

## The WCAM and *The Arrow*

George W. Elliott

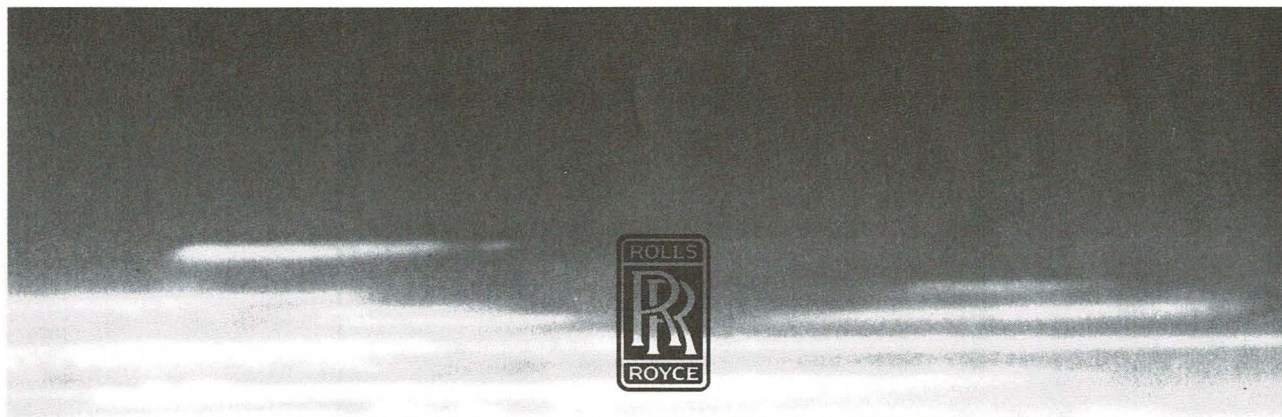
In February of 1996, the advance team of Straight Arrow Productions, the Company which would produce the four-hour TV mini-series entitled *The Arrow* visited the Western Canada Aviation Museum. Tim Byders, Dave Mahoney and others came to the Museum to find out just what kind of support they could receive to produce the TV mini-series. They required buildings which looked similar to the A.V. Roe Aircraft Limited buildings at Malton Airport in Toronto as well as a large number of aircraft artifacts for set dressings and several aircraft of that era. The Museum was very eager to support this film production as the word was out on the street in Winnipeg — "let's do our very best to overcome the somewhat tarnished image the City had acquired related to another film production which was lost a few years ago."

The Straight Arrow Productions representatives indicated that this would be a major production with a budget in excess of seven million dollars and it would prove to be a very beneficial activity for the City of Winnipeg as well as the Western Canada Avi-

ation Museum. To allow for the development of the appropriate filming sets, artifacts would be used such as various assemblies of aircraft, jigs, old wings, electronic components, uniforms and other items. The Production Company would also require aircraft of the 50's vintage, such as the CF-100 which was built by the A.V. Roe Co., the RCAF Expeditor, the T33 and an F-86 Sabre. The Museum had a wealth of material to support the production of *The Arrow* and we indicated that we would be glad to fully participate in whatever way that would be beneficial to the movie company.

The first activity that took place was an assessment of the WCAM buildings on Ramp 4 on the Winnipeg International Airport. The Museum's display hangar T2 was very similar to the A.V. Roe building right down to the color of the brick and the type of windows in the office area. The service buildings between hangars T2 and T5 were again of the right architectural design for the period that the TV mini-series covered. The Museum's large hangar T5 proved to be an excellent site for the roll-

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really excellent time from all of the positive reports that we've received. Gift Shop sales, as was the case with the Arrow, spiralled nearly straight up for the three days.

This exhibit project that was jointly supported by the Confederate Air Force, the Western Canada Aviation Museum and the West Winnipeg Rotary Club can only be described as a tremendous success. The holiday spirit of all of the visitors to the Museum clearly indicated to us all that everyone had a good time. We received many questions as to what we were going to do next year as this type of an exhibit was of a high interest to Museum visitors. The Confederate Air Force crew members including Jean Gapart, Rod MacCosham and their wives plus all of the other crew, the Museum staff and volunteers, the Rotary members and volunteers all made this a very spe-

cial occasion at the WCAM. I have to compliment the Confederate Air Force members for their real showmanship in touring visitors through the aircraft, telling them stories of the history of the aircraft and just being available for all types of questions. Upon their departure, the two aircraft did a very spectacular fly-by across the Museum and the Winnipeg International Airport. It was a very fitting farewell at the end of a very great weekend.

In closing, I want to ensure that Gary Bolton and all of the other members of the West Winnipeg Rotary Club are fully aware of the sincere thanks and appreciation from all of us at the WCAM. I want to also thank all of the WCAM volunteers, some who worked very long hours to support this heritage weekend.

## WCAM Welcomes New Members

Radisson Suite Hotel  
Winnipeg Airport  
Winnipeg, MB

KIRK, Thomas W.J.  
Marquette, MB

CARRIGAN, Pat  
Winnipeg, MB

TRAA, Henry  
Winnipeg, MB

GILL, Jeff  
Winnipeg, MB

DIBNAH, Norm  
Winnipeg, MB

CHRISTIE, Murdo W.  
Saskatoon, SK

SCHETTLER, Warren  
Headingley, MB

BYRD, William  
Williamsburg, VA, USA

ALLEN, Chris  
Winnipeg, MB

BARAGAR, Michael J.  
Winnipeg, MB

LOFF, Christine &  
ELLIN, Vincent  
Winnipeg, MB

BROESKA, Doug  
Carman, MB

BOWES, Keith  
Portage la Prairie, MB

McCREARY, Greg & Family  
Domain, MB

McCARRON, J.W.  
Winnipeg, MB

YARKO, Stephen  
Winnipeg, MB

BANTING, R.D.  
Oakville, ON

STEWART, G.K. & E.  
Winnipeg, MB

HICKS, Graeme  
Halifax, N.S.

COUPLAND, David  
Teulon, MB

SCHLEDEWITZ, Ivor  
Winnipeg, MB

KINDRET, B. &  
SCHULTZ, Jim  
Winnipeg, MB

RUDNIK, Linda & Family  
Winnipeg, MB

## Donations Received



Development Officer Vicky Wilson receives a cheque for \$46,000.00 from John Harvard, M.P. Winnipeg-St. James. This represents the first installment of a \$64,000.00 grant from the Museums Assistance Program of the Department of Canadian Heritage.



A donation of \$2,000 from the 99's (International Organization of Women Pilots) is given to Development Officer Vicky Wilson, left, by 99's Shirley Render, right. The donation is for a portable video kiosk for the Museum.





The Avro Arrow replica hangared in the Museum's building T-5 just prior to the roll-out series for the Avro Arrow TV production.

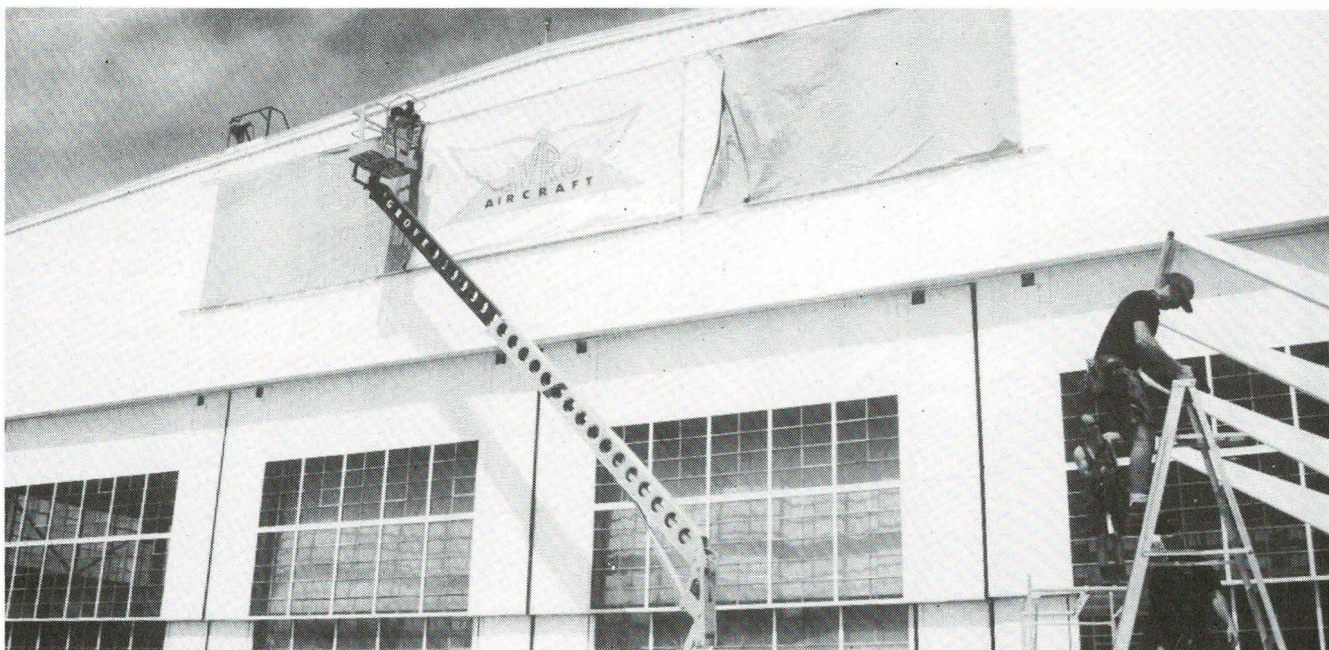
out of the Arrow scene.

