

Gerry Logan

I have many memories of the C119 Boxcar -- it was a good workhorse in its day, something like the DC3. I can remember my first trips in the Dakota (DC3) and Boxcar. There was a Dakota training flight going from Rivers directly to London, Ont on the Friday afternoon before the long weekend in October. I had just turned 18 on the 7th of that month (1955) and I was scheduled to start my jump course on the following Tuesday morning. All the guys on the plane were members of the RCASC Airborne Platoon and all had their wings. When you went on board any RCAF a/c they gave you a parachute harness to wear and a reserve parachute that you could strap on the front of the harness. If you had to jump you had a ring on the front of the chute that you pulled to open the chute. The flight went well on the way down - no delays no stops. However, the flight on the way back changed. We left London around 11:00 am and half way across Lake Superior one of the two engines decided to start leaking oil. All the airborne guys had their para harnesses tightened up nice and snug and had their parachutes in place, but I didn't have a clue. My harness hung six inches below my crotch and they had to do everything for me. Well, the plane managed to make it into Thunder Bay, which made me happy as this was my original home but which I hadn't visited since I was seven.

Well, one of my uncles came out to the airport and took me back to his place as we had to wait for them to send a C119 back for us from Rivers so we would be laid up for at least 5 hours. It turned out that my Uncle was one of the local bootleggers of the day and had a large batch of wine made. He kept pouring and I kept drinking, and at 18 I really wasn't all that wise in managing my new-found enjoyment. Anyways, he returned me to the airport in a little number state then when I left. I was a bit nervous as the pilot could have refused to let me get on board, well we got back to Rivers okay around midnight that night, and to my surprise there was a good eight inches of snow on the runways. Getting off the plane I accidentally picked up the parachute I had by the ring and of course the chute exploded all over the inside of the plane. (I still have the ring as a souvenir to this day). Next morning I reported to Airborne School at 8:00 a.m. sharp -- hangover and all. But I'll always remember that it was a little scary flying over Lake Superior with a damaged engine.

~ Gerry Logan

A few memories of the Rec Hall:

I remember the night I got myself into a little hot water, I had just turned 19 in 1957 and was only married about one month. Two of my buddies were both in the QOR of C -- Corporal Norm VanTassel, (just passed away last Dec 2007) and another fellow by the name of Buchanan, who now lives somewhere around Neepawa. Buchanan was phoning his girlfriend in Winnipeg and myself and big Norm had a few beers and were in the mood for some horseplay. The phone booth was not anchored to the wall or the floor in

the Rec Hall so we kept pushing it back and forth with poor Buck inside. Well, Buck stepped out and the phone booth suddenly became lighter by 150 lbs. I gave it one more push, not realizing of course that Buck had stepped out, and to make matters worse, my catching buddie decided to walk away at the last minute.... well, the phone booth "crashed" to the floor breaking all the glass....

Within 30 seconds we had cleared out leaving our mess behind, and about a half hour later I returned to my quarters and was informed that the MPs had been around looking for me. So I went out again and, sure enough, they were patrolling the camp so I somehow managed to climb up on top of the Rec Centre and watched them driving around and around trying to locate me. Eventually I went back and slept off my drinking spree.

Next morning of course was a whole different ball game -- no one said anything to me so I didn't own up to any mischievous nonsense. I remember the Army Sgt in charge of the military police detachment gave me a call and started asking questions, he said that Buchanan had turned himself in but had no idea who pushed over the phone booth. Well, I couldn't let old Buck take the blame so I owned up to the whole thing. The camp RSM at the time was an old RCR chap, WO1 Tracey. He came up and laid charges against me. So I had to go up in front of the CO. I could hear them laughing about the whole incident as Manitoba Telephone had repaired the line and wrote the whole matter off as a minor misdemeanour... oh but not the Army. Anyways they gave me a couple of days extra work because they didn't want to punish my new wife, who was living in Winnipeg, by stopping my weekend pass to go home. They made me dig a dugout on the camp baseball field, and on the second night I think that they made me fill the dugout back in. . . . just a fun time memory.

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