

Don Novak

Hi: I'm Terry Novak's father and he told me yesterday that he heard from you regarding the Avro Arrow.



I'll be 94 years old now and started working at Avro when I was 27 years old. Just a little of my background. I was manager at a Brewers Retail Store in Brampton and Walter Smart who would come into the store every Friday to get his 6 pints of beer. I started talking to him and found out he had just been made manager in charge of the Avro Arrow. We had our conversations about this new Super Plane which made me interested in planes.

He saw I was interested and asked me about coming to Avro, learning about planes and coming to work for him in the purchasing department.

In 1954 I came to work at Avro, finding out what planes looked like, finding out what the parts were and where they were on the aero plane. As you can see, I knew nothing about planes and nothing about purchasing, but I was always a quick learner. I started at Avro walking around asking questions about aero planes and what purchasing involved.

In the meantime, Avro were getting me security clearance for "Need to Know" for the Jetliner, CF100, Avrocar and the Arrow.

After about 3 months I was all set to go. The title I had was Design Liaison Procurement Department. I think this is enough about me for now.

Of course I'm retired and have been away from that industry for 67 years but I still have a good memory and would like hearing from you.

Hi Fred: I knew Walter very well but I didn't know he was interested in dogs. The Walter Smart I knew lived in Brampton ON and was quite a sportsman. He had a very high pressure position at Avro. He had a mental breakdown, in a home and I was the only one he would see. I was in the Avro purchasing division. Norm Lucas was the top person in this department. Besides Walter there was Leo Rock (worked out of wheel chair) Roy Hems, Jim Eady, Stu Learmont, Bill Hutton and I might think of more.

When I started working, just as things were happening, the Purchasing Department for the Arrow would get the drawings and specs from the Engineering Department, and because all the bought out parts were new, we had to find suppliers that were in that type of work, ask them if they were interested then send the necessary info, ask them to quote, giving us a price, including testing, approximate weight. It ended up that their where over 5,000 never made before parts. They included tires, canopy, under carriage, nose cone, windshield, etc. all parts to be used in altitudes of 60,000 feet and vibrations encountered when going twice the speed of sound. My job to look after the tendering, delivery of 1145 items.

They were in the structure, electrical, canopy, air-condition and under carriage.

If you think my information is what you are looking for, I can give you more info. As to covid I had my first shot on March 5th and get my 2nd vaccine on June 25th. My wife, who I was married to for almost 66 years passed away 6 years ago this coming Friday.

The best to you and your wife. Don

Don Novak

Memories about Avro

Hi Fred: Some thoughts to answer your e-mail dated April 13, 2021

I don't have any pictures when I worked at Avro. I'll try to send one of recent photo's of me later.

I do have memories I will share with you now. Like I said before I worked in The Design Liaison Procurement Department

I started at Avro in June 1954 and was laid off February 22nd 1959.

There were five of us working together to get the bought out parts. Bill Hutton, Stue Learmont, My self and Ken ??? and Bill??, I wasn't close to the last two guys. We got the necessary specs, drawings from the Engineering Dept and sent them to the different suppliers.

You have to remember the this was a very new aircraft and almost all the major equipment did not exist. High vibration at twice the speed of sound and temperature at 60,000 feet. The Arrow had over 5,000 new parts and all had to be tested for these conditions.

Of the 5,000 pieces of equipment, I was responsible for 1145, electrical, structure, air condition, de-icing and cock pit. None of the equipment was off the shelf and the parts would be only used on the 6 planes, 5 flying models and 1 to be tested to destruction. So we didn't have a lot of leverage to get deliveries on time. We had to find key people at each of our suppliers, get their confidence and convince them how important this was. This was not easy to do because the Arrow was better than anything the American's had at that time and some manufactures were a bit cool toward us.

We worked hard to accomplish getting the testing done, keeping the weight acceptable, getting the delivery while keeping the price in line. In 1958 I made 35 trips, just in New York, Newark, Connecticut, Ohio and Illinois to expedite the parts required for the Arrow.

