

Petroleum History Society: 2001
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Marquis Room, Palliser Hotel
Calgary, Alberta

Guest Speaker: HERB SPEAR, Aviator
Topic: Oilpatch Corporate Aviation History

Our speaker this afternoon is Herb Spear, whom I actually haven't been introduced to yet, so I'm assuming that's you in the front. Herb is from West Jet and he's had a very long and illustrious career in the western Canadian Aviation Industry. I'll just read basically, what it said in the announcement for today's AGM. The title of the talk is Oilpatch Corporate Aviation History and Herb will be speaking about the role of corporate aviation in the development of the Canadian oil and gas industry. He will be describing Canadian aviation history, from the days of Imperial oil and their junkers in the Arctic, through to Dome Petroleum in the 1980's. Now, Herb sent me quite a long resume, maybe he was applying for a job at Shell or something. I tried to distill that down into the following, Herb has had an incredibly diverse range of experience in the Canadian aviation business, since he began in 1950 through '64 in the RCAF reserve 403 Squadron, reaching the rank of Flight Lieutenant. He's worked for Great Northern, Northwood, Arctic Air, Mackenzie and Field Aviation, before he became involved in the corporate side of the oil and gas business on the aviation front, with Dome and Petro Canada in the late 70's and into the early 80's, during the boom. He continues to be an active participant in a wide range of aviation issues and areas and with that I'd like to ask Herb to come up and give us a talk today.

I just sent my four page resume that I keep on file, every so often, you never know in the aviation business where you're going to work next. I didn't go back any farther than 1950, when we're talking about the Air Force. It was brought to my attention a short while ago, that the 60th Anniversary of the Air Cadet League is in June of this year. It really shocked me, I was in the 1st Squadron in 1941. I was just a child then. If anybody's going through, never mind how old that is. I'm very glad to see Aubrey Kerr here, Aubrey and I spent quite a bit of time together, going over some history of places like Northwood Airlines, which I won't be touching on today. But to start with I'd like to acknowledge the contribution of Fred Hodgson, who's made a history of the aviation in his 1991 publication, Business Wings. And in addition to this, Doug McKinnon, I don't know if you ever, any of you old Imperial hands ever ran across his dad Don McKinnon, was one of the early pioneers with Imperial's aviation department. Doug of course, has since, we call it, retired from Imperial's western operation and he came up with a fantastic history of Imperial Oil's aviation department. It's about a 2" binder and I have it in my possession. If anybody in this organization would like to have a copy of it, I'll run one off for you, it's about two or three hundred pages and it goes all the way from the junkers, right up to the jet time. I was very fortunate back in the 60's of being a co-pilot with Imperial Oil and their DC-3 operation which #043 flew crew changes out of Calgary for Inuvik. Doug has attempted to have this published, but without success. When he approached Imperial Oil they just flatly turned him down, said, no way. Now I'm not sure whether it's the way he presented it. Knowing Doug over

