

JOHN KACER

Mr. Kacer's first memory of flying is of a 3 day event. The first two days, the aircraft was unable to get airborne, owing to there being too many holes in the air. (?) On the third day, the aircraft got up about 50 feet and flew 400-500 feet at 50-55 mph then nosedived and crashed. This event took place at MINORU PARK. The Clubhouse then lay east of the grandstand, approximately by the east wall of the present Theatre. It was a single storey building, without a basement. The grandstand itself was quite small.

Mr. Kacer obtained his pilot's licence in 1929 in the Prairies. He flew a WACO, a 4 cylinder GYPSY MOTH, and a BARLING - a low-wing monoplane American aircraft. He found the WACO cumbersome. It had a V8 liquid-cooled engine. The later WACOs had a JACOBS engine.

He had his first trip in an airplane in 1919. Flight cost \$5.00, and the trip was from Brighthouse Park, over the western part of Burnaby. The pilots did aerobatics. They would stall, go into a tail-spin, side-slip and land. After 1921, there were very few aircraft around until 1926-7. In 1926, the Sprott Shaw school of commerce bought a WACO, and opened a flying school. Pat Renahan brought the plane up from America, landed it at Lansdowne, using the South East approach.

The Lansdowne airfield was bounded on the north by the Alexandra station, the Railway bordered the East side, No. 3 Road the West side and the horse stables the South. Mr. Service's house was to the North. The airfield was extended to the North, to allow landing in a South East wind.

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The Sprott Shaw flying school operated for 3-4 years, Pat Renahan working for them. Pat was lost on a trip up North. An early airplane mechanic was called McCurby, he lived on Bridgeport.

NEIL CAMERON was with the Foggin Flying school on Sea Island in the late 30's.

In Sprott Shaw days, a MR. A.D. CRUIKSHANK bought the sister ship to the one LINDBERGH used on his Trans-Atlantic flight. He named it QUEEN OF THE YUKON.

When B.C. Airways had the Vancouver/Victoria/Seattle run, Mr. Kacer saw the Ford Tri-Motor. He recalls it was a foggy day in the Fall when the aircraft plunged into Puget Sound. Harold Walker was the pilot.

He remembers seeing around two EAGLE ROSES'S, biplanes whose lower wing was considerably shorter than the upper. The licence of one of them was GB-KATN, while the other had YARROW AIRCRAFT LTD., VICTORIA, B.C. written on it.

Western Canada Airways FOKKER Tri-Motor made a few trips in here. Its fuselage was blue and the wings orange. And a Tri-Motor Ford carrying only 6 passengers came in at one time. This plane had a tremendous "climb" - took off very steeply. Saw inside the plane, where wicket chairs were supplied for the passengers.

He saw a twin-motored TRIPLANE here in 1918. He remembers a forced landing by a bi-plane in an oat field at No. 4 Road and Caithcart. Another forced landing happened one night. Next day he saw that it was in a Peat bog near the Rifle Range. No

damage had been done and the aircraft was extricated. Its American pilot stayed for about 3 weeks here, doing stunt flying. He performed the outside loop.

An American show business man with a WACO did stunting here, performing the barrel roll. He saw two JUNKERS (single, liquid cooled engine) at Lansdowne Field in the late 20's.

Lansdowne airfield had a hangar, and the gas station for the airport existed until a few years ago.

Mr. Kacer had a great liking for aircraft. He predicted in 1925/6 that one day planes would carry as many as 150 passengers. He predicted cross-country flights of 4-6 hours. He was considered crazy. Around 1924/7, he made rough sketches envisioning the shape of future aircraft. These include the Delta Wing, similar to the British Vulcan, and sweep-back wings, with sweep-back elevators and rudders.

In the 20's he predicted the jet aircraft, after he read a Czech physicist's book. His father taught him how to build rockets. Several of his relations went to Prague University and it was through contact with them that his ideas were developed.

A Mr. Albert Browing (Browning?) an engineer from Vancouver and he discussed radio guidance systems for ships and aircraft around 1927-9.

He remembers a Gypsy Moth called ELSIE, painted Red and another called BEATRICE, painted Bright Blue. He saw these at Lansdowne.

The FOGGIN Flying School had a fleet, with 5 cylinder 90hp KINNER engine, licence no. CF-3ANF.

There was a Driggs Dart called the BETSY.

In 1926, Mr. Kacer saw an Unidentified Flying Object. The CNRV Transmitting Station had recently been constructed at Lansdowne, and on a winter evening, around 9 pm, he and his father saw an object hovering near the transmitter. This illuminated disc was there for about 1½ hours. He tried to persuade his mother, a neighbor, and Andy Waddell to come out, but could not persuade them.

It was a disc-shaped object, with a dome on top, having portholes. He estimates it would be about 100 feet across.

In 1958, whilst working on the night shift with Alcan on Vulcan Way, around 3 am, he saw a similar object. Its portholes were oval, the glare from it illuminated Mr. Daniel's barn. It hovered at around 100 feet for about four minutes. It then took off with tremendous acceleration and disappeared over New Westminster. It was silent in flight. A total of 12 individuals saw this phenomenon, including a Mr. Hill, then Manager of the Canadian Imperial Bank in Burnaby. Mr. Hill saw the object from his house in Burnaby.

Mr. Kacer talks of seeing a BARKLEY GROW aircraft, the LEONARD bi-plane, the Tri-motor Ford from United Air Transport from Edmonton (around 1939-40) and the SIKORSKY twin-engined seaplane on the Vancouver/Victoria run, with MR. SINCLAIR as pilot.

He remembers MR. GODFREY coming up from Ottawa to pick the airport site. He came in a FAIRCHILD. The choice lay between Sea Island and Burrard Inlet near the Second Narrows. Mr. Godfrey decided on the Sea Island location, having viewed both sites from an RCAF flying boat. The ERSKINE farm was one of the first to be bought for airport development.