

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 -----

Shop at NOAHC:

As a means of providing increased services for its membership, NOAHC has acquired a range of aviation merchandise that will be available at the Centre. For some time, NOAHC has had a relatively limited selection of T-shirts, sweatshirts, books, jigsaw puzzles and die-cast aircraft models for sale, but has now added a variety of new items. These include T-shirts and caps that feature designs showing iconic bush planes such as the Beaver and Otter, as well as military aircraft such as the Hurricane and Harvard that have links to northwestern Ontario. Other designs show the Spitfire, CF-18, Avro Arrow and US Blue Angels aerobatic team. Most of these aircraft plus the Lancaster, Stearman and the Snowbirds aerobatic team are also featured on a selection of coffee mugs.

The NOAHC shop will continue to offer Canadian Legends T-shirts and sweatshirts, plus jigsaw puzzles and books containing stories of local interest.

Look at what is available on page 4 of this issue of *FlyNorth* and come into the Centre to check out the merchandise. With Christmas approaching, now could be the time to get that special gift.

NOTE: Members receive a 10% discount on all purchases

Acquisitions.



Some of the memorabilia NOAHC received following the disbanding of No 66 Fort William Air Cadet Squadron.

Rollie Hammerstedt: 1931-2017



Rollie Hammerstedt, a retired aircraft maintenance engineer with over six decades worth of experience, died in Kenora on July 21, 2017. Born in Lac du Bonnet, Manitoba, he spent much of his working life in the Kenora area, as an engineer for Ontario Central Airlines and Redditt

Aviation where he worked on the repair and maintenance of bush planes such as the Beech 18 and the Nordyn Norseman, including the Mk VIII 'Metal' Norseman. He was also involved in the conversion of Canso amphibians from military to civilian use. Rollie retired in 1999, but when he heard that the Fairview Aircraft Restoration Society (FARS) had plans to restore a WWII Canso he offered his help (see *FlyNorth*, April-June, 2017). For seven years, he spent four weeks a year in Fairview, providing his knowledge, his specialty tools, and his friendship. The feeling at FARS is that without Rollie's contribution the Canso would never have left the ground. Sadly, when the plane did fly in June 2017 he was too ill to be there and he died only a few weeks later.

NOAHC extends its condolences to the Hammerstedt family.

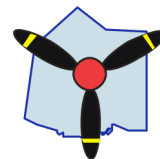
Flight Simulator:

Our flight simulator is proving popular. Come in and try it out. Here 3-year old Carter Sabourin takes his mom on a flight over Thunder Bay.



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2. Flying for the Marathon Paper Co.
3. Can-Car mystery
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NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO AVIATION HERITAGE CENTRE INC.

Mailing Address
403-1100 Memorial Ave
Thunder Bay, ON
P7B 4A3

Centre Location
905 Victoria Avenue E
Thunder Bay

Contact NOAHC at
(807) 623-3522
or
noahc@tbaytel.net

Webpage
www.noahc.org

Flying for the Marathon Pulp and Paper Company – from the journal of Colin Macmillan

As early as 1940, I started to get involved with the Marathon Paper Company of Wausau, Wisconsin. At that time, the Company was a small outfit with one basic pulp-mill at Rothschild, Wisconsin and another at Menominee, Michigan. They had a timber concession on the Lower Big Pic River in Ontario, where they had been cutting wood for a number of years. As the Peninsula Harbour and the lower Big Pic River timber concession was in the Pays Plat patrol area, it was natural that when Marathon Paper Company required an aircraft for transportation, reconnaissance or timber cruising, they would obtain permission for the use of my plane CF-OAW. In this way I became acquainted with most of the top men in the company. Sometime during the summer of 1945, I was asked if I would be interested in working for them. They needed an aircraft to facilitate development work on the Big Pic River and for personal transportation between Marathon and head office in Wausau, Wisconsin. There was also a need to transport management personnel between Marathon and the pulp wood cutting camps at the head of the Pic River, for at that time and for some years after, no road connected Stevens Depot with the northern Trans-Canada Highway. I was interested, but could not make a move until the war was over, since we like many other people in essential jobs were frozen in our flying jobs.