the years, he's not exactly a salesman but he does a hell of a good job on research. Better that it's published than left in my garage. But I've given a copy of it to the Canadian Aviation Historical Society, so they have one on file. It's backed up with at least seven or eight volumes of material, both with log pages, pictures, photographs, etc., etc. And he's done an excellent job. How I got a lot of this material put together, the Oilfield Technical society, OTS, holds an annual get together attended by several hundred oil field employees from all phases of the oil patch each year and they feature a certain segment of the patch. The year they honoured the aviation department of the oil companies, I was asked to complete a presentation, which I did. I'll just skim over a few of the companies, the names, I have several copies which you can pick up at your leisure if you want one. Or give me your name and business card and I'll send one to you from West Jet. That's the last commercial by the way. So you can just give me a call and we'll send it along to you. I hate to see all this material that's been put together, just as I say, left in my garage. Mind you in my will, all of my Arctic books go to the Arctic Institute, my aviation books go to the museum and my history books go to the Alberta Historical Society. But it covers Sun Oil, Shell Oil, Mobil, Chevron, Imperial Oil, Atlantic Richfield, City Service, there were seventy-six companies in Calgary with aircraft. Mind you some of them are owner operators, small single engine aircraft. Sure glad to see you Pete, I haven't seen you for years. Now I have to be honest. Pete and I go back a long time, if I screw up you'll just jump up and yell, will you Pete. Actually on the local scene we go back into February 22nd, 1928. A call was made to Great Western Airways in Calgary. The manager, Fred McCall - of course, McCall Field has been named after him - accepted a contract to fly three hundred quarts of nitroglycerin from Shelby, Montana to Calgary. The explosive was urgently needed for use in shooting a well in Turner Valley. McCall flew to Shelby and took aboard Charles B. Steneker??? of the Eastern Torpedo Company, with one hundred quarts of nitro and a dozen sticks of dynamite. Transport Canada would go nuts if they knew, nowadays. You can imagine the regulations covering that sort of thing. After bucking severe head winds, McCall landed in the airfield used by the Calgary Aero Club, and I think, according to my research, that was the old Bowness strip. That was before Renfrew, up there at Stanley Jones School, where my dad flew. He was so short of fuel that his engine stopped after landing and he was unable to taxi to the hangar, so more gas was supplied. The dangerous cargo was then transferred to a truck, which carried it off to the oilfields. Two more trips were made by McCall to fetch the rest of the nitro, a hundred quarts at a time. Everyone at the field knew what he was carrying and breathed a sigh of relief when the mission was completed. Actually the beginning of corporate aviation in western Canada was born by Imperial Oil, back in 1921. Two junkers, JL-6's named Greeny and Vic, were delivered to Edmonton, by pilots Wapbay??? and George Gorman with engineer, Pete ???. These aircraft worked the Arctic, particularly the Mackenzie River for two years and then were sold. There's a lot of stories about that, you've probably heard when they [followed the???] prop and somebody used some sled hickory and made - a fellow named Hollingoose???- made another propellor for one of their junkers. You'll recall in your readings that the early aviation operations with the Arctic, they came very close to bordering on charter operations. There were no regulations because Transport Canada didn't have any regulations, so there were no violations. No regulations, no violations. Which is absolutely contrary to what we are doing nowadays. On April 19, 1920, a new Air Board was formed by the #094 Order of Council with Hugh Guthrie as Chairman. He went on as you recall, to a very illustrious career in civil and military aviation. As a matter of interest, it consisted of three divisions, civil aviation, flight operations and the Canadian Air Force headquarters. In 1920 the first Canadian pilot's license was issued in Regina,

