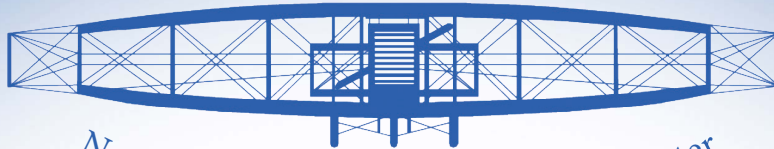


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Flypast

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Newsletter of the CAHS Toronto Chapter

CAHS Toronto Chapter ZOOM Meeting January 14, 2021 – 7:30 PM EST



*“A Canadian’s Experience in the RCAF
in the Cold War from 1955 – 1962”*
with Flying Officer E. Scott Maclagan (Ret’d)

December 10, 2020 CAHS Toronto Chapter Zoom Meeting

Topic: My Life Adventures

Speaker: John (Jock) Williams, Historian, Retired Military Pilot

Reporter: Gord McNulty

Forty-one members and guests of the Toronto Chapter and CAHS National enjoyed a colourful Zoom presentation by John (Jock) Williams (williamsb25@mitchell.com) "Master Control" host John Bertram introduced our speaker, describing him as "a pilot's pilot." Jock enthralled everyone, recalling his long RCAF career flying fighters and helicopters, his extensive service with Transport Canada, and then flying Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum aircraft among other things. He has accumulated a lifetime 13,500 hours of flying time and many stories along the way. Jock was born at No. 2 Bombing and Gunnery School at Mossbank, Saskatchewan. Years later, Mossbank became his practice area when he was a student on the Tutor.



Speaker
John (Jock) Williams

As a kid, Jock always wanted to fly. His dad had been a doctor and a pilot in the air force. Transport Canada decided Jock's eyes weren't good enough for powered flight and restricted him to gliders. Starting from about age 14, Jock would ride his bicycle from his home in Kitchener to the Brant Norfolk Gliding Club, where he enjoyed flying a Schweizer glider. He could afford only three or four flights. Then, as



1964 Cessna C150D

luck would have it, Transport Canada notified him that his eyes were okay for manoeuvres. Jock started to fly at the Waterloo Wellington Flying Club, where he flew one of the club's three Fleet Canucks --- an excellent aircraft that he loved to fly. Jock has a warm spot for the Cessna 150,

the first aircraft he soloed on. He went to have a lesson on the Fleet Canuck one day but there wasn't a Canuck around. In those days, flying club operations were not as strictly controlled. After just one circuit in the Cessna, the instructor told Jock he was ready to go solo. The instructor called the flying club and picked up Jock's student pilot permit. Jock wasn't about to tell him he'd never flown a Cessna

150 before, apart from the one circuit. In any case, the instructor got out and Jock went solo with “virtually zero time in the Cessna 150.”

Jock, who soon felt like he was “Charles Lindbergh reborn” recalled a pre-test ride in a Piper J3 Cub with the club’s chief instructor. At an altitude of around 3,000 feet, the instructor suddenly cut the throttle to simulate an engine failure. He asked Jock what he was going to do. Jock told him he would land in a nearby field and sideslipped down into it. Jock thought he did quite a serviceable approach, until the instructor asked: “Where did you learn to do that?” Jock replied he had “just made it up.” The instructor then advised Jock on the classic figure 8 procedure from the downwind end of the runway. The advice had to be repeated again and again. Jock wasn’t one to follow the book and could do only a semblance of it. So they landed and the instructor promptly advised Jock to learn from-the-ground up procedure in accordance with Transport Canada rules that night. The flight test went fine the next day with the same instructor.

Jock got his pilot’s licence with about 35 hours of flying time. He was attending Western University at the time. His brother flew a Piper Colt and started flying lessons at London Airport. They figured they could save by flying the same airplane.

Jock would meet him at the end of the runway and they both logged the time --- though it was illegal. They often tried various manoeuvres, such as a loop, and experimenting with ideas such as “stepping on the rudder and not doing anything else.” That immediately sent the aircraft straight down.

Fortunately, they were high enough

the first time they tried it and recovered after a dramatic stunt that “was a lot of fun but probably not recommended.” They always made sure they had plenty of altitude when trying anything they weren’t sure of.

Jock was commissioned into the Army after being named the top Army cadet in Canada. When he went to London, he wanted to serve in the Armoured Corps, where the 1st Hussars militia regiment had Sherman tanks. He served as a tank commander for the next four years, commanding up to four tanks. However, Jock always knew he would end up in the air force after university.