Museum volunteers Tony Morien, Jim Lickley, Tim Robinson and others accompanied the Straight Arrow Production crew to Gimli, St. Andrews and East Selkirk to do an assessment of the various artifacts there in storage at these locations. There was some difficulty in accessing the artifacts storage building inasmuch as it was still winter and doors were frozen and snow had to be shovelled away, and in one case the frozen doors had to be jack-hammered to get them open. Perseverance prevailed and the crews were able to get a very good look at all of the various items stored in the Museum's buildings.

The Production Company then provided to the Museum a list of all the artifacts that it would be requiring for the filming of the TV mini-series. The

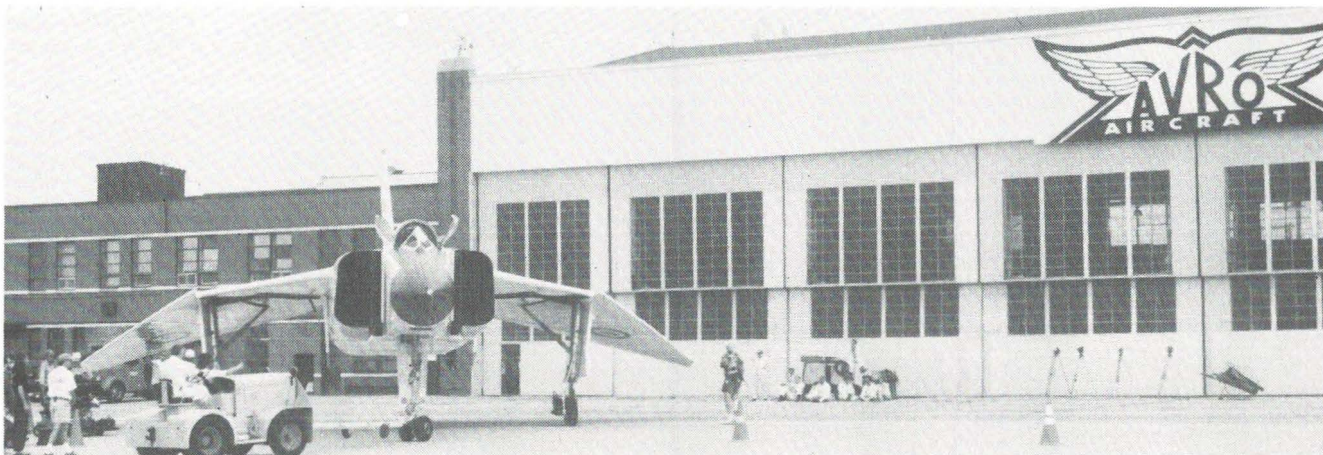
list of artifacts was extremely extensive and included a lot of jigs for the Fairchild 'Husky,' the Saunders ST-27 and ST-28, a lot of vintage electronic equipment and simulators for the CF-100 and T33. The Museum agreed to the use of these artifacts if the Production Company moved them from their storage areas to the filming site in T127 on the Winnipeg International Airport. The agreement with the Production Company also included the return of all the artifacts to the Museum's new Storage Complex at St. Andrews Airport. It took four forty-foot tractor trailers to move the artifacts to the filming site. It was amazing to see just how much material was required to develop the various sets for the filming process.

The Museum also acted as an intermediary for the



The making over of the Museum's building T-5 to simulate the Avro Aircraft Ltd. hangar in Toronto at the original Avro Arrow roll-out.





WCAM steps back into the past as its display hangar is named for Avro Aircraft Ltd. The Avro Arrow replica used in the Avro Arrow mini-series is parked in front of the WCAM hangar which was renamed the Avro Aircraft hangar.

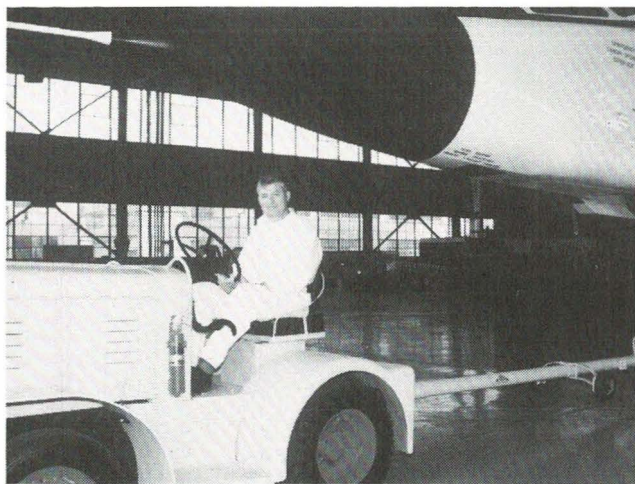
production company in the receipt of artifacts from the National Aviation Museum in Ottawa and the Brampton Museum, north of Toronto. These artifacts were forwarded to the Museum and were basically under care and control of the Museum during the filming process. The Museum's Associate Curator, George E. Lammers, Ph.D. was very helpful in curating the various artifacts and working with the other museums to allow the Production Company access to artifacts which they considered very important within their collections.

The Museum's display hangar T2 became the A.V. Roe hangar. The large sign on the airside of the Museum's display hangar was painted out and the logo of A.V. Roe Limited was installed. This was a very beneficial activity for the Museum as the Production Co. had to repaint the very large Museum sign on the hangar following the completion of filming. The Museum's other hangar, T5, had large signs installed on it as well showing the logo of A.V. Roe Limited. The hangar T5 was designated to be the 'roll-out' hangar for the Arrow scene. For all of these preparations, the atmosphere on Ramp 4

of the Winnipeg International Airport certainly took on the appearance as being the area in which the Avro Arrow was produced and rolled out at Malton Airport in Toronto in 1957.

The Museum worked with the Arrow production crew in many ways, including several volunteers acting as advisors, the Associate Curator, George E. Lammers, assisting with many small details, volunteers providing security, the Museum providing meeting rooms for various production activities. To say the very least, it was an extremely busy time for the WCAM but a very enjoyable time. The attendance in the Museum started to increase once there were several articles written about the production of *The Arrow* TV mini-series. The Museum sold all kinds of Arrow books during the period of time and any other posters or Arrow memorabilia that we were able to obtain and put on sale. The Gift Shop had record sales which were in the neighbourhood of \$10,000.00.

Production of the movie began in April and carried through until early August. The leading stars were Dan Aykroyd and Christopher Plummer. There was a great deal of filming activity on Ramp 4, both at the Museum's display hangar T2 and the Museum's hangar T5. The 'roll-out' scene at hangar T5 involved a lot of props made up of vintage cars and trucks and even filming equipment of the roll-out era. The day of the roll-out arrived and some 300 extras were gathered for the ceremony and if you have read the Arrow book and seen the pictures of the 'roll-out,' what was present here in Winnipeg on that day was very similar to what occurred in Toronto in 1957. The 'roll-out' was covered by news media from Winnipeg and many other major centres in the nation. It was top-of-the-hour on national TV, front page on national newspapers as well as the local newspapers. There is no doubt that the Arrow fever was very high in the city of Winnipeg during this very historic filming of *The Arrow*. The Avro Arrow is a legend in our country and the legend had



WCAM member Gordon Norwicky prepares to tow the Avro Arrow replica for the roll-out scene in the TV mini-series filmed in Winnipeg.



