



ROAR of the Harvard

Canada's grassroots organization devoted to keeping 'em flying
www.harvards.com March
2015

President's Report by Pat Hanna

The Canadian winter is sure letting us know that it is still king! Coldest day on record for many locales this day in mid-February! We are all enthusiastically looking forward to hearing those Pratt & Whitneys sing their "Song of Summer!"

We have seen a lot of personnel changes over the past few months with an improved CHAA hopefully being the end result. Sort of reminiscent of the Toronto Maple Leafs with one exception...we are putting together an awesome team with a winning attitude! **Go CHAA!** The changes in various key positions has caused some temporary hiccups and I apologize for some things that may have been overlooked or missed in the transition period. Sincere thanks to **Stacey McCue** for her dedication over the last two plus years as Membership Chair. As Stacey moves to different areas within CHAA, please welcome **Tracy Reddy** as the new **Membership Chair**.

Our pledge is to present the membership with a more efficient and streamlined way of communications through the ROAR, the website and Harvard Happenings.

One area that has been the source of a lot of teething troubles has been the introduction of PayPal to the system. Although very effective in conducting financial transactions for CHAA stores, memberships and gift certificates with on-line banking, it has been difficult to manage. We are continuing to work on the processes to avoid similar issues this year. Thank you for your patience through the transition time!

Another challenge that we have had is our CHAA website. A team of "experts" within CHAA are looking at improvements that are needed to make the website easier to program and navigate and to keep up to date. If you have incredible IT and programming skills that you are desperate to share, please contact **Terry Scott!**

As always, the wintertime is an opportunity to regroup and recharge for the coming flying season. The same goes for the aircraft! If viewed in their current state, the aircraft need a sense of imagination to be recognized as our beloved Harvards! The maintenance team led by CTechO **Shane Clayton** and AME **Kerry Wilkinson** do an amazing job to roll them out all ready to fly in early spring!

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CHAA contact information: Phone 519 842-9922 or by mail at PO Box # 175 Tillsonburg, On. N4G 4H5

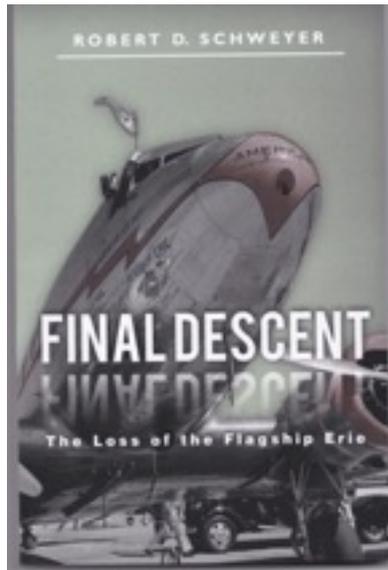
Upcoming Events & Meetings 2015

- Sat Mar, 21 2015 - Annual General Meeting --
- Sat April, 18 2015 - Monthly member's briefing -
- Sat May, 16 2015 -- Monthly member's briefing--
- Sat June, 20 2015 - Monthly member's briefing -
- Sat July, 18 2015 - Monthly member's briefing -
- Sat Aug, 15 2015 - Monthly member's briefing -
- Sat Sept, 19 2015 -- Monthly member's briefing -
- Sat Oct, 17 2015 -- Monthly member's briefing -
- Sat Nov, 21 2015 -- Monthly member's meeting -
- Sat Dec, 19 2015 -- Monthly member's briefing -

Be sure to mark these dates on your calendar!

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Did You Know

CHAA runs on all volunteer help. CHAA cannot survive without people who are willing to step up and take on the many jobs that must happen to keep the Harvards in the air and the association active.

Areas that are in need of such people include maintenance, Harvard Hawks, ground crew and many other behind the scenes positions waiting to be filled.

On a regular basis we have volunteers that drive from as far away as Toronto, Burlington, St Catharines and Guelph to help keep CHAA what it is.

If you are able to help in any small way, please get in touch with any director listed on page two of this publication. You may just have what CHAA is looking for.

Fuel in the tanks is limited. Gravity is forever.

