

Whitby Aero Modellers



# Whitby Flyer

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Happy New year to you all! By now you've had a chance to finish putting the Christmas jigsaw puzzle together and you've returned enough Christmas gifts to surface some cash to buy new modeling stuff. And by now your digestive systems have recovered from the burden of overeating & drinking too much egg-nog over the holidays - that egg-nog is a killer!!. Now Epiphany arrives on January 6<sup>th</sup> and Christians celebrate the Magi visiting Bethlehem bearing gifts -- they got it right bringing gold, - and maybe incense -- but what's with the myrrh?? What were they thinking? - especially when they had to cart the stuff all the way across the desert the way they did! Since they were three wise men you'd have thought one of them would have maybe suggested something like a blanket which would have been useful in a stable. But then again I suppose it wouldn't have sounded right if the story were told "the three wise men came from the east bearing gifts of gold, frankincense and a blanket" - it loses something. These theological issues are very complex.

On another subject - I see the Federal Liberals elected a new leader about a month ago - Mr Stephane Dion from Quebec (where else). What'll you bet before the next election he'll be taking English lessons - maybe from Jean Chretien!! - Lord help us!

So what's happening in the club?

## **New Years Day Fun Fly**

The 2007 season got off to a "flying" start again this year with the weather cooperating big time - it was +8C with bright sunshine at 10 a.m. when the event started - a bit on the windy side - about 20k - but it was blowing almost straight from the west end of the field and was not a big problem. Flying attendance was fair, with only four guys putting in flights. Wayne Challis captured the honor of being first into the air with his electric aerobatic plane which handled the wind very well. Wayne is shown here with Gerry Scheenaard just before his first flight:-



Second up was Howard Smith flying his scratch built .15 size racer, (pictured below) artfully covered with spectacular glitzy material bought at the dollar shop.



Third up was Don Cavanaugh flying his ancient Ultra Stick 40. Lastly and perhaps most spectacularly was Eric Dizenbach, flying his beautiful Bobcat 52 pictured below being readied for flight under the careful supervision of Jack Mothersill..



Eric would have been first up but his engine decided to act up on him -, however he was able to get it running smoothly and he put in several spectacular flights. This is a very impressive ARF put out by Nitro Models for only US\$129 plus shipping and is a great looking machine.

There was heavy spectator attendance at the event, including Doug Wood, Kelly Curl, Don Haslam, Kevin Hoerig, Jeanne Mitchell, Zane Mitchell, Mark Morisset, Jack Mothersill, Gerry Scheenaard and of course Dave Parton showed up as he always seems to when the wind is blowing. Also turning up was Bob Crawford and his wife as well as John Gammon who always makes it to the New Years event. (My sincere apologies to anybody I've overlooked)

Several potential new members (four I think) were there and were given club application forms by Jeanne Mitchell.

It was a great time - flying was very pleasant in the heat of the strong sun. Howard Smith organized the whole event, including bringing in a vat of hot coffee and a couple dozen donuts from Tim Hortons which was provided free to everybody. Organizing these things requires considerable expenditure of time and invariably, personal expense, but he did a fabulous job. So on behalf of the club executive and all the membership, a tip of the hat and much thanks to Howard Smith for getting the 2007 flying season off to a roaring start!

### **Club Membership Renewal Time!**

By now most of you will have checked the Club Website Membership posting to find that the club membership dues for 2007 are:-

OPEN-----\$100.00  
JUNIOR (less than 18 yrs old)----- \$10.00 (MAAC membership not included)  
FAMILY-----\$150.00

Folks who were not members last year will still need to pay an additional one-time \$30.00 Field Maintenance fee ( juniors excluded - one per household)

Don't forget that you need to be a current MAAC member in good standing to fly at the field.

### **New Rule Change — Impound Your Transmitter**

While you're joining the club this year be sure to take particular note of the new rule # 5 which says-

“5 When there are more than three persons with transmitters at the field at the same time, then all transmitters not in use must be impounded in the impound box.”

Obviously this new rule will somewhat change the way things are being done at the field from now on - and adopts a similar practice to that of many other clubs wherever you go. The thinking behind it was that when there are only two or three flyers flying, then they can pretty much keep track of each other's frequencies but when there are more than three, then it is much safer to impound the transmitters when it's not in use. We already have the impound box and we might as well use it. I recall a similar system in use at a previous club I belonged to and it was amazing how many times a transmitter was found impounded - still switched on! So this practice will help correct such oversights.

Of course this may all be history soon with the introduction of the new Spectrum DX7 2.4 Ghz radios recently on the market. Doubtless you've all read about them in the "Fly RC" and "Model Airplane News" magazines. These gizmos are the cat's black pants - no need for frequency pins - no more selecting the right model and of course, no more shooting anybody down by inadvertently turning on your transmitter. Really amazing!!