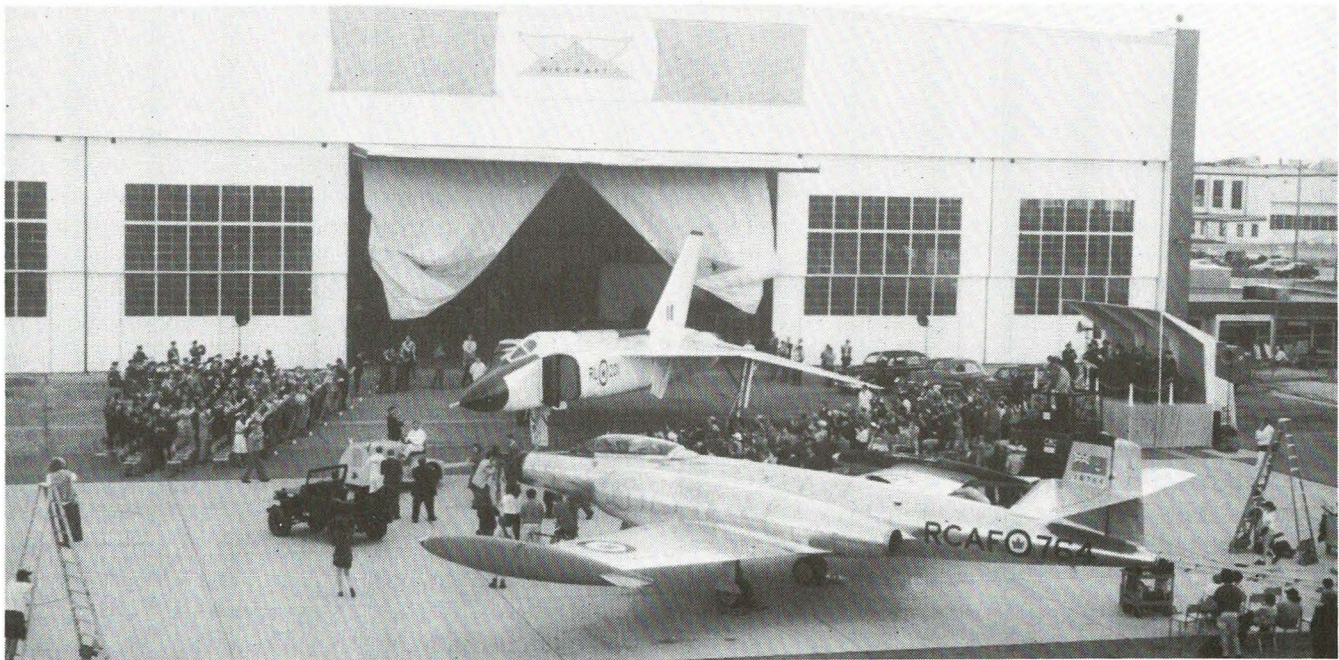


The film set for the roll-out Avro Arrow replica used for the TV mini-series *The Arrow*.

come to life for everyone to see — right here in Winnipeg and at the Western Canada Aviation Museum. There were crowds of people along Ferry Road, along the airport fence, watching all of the happenings that were taking place.

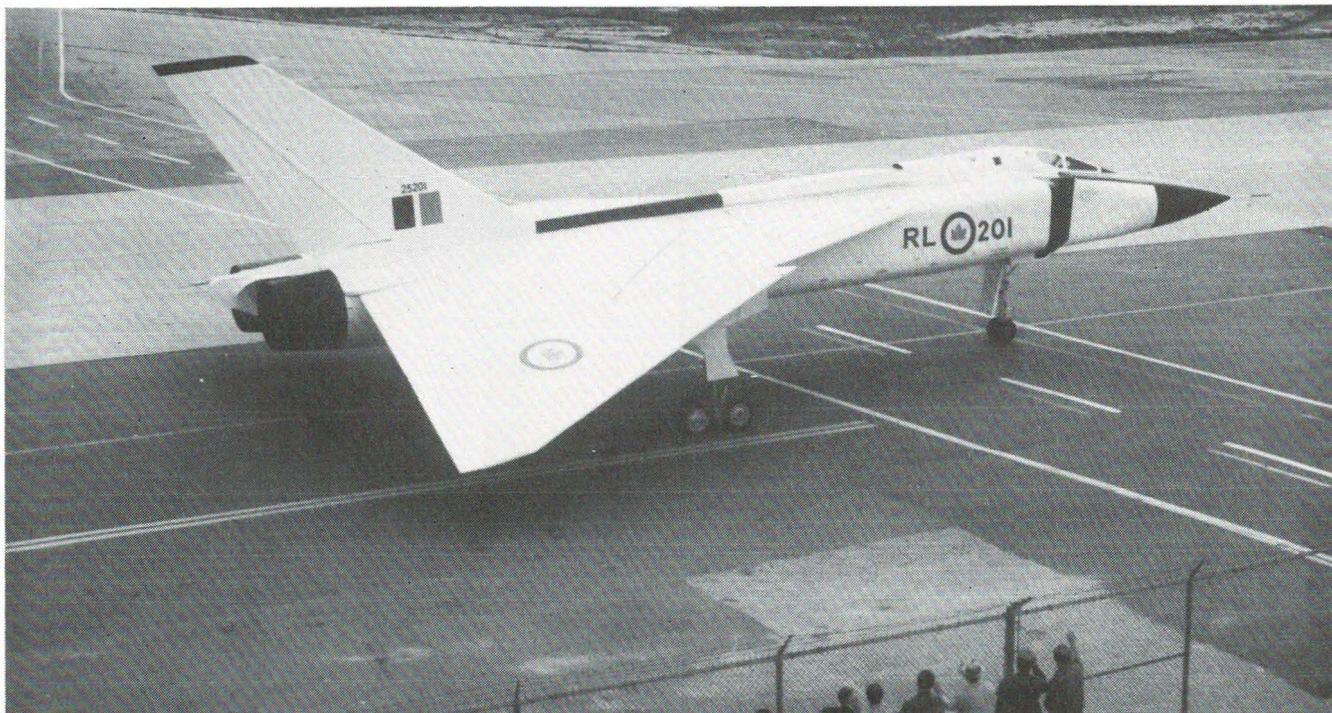
The replica of the Avro Arrow developed by the Production Company was full scale — 84 feet long, 22 feet to the top of the tail and with a 50 foot wing-spread. The replica had been under construction by Allan Jackson in Wetaskiwin, Alberta. This gentleman had completed the front nose section and the

main framework for the fuselage was partially completed. The production company brought all of the parts of the replica from Wetaskiwin to Winnipeg. They then undertook completing and skinning the fuselage section, marrying up the nose section and producing a very outstanding Avro Arrow replica. They even went to the length of installing electric motors on the landing gear so that actual taxi runs could be filmed for the TV series. The replica that the Straight Arrow Production Company produced was accurate to the point that, if you were 50 to 60



The roll-out scene of the Avro Arrow replica filmed in front of the Museum's building T-5. The Museum's CF-100 RCAF 764 is also shown in the foreground.





The Avro Arrow replica does simulated taxi runs in front of the extras of *The Arrow* TV mini-series production. The taxi runs were done adjacent to the Museum's Hangar T-2.

feet away from it — it was a real aeroplane. They did have some problems with the sagging of the wings; however, using different camera angles, they were able to overcome this problem.

The Museum's hangar T2 was used for approximately a week and filmed from various angles. The Arrow taxi-runs were filmed from the Museum roof area. The front of the Museum was used as the entrance to the A.V. Roe complex. The airside area of the Museum was used for the very sad activity that took place on Black Friday, February 20th, 1958, when the six Arrow Aircraft were cut up and destroyed. There were several mock-up fuselages of the Arrow, six in fact — and these were chopped up in the manner that had taken place in Toronto many years ago. If there is anything in this production that had a sad and sour note, it was watching the filming of the destruction scenes. When you see the destruction scenes, you will know that it was directly in front of the airside hangar doors of Museum's display hangar. Really a sad use of this area; however, it did provide a very realistic backdrop.

When all the filming was going on directly associated with the Museum, all the roads and parking lots were filled with the various vans, trailers, wardrobe trucks, and I guess you could say, 'you name it.' The production crew numbered 110 and those were 110 very busy people. One thing you find out when you become associated with a film production such as this is that all of the deadlines that they were dealing with — were 'yesterday.'

