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## Avro Arrow mystery deepens with U.K. discovery

An Avro Arrow CF-105 MkC5 Ejection Seat is currently on sale on eBay for \$250,000.  
(Courtesy: [www.jetartaviation.co.uk](http://www.jetartaviation.co.uk))

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Josh Visser, CTVNews.ca Staff  
Date: Sunday Dec. 18, 2011 9:45 PM ET

The discovery of an intact ejection seat from Canada's legendary Avro Arrow is fuelling a half-century-old conspiracy theory that one of the purportedly destroyed jets was smuggled to safety.

The Avro Arrow program was infamously shut down by then-Canadian prime minister John Diefenbaker in 1959. All related materials, from the prototype jets right down to the blueprints, were ordered destroyed.

The ejection seat was discovered in the hands of a private collector in the U.K., and has been tracked back to aviation museum closed during the 1970s.

So, how did the seat from an Arrow make its way to England?

Chris Wilson, the managing director of Jet Art Aviation, a British company that sells aircraft collectibles, suggests his discovery of the seat is the latest piece of evidence to suggest one Arrow escaped from Canada.

The seat, currently on sale on eBay for \$250,000, is believed to be the matched pair to a second Arrow seat that Wilson found in 2008 and was sold to the Canadian Air and Space Museum in Toronto. The Arrow had a front pilot seat and a rear navigator seat.

"The chances of finding one in the first place is more or less a miracle, it's a holy grail aircraft item. The chances of finding two, is just ridiculous, really," Wilson said in a telephone conversation from Yorkshire, England.

"That got me thinking that the only way a pair of seats could have come to the U.K. like that in flown condition is if an aircraft came over here."

The ejection seats have been confirmed to CTVNews.ca to have been from the Arrow program by Martin-Baker, the world's leading ejection seat manufacturer. A letter of authenticity by Martin-Baker's head of business development Andrew Martin is available on the Jet Art Aviation website.

Martin-Baker had a licensed facility in Collingwood, Ont. during the 1950s and was building the seats for the program.

The data plate on the seat lists its manufacturing date as Sept. 15, 1958.

"There's no question whatsoever that this seat comes from an Avro Arrow," Wilson said adamantly. "It's 100 per cent an Arrow seat."

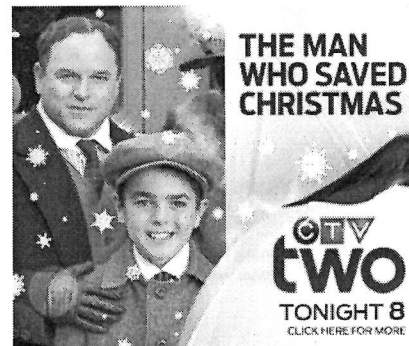
He added that probably less than 20 ejection seats in total came off the production line for the Arrow.

Wilson is also confident that the seat he is selling came from an Arrow that saw significant time in the sky.

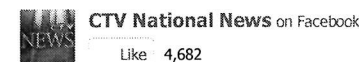
"This is clearly a used, flown seat," he said. "It saw a 100-plus, maybe as many as a 1,000 flying hours."

### Theory number one

Wilson said he had an inkling that an Arrow made its way over to the U.K thanks to the pair of seats, but a chance conversation with a customer gave him a firmer hypothesis.



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According to Wilson, the customer (who did not wish to speak on the record to CTV News) was an aviation fan who once lived near the RAF Manston air base near Kent England.

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The customer told Wilson that North Korea's heir apparent, Kim Jong Un, largely an enigma and he still remembered a strange incident in which a white, high delta wing aircraft with no national markings or regist

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Wilson said ex-RAF members North Korean Leader Kim Jong Il dies at 69, was a local legend within the force during the 1960s.

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Theory number two

Missile test goes ahead after Kim Jong Il's death

Robin Sipe, the owner of S and S Turbines, a military and industrial engine repair company in British Columbia, said a disgraced bishop faces sentencing in Ottawa for the Avro Arrow.

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Sipe is restoring an Orenda Iroquois Series II engine (built for the Arrow) that he came to learn about through a chance View More News Stories at a gas turbine conference. The engineer told him he worked on an Iroquois engine while in university in the U.K. during the 1960s. (The parent company of the Avro program, Hawker Siddeley, was British and shipped the engine over.)

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Now is the time for reforms and democratic elections. Hopefully Kim's son will have the good sense to give the power back to the people. His younger generation should realise there is nothing to be gained by oppressing your people and remaining cut off from the rest of the world. He should understand that he has no right to govern, any more than any other North Korean.

Dave

North Korean Leader Kim Jong Il dies at 69

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