



RFC's Crosswinds, Summer 2007

Flying a CF-18 – Kathy Fox's Experience of a Lifetime



Above, Kathy Fox after her CF-18 Hornet flight

On May 24, 2007 I realized a childhood dream of flying a fighter jet, notably a CF-18 Hornet out of CFB Baggotville. My duties as NAV CANADA's Vice President Operations (now retired) included co-chairing a joint ANS Cooperation Steering Committee with DND. I was offered a familiarization ride in the F-18 to better understand the operational issues faced during fighter operations.

To prepare for the ride, I underwent a medical with a DND Flight Surgeon, first in Ottawa a few weeks before the

ride, and then again with the base doctor the day before my flight. I watched a DVD on physiological factors associated with high altitude and high speed flight, then did a written review exam. Once on the base, I spent several hours the day before the flight getting checked out on the ejection seat, emergency procedures, parachute harness training as well as being fitted with all the necessary gear - flight suit, boots, g-suit, helmet, oxygen mask and gloves. Although I was a few pounds lighter than the minimum required for the ejection seat, once fully suited up, my weight wasn't an issue.

I met my pilot Capt. "Robbie" Robinson for dinner the night before – a great opportunity to get to know one another and "bond" before our shared flight. First impression, I remember thinking "he barely looks older than the aircraft!" But Capt. Robinson's enthusiasm and professionalism quickly put me at ease, and he promised to explore the envelope of what the airplane can do, while still being considerate of my lack of previous aerobatic experience (beyond those exercises normally conducted for flight training). Needless to say, I had a light dinner and skipped dessert!

The next morning dawned hot and humid, somewhat unusual for northern Quebec, even in late May. I have to admit to nervous stomach in advance of the ride... my butterflies were definitely **not** flying in formation!

A professional military photographer accompanied us to the aircraft for the customary "hero" shot. I suggested my smile might be wider "after the flight", to which the photographer replied "No, you'll probably be green!"

Strapping into the aircraft, I felt more like the airplane was wrapped around me. I found that reassuring and confidence building, in spite of the rather cramped cockpit. Capt. Robinson talked me through the pre-flight checks, then we lowered the canopy and taxied out. Our take-off was delayed about 10-15 minutes as we watched a group of six F-18s practicing for an upcoming airshow in Quebec City. Great spot to view this from, but I was glad to get moving again as we were starting to "bake" in the

greenhouse effect under the canopy. I really felt the acceleration as we rolled down the runway for a normal take-off but my first impressions were how smooth and quiet it was and what a great view I had! Even sitting in the back seat, you don't see the rest of the aircraft behind you unless you turn around and look at the wings, something it isn't easy to do when you're strapped in tight with visor down and oxygen mask on.

Shortly after take-off, going through 1500 ft. and 300 knots, Capt. Robinson said the magic words: "You have control"!

Although I'm left handed, I found it easier to operate the joy stick with my right hand as he proceeded to give me headings and angles of attack to fly using the Heads Up Display (HUD). We quickly climbed above 40,000 feet and he levelled off and set-up at Mach (M) 0.93. "Well, while we're up here, **let's go supersonic**", said the pilot. "OK" I said and watched the HUD as it rolled up to M0.96, M1.0 - the speed of sound - and he finally established it at M1.3 (760K at that altitude and temperature) and again said "You have control." Not only had I broken the sound barrier, but he was **letting me fly it supersonic ...AWESOME!**

Interestingly, you just feel a slight burble as you hit the sound barrier, kind of like going over an invisible speed bump. It was oh so quiet and smooth.... the F-18 is obviously capable of a lot faster, but that was good enough for me and we didn't stay long at that speed to avoid the high

fuel burn. Slowing back to about 350K felt like putting the speed brakes on.

We spent most of the next hour putting the aircraft through its paces. Having gone supersonic, we tried some slow flight (at 120K with 45 degrees nose up) then rolled into an incipient spin. We did a barrel roll; he did a loop, then I did a loop. I had never looped an aircraft before, so doing my very first one in an F-18 was certainly memorable, especially when you end up at a higher altitude than when you started! He also showed me a "0" G maneuver.

