

FLY NORTH

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NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO AVIATION HERITAGE CENTRE

Preserving and celebrating the diverse history of aviation in the northwest, through the collection and preservation of artifacts and stories of the persons and events that made this region unique in aviation history

NOAHC News -----

New Opening Times:

The Centre is now open for a second day during the week. In addition to the regular Sunday opening, it will now also be open on Wednesday afternoons from 1:00 to 4:00 pm. Board member Mary-Alice Isaac has generously donated her time on Wednesdays to open the Centre and make it more accessible to visitors.

Acquisition:

NOAHC has received an RCAF World War II Pilot's Flying Log Book, which was kept by Sgt. Gerald O'Grady Coghlan, who served between 1942 and 1944. The logbook was donated by Sgt. Coghlan's nephew Sam Coghlan. Sam previously provided NOAHC with information on his mother, Marion Swaim who was one of the first female members of the Fort William Aero Club in the late 1920s and one of the first women at the Lakehead to receive a pilot's license. (see *FlyNorth* vol 7, no 3 and vol 7 no 4) Find out on page 2 of this issue what Sgt. Coghlan's logbook reveals about pilot training in Canada during WWII.

Flight Simulator:

There is now a flight simulator installed at the Centre. It originally belonged to Vic Stevenson, NOAHC's founding member. After some time with Flight Ontario, it was acquired by Ted Creagh, who donated it to the Centre. He also installed and de-bugged the system and updated the hardware and software. A great variety of planes can be flown, from an Ultralight to a Boeing 747 plus a number that are of local interest such as the Hurricane, Beaver and DC-3. The scenery installed includes custom built coverage of the area around Thunder Bay Airport. Ted is currently training a number of NOAHC members on the operation of the simulator and once that is completed it is expected that visitors to the Centre will have access to it.

Presentation:

In June, George Holborn gave a presentation on a Canadian Forces Search and Rescue training

flight he took to the Arctic earlier in the year.

As a member of the Northwestern Ontario Air Search and Rescue Association he had the opportunity to participate in a SAR flight from Trenton to Kuujuaq on Ungava Bay then on to Resolute, Ellesmere Island, Iqaluit and back to Trenton. Flying in a CC-130 Hercules, the training included location spotting, familiarization exercises and in Ungava Bay, two SAR technicians were dropped by parachute to aid a boat in simulated distress.

Visit from the Canso Crew:

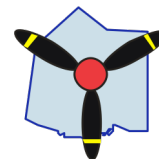
In July NOAHC had a visit from three of the six original members of the Fairview Aircraft Restoration Society's 'Canso Crew'. The crew was responsible for initiating the restoration of a Consolidated Canso amphibian originally built in 1944. The story of the rescue of the Canso and its refurbishment to flying condition was told in the April-June 2017 edition of *FlyNorth*. Following their visit to Thunder Bay, the crew and their wives went on to Kenora to meet Rollie Hammerstedt who made a significant contribution to the Canso project. After that they visited the Royal Aviation Museum of Western Canada's compound in St Andrews, Manitoba to check out possible Canso spares, before flying back to Fairview.



Brian Wilson, Joe Gans and Don Wieben ,
three of the Canso Crew at the Centre

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An RCAF Logbook from World War II

Earlier this year the logbook of Sgt. Gerald O'Grady Coghlan who served in the RCAF from 1942 to 1944 was donated to NOAHC by his nephew Sam Coghlan. Gerald Coghlan was born in Fort William in 1922 and at the age of 19 in 1942 he enlisted in the RCAF. He served until 1944, at which time he was given a medical discharge. His flying activities in the RCAF are recorded in the logbook he maintained during these years, providing an account of what was involved in the training of pilots for service during World War II.

After enlisting in April, 1942, Gerald began the serious business of learning to fly on October 26, 1942 when he had his first flight at #6 Elementary Flying Training School (EFTS) in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. This was one of the schools of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan (BCATP), which produced more than 50,000 pilots for the British and Commonwealth air forces. One of these was Gerald O'Grady Coghlan.

In Prince Albert, Gerald started his training on Tiger Moths, the most common basic trainer in the BCATP, and soloed after 9 hours and 20 minutes of instruction on November 7, 1942. By the end of the month he had done his first cross country flight and finished his time at Prince Albert with three solo cross country flights on December 18. At that time he had accumulated 69 hours of flying time, 34 hours and 40 minutes of them solo. In addition he had 10 hours and 15 minutes on the Link Trainer. Following the completion of initial training at the EFTS, Gerald went on to #10 Service Flying Training School (SFTS) in Dauphin, Manitoba in January 1943. There he flew the twin engine Cessna Crane, which meant that his skills were seen as more appropriate for bombers or transports than for fighters. After 5 hours and 55 minutes instruction he flew solo as first pilot on January 11 and by the end of the month flying almost every day, and sometimes several times a day he had accumulated 15 hours as first pilot. By April 18, when he completed his training at Dauphin, Gerald had 241 hours and 25 minutes in his logbook, including 88 hours and 45 minutes on Cranes. These hours included normal aircraft handling as well as navigational training, night flying, cross-country flights and low flying exercises.

