

# The Leading Edge

EAA Chapter 154 Newsletter

## Presidents Message

With the loosening of COVID restrictions I look forward to having a few coffee and doughnut fly-ins. If you would like to host at your strip lets us know and we will get the word out.

Ron Wood

I welcome any input members might have for future issues; We can be reached via email at [d.hilderman@sasktel.net](mailto:d.hilderman@sasktel.net), by phone 306-545-7845

Doug Hilderman



## Monthly VMC Club

The June VMC case study discussed the scenario involving a pilot (you) who was interested in joining a partnership in a 172 and went with the owner on a flight from the home base in the swamps in Florida. While in the air the engine started running rough. The options were based on problems. Firstly, how to decide who is the pilot in command and what to do about the engine; troubleshoot in flight, land now or try to make it back to the home airport 20 minutes away. During the flight the owner tried to get some hood time with the second pilot as a safety

Our group discussion agreed that we should test the mags and mixture while over a known small air field and if that did not clear it up land now. Our group thought that the client (you) should ensure that the owner accepted PIC. Some interesting information came out during their discussion. If you need to switch to a single mag while the engine is at cruise RPM the procedure is as follows: switch from both to L and both the R. If the engine quits when you choose a single mag don't switch it back until you lean the mixture right out to clear the cylinders and exhaust of un-burned fuel. If you switch right back to a hot mag without clearing the fuel you will cause a backfire and may blow your exhaust system off.

A comment was made by one of the experts that he would rather fly behind an engine over the recommended rebuild time than an engine with 100 hours on it.

The sessions are provided over Zoom. 8:00pm second Monday of the month.

To Join the Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82306156903?pwd=Qm91cUthODYza0FDRFVtTHZOR0ExQT09>

Meeting ID: 823 0615 6903

Passcode: 817364

July, 2021  
Regina and Southern Saskatchewan

## EAA154 Members Meeting Highlights

At the June members meeting we were treated to a presentation by Steve Molinelli from the Saskatchewan Aviation Museum. Steve talked about the mission of the organization and the aircraft on display. We talked about Chapter events for the month including our RC event on June 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup>. Discussion included our scavenger hunt. The details on those events are below.

## EAA154 Eye in the Sky Photo Scavenger Hunt

Photos are to be taken between the dates of July 1 to July 31. Location of the photos to be included. The complete package to be emailed to [ea154sask@gmail.com](mailto:ea154sask@gmail.com) before August 1, 2021. Photos are to be taken from the air if possible.

5 photos per entry

Open to all Members. To become a member see EAA154 website

Points for photos of:

Things mined on the prairies

Fields of Crops in bloom developed in Saskatchewan

Old and new ways of getting grain to market

WWII RCAF Hangers

Land of the Living Skies

## R.C. Model event a Success!

The weather was perfect on June 13 for our RC event. I think the wind was 0kts and clear. We had 11 members and spectators attend and 3 model airplanes out of the 5 attending took to the air. A big thank you to Kevin Machniak for providing model flight training and safety pilot duties. I am happy to report no planes were taken home in garbage bags (I always keep one in my RC flight bag...) I want to remind members of the Disley Airport CDS2weather website <https://tempestwx.com/station/2762/grid>

## Member Travel Tales

# Destination: Fairbanks Alaska

By Eleanor Reimer 2002-06 Submitted by Bert Hamilton

Doors locked, seatbelts tightened and C-GMGT is on the roll. Our C172 RG, owned and piloted by my husband, Jeff Reimer, departs Parr's airstrip near Regina, Saskatchewan at 1415 Z en route to Fairbanks, Alaska. Jeff and I have dreamed of this trip for years. Familiar sights fall away as puffy white clouds float below. To the north a bank of high cirrus passes. After Regina's week of wet and often stormy weather, we see this day as a gift and we are not alone.

Somewhere ahead, probably already half way to our first planned fuel-stop in Edmonton City Centre, Alberta, Phil Masson and Doug Cunningham are enjoying their lead. Eager to begin their adventure, they departed Parr's strip at 1245 Z, flying C-GOQX, Phil's homebuilt CH300 powered by a 150 horse Lycoming engine. Phil and Doug will share pilot responsibilities.

Meanwhile, far to the north, Bert Hamilton heads west in his homebuilt Thorp T-18, C-GTBH. Departing Jan Lake airstrip in Northern Saskatchewan, he plans to rendezvous with C-GMGT and C-GOQX in Dawson Creek, British Columbia later in the afternoon. The weatherman is not so kind to Bert. He must begin in low cloud conditions and the smoke of forest fires.

Fortunately, the weather improves for Bert before he must deal with Cold Lake Departure control. He reports later, "My flight path took me just south of the Primrose Weapons range and north of the Cold Lake Airforce Base. Departure control kept me separated from the Jet Jockeys going to and from the weapons range".

Meanwhile, we make good time and soon join the circuit at Edmonton Centre. Taxiing up to the Esso Avitat, Jeff gives instructions to fuel the plane then we go to the pilot's lounge where we find Phil and Doug patiently waiting. Everyone is hungry. After a good lunch at the Ramada Hotel across the street from the Avitat, we are ready for the next leg of our journey.

