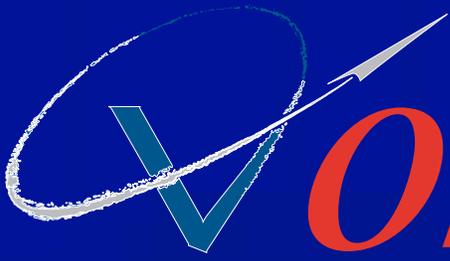


VOL. 1, NO. 2 - FALL 2004



On Approach

NEWSLETTER OF THE VICTORIA AIRPORT AUTHORITY



- IN THIS ISSUE:**
- 443 Squadron
 - Redcoats
 - Night Landings

Terminal expansion

The final phase of expansion at the airport is right on schedule. "The new departures area will be open with lots of light and a West Coast feel to match the balance of the terminal building," CEO Richard Paquette said. "We will have more room for the airline check-ins, more queuing space at check-in counters, and new automated check-in kiosks. We're also investigating the feasibility of a new pub style restaurant with an airside view."

and Air Canada Jazz, Hawkair, Pacific Coastal, Airspeed, and all charter operators will be accommodated in the new space.

Stage two involves renovation of the space presently occupied by Air Canada and Pacific Coastal. While this work is underway, West Jet and Horizon Air will continue operating from their present locations. After its completion in December 2005, they will be moving to new accommodations.

"We are going to do our best to minimize the inconvenience to passengers," Paquette said, "But there will be times when they'll have to leave the building, and enter again for pre-board screening. I hope that they will be understanding, and when it is all finished that they will be impressed with the results."

The total cost of the final expansion phase is estimated at \$11.2 million. A significant portion of that amount represents the cost of providing space for new security equipment, which will be reimbursed by the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority (CATSA).



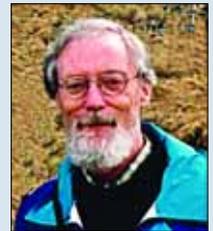
The final terminal building expansion is right on schedule.

The first stage of new work will double the length of the departures area and provide space for an enhanced baggage screening facility. This stage is expected to be completed by January 28, 2005. Air Canada

Editor's desk

Welcome to the autumn issue of On Approach, a publication designed to inform and delight you with stories about the people and events at Victoria International Airport. In this issue you'll be introduced to 443 Squadron and Mike Sudul, an airport tenant who just can't get enough flying. We also bring you stories about a new approach lighting system on the main runways, an introduction to our very own Red Coat Volunteers, and an update on construction at the airport. Happy reading and safe flying.

Phil Jensen, editor



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Contents

- 3 - Osler Systems**
An airport tenant story
- 4 - 443 Squadron**
The story of 443 Squadron
- 6 - Redcoats**
Who are those people in the red jackets?
- 7 - Night landings**
New technology makes night landings safer.
- 8 - Closer to the center**
Increased flights to the east.

On the cover: This night shot shows the main runways directly behind the terminal building.

Osler Systems

By Phil Jensen

The Nanchang CJ6A banks and turns south toward the Strait of Juan de Fuca, revealing a panoramic view of the San Juan Islands to the east. Mike Sudul, a business tenant of the Victoria Airport Authority, is flying from the forward seat. I'd met him for the first time just an hour earlier, when I walked into his business premises at the airport. What I didn't know at the time was that any conversation with Mike just naturally turns to flying. And for Mike talking is never really enough.

Popularly known in this country as a Chinese Yak, the CJ6 was used as a flight trainer in the Chinese Air Force for many years. Closely resembling the Russian Yak, the sprightly little craft is powered by a nine cylinder radial engine, and cruises at an easy 140 knots. "The performance is identical to a Harvard," Mike says. "But it's half the size and a third of the acquisition cost. It's the best bang for the buck in a military war bird."

Mike's business, Osler Systems Management, is located at the airport's East Camp, next door to the BC Aviation Museum. It was his extensive background in computers, coupled with an unbounded enthusiasm for aviation, that made Mike a natural fit for the medical software business. "In 1984, we were the first province in Canada to implement electronic billing for physicians," he says. "That jump-started the industry, and I bought the company in 1988. We do medical office business management, patient

scheduling, medical records and electronically facilitate any eligible billings to the province. Our product has a number of other modules, but the billing module is the core."

With clients situated all over the province, they needed a plane to operate effectively. That suited Mike just fine. "We had a pressurized Cessna Twin," he recalls. "We used to make one and sometimes two trips to demo a product. Then another trip to do the install and a follow-up. That's up to ten trips a week. At the peak of that style of doing business we flew four hundred hours a year. That's why we moved to Sidney, and ultimately put our office building right here at the airport behind our hangar."