Capt. Robinson asked me if I'd like to see how fighter pilots get down fast. I said "Sure". As he peeled over and headed down, I felt my only real discomfort of the flight as I had difficulty clearing my ears through the oxygen mask. We went "tactical" at 200 ft. and 350K following a valley over lakes in a remote area northeast of Baggotville. It was the only time we encountered any turbulence in the low level heat and humidity. I used the opportunity to detach my oxygen mask, clear my ears, and then buckle up again.

The pièce de resistance came near the end of the flight as we did a vertical climb on afterburners ...straight up at 90 degrees, lying on my back and feeling like I was **riding a rocket**.

Too soon it was time to return to base. We flew back low level, entered the circuit for a "closed pattern" over the runway at 2000' and 350K, then a tight descending left turn for a low and over,

followed by a high performance climb back up to 2000' and around again for a landing. That was the only time we pulled any significant "g" forces, just under 4G, but the g-suit worked great, reducing the effect by about 1-2G.

The landing was a greaser! It was great to put the ejection seat and canopy eject safety pins back in, open the canopy and savour the experience of a lifetime.

All in all, I couldn't have asked for a better experience (especially since I didn't have to use either of my "boarding passes" which 90% of first time F-18 passengers do). I attribute that to an incredibly smooth aircraft and a very professional and skilled pilot.

I probably "swaggered" back to Flight Ops, feeling the fatigue that comes with "g"s and an intense experience. But, to quote from that old song, "Oh, what a feeling....what a rush!!". It took several days for the whole experience to really sink in and even now, I can close my eyes and relive it.

I feel very grateful and blessed to have had this tremendous opportunity to fly the CF-18, a wonderful "smart" aircraft that seems to sense what the pilot wants and figure out the best way to achieve it.

I have renewed my tremendous respect for the men and women in our armed forces for the job they do everyday serving our country and often putting their own lives on the line. God bless our troops!

Memories - 46th Annual Wings Dinner, May 5, 2007



Above, Terry Peters (C) accepts the Ken Chatfield Memorial Trophy, from Mrs. Chatfield and Simon Garrett (L).



Above, Kathy Fox accepts the President's Trophy from RFC President Don Buchan



Above Dana Sponder's parents accept the CFI's award on her behalf.



Above, Scholarship recipients include Charles Ollivier, Alexander Hayes-Thibault and Adam Whitehorse. Absent Geneviève Millaire.



Steven Hyde accepting the "Spirit Award" from Brenda Reid.

Want to see lots more Wings Dinner pictures – visit the RFC website. Prints can be ordered by contacting Brenda Reid.

Special thanks to our photographer Vidar.

Congratulations to all pilots who earned licences or ratings this past year! www.rfc.ca

CONGRATULATIONS!!

First Solo

- John Bennett
- Brian Cameron
- Adam Chehour
- Jonathan Daly
- Mark Fletcher
- Marc Gendron
- Pier-Alexandre Groulx
- Stephane Maisonneuve
- Serge Massicotte
- Keith Poore
- Catherine Lucie Roy
- Jason Sheehy
- Vishnoo Soondrum
- Carrie Spencer



Above, Catherine Lucie Roy, 1st solo June 29th

Recreational Pilot Licence

- Jean-Luc Beaudoin

Private Pilot Licence (PPL)

- David Bozzato
- Victor Khodho
- Antonio Petrelli
- Jasmin Renaud
- Alexander Rudy
- Manon Simard
- Adam Whitehorne

NIGHT

- Jeffrey Nerenberg

Instrument

- Steven Hyde (1)

Instrument Multi-Engine

- Claude Beland
- Louis Lavigne

Instructor

- Jonathan Batterham (4)
- Steven Hyde (3)
- Ryan King (1)
- Andrew Murton (3)
- Charles Ollivier (4)
- Jean Rene de Cotret (1)(2)



Above, Brian Cameron, 1st solo June 15th

Births & Announcements - Amelia Patricia Batterman, born April 25th, 2007 to parents Jonathan and Louise Batterman

OSHKOSH 2007

Attendance at Oshkosh was up this year.

Learn more about this fascinating event at <http://www.avweb.com/eletter/archives/avflash/925-full.html#195813>.

Checking and Doing, Written by Chris Hobbs

As pilots we are slaves to checklists. Having read a number of articles recently about their effectiveness, I have been giving some thought to them.