along with the first Air Engineer's license to R. J. Broom and Robert McComb???. As you can see, corporate aviation was defined in those days by the registered owners of the aircraft. I'm going to be referring quite a few times to corporate aviation, Canadian Business Aircraft Association. There's no doubt about it in my mind, I was western Vice-President of CBAA, over the years when I was at Dome and if it wasn't for the oil patch, the Canadian Business Aircraft Association would still be on paper. The oil patch has done a fantastic job with Canadian Business Aircraft. In 1931, that was the year that really started Imperial Oil's long association with aircraft. It was the year of the first company owned aircraft, flown by a company employee. In the spring of 1931 Imperial Oil Ltd. hired Pat Reid to work in a new aviation sales department. Pat was a well known bush pilot and in short order, June 30, 1931, commissioned Imperial Oil to purchase CFIO, a DeHavilland DH-88 bush moth. In July 1931 Pat Reid was a tour leader for the Trans Canada Air Pageant, which travelled from Toronto to Vancouver and back. To Toronto in a 2 1/2 month period. Numerous major and minor displays were presented along the way to encourage the growth of aviation. In 1932 Pat participated, on behalf of Imperial Oil, in the British Columbia Air Tour and acted as leader of the Manitoba Goodwill Tour. In 1931 until 1946, Pat Reid, Manager of the Aviation Sales Department, operated several different types of aircraft on behalf of aviation sales. His job was to travel across Canada to encourage the sale and use of Esso aviation products. Pat Reid was awarded the McKee Trophy in 1942 and again in 1943 for many outstanding pioneer flights and other activities, which helped greatly to promote aviation in Canada. He was also named a member of the Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame in 1973. That was post-mortem of course. And was made a Companion of the Order of Flight in the city of Edmonton. From July 1931 until the late fall of 1946, Imperial Oil owned the aircraft and operated out of Toronto Island Airport. The aircraft maintenance during this time was done in the Toronto Island Airport by contract maintenance. In the fall of 1946, Mr. Henry Hewittson, Imperial Oil Ltd.'s President, had flown with Pat Reid on numerous occasions in the stagger wing Beech, BJ Dean. I'm referring to some of these airplanes with registration, so when you hear something funny that doesn't really jive with a type of aircraft, it's the registration. He felt that it was time to purchase an aircraft for the company executive to travel in and appointed Pat the task of forming an air transport department and purchasing a suitable aircraft. Pat hired aircraft maintenance engineer, Bob Quinn and pilot Bruce Middleton, in the fall of 1946, to supervise the purchase of Imperial Oil's first executive aircraft. Satisfaction was not achieved in leasing a DeHavilland Dove BNU, due to it's limited range. The decision, with Bruce Middleton, was then made to purchase a Douglas DC-3 ESO, which was delivered in May 1947. I had the honour of flying the ESO and IOC, two DC-3's that were out west here, we used to do our crew changes up to Edmonton, Dawson Creek, Simpson, Norman Wells, Inuvik, trying to find a place to sleep in the Mackenzie Hotel in Inuvik and back again the next day. With Gus Honing, the engineer, cursing and swearing at the pilots because they didn't put the covers on right, you know the story. In the meantime pilot Dan Driscoll was transferred to Toronto from the western operations, where he had been flying a Norseman, EER, since February '46. The initial crew for Imperial Oil Ltd. Air transport DSO, was Bruce Middleton, Danny Driscoll and Bob Quinn. When Henry Hewittson was President of Imperial Oil, there was a Department or Transport regulation, which stated that aircraft could only be registered to British citizens or British companies. Two thirds of the Directors had to be British or Canadian citizens. To get around this problem, Imperial oil set up a separate company, with the majority of Directors being Canadian's. That was when the aircraft for Imperial Oil were registered under the name of Imperial Oil Transport Ltd. Pat Reid stayed with the Aviation Sales Department till