“Final Descent”

Book Review by Gord McNulty

Witnesses who saw and heard the airliner flying erratically may have thought it was probably one of the wartime training planes that beat a path over the area day and night.

Within moments, the American Airlines DC-3 plunged into a farm field at Lawrence Station, 14 miles southwest of St. Thomas, at a steep angle. Seventeen passengers and three crew members lost their lives. The tragedy on the night of October 30, 1941, was the worst aviation disaster in Canada at the time.

In *Final Descent: The Loss of the Flagship Erie*, aviation historian Robert Schweyer revisits the poignant story of how the routine flight from Buffalo to Detroit went horribly wrong. Schweyer, who lived in Jarvis, extensively researched the crash. He completed a manuscript before his untimely death from Hodgkin's lymphoma in 2010.

His family, in a fitting tribute to both the author and the victims of the accident, recently managed to self-publish the full story in an excellent book. Schweyer's writing is rich in detail and engages the reader from start to finish. He sketches the lives of the people who perished and the impact on their families and the community.

Everything was in order when Captain David I. Cooper, a highly respected American Airlines pilot, took off from Buffalo at 9:03 p.m. in the reliable DC-3. First Officer Richard Cooper was making his first trip as co-pilot. Stewardess Mary Blackley was enjoying her new-found airline career.

Several industrial executives were among the passengers. Four others were employed in the blossoming aviation industry and three were union officials.

It was a typical late autumn evening in Buffalo, overcast, with a ceiling of 3,500 feet. The flight was cleared only to Detroit, since a lowering of ceilings to below minimums for scheduled arrivals in South Bend, Indiana and Chicago was anticipated.

Cooper reported passing over Jarvis at 9:39, advising that he was proceeding routinely at 4,000 feet and that weather conditions were fairly good. He was never heard from again.

Shortly after 10 p.m., as drizzle began, residents of tiny Lawrence Station heard the engines of an aircraft surging. Startled observers saw the twin-engined plane descend in right turns, while making sudden roller coaster-like movements that must have been nightmarish for those on board. The crew pushed the engines to the limit trying to gain altitude, but the *Flagship Erie* continued to spiral downward. It missed a farmhouse before finally hitting the ground at high speed. A huge fire erupted as gasoline and oil spewed from ruptured fuel tanks and bedlam erupted in Lawrence Station.

Despite the reduced visibility, the blaze could be seen as far away as St. Thomas. Would-be rescuers and neighbours quickly flocked to the burning wreckage, but couldn't do anything except spread the news. Virtually all of the physical evidence that might have helped to determine the cause of the crash was destroyed.

The grim story made front-page headlines in virtually every major Canadian and U.S. newspaper. It was the worst plane crash in American Airlines' history and the company's first fatal accident involving the seemingly invincible DC-3.

Schweyer traces how exhaustive investigations failed to solve the mystery. Speculation persisted that the aircraft might have struck a goose, so 200 military personnel were mobilized for an intensive ground search of goose remains. They covered hundreds of acres of farmland in a fruitless effort.

Investigators probed various theories, such as jamming of the controls, possibly caused by automatic pilot malfunction; a vagrant bolt of lightning blinding the crew; carbon monoxide from the exhausts incapacitating the crew; the health of the pilot; and more. Cooper had suffered for several days from torticollis, an annoying and often painful condition more commonly referred to as wryneck. He was cleared to fly three days before the accident. In the end, there wasn't any evidence to bolster any of the suppositions.

Schweyer, who was employed as assistant curator and curator at the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum for eight years, concluded that he was "personally

convinced that something either jammed or failed aboard the aircraft suddenly and without warning.”

The crash underlined the need for flight data recorders or “black boxes” that eventually became widespread. Schweyer dedicated his book to the 20 crash victims who, he felt, had not died in vain as their loss had helped to produce essential improvements in aviation safety.

Final Descent is an achievement of which the Schweyer family can be proud. They deserve high marks for ensuring that a painful story in aviation history isn't forgotten.