As the war in Europe wound down and the Marathon Paper Company wound up, I did more and more flying for the company. At the end of the 1945 flying season, I obtained a leave of absence from the Ontario Air Service and started to look for a suitable aircraft to meet the needs of the company. We picked up a military surplus, 5-place, twin engine, low wing Cessna T-50 and developed the ski installation for its type. This little ship performed fine on skis and wheels, but was not suitable for float installation. Later we installed floats on one of the heavy types of this T50 Cessna and used it for a number of years before replacing it with a de Havilland Beaver.

It appeared that during the summer of 1946 there would be considerable flying between the new mill at Marathon and the head office at Rothschild, Wisconsin. To facilitate this we surveyed two 3,000 foot airstrips about 2 miles from the mill. The site for the airport was picked for several reasons. It was close to town; it was the only level land anywhere close; it could be extended to 5,000 feet if necessary and it had a bush road running down one side of the site. The area had been burnt over some years previously so the only piece of construction equipment needed was a bulldozer. While the airport was being built, I took the train to Toronto and purchased a de Havilland Fox Moth, and hired a pilot, Tom Carr, then living in Port Arthur, whom I had known slightly before the war and who had a good reputation as a pilot.

As soon as Tom arrived from Toronto with the Fox Moth, it was kept quite busy. When we had one runway of the airport nearly completed, I flew in the Cessna T-50 CF-DCD and flights between the new mill and Wausau started. Traffic between these two points was heavy during 1946 and 1947 then tapered off after the mill became operational. Tom Carr and I switched planes occasionally so he could get some twin engine time in, but in the fall I had to let him go. I hired Bill Perry, a young fellow from Toronto who started flying as soon as the ice was strong enough to hold up the plane. Earlier in the fall of 1946 we had the opportunity to purchase a Heavy wing Cessna T-50, which could be fitted with floats so we started out the winter flying season with three serviceable planes. Around about February or early March I flew three of the top Woods Division men to Minnesota on a tour of lumbering operations there. We were away for several days and on my return to Ramsay Lake I found that Bill Perry and John Mitchell, the mechanic, had burnt the Light wing Cessna. I had always insisted that when warming up an engine with a fire-pot on cold mornings (below -20°F) someone had to be in attendance with a fire extinguisher. While I was away they neglected this procedure so we were minus one airplane. Both men were equally to blame and I should have discharged them then, but I thought they would have learned a lesson from the experience.

When the summer flying started in 1947 we had the Heavy wing Cessna on wheels and the Fox Moth on floats for normal flying and a rented Heavy wing Cessna for fire detection flights over the timber limits. Early in July, Bill Perry was flying out the dam control operator from Cirrus Lake when he crashed the Fox Moth on take off. Bill was thrown clear unhurt, but the passenger was burnt along with the plane. My opinion was that the plane was overloaded, although we could never prove it. Bill said it was not, but he lost his ticket while the investigation was under way and returned to Toronto.

To replace the Fox Moth, I purchased a Republic SeaBee, a small 4-place, single engine amphibian. For the remainder of the summer I did all of the float flying and as soon as the fire danger was over we returned the hired plane. During the winter of 1947-48, there was very little flying - hardly enough to meet expenses. Virtually all development work for the Woods Division was completed and the only company flying was moving personnel around. In addition, with the mill completed, flying between Marathon and the head office in Wisconsin had dropped off. There was insufficient work to support two aircraft so we disposed of the Republic SeaBee.

At about that time the Company asked me if I would consider giving up flying to take a job as Chief Guide and Customer Entertainer, to deal with customers who wished to come to Canada for fishing and to visit the new mill. I accepted and in 1948 began taking customers on cruising and fishing trips along the east coast of Lake Superior.



