



Atlantic Canada Aviation Museum Newsletter



**February 2011 Newsletter**

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**APOLOGIES** for the delayed February Newsletter – a result of persistent problems with my computer along with problems in connecting with the internet - for reasons that seemed very difficult to resolve.

2011 is now underway and activities are continuing in preparation for another open season. Winter activities are, of course, limited but our dedicated volunteers still manage to make progress.

This year will be more difficult from the revenue perspective with the decision by the Halifax Regional Municipality to no longer operate a Tourist Information Desk at the Museum. A decision obviously made as municipalities try to cope with budget issues.

The Museum has indeed benefited from the HRM presence and it is our sincere hope that the future may see them back again. In the meantime some limited tourist information will be made available from the Gift Shop.

**MEMBERSHIPS**

The Museum has always maintained a paid membership category to enable those not in a position to take a direct part in our activities to contribute to a helpful revenue source and to show their support and interest in the Museum.

The loss of the HRM Tourism Desk will undoubtedly reduce our revenues as many of the Tourists who dropped in also visited the Museum and the Gift Shop.

We do ask that any of you with an interest in the Museum but who are unable to take a direct part in its operation, and who haven't previously maintained a paid membership, would consider doing so at this time when we will be experiencing reduced revenues.

A single membership is \$25.00 and for a Family \$30.00.

A convenient membership payment form is provided at the end of the newsletter.

Your support is important to us and would be very helpful and much appreciated.

**NEW MEMBERS**

There are lots of opportunities for anyone with an interest in aircraft and aviation history to become actively involved in ACAM's operations.

These opportunities include participation in actual aircraft maintenance and restoration, in display development, in archive development, library and facility maintenance, and in Museum management.

If you have an interest, or know someone that does, a call should be made to Michael White at 446-7606 or Reg Clarke at 477-3315. They will be more than pleased to arrange a visit to the Museum to allow you to meet our volunteers and to see the many ways you could become involved.

### WEBPAGE

We hope that you take advantage of the excellent ACAM Webpage – the responsibility of Webmaster Michael White and supported so effectively by Brian Hicks of *Corronis Solutions.com*.

It's a great way to stay up to date on your Museum's activities. The efforts of Michael and Brian are very much appreciated.

The Webpage address is:  
[atlanticcanadaaviationmuseum.com](http://atlanticcanadaaviationmuseum.com)

Michael reports that, in the year 2010, total visits to ACAM's webpage were 83,634 which averages 229.13 visits per day. Over 10,000 of these were first time contacts.

Quite an achievement for the first year of operation for our new system.

### REGRETS

We are saddened to report on the passing of two of our most dedicated members.

#### JIM McCOMBE

After an extended period of failing health Jim McCombe passed away in January.

For those that were privileged to know him there was always appreciation of that friendly personality that went out of its way to make you feel that you were somehow important to him. Combined with a wonderful sense of humour he was a pleasure to be with whenever the opportunity arose.



Jim served in the RCAF for more than 23 years including service in Germany during the "cold war" flying F-86 Sabres. On return to Canada he became part of the famous Golden Hawks aerobatic team where he served from 1959 to 1961 becoming the Team Leader in his final year.

His service continued as an instructor at Rivers Manitoba, on exchange with the USAF in Virginia, and then Search and Rescue and Medivac at CFB Summerside, PEI.

Then came 12 years with the Department of Transport and finally Chief Pilot with Air Atlantic before retirement in 1989 from a distinguished aviation career.

He became a dedicated member of ACAM and served for many years on its Board of Directors.

A pylon mounted Sabre had long been displayed in Golden Hawk colours at CFB Chatham where Jim had served with the Hawks. With the closure of the Base under way it became Jim's obsession to see the aircraft brought to ACAM for restoration and long term preservation. He used every bit of his contacts and influence to see this come about and was a major factor in ACAM's success in acquiring this very significant aircraft.