Ironically, the day came when the very technology that made electronic billing possible also made it unnecessary to visit clients in person. "We do it all over the internet now," Mike says. "We still maintain a Cessna 210 for business meetings on the mainland, but the amount of flying we do is down to about fifty business hours a year."

Looking back, it's clear that a move away from extensive air travel was inevitable for a business of this kind. Taking full advantage of the internet means better service for their clients, as well as greatly reduced travel expenses. But for someone who loves flying as much as Mike, it's been a mixed blessing. Fortunately, he still has the CJ6.

At 140 knots and 2000 feet, it takes only a few minutes to travel the length of the Saanich Peninsula. Over the Strait of Juan de Fuca we circle above a cruise ship, heading for one of the American ports. We break away, climbing, then return for a second look. After a few more turns we level off on a northerly heading, and the full strength of the summer sun beats down on the canopy. Finding the air vent, I crack it open another notch. Mike gives me a quick thumbs up, and his voice crackles over the intercom. "Wonderful day," he says. It is, indeed, a wonderful day.



Mike Sudul, president of Osler Systems.



Mike Sudul prepares his Nanchang CJ6A for flight.

443 Squadron



In all likelihood, it was the last time Lt.-Col. Carl Wohlgemuth would ever fly in a Sea King helicopter.

The big machine came in with the rain, landing on the tarmac outside the 443 Maritime Helicopter Squadron hangar at Patricia Bay. It was August 9, one of the few wet days of last summer. And it was, in all likelihood, the last time that Lt.-Col. Carl Wohlgemuth would ever fly in a Sea King helicopter. After twenty months as CO at 443, he was passing the command on to Lt.-Col. Donald Leblanc, recently arrived from Ottawa.



Lt.-Col. Donald Leblanc accepts the 443 Squadron colours during change of command ceremonies.

Now in its 60th anniversary year, 443 was known as 127

Squadron when it was originally formed in 1942. Equipped with Hurricane fighters, the first of many aircraft the Squadron would eventually fly, they were tasked with the air defense of Halifax Harbour. Then in early 1944 they were transferred to England and renamed 443 Squadron, in keeping with Air

Force policy that all overseas units be assigned a 400 series number. The Squadron motto, "Our Sting is Death", was well suited to their activities during those war years. Their new airplane, the now famous Spitfire fighter, helped to ensure that the motto was much more than an idle boast. With this aircraft, they provided air support during the Normandy landings and tactical air support to the allied armies in Belgium and Holland. Following the cease fire, they served with the British Occupation Forces until disbanding for the first time in 1946.



Captain Marc-Antoine Fecteau says 443 is renowned as a great place to be.

Five years later the Squadron reformed in Vancouver. Now an auxiliary fighter unit they were equipped with P-51 Mustangs, Harvards, T-33 Silver Stars, and the F-86 Sabre. These aircraft were superseded by the Beech C-45 Expeditor and DHC-3 Otter in 1958 when the Squadron was reassigned to roles in Civil Defence, Search and Rescue and Light Transport.

They disbanded again in 1964, only to reform ten years later at CFB Shearwater, their ancestral home outside Halifax. Finally in July 1989, the Squadron moved to Pat Bay, their present location at the Victoria Airport.

A maritime helicopter squadron for forty years now, the 443rd provides helicopter support to Maritime Command Pacific (MARPAAC). "We spend an average of one hundred and eighty-eight days away a year," says Wohlgemuth. "If MARPAAC is tasked to go to the Gulf, we are there; wherever they are tasked to go, we are there. The other fifty percent we're here, assisting with Fisheries, RCMP, Customs coastal patrols, training exercises, and Search and Rescue."

As one the few military units in Canada located at a civilian airfield, 443 is unique. And

Wohlgemuth believes that the resulting close ties to the community are an important part of what makes the Squadron special. "Other air force units don't have that advantage," he says. "I want to say thank you to the community, because the community has been saying thank you to us. It's a lovely place to work and a lovely place to live."

Captain Marc-Antoine Fecteau, a four year Sea King pilot, feels much the same. "You'll have a hard time finding someone who doesn't enjoy it here," he says. This squadron is renowned as a great place to be."

Fecteau, who was deployed for almost the whole of his first two years with the Squadron, did tours to the Arabian Gulf, and Australia. On his most recent deployment, he was sent to Panama aboard HMS Ottawa to meet one of the Navy's new submarines, which they escorted to the East Coast. Now near the end of his time with 443, Fecteau is hoping for an assignment to the Air Force test pilot program. "I like being in maritime helicopter, though," he says. "So I'll probably come back to the Sea King community someday. But it will probably



Lt.-Col. Donald Leblanc addresses the Squadron.

be the Cyclone community by then."

The new Cyclone helicopter is a Sikorsky H92, a military version of the Sikorsky S92. Wohlgemuth welcomes the new machine, while remaining a loyal Sea King enthusiast. "Safety was never an issue with the Sea King," he says. "It's relevance that's the issue."

