



WINGS & TAILS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NO. 6 RCAF DUNNVILLE MUSEUM

Telling the stories of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, the No. 6 Service Flying Training School, and the RCAF Veterans, to the Communities of Canada.

Major Changes Planned

by Museum Curator, Peter Gay

Most of you will not know who I am, so let me introduce myself. My name is Peter Gay. I had been on a quest searching for my father's RCAF story when I arrived at the steps of the No. 6 RCAF Dunnville Museum 3 years ago. (My father trained at the No. 6, eventually becoming an instructor.) As with all our visitors upon their first visit to the Museum, I was amazed at the contents of the Museum and the people in the organization. What a hidden gem in Dunnville! It was a given that I would become a member and I did.

During 2015, the Museum had a very challenging year with the passing of curator Pat Logan and health issues facing many of our active volunteers. In June, I took on the coordination of the Annual Open House, and since that time, my involvement has increased. Now that the dust has settled and Don Oatman is back in the President's chair, my role is officially First Vice President and Museum Curator.

2015 Recap. Even with our challenges, it was an exceptional year. We held great events and received several donations of quality artifacts and financial contributions. We acquired control of the original No. 6 Service Flying Training School (SFTS) Fire Hall, which needs work but has great potential. That will be one of our many 2016 projects. Two of our most significant acquisitions were an original World War II RAF clock purported to be the No. 6 Base Clock, and a large collection of photographs and documents from the Taylor Family. Their mother, Audrey, was a Leading Aircraft Woman (LAW) and Motor Pool driver at the



Audrey Taylor, Motor Pool driver

No. 6. With all the new artifacts, the Museum is bursting at the seams. This is a great problem to have.

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Major Changes Planned

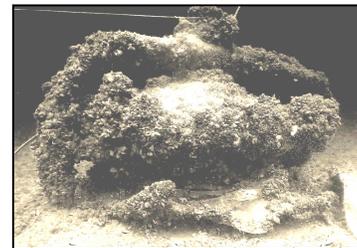
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Since the Dunnville Airport is no longer open to flight operations, our hangar space has become a static display area, so look to see better-defined displays of our aircraft. We are adding heat and updating the lighting. These are great enhancements as they may extend our season and provide a higher quality venue for events.

2016 Onward. It has been decided that it is time to review, rethink, renovate and reorganize (Whew!). I am really excited to have been given the responsibility to head this phase of the Museum's growth. We have already taken steps to set us on this path and many members have stepped up to help. We have started to compile the details of our collection of artifacts with a view toward eventually having a digitized collection. Work so far has been done through a herculean effort of some of our members. We also now have a *purpose statement* which has been added to the first page of the newsletter under the title. Both of these will help us determine how to reorganize and display our artifacts.

We have a tremendous opportunity to receive the remains of Harvard #2963 which crashed in Lake Erie on June 19, 1943. The Canadian Harvard Association is intending to raise the remains from the Lake and donate them to the No. 6 Museum.

Shown in the photograph below right is the Harvard #2963 engine, engine mount and propeller as they sit on the bottom of Lake Erie. The parts recovered will need extensive restoration and conservation after which they will be the centerpiece of a unique display.



Harvard #2963 parts encrusted with zebra mussels

Another goal is to acquire the balance of the aircraft used in the British Air Commonwealth Training Plan (BCATP) as full-size static displays. At present, we have a Fleet Finch (used at Elementary Training Flying Schools --ETFS bases), and a Yale and partial Anson (used at SFTS bases such as the No. 6). On our wish list is a Tiger Moth used at EFTS bases, and a Harvard used at SFTS bases as well as to complete the Anson. Wish us luck in finding these aircraft and the funding to purchase them.

A great deal of planning is going on into the new year, with the end game of having a brand new Museum "look" for Canada's 150th Anniversary in 2017. We have volunteers with the knowledge, talent and dedication to see this plan to fruition.

All the best to the members of the No. 6 RCAF Dunnville Museum in 2016 and thanks so much for your continuing support.



A Letter from the President

I hope everybody had a wonderful Christmas with family and friends and are looking forward to a healthy and prosperous 2016. The December Christmas meeting was a great time with lots of food and good friends, ending 2015 on a high note. I expect 2016 to be another tremendous year with many positive changes to our Museum. A new plan for the Museum will secure our place in the community long, long into the future. Our members have a wealth of knowledge and a willingness to help in whatever ways are needed.

I wish my very best to each and every one of you in the coming year.

Your President, Don Oatman

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 2016

***Your membership counts!
Museum membership dues
account for about 25% of
our annual income. Look
for your 2016 Membership
Renewal Form included
with this newsletter.***

Aircraft Profile: The Yale

Among the Museum's vintage aircraft is Yale X9, acquired through a generous donation from the Samsung Renewable Energy and Pattern Energy Group. Yales, and the slightly more powerful Harvards, were the primary aircraft used to train pilots at the No. 6 SFTS.

The aircraft was built in 1940 for the French Armée de l'Air. After the French surrendered, the British Purchasing Commission purchased it for use in the BCATP. Given the RCAF serial number 3416, it entered service on September 17, 1940, and initially served at No. 1 SFTS at Camp Borden.

Suffering some damage at Camp Borden, it was sent to Noorduyn for overhaul and converted to an airborne wireless trainer (WT) at the No. 9 Repair Depot in St. Jean, QC, in mid-1943. It was officially designated Yale W/T, given the code X9 and served at No. 1 Wireless



School in Mount Hope, ON. At the end of the war, the Yale was placed in stored reserve at the No. 4 Reserve Equipment Maintenance Unit (REMU) located at Brantford, ON. On September 26, 1946, it was made available for sale by War Assets and passed through several private owners, eventually purchased by Tom Dietrich. It was restored to a static display in the mid-1990s and placed on outdoor display at Guelph Airpark.