Final Descent: The Loss of the Flagship Erie, by Robert D. Schweyer, paperback, 123 pages illustrated with photos. The book sells for \$18.95 and is available at the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum, The Book Factory in Simcoe, The Tan Mar in Port Dover, and the Neat Little Bookshop in Cayuga.

REFLECTIONS FROM A VETERAN'S HEART

It was an era when everything appeared to be so simple and usual one day, and the next day everything changed. It was a day when young men and women had dreams and aspirations of their next moment in time, when 'the suddenly' caused the interruption- the cry of World War II.

We find my dear uncle enjoying his moments of time with his friends and his freedom. They were times spent playing tennis in the sunshine one day...and the next confined to a small cubicle learning the Morse Code. It was a stressful situation Jack recalls. Pressure was being applied to these applicants to find recruits quickly to join the RCAF. Mr Holmes was a special officer sent to the Galt Aircraft School. He was sent to examine the candidates and sign them up immediately if qualified. Jack passed the required tests and volunteered to sign up with the Air Force. He already knew a bit about the Air Force. He knew nothing about the army. To him the army did not seem safe. He told me that you never knew where you would end up. You could be sent “God knows where”, he said and “I didn't want to carry a gun and maybe have to shoot people”. He had friends who did join, and his fears were reinforced when tales came back about being 'in the trenches', with angry lieutenants screaming over their shoulders. These stories were also passed down by his own father who endured World War I days. Many of his friends never returned.

Jack continued to learn what was required, and his previous education had prepared him to become a qualified Wireless Operator. Once he was 'signed up' he explains how 'quickly' the chain of events of his life occur. He spends quality time with his family, and they give him a special picnic before his departure. His mother had passed away when he was only nine years of age. This was a very difficult goodbye for his father. Jack had been very close to his dad after losing his mother. A picture of his father saying goodbye at the train station says it all. “A very sad, sad, day”, he recalls tearfully. Even though few words were exchanged, he remembers well and tells me of that day. His dad hated to see him go. He didn't know if he would return. Memories of World War I flooded his mind. He was reminded of so many of his friends who never returned home to Brantford.

Everything from here was 'a rush', he said. From the train they proceeded to Calgary. Calgary was a learning center where they received further training in each field. War enactment scenarios were also carried out here. They were called “schemes”. They prepared as best they could for the reality they were about to face. Leave time was then given before they were sent overseas. He took his time and spent it at Field BC. Some of his fellow crew visited their families and said their goodbyes.

From B.C. he took a train to Toronto, and then across the remainder of Canada to Halifax. The group proceeded to take a boat which would eventually lead to England. The boat ride as he recalled had a Mr. Purser who was a steward with a thick cockney accent. He would sing a song with the lines, “I didn't want to do it. I didn't want to do it.

You made me have to do it". He sang this chorus to me several times as he remembered so vividly the day. The steward asked the men, "why are you going to England?". The men answered, " we're going over to save England ! ". The steward replied, " God help England ! ". My uncle smiled.

They reached England and got off the ship at Liverpool. They were placed in the airfield in the barracks near Liverpool. The Germans were raiding London at this time. It was here and then, that these innocent, young, Canadian men heard sounds that they never heard before, the 'sound' of German warplanes. Jack recalled the men not even having settled in to their quarters, rushing out of their barracks to look up and see the enemy bombers. Fear gripped their hearts, and it was at this moment they knew their lives had changed forever. They were 'at war'. "It was hard to believe", he said to me, "most of the guys had never been away from home, and 'all of a sudden they find themselves in a foreign country with bombers flying over their heads". The feeling, the memory, all very very real seventy five years later.

Days in England were spent doing D. I.'s. Daily inspections they were called. Each morning they would go out around the airplanes to check them out. Each unit would carry out their own inspections- the wireless, the mechanical, the aeronatics, etc. The Wellington was the main aircraft he inspected he remembered. There were other 'fighter planes' as well. During the second part of the war he remembers the Lancaster. His training in the RAF placed him in the position of these D.I.'s, for he had gained the instructional knowledge. All the equipment had to be up to date, he explained, because once they were in the air, no one could fix them. This included fresh batteries, and proper wires replaced often.