April 1954. You may recall that there was a mid-air collision over Moose Jaw, between a TCA Northstar and an RCF Harbour. Pat and his wife Marjorie were killed in that accident. Their son is in corporate aviation in Toronto. Imperial Oil employees contributed greatly to the CBAA. Directors that served between 1961 and 1991, are J. B. Burrie, Dennis Green, Wally Homersham, Wes Pollock, Amish Rankin, some of those names you may remember. Other employees left their marks in western Canada. Three western geographic features were named after Imperial Oil pilots. Latham Island, located in the Back Bay area near the town of Yellowknife, was named after Gord Latham. Shaplin??? Lake, located southeast of Kississing Lake, Manitoba, was named after Ralph ???. Macleod Falls, located at Gries ??? River, southeast of Fon de Lac, was named after Leslie Macleod. Leslie Macleod, if any of you ever flew with Imperial on the DC-3, Leslie was a legend. He taught me, really, how to fly a DC-3. Very quiet, very professional man. I understand that Leslie is no longer with us, I just heard that the other day. When he died, I'm not too sure. In the early 50's Home Oil of Calgary became involved in aviation with the purchase of a DeHavilland Dove, which Jim McQueen flew for a year. Don Brady, of Pacific Petroleum, was asked to find a Lonestar, which he did, in the United States. Jim McQueen contacted Don Douglas, who was flying for ??? in Nassau in 1952, and asked him to join Home Oil. He also hired George Kelly to fly the Lonestar. Anybody that had anything to do with Petrofina will know George Kelly of course. Jim McQueen contacted Don Douglas, later Home acquired a Gulfstream 1 in 1957. It was the first corporate G-1, Gulfstream 1, in Canada, serial number 7. They then upgraded to a Gulfstream 2, also serial number 7. It was the first corporate G-2. Brown of course, went first class all the way, as you can probably recall. And then later they purchased a Vulcan 20, also serial number 7. Home moved from field aviation hangar, to their own hangar, next to the Esso Avitat, on the southeast side of the Calgary airport. Don retired from Home Oil in 1980 and operated a corporate 727 out of the Esso Avitat. Don was considered the grandfather of corporate aviation in Calgary. We should add a short resume of a very unique petroleum corporate aviation department in western Canada. Dome Petroleum started in the early days of the oil boom and Jack Gallagher soon acquired an aircraft for more than work. Bill Bailey flew an NU-2, that's a turbo prop aircraft by the way, for some time in the Arctic and then was joined by a Twin Otter. Dome aviation outgrew one airport premises after another and so built it's own hangar on the southeast section of the Calgary International Airport, known as Hangar 77, now occupied by Spar Arrow. Spar Arrow does a lot of overhaul and they do a lot of 737 overhauls for that up and coming smaller airline, which I won't mention again. Dome had a Twin Otter and 2 King Airs, King Air 90's, three Citation jets, two G-2's a Boeing 737-200C, two S-76 helicopters, an S-61 and a VO-105 helicopter. The department was headed by Bud McMurchie, with Maurice Langpath as head of maintenance and there were employees in Calgary, Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk. A 737 was delivered new from Boeing in early 1980. It was unique as it had a high gross weight and the more powerful ??? Dash 17 engines. That was a first. This other airline I referred to also had quite a few of those Dash 17's on their aircraft. It makes quite a difference of the operation and the extra oomph that the Dash 17's have. It ran 5-7 day weekly schedules out of Calgary and Edmonton, Tuktoyaktuk was configured with seats and pallets for freight. The pilot ground school was carried out by Boeing in Seattle, with plenary check outs by Boeing pilots. Most of the aircraft were Calgary based. The helicopters were based in Tuk, along with the Twin Otter and occasionally a King Air. The remainder of the fleet took care of corporate flying out of Calgary and of course, that was Hangar 77. I was hired in 1980 by the department because I had some heavy aircraft experience and a little bit of Arctic experience and they needed somebody that was able to kind