He explains that the electronic equipment on the Sea King has become so outdated that it's difficult for air crews to operate effectively. "Although the cold war has ended, the environment we work in is much more complex. It's much more difficult than a direct encounter with the enemy over the open ocean. We looked at refurbishing and bringing it up to date, but that would cost as much as building a whole new machine. The Sea King remains a fabulous machine, but it's relevance that's the issue."

The new aircraft also has implications for the local community, reveals Wohlgemuth. "The Air Force routinely does analysis to determine if the structure is correct, and they were looking for the best location. 443 will stay here. That decision was mainly based on the new aircraft coming on line. Having the ability to be near MARPAC is important as well."

The Squadron will be undergoing some changes as the new helicopters come on line, including an increase from six to eight aircraft, and a new hangar. "It's time for a new building. This is a 1940s hangar with no fire suppression. And the Squadron will grow from about 230 members to about 300."

The incoming CO, Lt.- Col. Donald Leblanc, spent the last



Lt.-Col. Carl Wohlgemuth enters the hangar for the handing over of command ceremony.

four years in Ottawa working on the Sea King replacement program. And he wants to be sure that the new hangar is in place when the Cyclones arrive. So far, the building's location has been determined and the design work completed. Construction is expected to take place over the next several years, depending on budgets and the availability of contractors.

Leblanc, a seasoned pilot, was based at Shearwater for twelve years before joining the Sea King replacement team. "So I'm fresh out of the office," he says. "I'm definitely looking forward to two years of flying and excellent relations with the community."

For his part, Wohlgemuth is going on to advanced military studies at the Canadian Forces College in Toronto. "No flying ... all paper," he laments. "That's not necessarily a good thing." During a farewell speech to the Squadron, he spoke of the command change as a transition to the future. "It's time for me to leave, and time for the new blood to come in. Don, the fighting 443rd is yours."





Jacqueline de Muinck, Victoria Airport program coordinator.

Red Coat Volunteers

Did you ever wonder exactly who those people in the red jackets really are? Jacqueline de Muinck, Coordinator of the Victoria Airport Red Coat program, makes it all clear. Red Coat volunteers are there to provide travellers with information. The program, proven at airports around North America for many years, was adopted locally in 1990. "It started with a few people, and gradually grew," Jacqueline says.

"I came in November 1992, and in September 1993, I was asked to be the coordinator." During that year before the 1994 Commonwealth Games, Jacqueline and her small cadre of volunteers honed their skills, preparing for the demands that would be placed on them in the coming hectic days. They

proved themselves fit for the task, and the rest is history. The group is now thriving with twenty-three active members and a waiting list.

Not just anybody qualifies to be a Red Coat Volunteer. You need to be people oriented, have a good knowledge of Greater Victoria, and able to make a serious commitment to the job. Although there are no age restrictions, the group ranges from a young sixty to a young eighty years of age. Each member is responsible for a three hour shift at the Red Coat desk each week, and must be able to answer questions about scheduled flights, accommodations, ground transportation and local attractions. "We do not promote anything, but tell what we know," says

Jacqueline. "If we don't have an answer, we send them to the information centre downtown. They're excellent."

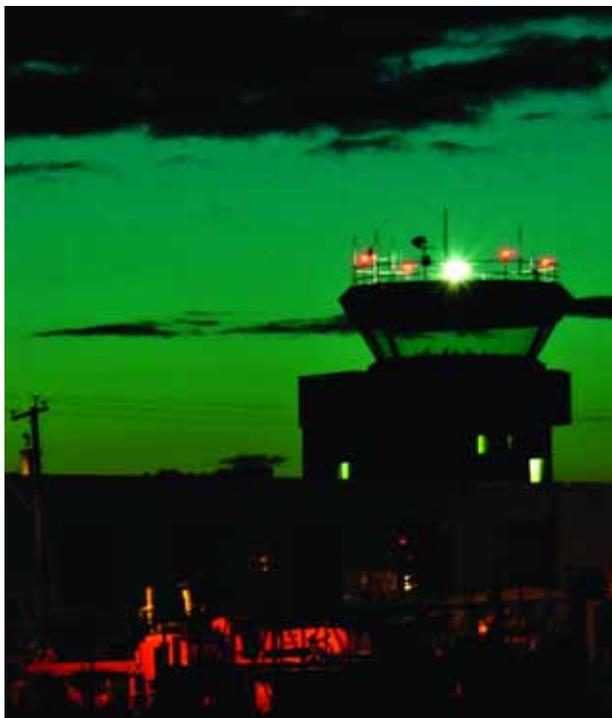
Now seventy-seven years old, Jacqueline de Muinck has been a Red Coat Volunteer for twelve years, and the group's coordinator for eleven. And she's twice been nominated for a Hearts of the Community award for her volunteer work. She is also realistic about what is possible during the few minutes Red Coats have with members of the travelling public. "We are not solving all of the peoples' problems," Jacqueline says. "We try to provide information, and answer their questions. You have to know the community, and need a wealth of knowledge. It's our knowledge that will help the public."