With flight plans filed and fuel checked, we taxi toward the active, expecting to reach Dawson Creek, British Columbia by 22:30Z. We are not long in the air before flight conditions

begin to deteriorate. We bounce around in moderate afternoon turbulence and forward visibility quickly diminishes as the smoke from forest fires thickens. Ground visibility remains good and we were still over the Canadian Plain so we press on, each of us secretly vowing not to proceed from Dawson Creek into the mountains unless conditions greatly improve.

As we approach Dawson Creek the smoke begins to dissipate and our hopes for a good day tomorrow soar. We taxi off the active and spot Bert striding across the grass parking area where he has secured his plane. He arrived an hour earlier and now introduces us to the self-serve fuel pumps (plug in your credit card and fill up).

Meanwhile, a group of ultra-light pilots come in from Watson Lake. Since we plan to stop at Watson Lake tomorrow night they recommend we stay at a bed and breakfast near the airport. "The accommodations are good and the price very reasonable," they assure us. This sounds good but right now we must find accommodations for tonight.

Before calling a cab, we stand inside the terminal reading the poster advertisements for motels. The airport manager comes along side, suggesting the Airport Hotel. "How many of you?" he asks. "Why don't you take my truck out there, the red Bronco?" And so we are off, courtesy of the city of Dawson Creek, which owns the airport and Bronco.

Following the airport manager's directions we find the Airport Hotel in town then scout out places to eat and check which restaurants open earliest for breakfast the next morning. 6:30 A.M. will do. And now for a good night's sleep. Tomorrow will be another long day.

Friday morning: After a positive weather briefing, we flight plan to Fort Nelson, our first fuel-stop, and head out to our planes. The air is cool, the sun shining. For these flatland flyers, the gentle rolling hills about Dawson Creek offer only a subtle hint of what lies ahead.

Off at 15:17 Z, we are only three minutes into the flight when we hear OQX announce that they are returning to the airport. On 122.75 Phil lets us know that they will be back with us in five minutes. Dawson Creek Radio asks if they are experiencing trouble. No, but the keys to the airport Bronco are still in Doug's pocket!

We over-fly Fort St. John, British Columbia in about ten minutes then lock onto the Alaska Highway. The scenery is breathtaking. The rolling hills are covered in trees. Narrow

rivers wind their way to small lakes. We fly over Sikanni Chief air strip, then Prophet River strip. Both are marked as abandoned on the maps but look good from our altitude. These airstrips, and other small strips not marked on the maps, give us an added sense of security.

We touch down at Fort Nelson at 17:12. Bert is right behind us. Phil and Doug, delayed about twenty minutes by their unexpected return to Dawson Creek, soon join us. We find a lunch bar just outside the airport gates and enjoy good home cooked food and the friendly openness of people in the north. One of the women running the lunch bar urges us to stop at the Laird River Hot Springs. "It is really worth your time," she insists.

On the map, the Laird River airstrip is marked abandoned. However, we are assured that people are using it all the time. The fact that airstrip is fifteen kilometers from the Laird River Hot Springs Lodge is not a factor. The airport Shell station manager makes a phone call to the owner of the Lodge. Yes, she has room and yes, she will pick us up at the Laird River airstrip at 2 P.M.

Heading out of Fort Nelsen, we pick up the highway again and soon reach Steamboat Pass. The gap is wide and highway elevation only 3500 feet. About fifty miles further on we enter Summit Lake Pass, the highest and narrowest we will encounter on this trip. With highway elevation at 4266 feet and less room to navigate this pass could be difficult in poor weather conditions but today the sun is shining and at a 6500 flight level we simply appreciate the beauty of the region.

Up ahead we get our first glimpse of beautiful Muncho Lake reflecting the deep blue-green color characteristic of glacier fed lakes. I want a picture but can't find my camera. We are experiencing moderate turbulence again so forget the camera. I will try to capture the image in my mind. We take note of a Lodge at the west-end of Muncho Lake and a gravel airstrip on the east side. Neither is marked on the map.

Continuing west, we soon fly over the Laird River Lodge where we will stay this evening. On final at the strip, we spot a camper parked up against the trees. The campers stand in awe, camera in hand as we land, taxi back and push our airplane off to the side. "Do you know you are parked on an airstrip?" I ask.

"No, we just thought this was a good place to stop and let our dog run" (They had the good sense to put their dog in

the motor home when they saw us coming). "We've never seen an airplane land close up before"

"Well, stand back with your camera ready," Jeff replies, "There are two more planes coming in".

The Lodge operator, Barb, arrives and we were off. She is anxious to take us sightseeing before going to the Lodge but we ask that she at least stop at the lodge long enough for us to use the telephone to close our flight plans. We surely don't want to put search and rescue into action during this trip. After a quick tour of the district we return to the lodge for iced tea and cokes.

Refreshed, we are off to the hot springs, a ten-minute walk on a boardwalk over swampy terrain. The walk itself is interesting. A signpost along the way explains the history of the little fish that swim along side our path. The flora is ever changing and now and again we meet people returning from their swim.