He now showed me a photograph of American bombers circling over London. He explained that they 'circled' in order to gain height. They circled over England to prepare to fight against the Germans. They were called "Flying Fortresses". We also gazed upon a photo of London after it had been bombed. A tear rolled down his aged face. "It's hard to believe", he said, "a young man from Brantford Ontario, never been away from home before, finding himself in the middle of this !"

A couple of years later, he found himself in North Africa. "It was a horrible place. Hot, humid, and the flies !..they were terrible. To this day, I cannot stand a fly near me, or a bug of any description,. All because of my time spent in North Africa", he said. It was also here where he got very ill. He came down with jaundice. All he knew is that he was extremely sick. He could not eat or move around. He spent all of his day lying in the hot, humid tent, losing much of his body weight. It was an extremely horrible time, he recalls being so very ill, and so very far from home. He wondered if he would make it back home. He told me the story (on video) of how they had a record player in the tent with only one record to play-it was jazz he thinks, and the guys would continually play it over and over again. They were having a great time drinking beer and dancing in the tent. He was so annoyed that he was unable to participate in the activities. He was glad for them, but sad for himself. .He explained the activities of days and nights in that tent were spent drinking beer, playing records, drinking beer and playing cricket, and drinking beer.

It was also in North Africa where he vividly remembers being bitten by a scorpion. He could explain it quite well as he later in life was employed with Ontario Hydro. He was reaching for his boots in the tent when he felt the pain. "The best way I can describe it", he says, "is like putting your finger in a live socket. It is like an electric shock of great magnitude. It goes up your arm first, then you feel it through your entire body. I will never forget it...North Africa..the whole place is miserable..hotter than hell, humid, billions of flies, snakes, and I was so sick I thought I was going to die there".

When some leave time was granted, he ventured to Tunis, and in 1943 he was in Sousse Tunisia. The whole time he explained again was "hotter than hell! "This placement was with the 425 Squadron of Tunisia. It was a time spent with the French Canadian boys.

Jack was also part of Squadron 603 In Edinburgh Scotland. He was called in to the "Grim Dem" in Scotland. It too was a 'miserable place' he remembered with the Scottish flyers. It must have been as the memories there were scarce. He does recall the squadron fighting in The Battle of Britain. He remembered well the Spitfire. He also spent time in Egypt.

Most of his memories, apart from the negative ones , were his times with the 400 Squadron in southern England. He was stationed at the Cranwell Training School, the biggest one in England. They played cricket there a lot, and they also drank beer ' a lot'. There is a theme running through these memories and it appears that drinking helped

carry them through their days. To this day, Jack is well known for his love of whiskey, and an ice cold beer (or three). It was also here where at the old racetrack in England, they carried out their "schemes". A lot of time was spent practising them. Burt Boys, who was a prominent businessman from Brantford was also stationed here with him. Lifetime friends were made here. He also told me of how Air Force officers who were shot down, and how they was an underground system which provided the RAF with 'code words'. In the event they were shot down, and survived, they would say the word, and the underground system would quickly get them to safety. He remembers several friends who had been fighting and were safe in a very short period of time, and some waiting to return home.

A final story from England, Jack loves to share and he remembers well, was receiving a special gift from his aunt Mame in Canada.. It was the best gift he would ever receive for his stay there. It was a regular suit. A civilian suit that was envied by all. There were many lieutenants and generals while they were in London, and each time you passed by one, you had to salute. The only relief one would get was to be dressed like an ordinary person. They would not know who you were. Most of your time passing through London was spent saluting Jack remembers and he said that it became very annoying, especially when you passed an arrogant, demanding type of person who ruled it over you. "You know the kind of guy, a real bully in your face type of guy. Then, when I got into my 'civies, I was free. I was free to walk around. It was a great feeling. Everyone wanted to borrow my suit. Funny though, because all the guys were not the same size and they would not fit properly into the suit. However they didn't care. They just wanted to be free. Free from the reality of the uniform and from the war", he recalls. "If even for a moment, we wanted to be normal!"