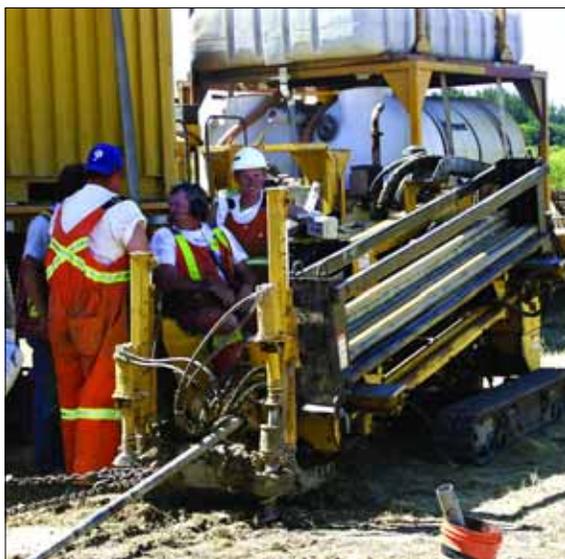
Night landings

Night landings at Victoria International Airport will soon be easier and safer with new approach lighting on two main runways. The Omni-Directional Approach Lighting System (ODALS), will replace low intensity amber approach lighting currently in use on runways 09 and 13. The new system consists of five sequentially

flashing high intensity lights on the extended centre line of the runway. The fifth light is located on the threshold of the runway itself. An additional high intensity light is located on each side of the fifth light, indicating the edges of the runway. The installation is expected to be completed by the end of November, 2004.



With the proliferation of lights in a built up area, a night approach can be confusing. In the photo above, the airport terminal buildings are at the middle left. The runways are outlined by the faint lights directly behind.



This machine is used to push electrical conduit pipe under the runway approach without messy excavating.



Mike Booton, project manager for the new approach lighting system.



(Above) Airport electrician Scott Cunningham shows where the final approach light on runway 13 will be located (orange marking at his feet). A high intensity light at each edge of the threshold helps to guide the pilot onto the runway.

Bicycle flying

Flying with a bicycle has become more convenient than ever for Vancouver Island bound cyclists. This past summer the Victoria Airport Authority opened a bike lane connecting the airport to Lochside Regional Trail, a popular cycling /walking path running the length of the Saanich Peninsula. Flying cyclists have a choice of riding north to

the Swartz Bay Ferry terminal or south to Victoria. Those choosing the southern route will connect with the Galloping Goose Regional Trail, which opens up the whole of Vancouver Island for their vacation. An assembly shelter in the terminal parking lot is complete with a tire pump, and a recycling box for airline bike packaging.



Cycling is a popular mode of transportation on the Saanich Peninsula. Here VAA board member Haji Charania leads the pack.



Laura Lavin photo

Sixteen-year-old Jacylin Jeffries with Reflection, her project for Orcas in the City. The program is organized through the BC Lions Society for Children with Disabilities. The exhibit will end with an Orca Auction and Gala Dinner where the Orcas will be put on the block and auctioned off to the highest bidder. Orca proceeds will go to the Victoria Easter Seal House and Camp Shawnigan.

Closer to the center

The Victoria Airport Authority predicts that a record 1.25 million passengers will move through the airport by the end of this year. That's up from 1.1 million in 2003. One of the contributors to that increase is undoubtedly the improved connections to Eastern Canada.

Air Canada and West Jet each schedule seven non stop flights a week between Toronto and Victoria. Jetsgo provides four non stop flights a week. "We're closer to the center of the world than ever before," said VAA President and CEO Richard Paquette. "Those people who live here can now propose Victoria as the location for their next corporate meeting or conference."

Lorne Whyte of Tourism Victoria is delighted with the improved connections. "It's a very positive addition, having direct routes from Toronto to Victoria," Whyte said. "We would hope that if we could increase the meetings, incentive

travel, and conference business that we might be able to retain the direct routes on a year round basis."

People have always enjoyed the beauty of this area, something that Tourism Victoria has continually promoted. "Whether it be golf, or kayaking, or fishing or just enjoying temperate weather, it's quite an attraction," Whyte said. "A lot of people also like to come out here for two week to four week stays in the [fall shoulder season]. February, March, April also seem to be very popular with our eastern visitors for long term stays.

"I think it's a good fit, and now with the airport nearing completion they can handle the increased numbers. It's been a very positive year for the Airport Authority. They're to be congratulated on the outstanding job they're doing, both the professional side and the board. I think they're doing an outstanding job."