of ramrod the operation. The area of operation of course, was all over Canada and the U.S.A., the Denver office had it's own Citation jet. All the aircraft were equipped wither the latest avionics from Sperry and I believe that Dome was the best customer, outside of the major airlines, that Sperry had. The equipment was second to none. Their was an excellent training program for the pilots and our Arctic reputation was so good, in fact, that Wardair Canada approached out pilots with job offers and several of them did go to Wardair. The hostile Arctic flying environment provided a lot of challenges for them on the ground, sea and air. One example is shown in the following, the drill ships spend a lot of time of the year frozen in the ice at McKinley Bay and they were crewed and maintained all this time. The men and materials were flown by 737's to Tuk and then by Twin Otter or helicopters to the ships. In order to save time and money we decided to land the 737 on sea ice, next to the frozen ships. I personally, I'll never forget this day as long a I live, I phoned Boeing and asked the engineers how much sea ice thickness was required to operate a 737-200 with gross weight, which is about 119,000 pounds. There was a long silence at the end of the phone. I repeated our plan, the engineer mumbled something about crazy Domey's. But he got back to me in a few days and we set out a 7,000' ice strip leaving a thin layer of snow. A Boeing check pilot accompanied us on our first check ride and every morning I received a report from the ice strip. They drilled about 10-12 holes in the ice, along the side of the strip to measure the thickness and I passed these readings on to the pilots. It ran around six or seven feet, roughly speaking. Dome Aviation played host to a number of aviation writers and consultants that were interested in our novel operations. We operated almost accident free, over the years, with many thousands of flying hours. Transport Canada often visited us, but we were not a commercial operation so they stayed at arms length. All that remains of Dome Aviation is a lot of fond memories and a job well done carried out by a bunch of professional airmen. Out west there was a great deal of flying in the oil patch, going on throughout Alberta and the Northwest Territories. We mentioned Imperial Oil but there was other outfits such as Hudson Bay Oil and Gas. Here are some names that you really have to dig out from the past. Hudson Bay Oil and Gas, Al Potter, Shell Oil, John Stewart, Chevron, Dick Cull, Atlantic Richfield, Ron Austin, Pacific Petroleum, Jack MacDonald, Home Oil, Don Douglas, Banff Oil, Al Lorrie, John Goodkey was there too, I worked there. Baden Drilling, Jack Riley, Canadian Superior, Joel Mahood, Mannix, ??? Keith, Mobil, Charlie Thompson, Sun Oil, Joe Irwin and of course, later was Dome Petroleum, Bud McMurchie, Pan Canadian, Ray Addett, Pan Arctic, Ed Kowalik, Petro Canada, Gord Davis, now it's been headed by Harold ???, Ranger Oil and Don Macleod. Jack MacDonald of Pacific Pete and Don Douglas of Home Oil received a lot of support from their respective employers and were able to promote time and money to the promotion of the Canadian Business Aircraft Association. CBAA's convention was held in Calgary and in true western style, was a great success. One of the first, in 1965 was held in the Palliser Hotel. Jack MacDonald was the Chairman and he went all out for the future success of the meeting. We were all able to hold a trade show in connection with the business meetings. The Calgary International Airport held a static display and a mini air show. It was showing the new corporate aircraft at that time. During the fly-by of the aircraft the pilot of a Twin Garnier feathered one engine and did a slow fly-by. He made the fatal mistake of turning towards the dead engine and lost control. I was in the control tower at the top of the old terminal coordinating the show and watched the Garnier crash. Bill Houston of the committee was the coordinator on the

#288 ground. Both pilots of course, were killed. A quick conference between Bill and I ended up in carrying on the show anyway. The National Energy Policy and I'm not telling you anything

that you haven't heard before, decimated the ranks of the energy based corporate aviation departments in the 1980's. For instance, Dome Petroleum went from 162 personnel down to 12. Imperial Oil cut their department to one aircraft and pulled out of the west. Home Oil sold out and turned their aviation department into a charter operation. Hudson Bay Oil and Gas was taken over by Dome, Amoco last year shut their doors forever in the aviation department, Petro Canada is suffering severe cutbacks. Ranger Oil sold their aircraft to an outfit down in Salt Lake City. Fortunately their engineer was able to obtain a job and is still living in Salt Lake City with that aircraft. Canadian Fina and Canadian Superior were taken over and disappeared. Pan Canadian is still in business, along with Shell and Petro Canada on a reduced scale. The drilling companies have disposed of their aircraft and are choosing to go charter. Charter aviation is alive and well in Calgary right now. Some of the corporate flight departments self destruct, some of the aviation department problems lie with the corporation itself. Most aviation departments run into several hundred of thousands and even several millions of dollars per year. Any other department managers with budgets of this size, leave to go through a thorough training and are able to handle this kind of money efficiently. This is not usually given to the aviation managers, therefore aviation costs run right out of control. Another unexpected hazard for aviation departments is a change in top level management. The new broom sweeps clean and get rid of the high expense of the aviation department. One of the worst enemies of corporate aviation is the company accountants. Their attitude is that a lot of first class tickets can be bought for the price of a corporate aircraft. But how many first class tickets go into the boondocks, how many first class or Air Canada go into anywhere off the airways. Are there any accountants here? Over the 50 some odd years I've been in aviation, accountants have been driving me nuts.

