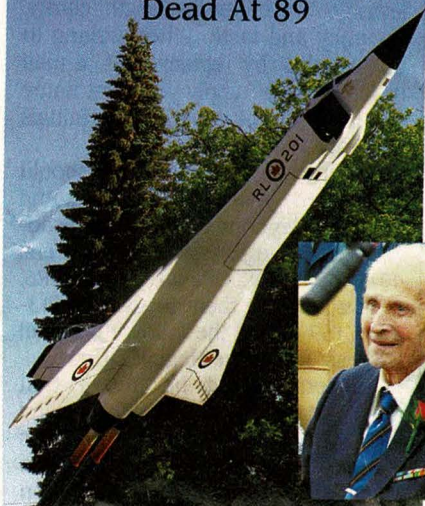


Journal

by Ray Dick

Avro Arrow Test Pilot
Dead At 89

PHOTOS: MARY RILEY, BARRY'S BAY THIS WEEK
"It was the high point of my career,"
says former test pilot Janusz Zurakowski,
the first to fly the legendary Avro Arrow.

Janusz Zurakowski...It's a name that doesn't slide easily off the lips, but it is one that is well known in aviation circles around the world and especially to anyone who has followed one of the most enduring stories in Canadian aviation—the birth and stillborn death of the legendary Avro Arrow fighter plane.

The Russian-born aviator, who flew for the Polish Air Force and later with the Royal Air Force in the Battle of Britain, died in February at his home near the small Ontario community of Barry's Bay, where he spent the quieter part of his life as a backwoods tourist operator and boat designer.

His name, however, is permanently enshrined in the Aviation Hall of Fame. And so it seems is the legend of the CF-105—the Avro Arrow—the could-have-

been Canadian fighter which he was the first to fly in March 1958. An estimated 10,000 people cheered when Zurakowski landed the plane at Malton airport in Toronto after the 35-minute maiden flight.

A scant few months later, with the Arrow about to be outfitted with a better engine, the Conservative Government of John Diefenbaker cancelled the entire project, ostensibly because of high development costs, and ordered the six prototype aircraft destroyed along with all plans and parts.

"The Avro Arrow was the high point of my career," Zurakowski said in a 1989 interview with the Ottawa Citizen. "Once the cancellation of the Arrow took place, I decided to make a change. I spent 25 years in my career and I reached a high level, but I felt there was no more use." He turned down several offers to work in the U.S., opting to set up Kartuzy Lodge on Kamaniskeg Lake about 150 kilometres west of Ottawa.

The fighter plane, designed by A.V. Roe Canada as a military aircraft for the post-war age, was considered the epitome of Canadian engineering and way ahead of its time. The Arrow was designed as an interceptor that could reach Mach 2, twice the speed of sound.

Cancellation meant thousands of aviation workers and engineering specialists at A.V. Roe lost their jobs, but many were picked up by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration that was then planning trips into space.

Zurakowski is also remembered fondly by the people of Barry's Bay, where last summer a commemorative park, including a quarter-scale model of the Arrow, was opened in his honour. And the Royal Canadian Mint honoured the test pilot with a \$20 commemorative coin in 1996.

British Towns Remember
Canadian WW II Soldiers

This is a story that involves a small forest fire-ravaged town in British Columbia, an 80-year-old war bride and the residents of some villages and towns in Sussex, England, that fondly remember the Canadian soldiers who virtually took over the area during WW II.

Elsie Kennedy of Sidney, B.C., is the war bride who vividly remembers when the 3rd Canadian Division invaded her small village of Lindfield in the 1940s and how the residents opened their homes to billet the Canadians.

Six decades later, with forest fires ravaging B.C. communities and especially the small town of Barriere, Kennedy wrote to her sister Kath Rusby in Lindfield and to other childhood friends in the area, describing the dreadful toll of the forest fires and wondering if Lindfield remem-

bered the Canadian soldiers and why they came to the village 60 years ago.

They did. A local newspaper reported on a "Lindfield born and bred" afternoon tea party: "They came together ...to pay back their debt in Canada's hour of need after a summer of forest fires which have devastated land and homes in British Columbia...people donated 861 pounds (\$2,045) to the town of Barriere whose sawmill—the only source of employment—has been ravaged."

The Canadian High Commission in London donated balloons, flags and a raffle prize for the occasion. And the famous wartime singer Vera Lynn, who lives not far from Lindfield, offered several items for auction. It was an overwhelming response, and it delighted Elsie Kennedy. It also resulted in a thank-you letter to Lindfield from B.C. Premier Gordon Campbell.

In a letter to Legion Magazine on the events in Lindfield, Kennedy also informs of another event honouring Canadian troops: "The Sussex village of Waldron is holding a special event this summer called Waldron At War," she writes. "I know they would be delighted to see any Canadians who were stationed there during the war."

Hall Of Valour Project
Seeks Support

Wanted: Stories and photographs of men and women veterans that will be displayed in the Books of Honour section of the Hall of Valour to be opened in Carleton Place, about 45 kilometres southwest of Ottawa, in June next year.

The unique Hall of Valour project will allow Canadians for the first time to learn in one facility the biographic detail of the thousands of decorated and non-decorated men and women who fought for this country in two world wars, Korea and in peacekeeping missions. A central hallway will display portraits and short biographies of Victoria Cross winners. On one side will be a viewing room for videos and movies of wartime and peacekeeper scenes. The other side of the hallway is a large study room with computer stations, wartime history and peacekeeping books, Books of Valour and Books of Honour.

The Books of Valour will contain portraits and short biographies of veterans who received valour awards while the Books of Honour recognizes all those others that served for the cause of peace.

Bob Campbell, president of Canada Veterans Hall of Valour Inc., says Books of Honour have been the most challenging part of the project and that many more stories and photos of servicemen and women are needed to go along with those already gathered for the opening of the project next year. Legion branches

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