Many components had been removed to facilitate its pylon mounting most significantly the complete landing gear without which it could never have been properly displayed. Jim

undertook a search for these difficult to locate items and was instrumental in their location and eventual acquisition.

He took great interest and much pleasure in the excellent restoration carried out on this beautiful aircraft.

Jim McCombe was a friend, a dedicated husband, father, grandfather, a gentleman, and a much respected and valued member of ACAM.

He will be missed.

### DON HENRY

Don Henry passed away on January 20<sup>th</sup> following a short illness.

Don became actively involved in the Museum when a decision was made to locate and undertake the restoration of a TBM Avenger in the form of the forest fire fighting Air Tankers as operated by Forest Protection Limited of New Brunswick for so many years.



Don was a true “outdoorsman” in every way. His career was in the New Brunswick Forest industry followed by some 17 years with Forest Protection Limited as they were involved in the massive spruce budworm spray program.

He fulfilled various supervisory roles in that program, primarily in field activities, in a very complex operation that employed as many as 100 plus Stearman spray planes and as many

as 75 Avengers in the effort. He obviously acquired a love of aviation in the process and developed friendships throughout the Province and elsewhere that lasted through his lifetime.

Don had many other interests and, at one time or another, was a hunter, a trapper, a prospector, as well as lifetime gun collector and gunsmith, an amateur historian, and a collector of everything from stone ginger beer bottles through to old farm implements and just about anything of interest in between.

Don was a major part of the restoration crew that undertook the 9 year restoration of the Avenger and was largely responsible for locating so many parts for the project from any number of sources including crash sites from the days when FPL operated with contract aircraft.

To follow him on one of the many visits through forest underbrush to such sites was an experience not to be forgotten. With his GPS unit in hand he would frequently disappear in the forest underbrush as one tried to follow. Catching up you might find him on his hands and knees carefully removing a tiny wild plant from the ground to point out its fine features and then as carefully returning it to the ground to continue its growth. He loved nature in every way.

On one occasion your writer took an unwilling swim in very cold water after trying to follow him up the middle of a stream as he stood laughing on the bank.

His efforts were largely responsible for the project being completed so accurately and at an actual profit as sales were located for many surplus serviceable parts.

He so obviously enjoyed his years with ACAM where he valued his new friendships.

Don was dedicated to his family and they soon became a subject of discussion in any gathering. We have lost a true friend, a gentlemen, and a valued member who will be missed.

## MUSEUM ACTIVITIES

### Cessna L-19 Restoration

Work continues on the restoration of an aircraft type that served Canada's Armed Forces and also as a Glider Tow with the Air Cadet movement for many years.

Current work, under Crew Chief Colin Wilmshurst, is concentrated on preparing the full airframe for painting. It is hoped that this can be arranged at an established paint shop.



photos – Colin Wilmshurst

### Fuselage and Wing Ready For Painting

Colin has established contact with a gentleman who has researched the history of L-19's in Canadian service.

This indicates that our example of the L-19 served with the Canadian Forces in Germany. It also provides useful information on colour schemes, etc.

### Gypsy Major Engine

Gene Hamilton has been working on the restoration of a Gypsy Major engine such as was used on Tiger Moths.

Gene has completely dismantled the engine and glass beaded many of the parts. Other parts have been returned from Aerotech after cleaning whose assistance is, as always, greatly appreciated.

In a future issue we will cover the restoration of this and our now pristine example of the P&W 1340 engine which is displayed in sectioned form.

### Link Trainer

A decision has been made to restore ACAM's Link Trainer to full operation.

Our example has been preserved in excellent condition and, as well, spares are on hand all of which should make the full restoration possible.



photo – Colin Wilmshurst

### Link Trainer

Bruce Paul, Thomas Hughes and Steve Cochrane, with Don Hirtle, have taken on this

challenging project which will include the restoration of the plotting table.



photo – Colin Wilmshurst  
Plotting Table

The Link Trainer was the invention of American Edwin A Link who, in 1928, left his father's air driven piano and organ business to work on this new endeavour.

