

## Texada Aviation Museum (TAM) and Library

During 2017, Texada Arts, Culture and Tourism was awarded a Canada BC 150 grant by B.C. Museum Association to commemorate Canada's 150th Anniversary. A group of aviation-minded volunteers (mainly brothers Gerry, David and Jim Johnson) assembled the displays, artwork and artifacts in time to open the museum in March 2018. It was more than a handful of work but 99% of the work was finally done by the deadline, and we have a number of volunteers to thank for the effort...and...the work goes on!

The displays include dozens of aircraft models, jet engine components, old electronics parts, and radios, model rockets, a diorama of Van Anda Bay during the 1960s when floatplanes serviced the Island, and various other aviation artifacts, instruments and navigational aids. An interesting display of the World War II features a miniature pair of fighter aircraft that actually circle above a model of one of the "Chain Home" radar stations that protected the British Isles during the War.



A view of displays in the Texada Aviation Museum. The red and white structure is "AirBuzz", the flight simulator. The blue airplane is a "Mini-max" ultralight.

A tribute to a well-known personality on the Island is a recent addition to the displays. Pilot officer Pete Stiles' flying helmet, gauntlets, logbook, hat and maps are displayed along with a class photo of Pete's classmates. Stiles was a graduate of Royal Roads Military College in 1950.

Of course, the flight simulator (AirBuzz Mk II) is a full time resident of the hangar. Its major use is to teach youth about flying, although many visiting pilots come to the hangar to try their skills as well. The equipment continues to require tweaking and touch ups on the construction and wiring. In 2020, the trailer needs to be re-decked so the crew will be looking for materials and possibly some help in getting it done.

As part of an overhead display, a Mini Max ultralight, donated by Knud Rasmussen, one of Texada's resident pilots, and is suspended from the roof of the hangar. This airplane is fully airworthy and has been one of Knud's favorites to fly around Texada in the calm of the summer evenings. The

droning of the two-cylinder Rotax motor became a familiar sound around Gillies Bay over the past decade. Thanks Knud, it is a great gift.

Most recently, Ms. Angie Beaumont donated an 11 ft. long model of an Air Canada Boeing 747-200, which she acquired some years ago. One wing and an engine pylon were damaged during the installation at her own home, and so when the plane was acquired it was decided the staff would undertake the repairs and now it is repaired and proudly hangs in the hangar. It is a historically important model, and because only four were made, it's a collector's dream.

Some of the Aerospace Camp hangar and the TAM is powered by BC Hydro, but a portion of the overhead lighting is augmented by solar power to run a portion of the overhead lighting and amateur band radios in the mezzanine. It is planned to continue to add solar collector panels and reduce hydro use in the future.

### **The TAM Library**

Another of TAM's features is its growing library. With over a thousand books and manuals in the stacks, it is probably the most complete community-owned aviation library on the coast. The books are there for people to borrow and enjoy. There are also a number of DVDs that span many aviation subjects and adventures to enjoy!

Private donors donate the majority of the books, but the Canadian Museum of Flight at Langley and the Comox Airforce Museum have donated several boxes of books. The Airforce Museum's donations have been very valuable since a fair number of these books are not easily acquired elsewhere. Many are RCAF and Canadian Forces technical manuals, and though out of date provide the students and public access to historic aviation information that is difficult to get anywhere else.

As the collection has been growing, storage area shortage has been mitigated by the staff building bookcases on wheels so they can be moved and displayed to more open spaces during opening hours. They are stored during off hours in the temperature controlled library room. Membership to the library will be a new feature this year, with borrowing privileges and inclusion in making decisions for events and the directions the library will be taking in the future.

The hangar and library are open during most March to October weekends and the public is invited to call during the week for impromptu guided tours (604 223 2588). Additionally, the hangar is often used as a classroom presentation area for tours and especially for the Texada Aerospace Camp held each summer. The subject matter is intended to inspire youth from the ages 10 to 15 years about aviation and the aerospace sciences. Approximately 300 youth have attended the camps since 2009. A number of the earlier graduates have informed the staff that they had gone on to aviation careers of one sort or other.

Hopefully, with the new direct ferries program from Comox being recently added there should be an increase in attendance at the TAM.

## **TEXADA AEROSPACE CAMP (TASC)**

As usual, the Aerospace Camp captivates a great mix of young space and aviation aficionados. In fact, last year some returning students were assigned to help with the new attendees in both the flight simulator procedures and helping the younger set do metalwork. The organizers wish to thank all the volunteers, instructors, and sponsors who helped so much with last year's Camp. With more of the facility being developed and new equipment acquired, 2020's scope of learning will certainly be enhanced.

The newest acquisition for the course is a computer-monitored rocket test stand that automatically calculates any given model rocket's thrust, its altitude capability, speed and duration of flight. The rocket test is displayed on a laptop as a series of graph traces during the test, and these can be saved for analysis and comparison when using different rocket motors. The other activities include learning to fly the AirBuzz Mk II flight simulator, basic lessons in the theory of flight, astronomy, meteorology, map reading, radio procedures, riveting metal, and learning about parachutes, radar and other aerospace subjects. All ages from 10 and up are welcome.



Chief instructor Dale Rinehart demonstrates wing fabric installation to Aerospace Camp students.

The fee is \$180 and students receive a t-shirt, wing badges, certificate of attendance, fruit snacks and water, plus transportation from and to the ferry. The graduation party is held on the camp's last day with special attendance by dignitaries, a mini airshow and flights for the attendees in light planes.



Rocket thrust test stand allows students to study the thrust and duration of rocket motors used in model rockets. An electronic sensor transmits signals to the computer via a special module designed and built by local electronics designer Sandrine Sims.

### **Texada Annual Fly-in and Fly-in Fling**

On Saturday night, the Legion is usually packed for the "Fly-In Fling". After a hamburger and beer dinner, the dancing goes on well into the evening.

The Annual Fly-In will be held on Sunday, July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Automobiles and bikes as well as antique and homebuilt aircraft will be judged for age, condition and uniqueness. A formation of brightly-coloured Fraser Blues Navion aircraft will again get put through their paces to totally impress the crowd with the magical airshow these great pilots put on!

The *Fly-In Fling* and dance for 2020 will again be held at the Royal Canadian Legion in Van Anda on Saturday, July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Anyone wanting to help with any of the above events during Aviation Week is welcome to contact Doby at 604 223 2588, or by email at [dgart@telus.net](mailto:dgart@telus.net).