It's certainly a very stressful activity for those involved and one that goes on for long hours — 10

to 12 — everyday until the final scenes are captured on film. To be involved in this very historic TV mini-series was a very rewarding opportunity for many of us at the WCAM.

Several of the staff and a lot of the volunteers became involved even to the point of being extras for the film and you can be assured that there will be none of us at WCAM who will ever forget this wonderful opportunity that we had. I must say it was a pleasure working with the representatives of the Straight Arrow Productions, a very professional group of people — sometimes somewhat demanding, but it was understandable given the types of activities that they were undertaking. The Museum was able to provide Straight Arrow Productions with artifacts, aircraft and a site which really made the production of *The Arrow* reality. The various Museum buildings, artifacts, and aircraft fit so well within the period of the TV mini-series that we received many comments that our support and help were really invaluable. The Straight Arrow Production Company was very supportive of the Museum and the Museum benefitted in many ways — financially, work done in-kind, and a project that we have been working at for some time — the movement of a lot of artifacts out of Gimli to our new Storage Complex at St. Andrews.

The WCAM collection was enriched by the participation and the production of the TV mini-series *The Arrow*. There are an awful lot of Avro Arrow artifacts out there in the possession of the general public. The artifacts have been handed down from people who were directly involved with the Arrow



or people who have them as keepsakes from their participation in the Arrow project. Once it became so public that the series *The Arrow* was being filmed in Winnipeg, a lot of artifacts showed up at the Museum's front door. These artifacts included technical manuals, models, electronic components, a beautiful collector's plate, photographs and other items. The Straight Arrow Production Company also gave the Museum several artifacts for its collection including technical manuals, drawings, uniforms from the 50's era and a replica flight suit from Jack Woodman. The production company also provided the Museum with two Arrow simulators that they produced for set props. The Brampton Museum donated to the Museum the original Avro Arrow simulator enclosure, plus a drag chute used in the Arrow flight testing program and the front stage compressor assembly for the Orenda engine. The large banner with the A.V. Roe logo which decorated the front of hangar T5 is now a part of

the WCAM collection. These artifacts plus a few that the Museum had prior to the filming of the mini-series now make up a very significant collection and likely as large as any in the country.

In summation, it can only be said that the Western Canada Aviation Museum greatly benefitted from having *The Arrow* production take place in Winnipeg. The production company loaned the Avro Arrow replica to the Museum for the weekend of August 9th, 10th and 11th. The replica was put on display for the public and 3000 Winnipeggers showed up to see it. It was a very happy time at the Museum and at times it was so evident that there was a great deal of very strong emotion about the Canadian Legend — the CF-105 Avro Arrow.

From the Museum, I would like to extend to all of the crew of the Straight Arrow Productions, our thanks for using the WCAM as a major central focus for the filming of the TV mini-series *The Arrow*.



The Avro Arrow replica being positioned in the Museum for public display on the weekend of Aug. 9, 10, 11. The replica was used in the filming of the TV mini-series, *The Arrow*. Three thousand Winnipeggers came to the Museum to see the Avro Arrow replica.

## WCAM

### 13th Annual Awards Dinner

FRIDAY, APRIL 18, 1997  
HOLIDAY INN – AIRPORT WEST  
2520 PORTAGE AVE., WINNIPEG

Cocktails 6 pm  
Dinner 7 pm  
Presentation 8 pm  
Dancing 9 pm to midnight

Tickets \$50 each  
Call (204) 786-5503 for tickets

Details in the next issue of the *Aviation Review*

## Books at WCAM's Gift Shop

Now available at the WCAM is a new book: *Through Footless Halls of Air (Stories of Atlantic Canada Airmen Who Failed to Return)* by Floyd Williston, a Winnipeg writer. This publication with approximately 350 pages, is well illustrated and is dedicated to P/O John Magee of *High Flight* fame.

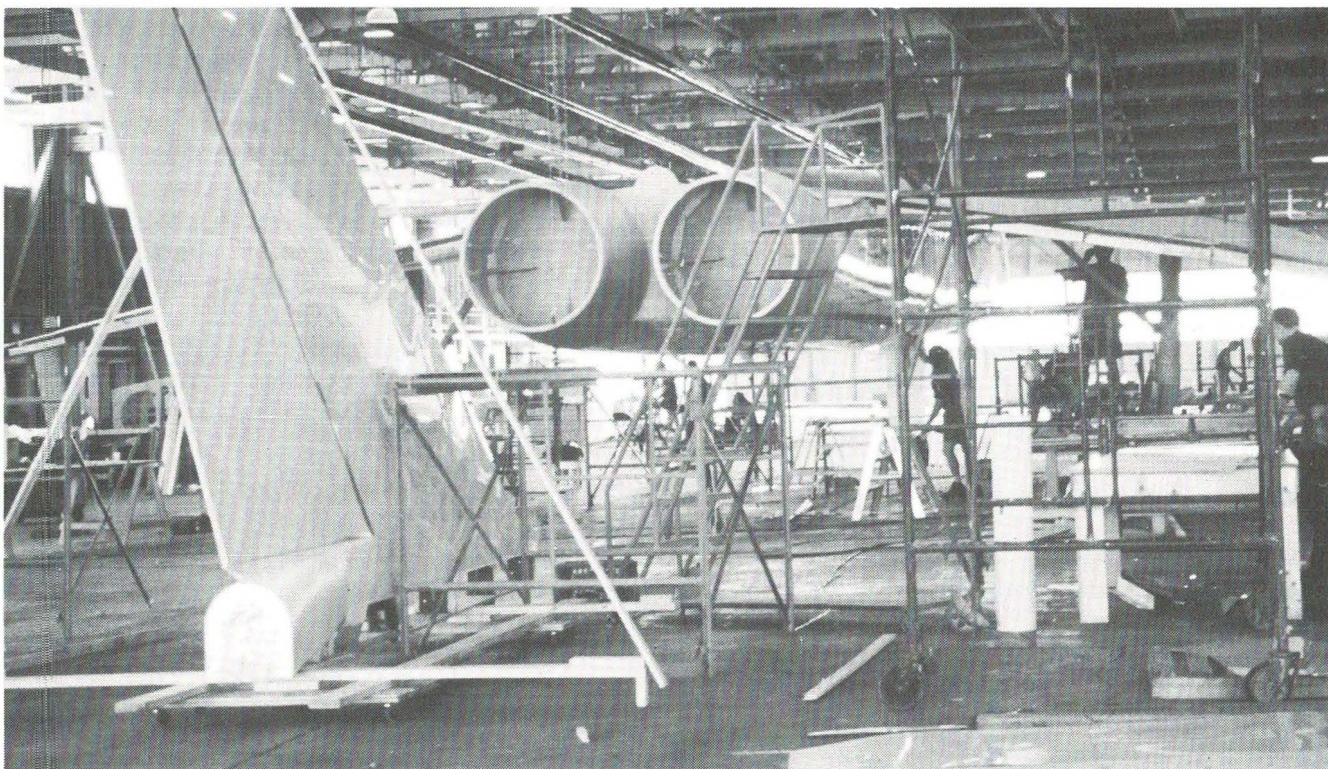
Interspersed throughout every chapter are the names of many Canadian airmen, including numerous Manitobans. The author also provides the reader with the first relatively complete account on the 111 Canadians who were killed in action on the March 30 & 31, 1944 Nuremberg Raid. The full list of Canadian casualties is included in the Appendix.



## The Avro Arrow on Centre Stage at the Western Canada Aviation Museum

by Bill Zuk

(All photos courtesy of Bill Zuk)



Construction of the Avro Arrow replica took place at the Winnipeg International Airport during the month of June 1996. Using Allan Jackson's wooden and steel framework, the film set construction crew led by Ernie Friesen completed the movie Avro Arrow by building outerwing panels and tail surfaces.

On October 4, 1957, the same day as Sputnik I was revealed to the world, another important event was taking place in Malton, Ontario at the Avro Canada plant. After years of design and construction, the Avro CF-105 Arrow roll-out took place in front of an estimated 12,000 guests who had joined the Avro employees who had proudly built the aircraft. Almost 40 years later, an Avro Arrow is again on centre stage in front of the people who brought it to life — this time, a life-size replica of the Arrow is being used as its stand-in for a film shot in Winnipeg.