The completed unit consisted of a pedestal mounted "fuselage" arranged to roll, pitch, dive, and climb as the students "flew" it. Movement was accomplished by a vacuum operated bellows controlled by valves connected to the controls. The instructor sat at a desk and communicated with the student in the enclosed cockpit through earphones.

The student relied on instruments to "fly" the trainer through various maneuvers as the course was plotted on a desk map by the three wheeled "crab".

Slip stream simulators gave the feeling of air over the control surfaces and a rough air generator gave added simulation.

The first six were purchased by the U S Army Air Corps in 1934 to assist in instrument flight training and subsequently, with WW11 underway, 6,271 were sold to the U S Army and 1,045 to the Navy. They were also purchased by some 35 other countries which, of course, included many supplied to Canada's RCAF.

A fully working Link trainer will, of course, be an excellent addition to ACAM's displays.

### Tours

During the winter closed season tours are normally limited to weekends when volunteers are in attendance. Recently there were two large visits by Cadets – a group of some 42 from New Brunswick and 38 from Cape Breton. ACAM members were on hand to guide them through the Museum and the visits were obviously much appreciated.

Such visits are welcomed by ACAM and arrangements can be made on request to accommodate them throughout the year.

### LOCKHEED HUDSON

It was reported in our last Newsletter that ACAM's Hudson has been transferred to the RCAF Museum at Trenton under an agreement that will retain the Museum's interest in the aircraft and see it restored as only the second surviving Hudson in North America.

Mark Peappell, who was responsible for the agreement on behalf of ACAM, prepared an article on the history of the Hudson Part 1 of which was published in the November 2010 Newsletter.

This covered the early development and operation of the aircraft, the Hudson Mk 111A of the North Atlantic Aviation Museum on display at Gander, and the Hudson Mk V1 as it evolved into ACAM's lifeboat carrying FK466.

Part 11 – of Mark Peappell's article follows:



**FK466 over Nfld**

In September 1945 FK466, was stored at Summerside P.E.I, ultimately becoming a target tug out of Greenwood. It was struck off charge in 1947, eventually finding its way to a scrap yard with a number of B-24's and other Hudson's.

When ACAM was in it early days, in the late seventies and early eighties, there were still old aircraft and parts lying around. Some of our early efforts were to recover and store some of these aircraft. Our Hudson fuselage was acquired during this period from a scrap yard in Canning N.S. At that time there were actually two Hudson fuselages around Nova Scotia.

In the late 40s an enterprising individual had obtained a Hudson, surplus from RCAF Dartmouth. The Hudson was dismantled and taken out to Sackville where it was placed beside a gas station and converted into a roadside café. The Silver Bomber Café became a fixture out in Sackville for a number of years.

Eventually it was dismantled and the fuselage ended up in a field in Lower Sackville where members of ACAM discovered it. Some initial efforts were started to retrieve the fuselage from the field in Sackville. From this a number of parts were saved and taken to CFB Shearwater where they were stored in the bottom of Warrior block. Unfortunately when the time came to pull the fuselage out of the field in Sackville, all that remained were a couple of small pieces. Someone had gone in and hacked up the fuselage.



**Lower Sackville Hudson- the one that got away! You can see where it was cut for the take-out window!**



**FK466 Sitting in the scrap yard waiting to be rescued.**

This left the remains of FK466 which still was located in Valley in the scrap yard. This was successfully retrieved by ACAM in the mid eighties once we had somewhere to store it.



### Arrival day summer 1987

The Hudson now sat for the next twenty years. Over this time a new hanger was built at the Museum and the collection has now out grown that. The Hudson has suffered losing bits and pieces over the years; the largest item lost in recent years was the rear door. Something was going to have to be done with the fuselage, before it became too late and it would be of no use for anything. Over this time we acquired a number of parts and components, including a wing from a US Navy aircraft, but we still lacked the center section and left wing.