The long hours and hard work paid off because the five of us were standing just off the tarmac when on March 25th 1958 Zurkowski broke 4 speed records. We all had tears in our eyes. I was responsible for the tires from Goodyear in Akron Ohio, and they to blow on the landing and Stu Learmont, who was responsible for the Parachute, I don't remember the name but they were from Fort Erie, Canada had his chute open up successfully to stop the Arrow on landing. This was our happiest day of our life. The saddest day was February the 20th when the Conservative Government cancelled the CF105 AVRO ARROW contract.

It took me a few months to find a job I thought I would like in maybe the construction industry. Like the aircraft industry, I didn't know anything about the Ready Mixed Concrete Business but told Boehmer's that because I didn't have any experience and was a quick learner, they could teach me exactly like they wanted me batch. I started working for them in June 1959 and retired 33 years later on December 31 1992 as manager of the Concrete Products Division.

I had a very interesting time at Boehmers. I got books on Concrete and talked to many people about concrete and when Boehmers got the Contract from Ontario Hydro to supply concrete to the first Nuclear Power Plant and they asked me if I was interested in going up to Douglas Point and work with the best concrete people Hydro had I jumped at the chance. I started in Douglas Point in February 1961 and learned all I could and met many concrete people . When the project was over, I took my knowledge to help Boehmers get the Concrete for the Naticoke Hydro Plant. Then I helped to put a proposal and Quote for Bruce "A" Nuclear Hydro Plant, the Concrete Plant at Pickering "B". By this time, I had been promoted to Divisional Manager and was the lead person on the Bruce "B" Nuclear which was rewarded to Boehmers.

I was very fortunate to marry Jean Kraft on May 7th 1959, she passed away on March 26th 2015 She spent all her life looking after the 5 kids we had. We had 4 boys and 1 girl. All the kids are still married to their original spouse. Each of my children have 2 children and I have 7 Great Grand Children.

Well Fred I hope this is what you were looking for.

Don Novak April 15, 2021

Family Group Sheet for Donald John NOVAK

Husband:		Donald John NOVAK	
	Birth:	03 May 1927 in Herlan Ave, Kitchener, Ontario	
	Marriage:	07 May 1949 in St. Mary's Church Kitchener, Ontario	
	Father:	John Joseph NOVAK	
	Mother:	Marie Ann DRONSKIEWICZ	
Wife:		Jean Elinor KRAFT	
	Birth:	27 Jan 1930 in 78 Samuel St., Kitchener, Ontario	
	Death:	26 Mar 2015 in At Home, Heidelberg ON	
	Burial:	31 Mar 2015 in Woodland Cemetary, Kitchener, Ontario	
	Father:	Norman Louis KRAFT	
	Mother:	Doris Maude TROUBRIDGE	
Children:			
1	Name:	Randall Donald NOVAK	
M	Birth:	22 Feb 1950 in St. Marys Hosp. Kitchener Ontario	
	Marriage:	15 Aug 1975 in Mc Master Univ., Hamilton, Ontario	
	Spouse:	Mary Jane ROBINSON	
2	Name:	Mark David NOVAK	
M	Birth:	17 Nov 1952 in K-W Hospital, Kitchener, Ontario	
	Marriage:	20 Oct 1990 in St. Clements Church St. Clements Ontario	
	Spouse:	Doris KOCH	
3	Name:	Neil Douglas NOVAK	
M	Birth:	02 Aug 1954 in K-W Hospital, Kitchener, Ontario	
	Marriage:	09 Jul 1988 in St. Ambrose, Cambridge, Ontario	
	Spouse:	Fabiola Elda SCUDIERO	
4	Name:	Terence Dale NOVAK	
M	Birth:	23 Sep 1956 in K-W Hospital, Kitchener, Ontario	
	Marriage:	11 Jul 1981 in All Saints Anglican, Ottawa, Ontario	
	Spouse:	Susan Jo GOURLEY	
5	Name:	Tammy Jean NOVAK	
F	Birth:	07 Oct 1964 in St. Mary's Hosp., Kitchener Ontario	
	Marriage:	10 May 1986 in St.Clements Church, St. Clements Ont.	
	Spouse:	Robert Russel BAILEY	
Notes:			
Donald John NOVAK			
Started family Tree in 1972			