End of tape.

Side B

But the Canadian business this aircraft will flourish into the future as Nav. Canada and Transport Canada recognize corporate as a separate from general aviation airlines and charter. The corporate fleet are flown by all well trained professionals and the aircraft are usually equipped with the latest avionics and electronics. Their speed and altitude of operation is up there with the big iron. New navigation equipment such as GPS and FMS are within the reach of most corporate Falcons, Gulfstreams, Challengers, along with the Leers. A lot of meetings between the government and the users usually have room for a corporate voice. This is due to the professional attitude of the corporate community towards aviation. Three words you like to hear, and in conclusion, you'll notice that I've referred to the oil patch aviation and CBAA together. There is no doubt in my mind that the CBAA leans heavily on the oil patch aviation departments for support and I referred to the involvements earlier. This will continue as the CBAA has a voice with Transport Canada and Nav. Canada. Together the two groups will continue to have the best safety record in the aviation industry and there is no doubt about that. Sure, in the early days you heard about the odd time where an F-27 took off on a short strip and ended up in the trees at the other end of the strip. They got rid of that F-27 ????. But there's a lot of good stories that came out of the oil patch in aviation. As Aubrey knows I was involved in Northwood Airlines, Great Northern Airways, some of those that we did a lot of work with Pan Arctic and a lot of the other operations. You'll probably recall Baden Drilling, with their sojourn into Winter Harbour. That was supported of course, by aviation. You will also appreciate that without the

early pioneers in aviation in the Arctic, it would be a whole new story up there. My only hope is that I live long enough to get involved with another Arctic operation. Somebody is talking about, a pipeline and I would sure like to get my hands on that aviation side of it. However that up and coming little airline treats us too well, I don't think I want to jump ship just yet. Are there any questions by the way on any of the early days, on any of the aviation departments. Yes sir?

Yes, Herb, on the eastern Arctic, Resolute Bay, Bradley Air?

HS: Yes, and Atlas Aviation. Yes, Atlas Aviation and Bradley and I think that was taken over by First Air, if I remember correctly. Bradley of course, was headquartered out of Ottawa or some place close by there. The Atlas Aviation of course, was formed there and then it was taken over by Kenton, if you will recall. And then it kind of disappeared. But yes, when I was at Great Northern Airway, I don't know if you remember, we left an F-27 on top of the hill at Resolute Bay. And our friends at Atlas flew up to the top of the hill in an Otter on skis and rescued our crew at the time. The aircraft of course, is still, last time I was in Res, the aircraft was still up there, minus the engines and instruments and ??? etc., etc. But no, it was the good old days. Drake Point of course, was another story all together. You could go on all night about Drake Point, what happened there and some of the operations that were there, with the PWA Herc's and so on and so forth. I also had the good fortune of working for the outfit that set up their Echo Bay mines. That was a corporate aircraft, a Herc, a Convair??? and they're now running a 727, they have two or three other pilots working for us now too. Any other questions?

How about the early history of the helicopter, when was the first helicopter used in ???

HS: Up in the Arctic. Of course, helicopters, when they first started up in the Arctic, unfortunately they were, like, Associated Helicopters, they were mostly piston driven aircraft and it wasn't until really when they got the jet engines, like the Long Rangers and some of those other aircraft that helicopters really got going in the Arctic. It was Associated I would say, were probably the early pioneers up there. They had such a short range. It wasn't until later, when they had the more powerful engines, that they could carry more fuel and they had a little longer range. I know in the spring time at Dome, or correction, the fall at Dome, we used to carry the aircraft back down from Tuk to our Calgary hangar and it was a long trip. But I'm just trying to think of the name of the fellow that was the early pioneer up there, in helicopters, Agar???, he was one of the early fellows that operated around the Arctic in helicopters. There was no doubt, with Dome, that without those helicopters and the excellent navigation we had, to get the aircraft out to the drill ships, to the decks, that it would have certainly slowed. . well, you know the length of time you had to drill out there. And any delay getting the crew in there of course, was very, very expensive. We spent a lot of money getting the helicopters on to those decks with the sophisticated equipment. Somebody else over here had something, yes sir?