While at Western, Jock was lucky enough to be sent to St. Lawrence University in New York state for a



Piper Colt C - GTDH

UN conference. What an adventure! The university gave him the money to fly a Cessna 172 to Ogdensburg, NY. Jock gave a speech after being the best representative, so he had to fly back at night. Unfortunately, he had never flown at night. Departing at nightfall, he intended to fly to Kitchener refuel. Jock didn't know how to contact Malton airport, but didn't want to leave sight of Highway 401 as his navigational aid. "So I just plowed through the area without talking to anybody," he recalled with a smile, noting he didn't have a transponder. No one said anything. Jock arrived



RCAF Neptune P2V-7

at Kitchener, where only one runway was lit. As he was about to land, just crossing the intersection of the two runways, an aircraft using the unlit runway whipped by. It missed Jock by "maybe by 50 feet or so." Jock called the other pilot, but the stall warning went off while they were still in the air. It was a startling experience for three passengers with him. No wonder. He had earlier told the passengers the stall warning normally went off after the aircraft landed on the ground, but if it went off while the aircraft was 50 feet in the air "you would crash and burn." After stopping in Kitchener, Jock realized he wasn't the pilot he thought he was. He told London airport to send an instructor for more training the next morning and Jock sent his passengers home by car. Jock admitted: "I was the picture of overconfidence, no question."



Tutor on the ramp at 15 Wing CFB Moose Jaw

A radio announcer colleague of Jock's brother would periodically rent a Mooney Mark 20. The announcer got lost above cloud in the London area but fortunately called Centralia, which sent a Chipmunk to intercept the Mooney and lead it to the base. Jock's brother probably had "the least high-tech intercept that was ever flown by the RCAF"

Jock graduated in history and geography from Western and transferred from the army to the RCAF. He had just become a captain in the army and had to drop a rank to become a student

pilot. Jock mostly flew the Tutor at Moose Jaw and "just loved it." On weekends, the Air Navigation School would frequently send a Dakota (Dak) to fly base sports teams and other groups to destinations. Jock found that if he talked nicely to the Dak pilots, they would let him fly the aircraft. He accumulated

more than 100 hours on the Dak to his great enjoyment. The RCAF had trouble persuading student pilots to volunteer for anti-submarine patrol with Maritime Air Command. They took a group of student pilots to a lake south of Moose Jaw and demonstrated the impressive P2V-



Canadair CT-133 Silver Star (T-Bird)

7 Neptune. At about 1,000 feet above the lake, with everyone strapped in, the pilot rolled the aircraft upside down. He held it for 10 seconds, rolled back in the opposite direction and turned it right side up. As Jock recalled, "He turned to those of us who were sitting in awe, and said, 'You can't roll a Neptune.' There was a rule that you couldn't roll a Neptune. But he figured by just going inverted and coming back out, he was meeting the letter of the law." When pilots received their Wings, they went from the Beech Expeditor to the Neptune. If they flew it for a few hundred hours successfully, they went to the Canadair Argus. Jock enjoyed a flight in a civil-registered B-25 Mitchell at Edmonton Municipal Airport just before he got his Wings in 1967. In those days, Jock easily talked his way into the cockpit of an aircraft and flying the Mitchell "was one of those lucky scrounges."

Later in his training at Moose Jaw, Jock flew on the CT-133 Silver Star --- "a nice airplane, very easy to fly." Remaining current on whatever aircraft he was supposed to fly, Jock accumulated just over 1,800 hours of T-bird time. He once flew a CF-100 to Homestead AFB near Miami. When he returned, the squadron commander met him at the aircraft and asked him if he could take a T-bird to Sacramento as some hours had to be flown off the trainer. Jock took off merrily for Sacramento, where oddly enough he had a girlfriend he met in London, England. They had a good weekend. RCAF flying suits were rather plain, especially for students who didn't have any markings on their uniforms. The dress didn't show up well when the Canadians visited USAF establishments, including nearby Strategic Air Command bases. So the student pilots in Jock's group made



A CF-100 of 425 Alouette Squadron

up a “6,604th Bombed Group” crest. They chose that title because most students failed the course. Only four of 27 students who arrived with Jock at Moose Jaw received their wings one year later. There was a good reason for the failures, as about half the students were French Canadian and the RCAF lacked suitably qualified French language instructors. Jock said it was unfortunate that bilingual training was lacking, as many of the French chaps would have made fine pilots.