I am truly grateful to the men and women who sacrificed their time, their gifts, their families and their lives for my freedom. I intend to keep their stories alive through my pen, to pass on to the next generation. Freedom must never be taken for granted. It comes with a great price.

Thank you to all who have and do serve. You are appreciated!

Mr John (Jack) Tooley was born October 29, 1917 in Brantford Ontario. He served in World War II for four years. When he returned home, he completed university and became an engineer and manager of Ontario Hydro in Kirkland Lake. He currently resides in Woodingford Lodge in Woodstock Ontario in his 98th year. He still brings his stories and wit to the fellow residents and staff and his humour brightens the day of many.

I SALUTE HIM!

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Continued from page 1

Looking ahead to Spring, please plan to attend our **Annual Business Meeting** to be held at the Tillsonburg Airport on **Saturday, March 21st at 10:00 AM**. The Board of Directors will share the plans and budgets for the coming year (s).

Also coming up fast is the **Annual Banquet and Fund-Raising Auction** on **April 25th** at the **Woodstock Legion**. Guest speaker **Peter Killin** hails from Campbell River, BC and for twelve years was a pilot on the infamous **Martin Mars Fire Bomber**, the world's largest authentic warbird! Tickets are available **ONLY** from **Jeannette Rooke** and information is available elsewhere in the ROAR. Ticket prices are **\$35.00** each, but if you order **AND PAY** by **March 21st**, the early bird price is **\$30.00 each**. The auction is a key fund raiser to lead us into the flying season and its ultimate success depends on member donations! Do you have a cottage to donate for a week, or perhaps showing your prowess on the BBQ by hosting a special BBQ for a party of eight! A wine and cheese tasting party or perhaps tickets to a play...be creative and let your imagination come up with a unique donation that is going to encourage a lot of bidding during the auctions. Please see **Sandra Sparkes** or **Marg Hollister** with your donation and qualify for a tax receipt.

The Canadian Harvard Aircraft Association was formed in the spring of **1985** and on June 13 & 14, CHAA will celebrate its **30th Anniversary!** Volunteers are needed to help in the planning of this weekend so please look for details outlined elsewhere in the ROAR.

Thank you to all the volunteers who give selflessly of their time and talents to insure that the ROAR of the Harvard will be heard for generations to come...**TOGETHER, WE WILL KEEP THOSE HARVARDS FLYING!>**

Airspeed, altitude, or brains; you always need at least two

The Burgessville Anson

By Shawn Wylie



A number of years ago we received information and photos on what looked to be a BCATP type aircraft located in the area around Burgessville, Ontario. After a few inquiries it was decided that it was about

time to go take a look and at the very least, determine the type of aircraft. In mid-October fellow CHAA member Lori Barnim and myself went to investigate.

After receiving the land-owner's permission we started the short hike to where we thought the aircraft remains where laying. After about 90 minutes into the search we started to come across small bits of what appeared to be aircraft parts although nothing substantial had been found. **But this is where the story gets interesting**



First view of the Anson

Along the back of the property there where several trails being used by ATV riders. Being unfamiliar with the area but sensing we were getting close, we decided to stop some of the locals to ask if they had any knowledge of what we were looking for. The first group told us that they knew about the aircraft, but didn't know exactly where to find it, although they did mention that we were 'in the right area'. After about 20 minutes another rider came along and we stopped him as well. This time we were about to be surprised. His initial information was basically the same as the first groups' except that he told us that it had been removed. Although we were disappointed at hearing this, he further explained that parts of it had been removed as scrap. A little more conversation followed and, after hearing our reasons for searching, he then admitted that he knew where it was, and that he had taken bits of it. The best part was that he still had them and they were in his backyard **only a few minutes away!**

Disappointment was quickly overtaken by relief and anticipation, as we made arrangements to meet with him within the next few minutes. We hurried back to our cars to meet at a prearranged location.

The questions in my mind were racing. What would we find? How much did he have? Would we be able to identify this aircraft? We met with him as arranged and he led us to his residence. Through the garage, into the backyard, and **there it was!**



Anson control stick

Piled in a corner of the yard was numerous bits of broken aluminum, fuel lines, and bits of panels. The most obvious find was the engine mount, rudder pedals, and control stick.

