the new trainer aircraft was started in the summer of 1945 and was

Chipmunk (CF-DIO-X) was completed largely without tooling. Patrick Fillingham took the prototype Chipmunk aloft for the first time on 22 May 1946 at Downsview on a successful 60 minute test flight.

The new DHC-1 reflected the widespread changeover in the aircraft manufacturing trend to metal, stress skinned



construction. The two cockpits, arranged in tandem, were well suited for military instruction and were enclosed with a built up Perspex canopy. The Chipmunk's overall layout was reminiscent of the clean monoplane designs of the late 1930s.

The first three operational Chipmunk aircraft were delivered to the Canadian Joint Air Training Centre, Rivers, Manitoba on 10 April 1948. Delivered in natural metal finish with red and blue maple leaf roundels in all six positions, they served with No. 444 (Air Observation Post) Squadron only until 1 April 1949, when the squadron was disbanded. While at Rivers the Chipmunks were used for advanced flying training for Canadian Army pilots, who graduated from the Light Aircraft Pilot Course (LAPC) with the Canadian Army Flying Badge. The Army pilots went on to fly the Auster and L-19 aircraft for ranging and directing artillery fire.

Before the Royal Canadian Air Force purchased the Chipmunk, a number of minor design changes were completed on the aircraft at the recommendation of the Air Force. Included in these modifications was the change from the built up canopy to the bubble type canopy. The RCAF accepted its first Chipmunk aircraft in 1952.

The Chipmunk became the primary trainer of the RCAF and the majority of Chipmunks of the first lot of 37 aircraft ordered by the Department of National Defence were issued to Royal Canadian Flying Club Association branches for refresher training of ex-RCAF pilots. The reason for this was largely economic as the Chipmunk was more expensive than its civil counterparts, and civilian trainers were usually a cabin arrangement with side-by-side seating. Eventually, all Chipmunks purchased by the Canadian government and loaned to the civilian flying schools would be reassigned to the RCAF. A total of 100 Chipmunks were purchased by the Department of National Defence. The last Chipmunks were accepted by the Royal Canadian Air Force in the autumn of 1956.



Two RCAF Chipmunks (18046 & 18047) over north Toronto prior to delivery to the RCAF. Note the bubble type canopy as specified by the RCAF. DE HAVILLAND CANADA

Introduction to the Chippie

by Peter Rowlands

With help from my friends and a J3 Piper Cub, a Private Pilot Licence accompanied my entry into the Royal Canadian Air Force in November of 1962, where Course 6208, the eighth such intake of that year, proved to be an eclectic mixture of very young men from across the country being brought together for assessment and possible selection as aircrew officers. Subsequent weeks of mental and physical examination led successful candidates into the officially structured officers' training school which offered fairly formal instruction on subjects as diverse as table manners and foreign affairs to public speaking and aerodynamic principles; of course, the introduced marching drills and physical education programs would be with us for the duration. After many such weeks of generic social conditioning, the officer cadets of 6208 were then segregated into their assigned specialties: navigator trainees were dispatched to Air Navigation School in Winnipeg while pilot trainees remained in Centralia to attend Primary Flying School.

Several more weeks of bookwork in ground school finally got us pilots to the flight line where we were introduced to de Havilland Canada's first post-war production model, the DHC-1 Chipmunk. A low wing monoplane dressed in Training Command yellow and topped with a bubble canopy, the "Chippie" was a friendly-looking machine that usually evoked smiles inside and out. With the same engine and half as many wings as its Tiger Moth predecessor, it proved to be a wonderful little flying machine: highly responsive while pushing 100 on the speedometer with its 145 hp Gipsy Major inverted four-cylinder engine, it was certainly a step up from the J3 Cub. Fortunately much stronger than it looks, the Chipmunk had just enough idiosyncrasies to make it a wonderful training machine: not only was the engine upside down with a backwards turning propeller, but also, the hand operated wheel brakes needed to be partially applied at just the right amount to provide directional control on the ground. Along with endless "circuits and bumps" came the introductory thrill of aerobatics; along with strict compliance to airborne procedures came the ceremonial rite of a severed uniform tie to signal completion of a successful first solo flight. The school's entire flying curriculum was completed in 33 calendar days with 23:40 in the air that included 7:30 of solo time. Thank you Flying Officer MacDonald.