After receiving his Wings, Jock was posted to Flying Instructor School at Portage la Prairie, where T-birds and Tutors were flown. Jock also spent as much time as he could flying the Expeditor. He later returned to his home in Kitchener, where Avengers were being converted for budworm spraying in New Brunswick. He talked his way into ferrying 12 Avengers to Brantford for repainting. The Avenger was a big change from jets, but it was “dead easy to fly” and a great opportunity for a young guy to gain time on something else. Jock’s first operational tour was on the CF-100, which he described as “an absolute thing of beauty” and “a joy to fly.” Jock recalled it had some foibles, as the instrument arrangement and the fuel controls didn’t seem logical, but it was powerful “and just an excellent airplane.” Jock paid credit to navigators who had more experience than the younger and sometimes overconfident pilots. “The fact I’m alive today is largely because some of the navigators stopped me from doing something stupid that I might otherwise have done.” Jock had a CF-100 adventure while he was engaged to a girl in London, ON. His navigator, an American exchange officer who had skied with Jock in Utah, noted they were flying home much faster than normal, courtesy of an exceptional tailwind. The navigator mentioned his family lived near Fort Wayne, Indiana, and asked if they could do a low pass over the family farm. In fact, they had enough range to do a flypast over London. So they did flyovers at both places. It wasn’t illegally low, but sadly for Jock, the mayor of London was a ham radio operator. He heard the tower trying to get the crew of aircraft circling over London to identify. Jock couldn’t respond, however, as he was on a UHF radio while the tower was VHF. Jock landed and went to his apartment in Ottawa. The phone was ringing. His brother, a radio and TV control announcer in London, told Jock he’d better start “damage control” immediately because “the mayor was on the TV and radio news promising he will have the head of the pilot doing the low flying over London.” Jock called his squadron commander, who



RCAF CF-104 Starfighter Departing Prestwick UK

had assured him he'd always been available to help day or night. He assigned Jock to winter and Arctic survival in western Canada. That was good, as the RCMP arrived at Jock's squadron, 414, the next day. Jock also had a chance to experience the "really impressive" CF-101 Voodoo with 414 Squadron, with back-seat flying on test flights and more.



Kiowa Helicopter Courtesy - DND

After two years with 414, Jock was sent to Cold Lake to become a CF-104 Starfighter pilot. He started training on the CF-5 Freedom Fighter, ending as a CF-5 instructor. Cold Lake had a Sikorsky S-58 (H-34) for base rescue and Jock had 15 hours on it. "It was the strangest airplane to fly," he recalled. "There was absolutely no feel in the stick. You might as well have been connected to a noodle." The trick with a helicopter, he added, is for the pilot to keep his hand still and avoid any movement, because the chopper is so sensitive. He later flew the Kiowa with the Reserve in Montreal.



Canada Aviation and Space Museum's Replica Nieuport 17

Jock spent four years with the 1 Canadian Air Group at Baden, Germany. He first served as a reconnaissance pilot in the CF-104, then as the base flight safety officer. The Canadian Army had just given its L-19 Bird Dog observation aircraft to the Baden Flying Club, which in turn rented Piper Cherokees for the air cadets. Jock, as a volunteer at Sunnybrook, had fond memories of Lou Wise, the exceptional Toronto CAHS member and Cherokee pilot, and was

also a friend of Al Wallace. Both Lou and Al were long term members of CAHS Toronto Chapter. Jock was a kind ambassador to the veterans at Sunnybrook, often taking them to appointments and generally engaging them in conversation (Always pilot stuff!).

Baden was constantly visited by fighters from NATO countries including the Harrier jump jet. Jock once enjoyed a back-seat Harrier ride over Bavaria. The captain did a high-speed pass over the base runway with permission from the tower. Then he stopped, brought the Harrier up, adjusted the engine controls

and soon they were hovering. “104 pilots are not used to hovering. It was very speed critical and anything below 240 knots or so was just dangerous,” Jock said. The pilot then spun the Harrier around on its vertical axis, flew to the other end of the airfield and “bowed to the tower” Jock enjoyed rides in other fighters, such as the Hawker Hunter, F-100 Super Sabre, F-4 Phantom and Fiat G. 91. For its part, the USAF became nervous about people doing weird things on familiarization flights and stopped offering rides. When Jock returned to Canada, the Canada Aviation and Space Museum invited him



Jock Williams Tiger Moth C-FDGC

to be a demonstration pilot on the Avro 504K, flying with the Nieuport 17 and Sopwith Pup. In 1989, at Abbotsford, BC, Jock came to grief in the Nieuport 17 during a test flight. He noticed the biplane was out of rig. Just as he tried to steer it with a right hand turn to the airfield, the engine quit. He didn't have any hope but to hit the ground with the right wing and cartwheel the aircraft. The Nieuport was badly damaged and Jock dislocated his shoulders. Fortunately, the aircraft didn't burn, though Jock was hospitalized and required plastic surgery.