Scheduled for release in January, 1997, *The Arrow* will be a four-hour CBC mini-series, starring Dan Aykroyd as Crawford Gordon, the combative CEO of Avro Canada. Along with Aykroyd, *The Arrow* will also feature Christopher Plummer, Michael Ironside, Michael Moriarty and Canadian television stars, Sarah Botsford of *E.N.G.*, Ron White (*Kissinger and Nixon*) and Aidan Devine of *Net Worth* and *The Boys of St. Vincent*. At an estimated \$7 million budget, the mini-series will also showcase a dozen other principal actors and use an estimated 300 extras, making it the largest film production ever shot in Winnipeg.

*The Arrow* mini-series had its beginnings in 1989 when writer, Keith Ross Leckie, along with his wife, producer Mary Young Leckie, began to develop the story as a feature film. Financing was difficult to raise but when Hollywood actor and consummate Canadian, Aykroyd, was approached to take a leading role in the film, he suggested that a CBC mini-series would be possible.

"Coming back to TV, Canadian TV and the CBC . . . was very exciting," recalled Aykroyd recently. The project was also one to which he was personally committed; not only was he aware of the significance of the Avro Arrow but he also had a personal connection. His mother had known Crawford Gordon in the Second World War when she had worked for Gordon in his munitions program.

A joint production of Winnipeg's John Aaron Productions and Tapestry Films and The Film Works of Toronto, Straight Arrow Productions will produce *The Arrow* mini-series. It brings together some of Canada's finest feature film production and technical expertise. Toronto director Don McBready, award-winning director of the acclaimed *Butterbox Babies* (1992) is teamed with Toronto producers, Mary Young Leckie and Paul Stephens,



and Winnipeg producer Aaron Kim Johnston whose credits include *The Last Winter* (1989) and *For the Moment* (1995). Along with this talented quartet are numerous other nationally and locally known filmmakers, swelling the ranks of the production crew to approximately 150 people.

The mini-series is being produced in association with the CBC and with the participation of Telefilm Canada, Manitoba Film and Sound and WIC Western International Communications Ltd.

Winnipeg and Manitoba will be featured prominently in *The Arrow* mini-series. When producers researched the original Avro plant at Malton, Ontario, they found that it would not be possible to recreate the 1950s era in the modern Toronto International Airport complex. However, in Winnipeg, near the current airport runways, was a hangar area that was owned by the Western Canadian Aviation Museum that looked identical to the aircraft hangars of the 1950s. Throughout the rest of the city were many other areas that could recreate the post-war Toronto area — the McGregor Armoury, Exchange District, Air Command Headquarters and the Manitoba Legislative Building.

Another reason for picking Winnipeg as the site for *The Arrow* was the availability of a talented group of Manitoba filmmakers. With the recent success of production companies such as the Credo Group (*My Life as a Dog*) and John Aaron Productions, there was a proven track record in the province and a growing list of experienced actors and filmmakers. The mini-series has also received assistance

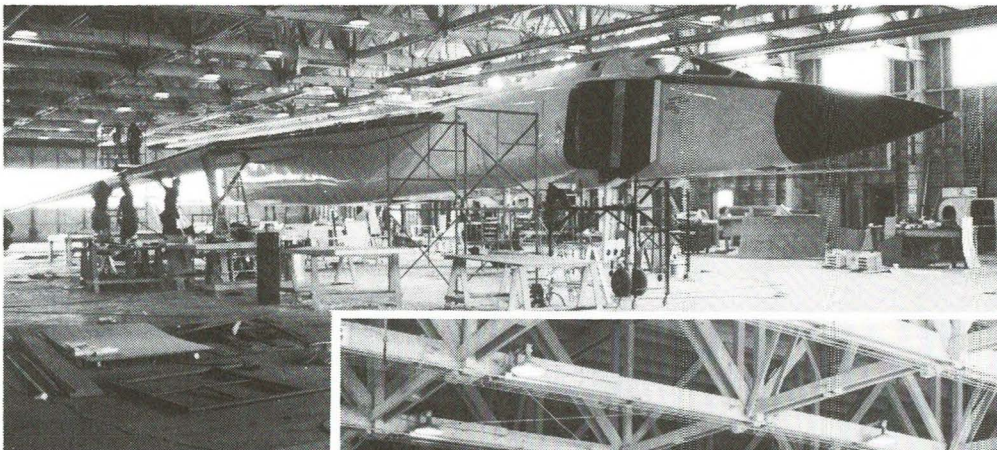
and cooperation from Air Canada, the Department of National Defence, the City of Winnipeg and the Western Canada Aviation Museum. At the end of principal photography, the Museum displayed the full-scale replica of the Avro Arrow for the public to see. (Incidentally, one of the original Avro Arrow nose cones is part of the WCAM collection).

*The Arrow* features a working model of the real aircraft. The origins of this scale replica had an unusual beginning. It had come from the workshop of Allan Jackson, a 59 year-old sales estimator working in the steel industry in Wetaskawin, Alberta. Beginning a long-term project of building an accurate replica of the Avro Arrow became a passion for Jackson. He had completed a wooden mock-up of the nose section by 1993 and had envisioned its final completion for the year 2000 until the intervention of the film crew.

Jackson had been building an exacting model, creating a wood and metal framework that was accurate to within inches of the original aircraft's dimensions. When Jackson was approached with a proposal to use the model in the film, an arrangement was made to complete the model for the mini-series and then transport it back to Wetaskawin.

Allan Jackson's dream was now about to come true. The completed model is destined for a museum display in the future, but for now, it plays an important leading role in the story of the Avro Arrow.

After the skeletal framework arrived in Winnipeg where principal shooting was to take place, it be-



As the sheet aluminum panels were attached, the model Arrow began to look the part.

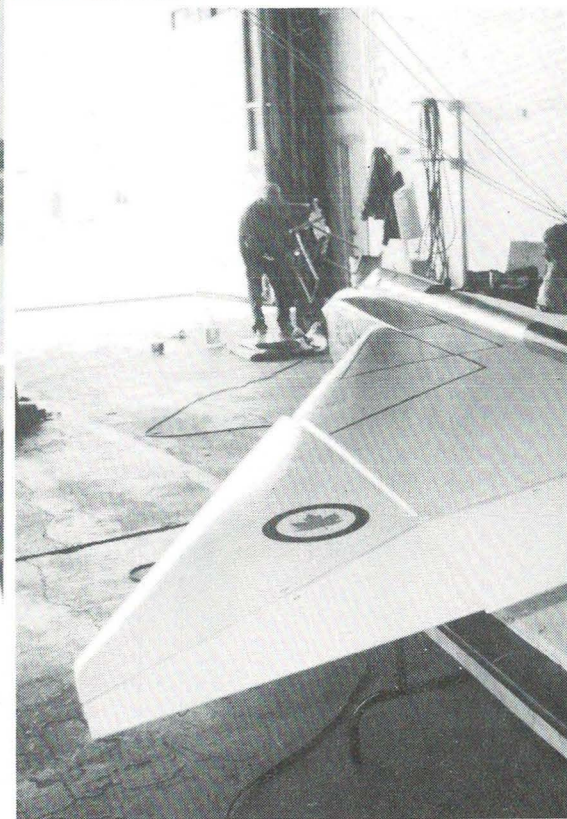
Due to the low ceiling height of the Esso hangar that *The Arrow* production utilized, the tail section was assembled last and could only be fitted in between ceiling girders.