The next stage for trainees following graduation from SFTS was preparation for operational flying. For that they were shipped to Britain and in early May 1943, Gerald Coghlan left Halifax to join #20 (Pilot) Advanced Flying Unit (#20 (P)AFU) at Weston-on-the-Green in Oxfordshire, England. There he began to fly the Airspeed Oxford, a twin engine, monoplane trainer designed to prepare pilots and other aircrew for Bomber Command's operation aircraft such as the Wellington, Halifax and Lancaster. He soloed after 5 hours instruction and by the end of the training he had accumulated 55 hours and 20 minutes on the Oxford. Of these, 21 hours were solo, split into 13 hours and 35 minutes daytime flying and 7 hours and 55 minutes nighttime. The normal circuits, landings and overshoots were practiced, but time was also spent on navigation training, cross-country exercises and formation flying. Beam Approach Training, using a radio beam to assist approach to the airfield at night or in bad weather, was also part of the course. At the end of his time at #20 (P) AFU, in September 1943, Gerald Coghlan had nearly 320 hours in his logbook. At the time the average number of flying hours required before a pilot was sent on operations was 335. Gerald would have made up the difference at an Operation Training Unit (OTU) where he would have been introduced to combat aircraft, but it was not to be. In his final assessment at (P) AFU, his commanding officer identified him as an average pilot, which would have allowed him to continue, but he also noted that he had an "Aversion to night flying which must be eliminated before he is a suitable captain for an aircraft". That was a major problem for a pilot expected to carry out bombing raids at night over enemy territory and Gerald returned to Canada in December 1943.

First page in Gerald Coghlan's logbook

Gerald Coghlan left Halifax to join #20 (Pilot) Advanced Flying Unit (#20 (P)AFU) at Weston-on-the-Green in Oxfordshire, England. There he began to fly the Airspeed Oxford, a twin engine, monoplane trainer designed to prepare pilots and other aircrew for Bomber Command's operation aircraft such as the Wellington, Halifax and Lancaster. He soloed after 5 hours instruction and by the end of the training he had accumulated 55 hours and 20 minutes on the Oxford. Of these, 21 hours were solo, split into 13 hours and 35 minutes daytime flying and 7 hours and 55 minutes nighttime. The normal circuits, landings and overshoots were practiced, but time was also spent on navigation training, cross-country exercises and formation flying. Beam Approach Training, using a radio beam to assist approach to the airfield at night or in bad weather, was also part of the course. At the end of his time at #20 (P) AFU, in September 1943, Gerald Coghlan had nearly 320 hours in his logbook. At the time the average number of flying hours required before a pilot was sent on operations was 335. Gerald would have made up the difference at an Operation Training Unit (OTU) where he would have been introduced to combat aircraft, but it was not to be. In his final assessment at (P) AFU, his commanding officer identified him as an average pilot, which would have allowed him to continue, but he also noted that he had an "Aversion to night flying which must be eliminated before he is a suitable captain for an aircraft". That was a major problem for a pilot expected to carry out bombing raids at night over enemy territory and Gerald returned to Canada in December 1943.

However, he had spent some time on the Link Trainer at RAF Kidlington with a final assessment of 'above average' and it was as a Link Trainer instructor that he was to make his main contribution to the war effort. The Link Trainer was an early flight simulator in which a trainee pilot could gain experience in using instruments at night or during bad weather without the potential hazards they would present to an inexperienced pilot in the real environment. Training for cross-country flights as well as Radio Range or Beam Approach techniques could also be practiced. The trainer consisted of a fully instrumented replica cockpit for the trainee along with an external desk for the instructor, which had a map plotter to allow the instructor to follow the trainee's movements, plus duplicate instruments that the instructor could use to alter particular flight conditions such as wind strength and direction, initiate a stall, or alter the information from radio beacons. After returning to Canada, Gerald Coghlan received intensive training on the Link at #1 Instrument Flying School (IFS) in Deseronto, Ontario, putting in more than 50 hours in 10 days when he first arrived there. With an additional 40 hours in the trainer cockpit and 36 hours on the desk he was considered ready to instruct and in April 1944 was transferred to #1 Central Navigation School (CNS) at Rivers, Manitoba. He remained there until October 1944 and in that time put in more than 400 hours on the desk, teaching mainly Radio Range approaches. The last entry in Gerald's logbook is dated October 19, 1944. What happened after that is not clear, but on November 30, he was discharged on medical grounds and transferred to the RCAF Reserve. He returned to Fort William to work as a grain sampler, before moving over to Port Arthur, where as late as 1974 he was still listed in the Voters' List as an Elevator Employee. Gerald O'Grady Coghlan died on August 16, 1978 and was buried in the Soldiers' Plot in St. Andrew's Cemetery.