The prototype DHC-1 Chipmunk at Downsview about 1948. Notice the built up Perspex canopy, as provided with the first few Canadian built Chipmunks.
JACK MCNULTY COLLECTION VIA GORD MCNULTY



The Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum's Chipmunk 18035 (CF-POW) in 1972 at Buttonville Airport, shortly after being retired from the RCAF. BILL CUMMING COLLECTION

A total of 217 Chipmunk aircraft were manufactured in Canada. More Chipmunks would have been built in this country had it not been for currency restrictions which were imposed at this time. Only five examples were sold in Canada outside of the Canadian Government purchase and export orders were provided to India, Egypt and Thailand. A total of 1014 Chipmunks were built in England and another 60 were also built under licence in Portugal by OGMA.

INITIAL TRAINING CONSISTED OF APPROXIMATELY 21 HOURS ON THE CHIPMUNK

Flying instruction on the Chipmunk aircraft was carried out at the Primary Flying School at Centralia as well as at Claresholm, Alberta. Initial training consisted of approximately 21 hours on the Chipmunk, before the student proceeded onto the Harvard and later the Tutor jet trainer. The Primary Flying School at Centralia closed in 1966 and moved to CFB Borden, followed by a move to CFB Portage in Manitoba. The Chipmunk was retired from Canadian service by 1971.

Canadian Warplane Heritage's Chipmunk 10835 (C-FPOW) was manufactured by de Havilland Canada in 1956 as a model DHC-1B-2-S5. Taken-on-strength by the RCAF on 13 February 1956 it was assigned to Training Command, serving at CFB Borden and CFB Portage. Struck-off-Strength in 1971, it was purchased by Adrian Sandziuk in April 1972 from Crown Assets and registered as CF-POW. When former Prisoner of War (POW), John Weir, saw the registration CF-POW, he knew he had to have it and immediately purchased the Chipmunk in October 1972. He subsequently donated it to the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum in June 1973. It has been restored to its former RCAF Training Command colours of the late 1950s, and today, C-FPOW is quite active with the aircraft flight program.



The first Chipmunk 18001, delivered to the RCAF in April 1948. Notice the built up canopy and the gear leg fairings. This aircraft, along with Chipmunks 18002 & 18003 were assigned to No. 444 (AOP) to train army pilots in basic flight training. In 1952, the three Chipmunks were upgraded to the Mk. 2 standard before joining Training Command, until declared surplus and struck-off-strength in 1959. JACK MCNULTY COLLECTION VIA GORD MCNULTY



The Chipmunk served well as a primary trainer in the military, leaving its mark in the progress of air history, and helped to establish de Havilland Canada as a major aircraft manufacturer. As the Chipmunk became surplus to military requirements, many of them found their way to the civilian market. Some became popular aerobatic aircraft and many were modified with higher powered engines for this purpose. Fortunately, many of the examples operating today by private owners are restored in their former military markings and can be seen at the many air shows and fly-ins that are held around Canada, Great Britain and the United States each year.



RCAF Chipmunk 18053 at RCAF Station Centralia, circa 1965. DAVID HILL



The elegant lines of C-FPOW in flight. ERIC DUMIGAN

The Other Chippies

by Bill Cumming

A few years ago, two other Chipmunk aircraft were on display at the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum. Both aircraft have since left the collection and have been moved to new owners.



KOOL SHOTS

Chipmunk 18041 (CF-BXK) was built in 1956 and served with the RCAF at Camp Borden and with the Canadian Forces (as 12041) at CFB Portage. It was struck off strength in 1971. It was donated to the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum by Hank Dielwart in 2003.



KOOL SHOTS

Chipmunk CF-CXP/C-FCXP was built by de Havilland Canada about 1953 for the RCAF and was one of the 35 examples loaned by the RCAF to flying clubs in Canada to provide refresher training to RCAF pilots. CF-CXP was loaned to the London Flying Club and remained there until 1957. It was finished in the polished aluminum finish of the Chipmunks as loaned to Royal Canada Flying Clubs. The silver Chipmunk was on loan to the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum until sold by the owner.

Upcoming 2018 Closures

January 23 to 30 inclusive
February 26 to March 6 inclusive
April 3 to 10 inclusive

2018 Calendar

March 17	ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - 11 am
March 25	HERITAGECON XII Model Contest & Sale
April 15	DRAGSTRIP MEMORIES Back by popular demand!
April 28	SKY'S THE LIMIT Charity Auction (rescheduled date)
May 12	DAMBUSTERS 75th Anniversary
June 16 & 17	Come fly with us at FLYFEST
July 7	AIR FORCE DAY Past, Present & Future
July 29	VINTAGE WHEELS & WINGS
August 29	COMMUNITY CHARITY AIRSHOW At the Brantford Airport
September 8 & 9	CLASSICS OF THE GOLDEN AGE Indoor Car Show
November 11	REMEMBRANCE DAY - Large indoor service
November 17	SWING OUT TO VICTORY Dinner & Dance

*Please visit warplane.com for additional updates. Dates subject to change.