### **New Cautionary Signs at the Field**

As mentioned in previous newsletters, MAAC is requiring all clubs to put new signs at their flying fields advising of the potential hazard involved in flying model airplanes. MAAC President Richard Barlow advises that - "there has been some consternation in a few clubs with regard to the wording used on the warning signs, as they state that our hobby can be hazardous. The wording used is exactly the same wording as is used by our American colleagues in the AMA and this can be seen on their website. ....Our insurance coverage is in no way negatively impacted by posting the signs. Quite the opposite. For us to warn of potential hazards is the responsible thing to do, and protects our insurance coverage..... "

So you will all see these new signs, which we got from MAAC, now posted at the field entrance gate, at the entrance from the park, and at the entrance to the pit area.

### **Next Club Meeting - 21 January 2007 - Format Change**

Try to make it out to the first meeting of the year to be held on 21 January 2007 at the usual spot - Durham College, 1610 Champlain Ave. in Whitby - starting at 7:00 p.m.. President Don Mitchell has decided to give the meeting a new format for this meeting. The usual business meeting will be shortened as much as possible - instead you guys are encouraged to bring in your new models - including those under construction for examination by the more experienced members who can give helpful advice on what might need improvement or how to solve problems that you've encountered in the construction process. It's sure to be a most informative session for everybody including many of us who've been building for some time - there's always something to be learned from the voice of experience!!

### **Final Thoughts**

Whatever you do never **-never-** make a comment to a woman that even suggests you think she's pregnant - unless you're absolutely sure she is!!

### **Canadian Aviation History -- Andrew Charles Mynarski**

The following narrative is the author's opinion.

It is hardly necessary to repeat the story of Andy Mynarski because almost every Canadian with even a passing interest in aviation has heard of his story. Just after WWII, I recall reading a comic book (they were the rage in those days) which featured the touching story of Andrew Mynarski who had then recently become very famous. So bear with me while I recount the story of this remarkable Canadian.



Andrew Charles (Andy) Mynarski was born in Winnipeg on October 14, 1916, one of five children of recent Polish immigrants. He went to school at King Edward and later at Isaac Newton elementary schools before attending St. John's Technical School. His father died when he was

only 16, so to help support his family Andy went to work cutting chamois for a furrier in Winnipeg. He also built furniture and models in the basement of his home.

After the second World War broke out, Andy joined a militia group - the Royal Winnipeg Rifles where he served for a short time before joining the RCAF in September of 1941. He was initially posted to No. 3 Manning Depot in Edmonton for a short while, then on to No. 3 Bomb and Gunnery School at MacDonald Manitoba. He graduated just before Christmas 1941 as an air gunner - earning his "AG Wing" (seen in the picture above) in that short time. He was sent to Halifax and was promoted to temporary sergeant before being sent overseas in January of 1942.

In England he was sent to No. 16 Operational Training Unit (OTU) for gunnery training on Wellington bombers and then on to No. 1661 Heavy Conversion Unit (HCU) for additional gunnery training on Halifax bombers. He was promoted to Flight Sergeant and went to No. 9 RAF for additional operational training on Lancasters. This was followed by a series of non-operational postings before being posted with No 1664 RAF HCU at Dishforth, Yorkshire in March 1944. At this point the RCAF began to insist that all of its operational bomber squadrons be manned by all-Canadian crews as much as possible, so Andy and his crewmates were all reposted to 419 "Moose" Squadron RCAF at Middleton St George at Durham. Andy was a mid-upper gunner on Halifax bombers.

The crews first operational mission was in a Halifax Mk II in which they attacked the marshalling yards in Leon, France. They had started their operational flying just when Gen. Eisenhower implemented his "Transportation Plan" which was aimed at destroying western Europe's rail, road, and bridge networks to prevent them from moving reinforcements into Normandy where the invasion was planned. All subsequent trips made by Andy and his crew were in Canadian-built Lancasters in which they carried out raids on railway marshaling yards at St. Ghislain ( a resounding success); Ghent, Boulogne; and Louvain. Air Marshall "Bomber Harris" did not want to abandon his strategic attacks on major German targets, so Andy's Lancaster also carried out raids on a military camp at Bourg Leopold in Belgium, and on the Mt Couple radar station at Cap Griz Nez.

Andy found a good friend in his tail gunner, Flight Sergeant Pat Brophy in spite of their difference in rank. They chummed together while off-duty especially during their pub crawls. One time Mynarski bailed his friend out of jail after he'd got into some sort of scrap which irritated the local constabulary to the extent that they tossed him into the royal pokey. What they had in common was a general remove from the crew, and they were both air gunners.

D-Day arrived on June 6, 1944. In support of the Allied landings in Normandy, bomber command tasked the "heavies" for maximum effort - and Mynarski's Lancaster hit the coastal batteries at Longes, France which threatened the area where the Allies wanted to establish a new landing site. This raid was conducted at only 1500 feet in order to improve accuracy and cause minimal collateral damage to the French population.