Thank You, Bell Canada!

At the January 9 general meeting, Jack Murphy presented the Museum with a \$250 cheque from Bell Canada in recognition of his volunteer work for the Museum in 2015. As a Bell retiree, Jack is eligible to participate in Bell's Employee Giving Program that supports organizations where Bell employees and retirees volunteer. Jack has been doing this for the last 15 years. Including this year's donation, Bell Canada has donated \$7,250 to the Museum! Last year, Bell's program donated a total of \$1.5 million. If you volunteer at the Museum, check to see if your employer or former employer has such a program. It's an easy way to raise funds for the Museum for doing something you enjoy!

No. 6 SFTS Records: A Valuable Resource

Memorabilia, artifacts and aircraft at the Museum get a lot of attention. Visitors can see them and touch some of them in a short time. What doesn't get so much attention and is extremely valuable from a historic perspective is all the Museum's documentation. In fact, the majority of inquiries that come to the Museum are related to records—who, what, when, where, and how. Among its records, the Museum has:

- **Incoming course group photos**, usually with last names. For courses 58-106, we have photos and first names and initials of graduates, their home towns, and at which EFTS they did their initial training. Records of most of the pilot trainees have been converted to searchable digital files to facilitate name searches.
- **Daily diaries** from October 1940 through November 1944 that record, for example, flying conditions, staffing levels, aircraft stationed at the base, and accident reports.
- Details of all the **fatalities at the No. 6**, and a book listing every member of the RCAF who died during World War II.
- 19 issues of **The Sky Writer**, the base newspaper with a wealth of information about everything from training-related news to entertainment, base weddings, letters home, poetry, and more.
- **Articles about the No. 6** that appeared in the *Dunnville Gazette* and the *Dunnville Chronicle*.
- An **extensive library** of books on military aircraft, the RCAF, and World War II that is currently being reorganized and recatalogued.

Memorial Bricks

The number of memorial bricks placed around the Harvard Memorial continues to grow. These bricks are a special way to acknowledge the sacrifices made by our veterans. The cost of a memorial brick is \$85. To be installed in time for the July 2 Annual Open House, bricks must be ordered by March 31. Please call the Museum or send email through our website for information.

Mark Your Calendar!

Selkirk Heritage Day

Mon., Feb. 15, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Visit our table at the Selkirk Community Hall.

Lions Home & Garden Show

Fri. & Sat., April 15 & 16

Visit our table at the Dunnville Memorial Arena.

Museum Season Opening

Victoria Day Weekend, May 21, 22, 23

Hangar Sale - Museum Fundraiser

May 21-23 during Museum hours

Drop off donations in Hangar 1 (no clothing, please). For information, call Jack Murphy (905-774-3068).

Annual Open House

Sat., July 2, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Chicken BBQ

Sat., July 2, 4 - 6 p.m.

Elimination Draw & Silent Auction

Aug. (date to be determined)

Doors open at 5:30 p.m., dinner at 6 p.m.

Doors Open Haldimand

Sat., Sept. 17, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Veterans' Dinner

Sat., Oct. 1, 5:30 p.m.

Dunnville Golf & Country Club

Monthly Meetings & Lunch

March 12, April 9, May 14, June 18, July 9,

Aug. 13, Sept. 10, Oct. 8, Nov. 12, Dec. 10.

Museum Meeting Room, 10 a.m.

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Heritage Program Features the No. 6 SFTS & RCAF Dunnville Museum...

On April 27, the Dunnville District Heritage Assn. (DDHA) is sponsoring a program on the No. 6 SFTS and the Museum. Curator Peter Gay will talk about the operation of the No. 6 SFTS and the impact of the more than 1,400 pilots, trainees, mechanics, and staff on Dunnville. He will also give a "sneak preview" of the major changes planned for the Museum. The program will be held in the auditorium at Grandview Lodge, 657 Lock St., W., Dunnville, 7 p.m. Admission is free, donations welcome. For more information on DDHA, visit www.dunnvilleheritage.org.

No. 6 Museum To Be Part of "Man Cave" Tour...

On May 14, the Rotary Club of Dunnville is sponsoring a unique event catering to the interests of men! Between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., ticket holders can visit local "man caves", including: Archie Merigold's "Ourdoorsman Dream"; Ross Meisner's "Model Railway"; Jay Werner's "Mechanics Delight"; Ray Lyell's "Music Studio"; and the World War II memorabilia, aircraft, and shop at the No. 6 Museum. Tickets are \$20 and may be purchased at Art Service Office Supply, Dunnville, or from members of the Rotary Club of Dunnville. Call 905-774-8225 for more information on the tour. Visit www.dunnvillerotary.ca for more information on the Rotary Club of Dunnville.

NO. 6 RCAF DUNNVILLE MUSEUM

536 Port Maitland Rd., Dunnville Airport, Hangar 1

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 232, Dunnville, ON N1A 2X5

Phone: 905-701-7223

Website: www.rcafmuseum.org

Visit the website for photos, upcoming events, and more. If you don't have internet access, visit your local library.

Hours: Victoria Day weekend through Labour Day weekend: Saturdays & Holidays, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., and Sundays 1 - 5 p.m. Tuesdays, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m., year round. Remembrance Day, noon - 4 p.m. To arrange for a tour, call 905-701-7223.

2015-2016 EXECUTIVE

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Peter Gay, 1st Vice Pres.

Joanne Villeneuve, Treasurer

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