Cessna T50, civilian version of the Crane used in the BCATP, many of which were acquired by civilian operators post-war (l)

A DH Fox Moth, similar to CF-BNX, the one that crashed at Cirrus Lake in 1947. (r)



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Lakehead Models
Steve Melnick

262 Bay St.
Thunder Bay, ON
P7B 1R5
Tel.: 807-345-5776
Fax: 807-344-6489
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 **SIGNAL GROUP**
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TEL: 1 807 475-9341
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DAVE KINC
OWNER

313 EDWARD STREET S.
THUNDER BAY, ON P7E 2G9

SJS Susan J. Southcott
Professional Corporation
CPA CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT


#701, 1184 Roland Street
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 5M4
(entrance is between 1184 and 1186 Roland)

Phone: 807-623-5977 Fax: 807-623-3524
Email: sjsouthc@tbaytel.net

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180 Park Avenue
Suite 101
Thunder Bay ON P7B 6J4
Tel: 807 344-3667
Fax: 807 343-7973
Toll Free: 1 800 461-8909

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Medicals done at Aviation Centre of Excellence,
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Tel: 807-577-4888
FAX: 807-475-5044
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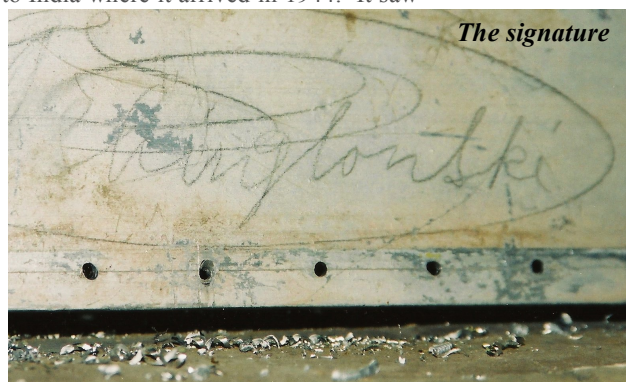
 **JOHN ANDREWS FOUNDATION**

Can-Car Mystery

In 1996, Peter Vacher, a collector and restorer of vintage motor cars was visiting India to purchase a Rolls-Royce, when he came upon the remains of an old aircraft in the grounds of a university in Mumbai. When he discovered that it was a Hawker Hurricane and a survivor of the Battle of Britain he decided to buy it, return it to Britain and restore it to flying condition. Research showed that the remains belonged to a Hawker Hurricane Mk I with the serial number R4118, built in England by the Gloster Aircraft Company in 1940 under contract from Hawker. It was taken on charge by the RAF in time for it to be involved in the Battle of Britain during which it was flown on 49 sorties and shot down five enemy aircraft under the control of eleven different pilots. Following the Battle, R4118 saw service in Operational Training Units (OTU) where it suffered damage that required the replacement and refurbishment of a number of components. In mid-1943 it was allocated to Air Command, South East Asia and shipped to India where it arrived in 1944. It saw

no operational service there and eventually ended up at a university where it seems to have been used for aircraft maintenance training.

While working on the restoration, Vacher and his crew found that the wings were not original, but had been built at Can-Car in Fort William probably in 1941 and had been used to replace the originals following an accident sometime between 1941 and 1943. On one of the wing spars there was a signature, most of which had become unreadable over the years, with only the last few letters decipherable. These are ...LONSKI and may well belong to one of the workers at Can-Car who built the wing. Apparently leaving an autograph on part of a plane was not uncommon. After 75 years, it might not be possible to solve the mystery, but if anyone remembers someone with a surname ending in ...LONSKI who built Hurricanes in 1941, *Fly North* would be happy to hear from you.



New merchandise from NOAHC: a selection of the products available at the Centre



Mugs



Jigsaw puzzles and die-cast aircraft models



Caps



T-Shirts:
various
sizes
S, M, L,
XL



¼ Zip Fleece – various sizes



Sweatshirts – various sizes

PRICE LIST

Mugs:	\$15.00
Caps:	\$15.00
Jigsaw puzzles:	\$5.00
Die-cast Models:	\$5-12.00
T-shirts:	\$23.00
Sweatshirts:	\$25.00
¼ Zip Fleece:	\$45.00
Books:	\$10-45.00



The CWH Lancaster's trip to Britain in 2014. Copies of the official DVD are available from NOAHC at a cost of \$35.00



Selection of books on topics of local interest

NOTE: Members receive a 10% discount on purchases