Consider the “before start” checklist for a Cessna 150 that I have found on the internet:

- belts/harnesses secure
- prime as required
- master switch on
- radios off
- anti-collision light on
- nav lights as required
- fuel shutoff valve on (down)

There are so many problems with this “checklist” that it is difficult to know where to start.

Firstly the steps are not numbered---it is much harder to miss an item on a checklist if the items are numbered and the numbers are read aloud as the items are carried out.

Secondly it is not a checklist. Some of the items require you to check something (belts/harnesses secure), other items require you to *do* something (master switch on) and don't belong on a checklist, they belong on a do list. Some items are ambiguous: does “Radios Off” mean turn the radios off or check that the radios are turned off? Psychologists tell us that our brain activity as we respond to a checking request is very different from our brain activity when we respond to a doing request. Mixing them in this way is another way of making the checklist difficult for the pilot.

Thirdly at least one of the items on the checklist is very misleading: “fuel shutoff valve on”. This would indicate to most people that the fuel should be shut off---it is a shutoff valve and it should be switched to

“on”, thereby shutting off the fuel. This is probably not what was meant because the next checklist, without moving the valve again, starts the engine. A similarly misleading item often appears in the closing-down checklist: “Live mag check”. The purpose of this check is to confirm that the magnetos are *not* live, not that they are!

Fourthly the checklist does not provide for a stimulus/response interaction. Research into aviation human factors has found that crew communication is at its most effective when it is in the form of stimulus and response. A Cessna 150 may be a single crew aircraft but there is often a passenger in the right seat. Getting the passenger, particularly a nervous passenger, involved in the flight helps everyone: it gives the passenger something to do and makes him or her feel involved in the flight as more than a passive observer. Such a passenger is much more likely to point out aircraft and be useful in an emergency.

In the light of these factors, how could this simple checklist be improved? Here is one suggestion:

Pre-Start Checks

1. belts/harnesses --- checked secure
2. radios --- checked off
3. anti-collision lights --- checked on
4. navigation lights --- checked as required

Pre-Start Actions

1. prime --- engine primed
2. master switch --- turned on
3. fuel --- turned on

The checks and actions have been separated and each has been numbered, thus reducing the chances of an item being missed. The passenger or instructor is asked to read the

items before the hyphen and confirm that the pilot responds correctly, thus involving the passenger and making sure that the pilot actually thinks about each check and action. Also, to clarify things, the action with the fuel is made explicit.

Once the split between checklists and do lists is complete, there are many articles proposing that they should not be read but should be remembered: using a mnemonic or formal flow across the cockpit. Most pilots are familiar with GUMP as a check on final to ensure that the gas (fuel) is being taken from the fuller tank, the undercarriage is down and locked, the mixture is fully rich and the propeller is in fine pitch. Certainly I would never read my downwind checks from a list - downwind at a busy airport like Rockcliffe is no time to have one's eyes (or even your passengers' eyes) inside the cockpit looking at checklists. If I memorise that checklist, why should I read the others?

Checklists have been around as long as aircraft and, certainly in many general aviation aircraft, have remained unchanged for the last 40 years. In that time there have been numerous studies pointing out weaknesses in them. In the interests of safety, is it time for us to change?

Safety Committee Corner, by Chair Roger Delisle

Visit the RFC website for an interesting, new Safety Committee report – sorry, but it's too long to include here.

Historical Committee, by Chair Janice Templeman

Help us by sharing stories, fond memories, or photos, which we hope will be captured in print and online. Submissions can be forwarded to the committee through Brenda Reid at the club.

List of Flying Activities Committee Events (see bulletin board for notices), by Chair Nicole Harris

**Saturday, Aug. 11th, 2007, 12h00 – dark:
Flour Bombing/Spot Landing
Competitions & Volunteer Appreciation
BBQ/Cricket Match.**

Flying Competitions will commence at noon, ending at 16h00 when the BBQ starts. Winners will be presented with prizes at the BBQ. The cost for the Flour Bombing/Spot Landing Competitions is \$10.00. BBQ food items are available for purchase for competitors. BBQ food items are complimentary for regular RFC volunteers. Two persons must occupy the aircraft for the Flour Bombing Competition. Rules will be posted at the club. Everyone is encouraged to participate. **25% off the rental of club aircraft** to participate in the competitions. Proof of registration is required to receive the discount. **To participate or volunteer call Brenda at the Rockcliffe Flying Club 613-746-4425.**

Looking to build cross-country time or experience?