Pigeons in War

At the outbreak of the Second World War, thousands of Britain's pigeon keepers gave their pigeons to the war effort to act as message carriers. Nearly a quarter of a million birds were used by the Royal Air Force, the Army and Civil Defence Services including Bletchley Park. Pigeon racing was stopped and birds of prey along the coasts of Britain were culled so that British pigeons could arrive home unhindered by these predators.



CANADIAN WARPLANE HERITAGE MUSEUM

Homing pigeons were used not only in Western Europe by British forces but also by American, Canadian and German forces in other parts of the world during the war - Italy, Greece, North Africa, India and the Middle and Far East. All RAF bombers and reconnaissance aircraft carried pigeons and if the aircraft had to ditch, the plane's coordinates were sent back with the pigeon to its RAF base and a search and rescue operation was effected. Thousands of servicemen's lives were saved by these heroic birds that flew often in extreme circumstances. Pigeons carried their messages either in special message containers on their legs or small pouches looped over their backs. Quite often pigeons were dropped by parachute in containers to Resistance workers in France, Belgium and Holland.

Pigeon soldiers were decorated and buried with military honours. The Dickin Medal was instituted in 1943 to honour the work of animals in war for their outstanding acts of bravery and devotion to duty. The medal was awarded to 32 pigeons between 1943 and 1949 to acknowledge brave actions during WWII.

The Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum recently had a collection of messenger pigeon artifacts donated to its permanent collection which are on exhibit in the hangar until early 2018.

How Can I Help?

Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum is proud to recognize those supporters who have made significant contributions to our Museum over the past few months and we are thrilled to add the following to our donor walls:

Cornerstone - \$100,000
In Memory of William Thomas Beavin

Wings of Gold - \$25,000
Harry and Toby Jordan Foundation

Wings of Bronze - \$5,000
Albert C. R. Roffey, Elenita Dabu Roffey
In Loving Memory of Ronald C. Chaston,
Corps of Signals
Sgt. John Feduck, In Memory of my wife Lillian Lorne Brisbin

"Friends of Flight" Memorial Hangar Doors - \$2,000
David Ross Grant, Navigator,
429 Bison Squadron
Gerald W. Jackson, Forever In My Heart

"Friends of Flight" Wall
Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg KOOKS
In honour of our dear friend Keith Clifford,
"Blue Skies"
John Orosz, Lest we Forget

Life Members now include:
Steve McIntosh Rankin MacGillivray
Bruce Gemmel Maud L. Martinsen
McLaren Brown Ross Harley
Larry Doyle Thomas Dunn
Daniel Ebenhoech David Phillips
Lance Klammer Mike Charters
Bob Carr Bob Patullo
Piet Van Der Laan De Vries



The Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum



Looking back on Canada's Sesquicentennial, it was a tremendous year in our nation's history as well as our own museum. Our Air Force Day event with a RCAF Globemaster, CF- 18s, Hercules and the Vimy Flight, the Citizenship Court held on July 1, the unveiling of the Ruhr Express, the Classics of the Golden Age Car Show, the Vintage Wings and Wheels Show, Flyfest, the Community Charity Airshow, the Birchall Leadership Award Dinner with Chris Hadfield, Peter Mansbridge, John McDermott and the Royal Military College Foundation, the Swing Out to Victory Dance, and our Remembrance Day Ceremonies are but a few of the events we held which were outstanding in every aspect.

So as we plan for 2018, there are several developments that I am pleased to tell you about; we have just ordered a new Pratt & Whitney 1830 engine to get our C-47 Dakota back in the air and repainted in a 1944 paint scheme, a Wright 2600R Cyclone engine will also be acquired for the B-25 plus the glass nose will be sent out for restoration, the wing folding attachments for the Firefly are being made now and the Firefly will be back in the air this year along with the Avenger, and a new roof membrane will be installed on the hangar this summer.



Additionally as we know Operation Chastise was the daring attack on German dams carried out on May 16-17, 1943 by Royal Air Force 617 Squadron. Of the 133 airmen who took off on the Dams Raid, 30 were Canadians and 15 of them did not return. This year in memory of this daring raid and the Canadian involvement, our Lancaster will be wear the markings of Wing Commander Guy Gibson's aircraft AJ-G ED932 in in honour of the Dambuster's 75th Anniversary.

Per Ardua ad Astra

David G. Rohrer, CD
President & Chief Executive Officer,
Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum

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