### A lady in waiting

The RCAF Museum at Trenton has fast become an important museum in Canada. The crown jewel in the collection is the Handley Page Halifax NA337. The restoration of the Halifax was a major project which took over 300,000 man hours over a ten year period. Rolled out in 2005, it has continued to be worked on and detailed. It is the only completely restored Halifax in the world.

About two years ago, Chris Coulton, who is executive director of the museum, started looking for another project to keep his band of restorers busy. During the course of the Halifax restoration, a large team had been built up to restore it, not to mention a large infrastructure and workshop area. It was his concern to keep his team together and find another project. Since the Halifax went on display in 2005, the RCAF Museum has restored a Harvard II and is continuing with an Anson Mk II. As a lot of the Anson is wood; the desire was for another metal airplane after the Harvard was finished. A project was started to restore a Northrop Delta, and this however failed to take off for a number of reasons.

Chris was still looking for a project for his team. I ran into Chris in Washington DC in April of this year at the Mutual Concerns conference which is held annually at the National Air and Space Museum. He asked if I knew of any projects that would meet his criteria. At that point, I pitched the Hudson project. The Hudson project would only be viable if we could find suitable parts and be able to bring them together. I knew of an airframe which could be of help. In Wetaskawin AB, there was a Lodestar that would provide some of the missing puzzle.

The L18 Lodestar CF-CEC, 18-2132, Lear star is owned by Historic Aircraft of Wetaskawin, which is a vintage aircraft company owned by Byron Reynolds. Further discussion with Byron; found that he would donate the airframe to the project. This airframe will be brought shortly from Alberta to join the rest of the parts being assembled. It will provide the basis of the center section and undercarriage components missing on FK466.



**CF-CEC L-18 2132 “Lear Star” – sits waiting in Westaskawin, AB**

Another partner, the Canada Air and Space Museum has also offered parts from its vast collection to help finish the aircraft, which includes R1830 engines and propellers. Surprisingly, this all came together quickly, however the project almost ground to a halt, when Trenton realized what a large project it was about to take on. Once the deal was presented to ACAM’s Board, it was clear that this option provided the only realistic opportunity for the restoration of FK466 and it was a clear decision to endorse the project.

Another interesting link and avenue for help on the project, is that with Canada’s Transport fleet being based at Trenton, there is sometimes an opportunity to use the fleet to bring parts in from far flung corners of the globe. I was told that if the Hudson would have fit, it would have been flown up to Trenton in a Hercules. With the introduction of the New J model Hercules at Trenton, Lockheed have a presence on the base there. This has provided the opportunity to approach Lockheed and see what support is available to help restore one of their former products.

As one has gathered, a lot of things have had to come together to get this project to this point. I am still amazed that this has come together and at the end of the day, this was the only solution for the Hudson. The Trenton

team is the only group in Canada which could take this project on and follow through with any successful conclusion.

We were fortunate to save this aircraft so it could be restored and it is unfortunate that it has to leave ACAM to be worked on, but it becomes a decision as to what is best for the artifact, and we are saving these artifacts for Canadians, not just because we are interested in them. The support shown by a number of other partners in this project, shows the level of cooperation which does exist between members of the aviation museum community.

Trenton estimates that it will take 6 to 7 years to finish the job. They have promised to provide updates as the project grows. The aircraft is on loan from ACAM to Trenton for the next 20 years, with the option for the completely restored airframe to return back to Halifax at the end of this term. Hopefully by that time, we will have somewhere for it to be displayed inside.

(Editor’s note : our thanks to Mark for this very complete article – we will be keeping our members up to date on progress of the Hudson restoration)

**N S INTERNATIONAL AIR SHOW**

ACAM’s Gift Shop Manager Dave McMahon is known for the professional quality of his photography. There is nowhere this shows up better than in the following photos taken by him at last year’s Nova Scotia International Air Show. We are indeed pleased to be able to present a selection of them here:



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More of these in the next Newsletter.

**MUSEUM MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Single \$25.00    Family \$30.00

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