#060 Herb, I was a summer student at Drake Point awhile back, 1970 I think it was and an Atlas Aviation Twin Otter came in one day and it happened to be a pilot that I'd trained with years before. I hadn't seen him in years and I haven't seen him since and I just wondered, any

chance did you know Hans Hollier and what might have happened to him?

HS: I certainly know the name Hollier. Were you there when they had the salt dome there by the rig, at Drake?

Yes, that's what I worked on?

HS: Yes, that was a bit of a hazard at night. Because it was not that far away from the strip. Hollier I'm afraid I don't know where he is. Yes, sir?

When I worked for California Standard back in the 60's, they had a rather curious aircraft back then, a Boeing 247 I believe it was.

HS: Yes, that's in the Air Museum right now.

That's right.

HS: Ron Martin flew it down to Ottawa to put it in the museum and went over to Toronto and picked up the Twin Otter. I think that was the first corporate Twin Otter that came back here with Chevron.

Anyway what year was that?

HS: You had to ask me that didn't you. It would probably be in the early 60's if I remember correctly. Because Ron was also a pilot in the 403 Squadron, that's where I knew him and so I think that was the time that Ron had the 247 down to Ottawa.

Anyway, I wanted to pursue that a little further, the 247 I believe was an early 30's design and it didn't have flaps I don't think. And when they would land in an airport there would often be a bunch of curious people, onlookers come out to have a look at this ancient aircraft and I always had the impressions that the pilots, Gordon Cameron comes to mind, kind of a shame you guys are flying this old clunker. Would that have been the case do you think?

HS: No, it was a . . .

It was a very good craft.

HS: A very good craft. Of course, it's in the DC-3 era too. I don't know. . . oh, there's a few of the young bucks that have been pushed on to DC-3's and aircraft like that, that don't want to admit it. Where us old timers that was a heck of an era. It was a very easy airplane to fly, it was a gentleman's airplane, same as the 737. Mind you, I'm a real expert on the 37, cause I've flown it twice. But it's one of these aircraft that, like the DC-3 and the 247, the way they stabilize them, you just trim it up and fly with your fingertips. You didn't have to be a man handler, like flying a water bomber like a Catalina. Yes?

A few years ago, a lady whose husband worked on the Leduc, was it number 1, brought in the

first well at Leduc with ???, told me that, as a celebration the Trans Canada Airlines first flight, well it wouldn't be corporate, except that what she said was, in celebration of this flight, Imperial gave her and the people associated with Leduc, that first rig, tickets to fly somewhere in another celebration.

HS: I hadn't heard that story. Because see, TCA started what, 1937-'38. And if they were going to give away tickets, a whole plane load would only be 8 tickets wouldn't it.

No, but she said this was recent, like say in the 1990's.

HS: Oh, is that right. Has anybody heard of that celebration for the Leduc 1?

I should talk to Aubrey or. . I suppose the people at the Leduc place might know, it's just curious. . . .

HS: I'm surprised that ??? would give away anything right now. Yes, ma'am?

There's a guy in Yellowknife, Buffalo Airways, who still flies around in DC-3's.

HS: Oh, Buffalo Joe, oh yes.

Yes. Does anybody else do it or is he the only one left?

HS: No, he's got quite a fleet, he's got DC-3's and DC-4's as a matter of fact. But when I was in aircraft sales at ??? Aviation, this goes back in the early 70's, Buffalo Joe would be in my office and every time he came in I had to go through every DC-3 in North America and tell him how much it would cost for him to buy it. He wanted a DC-3 so bad. Eventually of course, he got financed and got into business. There's DC-3's operating out of Manitoba. One of the problems with DC-3's, they're disappearing, same as the DC-4's, for the simple reason people can pick these up fairly cheap and what's happening to them of course, they're loading them up with drugs and crashing them into remote strips. And then disposing of the drugs and the airframe means nothing. Well, you can imagine, if you put 10,000 pounds or better of drugs in a DC-3, can you imagine what that brings you on the market.