As we round the corner of the change rooms we discover that the hot springs have, as much as possible, been left in their natural state. Two creeks, one very hot and one cold, come together and are slowed by a small dam. The creek bed is pebbled; it's banks dark earth covered in ferns, shrubs and wild flowers. We feel like kids again, swimming in the creek except, as Doug points out, "here there are no bloodsuckers!"

Drained of energy we head back to the lodge for a good supper. We plan to get to bed early. The restaurant opens at six-thirty A.M. for breakfast and we have another big day ahead of us.

Off Laird River airstrip at 15:35Z, we head for Watson Lake for a quick fuel stop then on to Whitehorse. Teslin Lake lies ahead and we get our camera ready to take pictures of the little village of Teslin where my mother taught school for fourteen years. Mild turbulence and haze preclude hopes for good quality pictures but we will take a few anyway.

Time to call Whitehorse tower and give our position and altitude, the northern method of traffic control (no radar or Mode C here). For the airlines we turn on our transponders so that they can see us on their TCAS. We are advised that L 31 is the active runway and soon we are down. After securing our planes and giving the Shell truck instruction for fueling us up, the five of us rent a Jimmy and head out on a side trip to Skagway, Alaska.

We arrive in Skagway, a city bustling with tourists from cruise ships and large buses, in late afternoon to discover that many hotels are full. We do find accommodations and in the process are invited to the city's potluck supper and other solstice festivities being held in the park. "Just bring a bag of chips for the pot-luck, and you're in," we are assured. We pass on the supper but later in the evening Doug, Phil and Bert check out the other festivities.

It is morning in Skagway and Bert offers to go to the train station to purchase tickets for the morning rail trip over the White Pass Route while the rest of us have breakfast. We have been told that the tickets often sell out and we don't want to miss this trip. Later we learn that we had made a mistake on the time the ticket office opened. Bert was there half an hour early and was first in line!

Our three and one-half hour trip over narrow gauge rail is fully narrated. We learn more about the history of Skagway and the trail of the gold miners over White Pass in the 1890's. Seated comfortably, with free Cokes and pretzels, it is hard to imagine the hardships suffered by those early gold seekers.

Back in Skagway we have lunch then head back to Whitehorse in time to take in the "Frantic Follies", an 1890's vaudeville show. We are not disappointed---well, maybe some of the guys are just a little disappointed that they are not chosen from the audience to remove the garter from the salon girl's leg!

In the morning the weather doesn't look very good but we head to the airport to get a detailed weather report before heading out on our final leg of the journey to Fairbanks, Alaska. The report confirms what we already know of Whitehorse weather and we learn that things don't look that good en-route to Fairbanks either. The weather is iffy and there is restricted visibility due to forest fires.

"Why don't we forget about Fairbanks and head up to Dawson City instead?" someone asks. The only reason we had planned on flying to Fairbanks was to follow the Alaska Highway and we had talked about returning through Dawson City anyway. Now we quickly agree that Dawson City will be our final destination.

Nav Canada personnel tell us that weather in Whitehorse should be lifting later in the morning and suggest that we take a scenic hike along the path to Canyon City while waiting. Five kilometers out of town we find the swinging

bridge that marks the beginning of our hike. Once across we see a sign post "Canyon City 1.75 km"

There is nothing at Canyon City except tabletop diagram of a community that once sat here. It is enough. Our walk along the narrow path paralleling the river has been invigorating. The sky is brightening and we are off to the airport again, but glad that we were delayed long enough to discover Canyon City

Five minutes out of Whitehorse, tower asks us to advise them when we reach the north end of Lake Labarge. Jeff is surprised. He had always thought that Robert Service had made up the name 'Lake Labarge' for his poem "The Cremation of Sam Magee". Now we are actually flying over it.

Up ahead lies the Braeburn airstrip, better known as Cinnamon Strip. We are told that if we land there we can walk across the highway and enjoy the huge and wonderful cinnamon rolls that the strip is famous for. We haven't been in the air that long and won't stop. It does sound good though.

After a two-hour flight we arrive at Dawson City, Yukon. The airport is quite a distance from the town but several hotels provide limousine service to and from the airport.

Dawson City, once the heart of the Yukon gold rush, is now a small tourist town eight blocks deep and sixteen wide. A car is not necessary but if you want one, you must book it in advance. Local tour buses offer services to attractions beyond walking distance.

We choose to take in the town attractions: a history and recitation of Robert Service poems by Tom Bryne and a visit to the Robert Service Cabin, the local museum and a film about the history of Dawson City narrated by Pierre Burton. We walk past the house where Pierre Burton was born (now privately owned), and take in some of the town's evening entertainment.

A day and a half later it is time to head back. It has been a wonderful trip. In retrospect, the unplanned side trips: Laird Hot Springs, a hike to Canyon City, and our visit to Dawson City are highlights we will always be happy for. Once home and looking back, we will wish we had taken more time for sightseeing, flown onto the tundra, camped for a night and watched the midnight sun and on our way back, stopped at Cinnamon Strip. Of course, there is always next time!