The Tiger Moth had a huge impact on Jock's aviation career. He bought one in 1969 and has flown it ever since. A pilot who attends an air show with a Tiger Moth is often asked by other pilots to trade a flight.



Jock Williams Tiger Moth C-FDGC

Jock has enjoyed reciprocal flights, solo and dual, on countless aircraft because he brought the Tiger. He enjoyed socializing with John Diefenbaker in the mid-1970s and gave the then Opposition Leader a ride in the Tiger Moth in return for Dief's hospitality at the parliamentary restaurant. While in Ottawa, Jock flew largely out of Carp. CFL player Bill Van Burkleeo once traded flying time with his Twin Comanche for Jock's Tiger Moth --- “the deal of the century.” After retiring from the regular RCAF, Jock became a training and check pilot for Transport Canada and flew various aircraft, including the Dash 8 in reconnaissance along the St. Lawrence

River. Check rides on First Air's Boeing 737 and 727s were a favourite. Transport Canada later checked out Jock to fly the Canadian Warplane Heritage collection as an inspector. None of TC's 30-odd pilots volunteered for the job, so Jock gladly enjoyed the opportunity to fly everything including the Mynarski Lancaster. He retired from TC to become “a complete civilian” and flew corporate jets for seven years.

Nowadays, Jock flies his son's Cessna 150 and the Tiger Moth.

Jock's enthusiasm for aircraft and flying shone through as he answered numerous questions in a presentation which closed 2020 with a bang.

Folded Wings

CAHS National Vice-President and Flypast reporter, Gord McNulty, sadly reports that the aviation world has lost Russell Guy Norman. "Russ" passed away on December 19th, 2020 at the age of 92. Russ was a pilot and noted builder of homebuilt aircraft. He was also a founding member of Chapter 65 EAA (Experimental Aircraft Association). In later years he enjoyed the companionship of the well-known, "Tiger Boys," based at Guelph Airport. The Toronto Chapter sends our condolences to Chapter 65 and the Norman family. *Files from Chapter 65 & Gord McNulty.*

Flashbacks Quiz – The Boeing B377 Stratocruiser

The Boeing Stratocruiser began life as Boeing's postwar airliner project designed to compete with Douglas with their DC-6B and Lockheed with their lovely Constellation. The bulbous (Jumbo-Like) double-decker fuselage of the Stratocruiser was derived from the C-97 Stratofreighter, while the wings and engines were taken from the B-29D Bomber model. Engine type was the 28 Cylinder Pratt and Whitney R-4360-5 Wasp Major Radials of 3500 Hp. These complex engines would be a continuing source of problems for the Stratocruiser. A contemporary airliner was the French double-decker, Breguet, which flew in early 1953. The Stratocruiser was first ordered by Pan Am, closely followed by orders from BOAC of the UK. A favourite route on BOAC Stratocruisers from 1949 forward, was the Trans-Atlantic run from Montreal to London, with some flights departing from Toronto-Malton. In spite of flight planning based on favourable flight / upper wind conditions over the Atlantic, frequent refueling stops had to be made using Gander, Newfoundland and Labrador. Notwithstanding the sometimes lack of non-stop service, a great number of Canadians preferred the Stratocruiser service for its wide cabin featuring, side-by-side seating comfort, overnight berth availability, a lower deck lounge / bar reached by a spiral staircase, and most important, a far lower noise level than the competing TCA Merlin – Powered Canadair North Stars. Canadian Stratocruiser service continued into the 1950s until the introduction of Boeing B707 Jetliners.

Stratocruiser Quiz

- 1) In what James Bond movie did the Stratocruiser appear?
- 2) Why did Boeing design the Stratocruiser as a "Virtual Electric Airliner"?
- 3) Into what specialized design did some of the Stratofreighters convert to?

Answers bottom of page



Illustration of a Boeing B377 Stratocruiser in BOAC Colours departing London Heathrow Airport

Courtesy - surclaro.com



BOAC Boeing B377 Stratocruiser in Flight Photo Courtesy - www.pilotspost.com

Quiz Answers

- (1) "Diamonds are Forever"
- (2) Since the available hydraulic fluid in the late 1940s, was highly flammable, Boeing, decided to "Go Electric" for all accessories, controls and landing gear.
- (3) Some Boeing Stratofighters (C-97) and Stratotankers (KC-97) were converted into the "Guppy Series" for carrying large, oversized, bulky cargo.



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