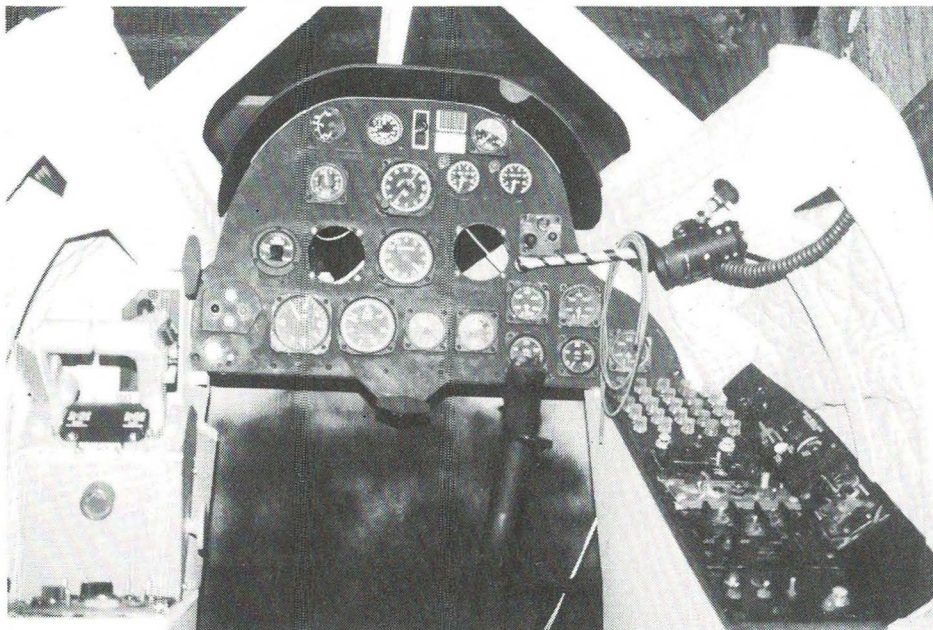




At Gimli airport, a helicopter crew using the "Skycam" camera filmed aerial scenes that involved large-scale models.



The RC models that were constructed in Calgary.



Interior shots of the Avro Arrow cockpit required the design and construction of an accurate full-size replica.



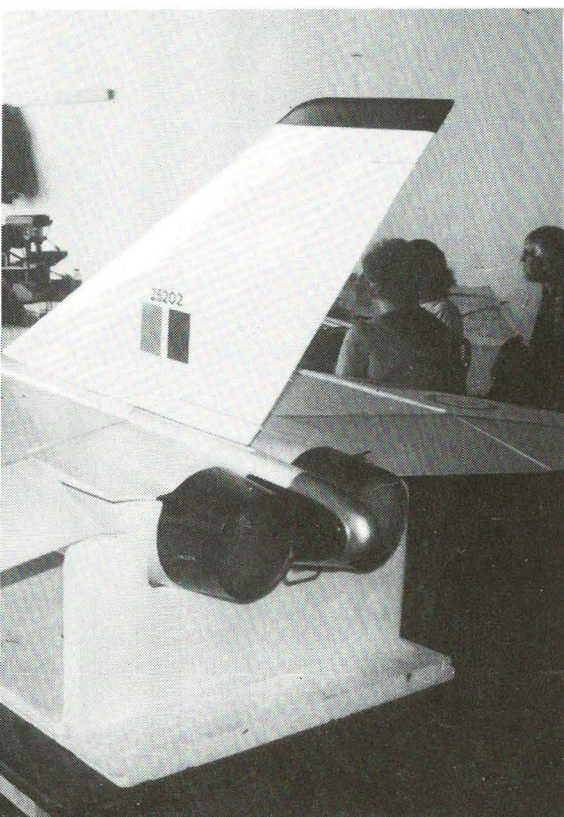
The finished Avro Arrow model in RL-201 scheme is moved to the Manitoba Government Air Services Hangar for the roll-out ceremony filming.



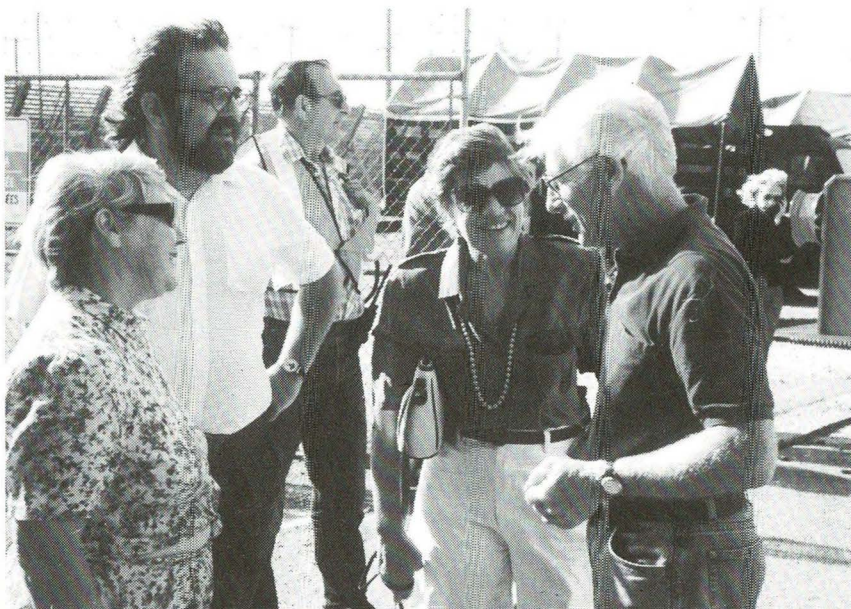
Dan Akyroyd portrayed Mrs. G in the mini-series. In this photo, he is with the other actors who played Mrs. G.



Studio publicist Ches Yetman (left) meets Sylvia and Derek Wooley on the set of *The Arrow*. Derek was a former Avro flight test engineer and former WCAM director.



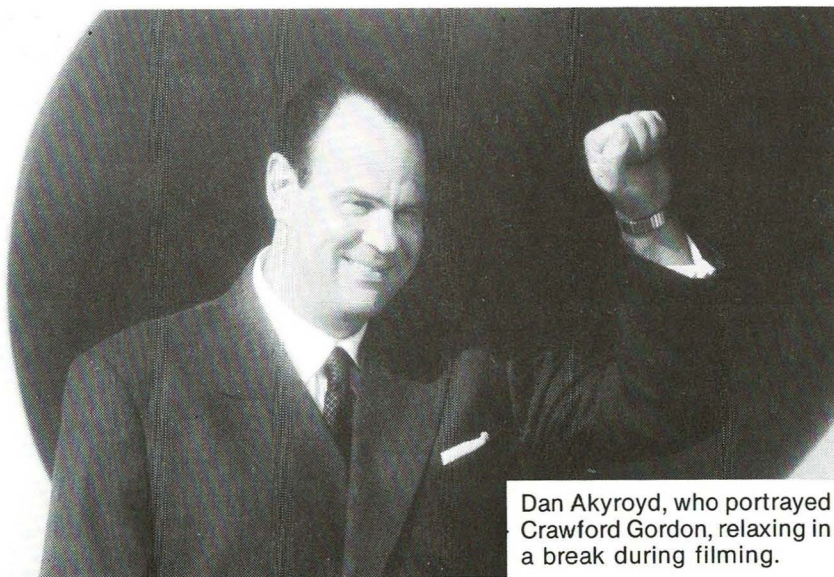
y arrived in July for filming at the Gimli airport.



Model maker Allan Jackson was also present for the roll-out scene.

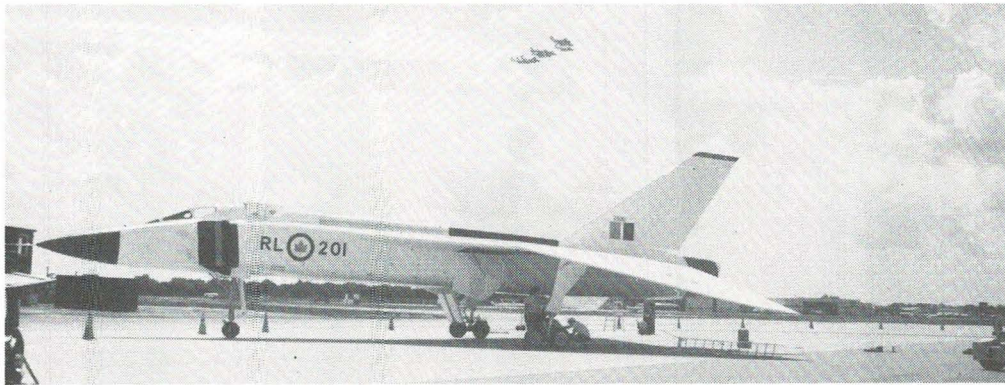


awford Gordon in *The Arrow*  
aph, Akyroyd is seen with action  
and Crawford Gordon Jr.



Dan Akyroyd, who portrayed  
Crawford Gordon, relaxing in  
a break during filming.





During filming at the Western Canada Aviation Museum complex, the Snowbirds made an appearance over the set.

came the job for David Melrose, construction supervisor, to make it the movie Avro Arrow. The model had to be finished by the end of June, roughly three weeks time, in order to be featured in exterior shooting that would take place at the Winnipeg International Airport. The nearly 24 metre long fuselage of the aircraft was assembled with the slightly longer than 15 metre wingspan delta wings next to be attached.