Crew of Lancaster VR-A, (l to r) ; Pat Brophy, Jim Kelly, Roy Vigars, Art de Breyne, Andy Mynarski, Jack Friday, Bob Brodie.

Mynarski and his crew had completed 12 missions when they were assigned to attack the rail marshalling yards at Canbrai, France on the night of 12/13 June 1944. The trip to the target started out to be routine with only light flack when they crossed the coastline and flew on into France. Suddenly there was blinding light as a searchlight caught them. Other searchlights quickly converged and coned on the aircraft. The pilot, Art de Breyne threw the Lancaster into a steep bank and dove for the ground before pulling up - trying to squirm away from the deadly glare. They made it ! Once again the Lancaster was flying in the comfort of darkness. However, the searchlights often allowed a bomber to escape when they knew a nightfighter had got a radar fix on the aircraft. From then on it was just a matter of the nightfighter maneuvering into position to attack. It was too soon to tell. The Lancaster flew on and as it approached the target began to descend to the 2000 ft attack altitude. As the aircraft passed through 5000 ft, the tail gunner suddenly yelled “Bogey astern at 6 o’clock “ The pilot repeated his corkscrew maneuver but to no avail as Pat saw the grim Ju-88 twin engined nightfighter fly underneath the Lancaster with it’s cannons blazing.

Ju-88 night fighters were highly sophisticated and deadly machines, being fitted with radar, and also carrying a set of 20mm cannons that fired upwards at 45 degrees enabling them to fly under the Lancasters and Halifaxes and exploit their weakness where they lacked belly turrets to defend themselves. Tail gunner Pat Brody got off a few rounds at the Ju88 before it overtook the Lancaster and slid in underneath. The cannon fire from the Ju-88 disabled both port engines, started a fire in the left wing and the aft fuselage between the Andy’s upper turret and the tail gunner.

The pilot ordered the crew to bail out of his mortally wounded aircraft. Mynarski slid out of his turret, opened the rear escape door and was about to jump when he saw that his buddy was unable to free himself from the aft turret because the hydraulic system had failed and the turret could not be rotated into a position to allow him to exit the turret into the aft fuselage. Pat tried to rotate the turret with the auxiliary manual crank but the handle came off in his hand. Seeing all this, Andy crawled back through the flames to try to free his friend and in doing so his flight suit

caught fire from the burning hydraulic fluid. He reached the rear turret and worked frantically to try to move the turret but it was no use. He grabbed a fire axe and began chopping at the turret - but was unable to make any holes big enough for Brophy to escape. Brophy could see that Mynarski's pants and parachute were burning as he worked. And kept yelling to Andy to get out and save himself. Finally Andy could see that it was useless. He crawled back to the escape door , turned and looked back at his friend, then slowly drew himself to attention and saluted his friend as he'd done so many times before. Then he jumped.

French witnesses on the ground saw Andy's descent which they described as looking like a roman candle as his clothing and parachute burned on the way down. He landed alive with his clothes still on fire. French farmers hustled him off to the doctor but he died shortly after of severe burns and injuries from his fall.

Meanwhile, back in the flaming bomber Pat Brophy braced himself for the crash. The flaming Lancaster bellied into a field, hit a thick tree with it's port wing which tore the wing off and swung the aircraft violently to the left. The whiplash effect of the tail snapped the turret around so the opening faced sideways and Pat Brophy was tossed out of the aircraft and wound up against a tree about 40 feet from the wreck. He didn't have a scratch on him!

In fact Andy Mynarski was the only one of the seven crew who was killed. All the others survived in good shape. Four were hidden by the French underground and returned to England shortly after the crash. The other two, including Pat Brophy were captured by the Germans and interned until being liberated by American troops, so it was not until 1945 that Pat Brophy was able to get back and relate the story of Andy Mynarski's bravery. Until then, nobody knew.

Pilot Art de Breyne immediately recommended an award for Andy and set the wheels in motion to find his grave. The recommendation worked it's way up the RCAF chain of command and so it was that Andy Mynarski was awarded the Victoria Cross "for valor of the highest order" - so that the world might know of this truly gallant man who laid down his life for his friend.

Mynarski's Victoria Cross is on display at the Bishop Building at the Air Command Headquarters in Winnipeg. One of the men who attended the inaugural ceremonies was none other than Pat Brophy. Andy Mynarski's name has been honored in several locations in Canada. The Married quarters at CFB Penhold are called Mynarski Park. A chain of three lakes in Manitoba are named after him. He was inducted into the Canadian Aviation hall of Fame. The City of Winnipeg created an 8-hectare park in his honor..

Andy Mynarski is buried in plot number 40, British Plot, Meharicourt Communal Cemetary, Meharicourt, Somme, France.

*Don Cavanaugh*