YEAR	AIRCRAFT	PILOT, OR 1st PILOT	2ND PILOT, PUPIL OR PASSENGER	DUTY (INCLUDING RESULTS AND REMARKS)
1942	Type	No.		TOTALS BROUGHT FORWARD
COMMENCEMENT OF ELEMENTARY TRAINING AT No. 6 EFTS, PRINCE ALBERT				
Oct. 26	Tiger Moth	4944	Mr. McLeod	Self 1-1A-2-2-4
Oct. 27	Tiger Moth	5944	Mr. Francis	Self 2-2-4-5
Oct. 28	Tiger Moth	4290	Mr. McLeod	Self 3-6-7-9-16
Oct. 29	Tiger Moth	5944	Mr. Francis	Self 3-6-7-9-16
Nov. 1	Tiger Moth	4290	Mr. McLeod	Self 6-7-9-16-16
Total Week Ending Nov. 1				Grand Total
Nov. 2	Tiger Moth	4241	Mr. McLeod	Self 6-7-9-16
Nov. 4	Tiger Moth	4241	Mr. McLeod	Self 6-7-9-16-18-18A
Nov. 7	Tiger Moth	4241	Mr. McLeod	Self 6-7-9-16
Nov. 7	Tiger Moth	4241	Mr. McLeod	Self 6-7-9-16
Nov. 7	Tiger Moth	4241	Mr. McLeod	Self 6-7-9-16
Total Week Ending Nov. 7				Grand Total
GRAND TOTAL (Cols. 1) to (10)				
Hrs. 20 Mins.				TOTALS CARRIED FORWARD



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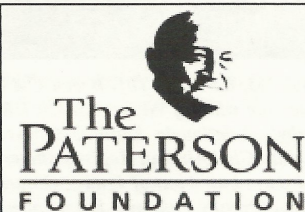
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**JOHN ANDREWS
FOUNDATION**

William Edward Turner: 1923-2017



With the death of William (Bill) Turner on August 8, 2017 at the age of 93, NOAHC lost a good friend and enthusiastic supporter. He donated several items to the Centre including his RCAF uniform, provided material for our newsletter and regularly attended events at the Centre. Aviation was a major part of Bill's life for more than 75 years. As soon as he was old enough, in 1942, he enlisted in the RCAF determined to become a pilot. His basic training took place at #2 Elementary Flying Training School (EFTS) in Fort William where he learned to fly on Tiger Moths, and, after further training in western Canada and Britain, by 1944 he was a pilot of one of the air force's main bombers, the Avro Lancaster. By that time the training system had become so efficient that there was a surplus of pilots and he and his crew did not become operational before the war in Europe ended. Bill also volunteered for the Tiger Force that was being assembled to fight Japan in the Pacific, but again the war there ended before he went into action.

After the war he was active in the Thunder Bay Flying Club, serving as club president and as an instructor. He also spent as much time as possible flying the Chipmunk that had been assigned to the club for use by RCAF Reserve pilots for refresher training. For a few years in the 1970s he operated Shebandowan Air Ltd., a charter air service based at Shebandowan Lake, west of Thunder Bay. Bill owned and flew a variety of aircraft, but was most proud of the Murphy Rebel he built with his son, Bill Jr., which in 1988 won for them the "Outstanding Homebuilt Seaplane" trophy at North America's largest air show in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Bill continued to fly well into his 80s and was enthusiastic and knowledgeable about all things involving aviation, which he was happy to share during his visits to the Centre. NOAHC extends its condolences to the Turner family.



Bill Turner RCAF 1944

The Red Lake Norseman Festival - 2017

George Holborn, NOAHC Vice-President took the Centre's travelling display to the Norseman Festival this July. As well as promoting the Centre and talking up the benefits of membership, George had time to take a flight in the Chimo Air Services Norseman. "The best \$60.00 I ever spent" according to George.



courtesy George Holborn

The NOAHC booth. It was shared with the Northwestern Ontario Air Search And Rescue Association (NOASARA) of which George is also a member.

George providing visitors to the booth with details of NOAHC's interest in preserving and promoting the history of aviation in the northwest



courtesy George Holborn



courtesy George Holborn

Author Larry Milberry and Festival Co-ordinator, Sophie Castonguay at the dock waiting for a ride in the Norseman. Larry is the publisher of CANAV Books and has written extensively on aviation in Canada. His books, including that on the Noorduyn Norseman shown here, are available at the Centre.



courtesy George Holborn

Noorduyn Norseman CF-KAO, which gave flights at the Festival, was built in 1944 and delivered to the USAAF. Disposed of by the military in 1946, it was flown by the US Department of Agriculture for ten years before coming to Canada in 1957. After flying for several companies in eastern Ontario and Manitoba CF-KAO arrived in the northwest in the 1980s, being registered with Kayair and Gauley's Northern Waters Air Service, before being acquired in 1994 by its current owner Chimo Air Service.