Melrose, was faced with a daunting project. The aircraft model had to look like the Avro Arrow but not to the point of being an exact reproduction - "it's movie magic . . . all illusion, nothing is real," explained David. With the need to get things done in a hurry, the 39-year-old supervisor worked with a mix of ten carpenters and craftsmen — all able to produce the parts needed to a deadline.

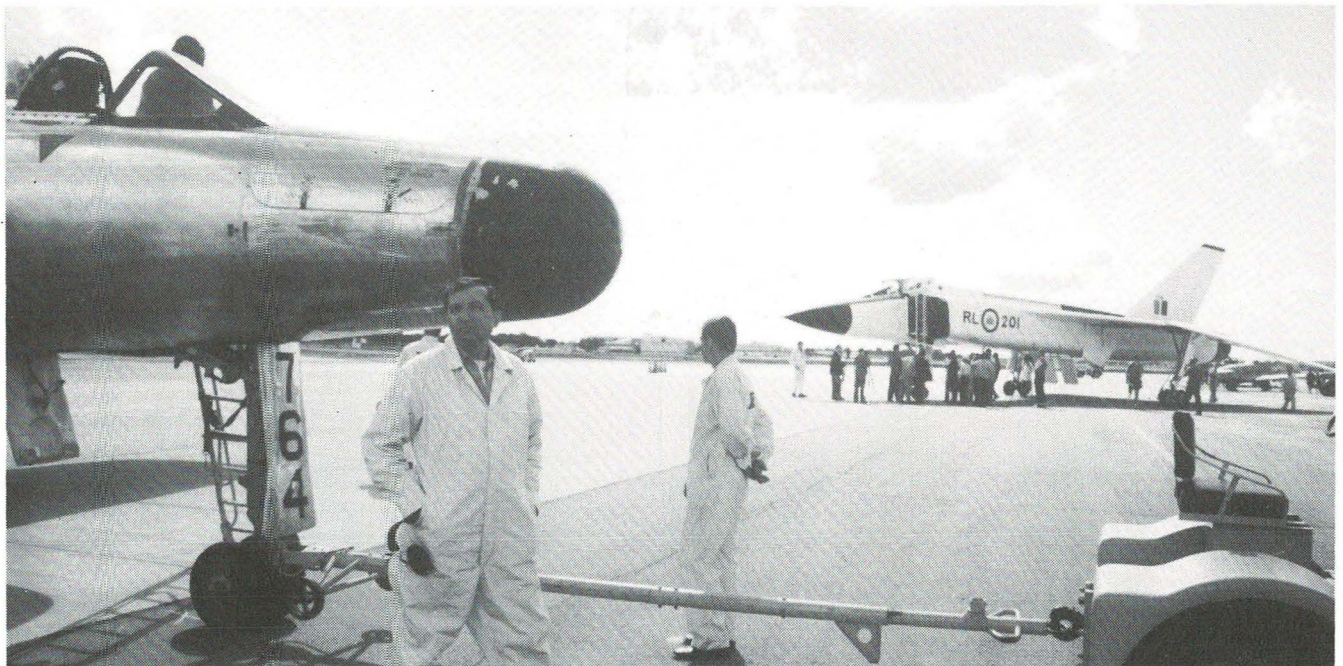
With the arrival of star Dan Aykroyd on June 12, came a flurry of publicity for the movie and the Arrow model was finally shown to the press. Still resembling a skeleton, the model began to take on a more finished appearance as thin white aluminum sheets were fastened to the frame. With the aircraft

sitting on its spindly landing gear, the next step was taken — to make the 7½ ton Arrow model actually move. Melrose had devised a set of DC powered motors for each of the main wheels.

A day ahead of schedule, the Avro Arrow model was ready to move from one side of the hangar to the other. As production publicist, Ches Yetman and production manager, Anna Marie Boquist, watched the operation, they noted that the aircraft was covered in dust and as the motors were started, the model shook the dust off. As it moved slowly ahead, Anna Marie said "it looked like to was coming to life . . ."

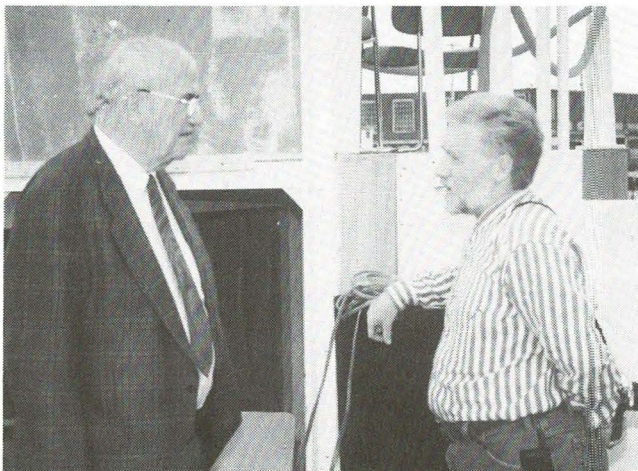
In the recreated Avro plant on the other side of the hangar, the model finally received its tail and final details. The Avro Arrow model was ready for filming.

On the fateful day in 1957, a small boy, George Foley had come along with his mother and father to see the unveiling of the Arrow. He was excited as all little boys could be on a special day — one where he could go to see where his father, a tool and die maker worked and of course to see the Avro



WCAM's CF-100 played the role of a chase plane for the mini-series.





Elwy Yost meets George Foley, "the little boy in the picture."

Arrow.

As the music surged and the crowd cheered, Foley gazed at the wonderful sight of the glistening white interceptor. Sometime that day, a photographer spotted him at the red rope barrier and took a photograph that became legend — a little boy gazing out at the giant fighter. The photograph appeared in several magazines and books — labelled "the future, looking at the future."

It was not to be, unfortunately. After the roll-out ceremony and an impressive test flying schedule, the entire Arrow project was cancelled and nearly all the Avro employees were fired. George's father continued his work as a tool and die maker but no longer in the aviation industry. George's family drifted to Newmarket, Ontario and years later, he began a new life in Winnipeg.

Fast forward to July 4, 1996; Foley returned to see the Arrow once again. There it was, being rolled out into the sunlight in the midst of hundreds of cheering people. He had been drawn to the set of *The Arrow* and he was not the only person to have



Actor Ron White who played RCAF test pilot Jack Woodman relaxes on the set.



George Foley nearly 40 years later, recreates the scene of the day the Arrow was rolled out. (See story).



The movie Arrow visited the WCAM after shooting was completed.





Rough landings and problems with the ducted fan engines of the RC models slowed the F/X filming.

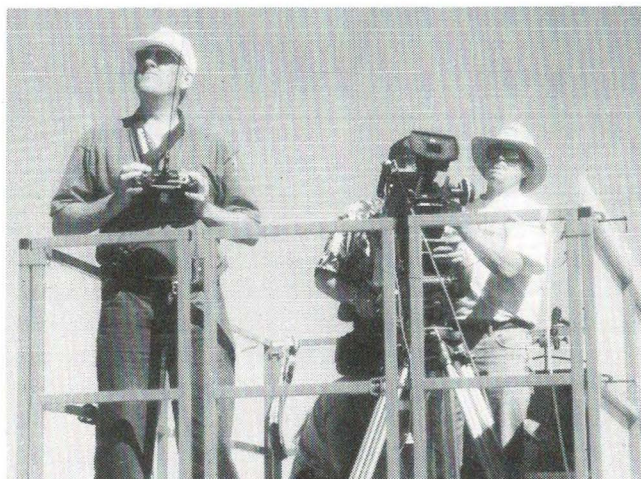
been at the original ceremony. Elwy Yost, the famous Canadian broadcaster and one-time Avro Company publicist, Sylvia and Derek Wooley (former Avro flight-test engineer) were also there. The little boy was there as well. George had returned that afternoon with his four-year-old son — a blond haired, spitting image of himself in 1957. “I don’t know what brought me here but I just wanted to see it again,” said Foley.

Crawford Gordon was present at the ceremony, as well, with his wife and son, at least the uncanny look-alike in the form of Dan Aykroyd. As he moved about the set at the Western Canada Aviation Museum and the Manitoba Government Air Services Hangar, which was now populated with props from an Avro CF-100 jet fighter, an authentic looking CBC TV truck to extras all accurately depicted in 1950s era clothing, it was Crawford Gordon again.