Where do you get parts for these things?

HS: They're still around.

I went on a horse riding trip to Outer Mongolia and they flew us out in a DC-3. Big seat fold down, it's just like the good old days in Yellowknife, full of freight, people, kids, dogs.

#122 HS: Yes. There are several companies that produce DC-3 parts. Their engines are I was going to say, fairly standard but there's a few of them around, but they can hammer out the parts. Of course, the military, a lot of people picked up the surplus when they were holding them in stock and got a good price for them. A good serviceable DC-3 now, you can probably sell it for, depending on engine times and a few things like that, you

can probably sell them for around \$250-300 thousand. When I was in aircraft sales you could pick them up for under \$100,000. The older they get, the better they get, just like women and wine.

Would you comment on the Norseman?

HS: On the Norseman. For instance, that one that's hanging in Petro Canada's lobby. The Norseman was a fantastic aircraft. It was kind of replaced by the Beaver, the DeHavilland Beaver and the Single Otter. the fellow that designed that back in the 30's, it was built by the Nordine Company, down I think it was Fort Erie or somewhere down in eastern Canada. I've got the book of it at home. I don't know how many were produced but they had that very peculiar under carriage, that went into a slope. They say that that smoothed out a lot of rough landing, by bending that instead of jamming the under carriage into the fuselage. But there's a lot of them still operating, a lot of them surprisingly. DeHavilland Beaver #1, is in the museum now. As a matter of fact one of our pilots used to fly that for Norcan Air. I wouldn't be surprised if DeHavilland stole a little bit of design material from Nordine when they built that one. Any other questions, before we. . .oh look, the bar's open, make it short [laugh].

Are there any Ensigns??? flying?

HS: The only Ensigns that were kicking around in the ??? days were the Mark 5's. As far as I know there are a few Mark 5's around. If you want to see airplanes like that, and I had the very good fortune of going down to Oshkosh, and if you want to see some of those old aircraft like the Cessna Cranes and the Mark, I haven't seen any Mark 2's or Mark 4's, but Mark 5's came out at the end of the war. They weren't used that much by the military, it was mostly civilians. But I haven't seen a Mark 5 for a long, long time. The Air Museum has a reconstruct of the Mark 2. I flew those during the war and I didn't realize how those things are put together. It was marvellous because it was a very stable training aircraft, they used for instrument flying. And we used to punish it beyond all belief. When you see how it was built, the Brits had quite an idea on that laminating the sparring???, it was a great idea. Is the bar open? Thank you very much for your attention that was great.

I'm just going to invite Aubrey to come up and thank our speaker here. I would have to say that I can't recall any occasion where we've had a speaker, either at an AGM or at a luncheon where we've had so much discussion and I think we should consider changing the society to petroleum and aviation history society. So with that, I'll turn it over to Aubrey to properly thank our speaker.

AK: On behalf of the society, I don't think we've ever had such an interesting and encyclopaedic treatise on aircraft, covering all kinds of everything. Especially I recall Herb, you and I labouring over some of those words, but that's another story. But on behalf of the society I'd like you to receive this book of mine.

HS: Is this your latest one?

AK: Yes, that's the latest one. Gordon Hobson, do you remember him. Gordon is written up in there, so that's the link with you. So many thanks.

HS: Thanks very much.

Well, we're running well ahead of schedule, I'd say we're probably a good 25 minutes ahead. That brings to a close the formal part of the meeting, I'm sure, or I hope Herb will stay around and some or you will have some questions for him and some more discussion. Thank you all for coming out today. I repeat my invitation for anybody who'd like to become involved in the society to let us know and we look forward to seeing you at our upcoming luncheons and other activities, thank you very much.