Other than the Harvards, I really don't have much experience with aircraft. I was unable to determine what type of aircraft I was looking at, other than I knew it was vintage and from the BCATP era. A number of the parts still held the unmistakable 'trainer yellow' and primer green paint.

After several photos and measurements were taken, we left for home and for what I was sure would be the start of a great hunt for me.

Luckily, we now live in a world where the Internet and social media exists. Within a day or two of posting our findings we had another player come onto the scene, in the form of Cam Harrod. Some of you might recognize that name, as Cam is every so often seen around the CHAA hangars and the Tillsonburg airport in his Fleet Finch. Cam is also very much into the history of the BCATP and has been investigating aircraft accidents for over twenty years.

So another date was set to investigate the site further in early November, this time accompanied by Cam. Although I was fairly certain that we were looking at an Anson, he would most likely be able to confirm the find and provide such much needed answers. Back through the garage, and into the yard, and almost immediately he confirmed the aircraft as an Anson Mk II. With a little more investigation he also confirmed that it was part of a crash. Those indicators that were unknown to me, he quickly explained.

The folded over firewall, cracked and broken engine mount structure, and the bubbling and discoloration of the paint on the existing panels.



The throttle quadrant

We made our way back to the initial site, after again getting permission from the land-owner, and spent a couple of hours searching around. What we uncovered and have left covered for now, was almost ghastly. Obvious signs of a wreck, most likely the remnants of what would have been recovered by the RCAF in WWII, were strewn along a 50 or 60 yard area. Large parts are still buried, with fragments of glass, wood, and aluminum still strewn about the site.>

Restoration Report

By Ron Jay

Harvard 20304: MK IV, Fuel tanks are being installed and 3 short alum fuel lines have to be made up. Small parts and oil and vacuum lines are being put in place. The wing attach angles are being cleaned so they can be inspected by our professional tech Kerry Wilkinson.

Tiger Moth: The lower wing attachment rods are being replaced as required by the A.D. The landing gear has some worn parts that will be replaced. The crankshaft and prop hub have some serious galling and will have to be replaced.



CHAA Annual Banquet

April 25, 2015 Woodstock Legion Hall Branch 55

576 Brant Street Woodstock Ontario

Tickets \$35.00 each

Call Jeanette 519 539-2762 to Order



**Guest Speaker
Peter Killin**

Peter has flown tens of thousands of hours on floats and seaplanes, from Cessna 180's, De Havilla nd Beaver, Otter, Twin Otter and then, most notably, 12 years worth of thrills flying the world's largest warbird, the mighty **Martin Mars water bomber!**

**When: Attitude Adjustment at 4 p.m. Dinner at 5 p.m.
Silent Auction, Live Auction and Raffle prizes are all part of the evening!**

2015-01-26

Dear Pat,

I was looking over some old photos of my youth and spied this one of a Harvard. I wonder if it is one of the few that have survived.

For the summers of 1942 and 1944 I worked the flight line at No. 31 E.F.T.S., Dewinton, Alberta. We flew Tiger Moths, Corsels and Sperrmans. The Harvard in the picture was a visitor from an S.F.T.S. at Banhof, Alberta I think.

I was 14 yr. old in this picture and loved my job! On good flying days, we (all kids!) gassed, chatted and tried to hold down the Tigers from popping in the winds! We also did D.I. where we checked cables, etc.

On bad weather days, we worked in the hangars washing the Kiwis and mending tears in the canvas of the "vests".

Although I've had a broken hip, I hope to get one more backseat ride. I would need help to get into the Harvard but a ride in the Tiger Moth would do. My first plane ride was in a "moth" in 1942.

If you have time, let me know if this Harvard still exists.

Sincerely,
Carmie Watkins



AUGUST, 1942

A letter and photograph to Pat Hanna from a CHAA member with fond memories of working around and taking the occasional flight in a Tiger Moth and Harvard.
Thank you Connie Bodkin.