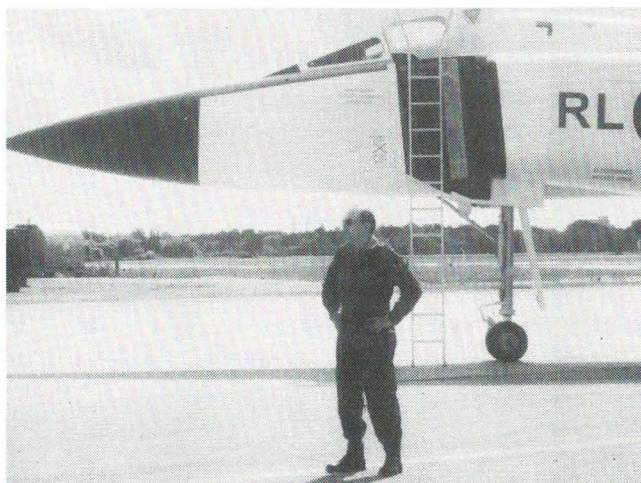
The key player in the Avro Arrow story was the president and general manager of A.V. Roe Canada, Crawford Gordon Jr. who remains one of the most intriguing figures in Canadian history. Born in Winnipeg, in World War II he was one of the “dollar a year” men who worked in the Department of Munitions and Supply. After the war, Gordon took over as the chief executive of A.V. Roe Canada. It was an industrial giant by 1955 consisting of not only jet aircraft and engine production but also shipping, steel products, trucks and buses, iron and coal mining, railway rolling stock, computers and electronic equipment.

Gordon and Avro Canada had invested heavily in the new Arrow program not only in money but also in expertise. The over 13,000 people working in the aviation division were some of the most skilled and creative team of designers, engineers and production staff ever assembled in Canada. They had been involved in the design of Canada’s first jet engine, first jet fighter, first jet airliner in North America and soon, Canada’s first supersonic jet interceptor.

A change in governments and a sudden reevaluation of defence needs led to the collapse of the Avro Arrow program and the eventual dismissal of “just about the best team anywhere.” Gordon fought fiercely for the Arrow and in the end, he also lost



Special Effects filming took place at the Gimli airport using remote controlled models.



The actor portraying Jan Zurakowski was an amazing look-alike.

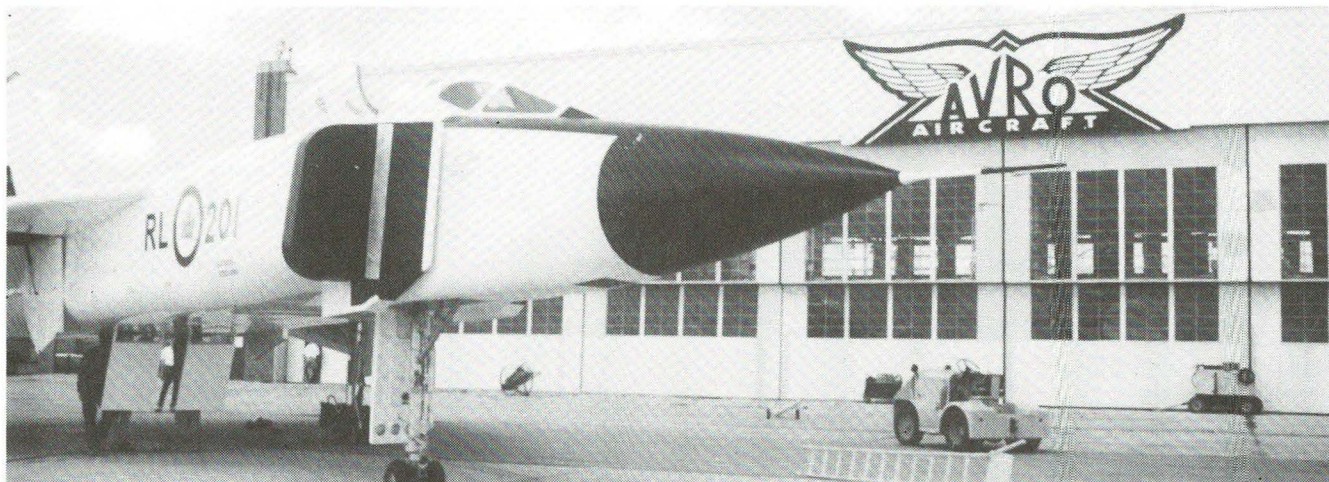
his job. He died in 1967 at the age of 53, a broken man.

The gruelling shooting schedule for the roll-out ceremony meant actors and production crew would be in the 30+ Celsius temperatures for most of the day. For Aykroyd, it was the culmination of nearly a month of filming and it was nearly over.

Dan Aykroyd, comedian, actor, screenwriter, director and producer was born in Ottawa. The class cut-up found fame in Toronto’s Second City troupe and *Saturday Night Live* before turning to film.

Aykroyd’s screen credits include a diverse range





The movie Avro Arrow poses outside the WCAM.

of films — he was in box-office winners such as *The Blues Brothers* (1980), *Ghostbusters* (1984), and its sequel *Ghostbusters II* (1989), which he also co-wrote, as well as *Driving Miss Daisy* (1989) in which he had an Oscar nomination for best supporting actor.

In his film career, Aykroyd has teamed up with some of Hollywood's foremost comedians, including fellow *SNL* alumni Chevy Chase, Bill Murray, and Eddie Murphy as well as the late John Candy, Steve Martin and Tom Hanks. His latest films include *Coneheads* (1993), *Exit to Eden* (1994), *Sgt. Bilko* (1996), and *Celtic Pride* (1996).

Aykroyd now is at a point in his career where he has the time and money to pursue some of his favourite projects and interest. The House of Blues Foundation and continuing the legacy of the Blues

Brothers is a major project.

His other main interests centre around his homeland, where he has often returned to receive honours as a favourite son. He has campaigned for the motion picture industry in Canada and now, *The Arrow*. "Really a tragedy of interfighting and politics . . . but it just shows what we can do as Canadians when we put our minds to it," said Aykroyd in a recent interview.

The shooting schedule of *The Arrow* continued into August, 1996 with more scenes being filmed around Winnipeg and in Gimli, Manitoba where radio-controlled model Arrows recreated the test flights of the aircraft. But there will be no more important scenes than the roll-out of the Avro Arrow — once more on centre stage for the world.



Vintage vehicles such as the 1955 Chevrolet made the scenes come alive. The movie Avro Arrow looked convincing among all the other 1950s era props on the set. It is now in RL-206 colours.



## Letters to The Editor

June 18, 1996

Dear Shirley,

I found Jerry Vernon's letter to the editor in the June *Review* quite interesting! It was interesting to learn that Wayne Coulson has lifted CF-BTX out of Kakwa Lake using an S-61.

I could perhaps add a bit of detail about the crash, which caused the death of Carl Brooks, also Carl's connection with WCAM's own Guy Moore, recently deceased. Both men worked on the M.P.H.A. during the summer months of 1937 and 1938. Guy was a university student at that time. M.P.H.A. means Monkman Pass Highway Association. The 'raison d'être' for the MPHA was to build a shorter route to get the grain out of the Peace River Country to the ocean. This group of citizens, working with Alex Monkman, succeeded in cutting a right-of-way from Beaverlodge, Alberta through the Monkman Pass, to the CN Railway, east of Prince George and fairly decent road for about one-third the total distance. (Guy was the first aid man and was called 'Doc'.)

In 1945 Carl Brooks had built up a good trophy hunting business and these customers, mostly Americans, wanted something more efficient to get into

'mooseland'. So Carl began chartering the Barkley from C.P. to fly the hunters from Lake Saskatoon, near Beaverlodge, to a camp at Kakwa Lake where he had guides and wranglers. One party would be flown in and another flown out on the return trip. A number of successful trips were made before that unfortunate engine failure.

Pilot G. Cormack, with one of Carl's Indian guides, came out by saddle horse doing the seven day trip in three hard days! It had got reported that the plane crashed taking off from "Porcupine Lake." In any event it certainly ground to a halt on the shore of Kakwa Lake, BC.

I understand that in 1986 Carl's four sons trekked in and placed a memorial plaque on the door of the Barkley.

I was going to add a little bit re the story of towing the military planes into Canada early in the war, but this little letter is starting to get out of hand! Some of us characters, as we get older, will talk your hind legs off if we don't watch ourselves!

Cheers  
from  
Al Bartlett



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