Join the **Rockcliffe Flying Club's trip to PEI** August 25-27, 2007. Gain experience from more seasoned pilots. A planning meeting will be held. Rental aircraft have been set aside for participation in this event. One aircraft is already confirmed.

To participate please email the flying activities committee at rfctrips@magma.ca and indicate whether you are an aircraft owner or rental pilot and include a list of all your licenses and ratings.

From the Passenger Seat - How to stop worrying and enjoy the ride.

Do you recognise yourself? You might be a man with a passionate aviatrix for a girlfriend, or the father of a young woman who has just recently won her wings. However, to avoid confusion between 'he' and 'she' in this article, let me imagine that the pilot in your life is male and that you are his wife.

The first thing to consider is when you're going to take your first ride with him, because the right moment will make all the difference.

Tell him to wait patiently until flying conditions are at their best. You should insist that the air is clear and calm. Even if a bright, warm day is forecast, that may still not be the best weather for you to fly. The hot sun usually causes thermal turbulence, and good visibility is often associated with windy conditions, when so-called "mechanical turbulence" (caused by the swirling of the air over nearby hills, not by a faulty engine) can be quite unnerving if you are not used to it; you might be too distracted by the rocking of the aircraft to appreciate the views. Gusty conditions are not conducive to a gentle landing either. What you must do is insist upon going up for the first time either in the early morning, before the bumps begin, or in the early evening, with the low sun casting long shadows across the lakes and fields, when the air is smooth as silk. So long as your pilot is not too dazzled by the sunset as he makes his final approach toward a westward facing runway, this is a magical time to fly.

Knowing what to expect will help you both keep calm. Get him to show you on the map where you are going and to describe what you are likely to see. A short, half-hour's excursion is quite enough excitement for the uninitiated. Don't let him talk you into a

longer ride until you have felt happy with a short one.

The pilot is legally obliged to give you a safety briefing before he turns on the engine. You should also ask him to read aloud his pre-flight checklist, to reassure both of you that all the equipment is in good working order. Your headphones should be a good fit –adjust them, if necessary, before you pull away from the parking spot. The "run-up" process can take a while, especially if you have to wait behind other aircraft; be prepared for a few minutes of tension before you begin to roll. Keep your thoughts to yourself, because now your pilot must look around, listen and make a radio calls to announce his departure from the field. It will be a proud moment for him, so remind yourself to be appreciative and hold tight to your seat, strap, or safety belt. Whatever you do, don't make a grab at the dual controls (or the pilot).

Your lift-off will probably feel surprisingly gentle. The only disconcerting thing is that you might not be able to see much through the front window as the aircraft climbs, but once you reach cruise altitude and level out, you will have a much better forward view. If you are small, bring a cushion to give you a little more height in the passenger seat; you will be glad of it. You do not need to sit rigidly motionless. The balance of the aircraft is not that sensitive and your leaning with or against the tilt of the plane will make no difference to its performance.

Another concern sometimes voiced by a novice passenger is that, when you look out of the window from several thousand feet above ground, you feel as if you are "standing still" in the air. This is an optical illusion. The plane is actually moving along at a respectable rate. The GPS should be

able to tell you your speed relative to the ground, and the Airspeed Indicator (ASI) will give you proof of how fast you are moving through the air.

Are you afraid you might get lost up there or inadvertently wander into the path of an oncoming jet? This is most unlikely. A relatively inexperienced pilot will probably take you to a part of the sky he knows from his training, the so-called "practice area" where jets are not allowed. Even if he is ambitious enough to fly you further, Air Traffic Control will keep an eye on your progress and give you the benefit of their assistance.

Before you know it, you will be homing back to earth. As you descend, the sound of the engine will change; if you expect this, you will not be alarmed. You should also anticipate your pilot's "banking" the plane as he makes his way round the required circuit; if he performs a gentle turn, this manoeuvre should not alarm you either. You must then trust him to land the plane. He will be so determined to impress, that I'd like to bet he will bring you flawlessly onto terra firma, "...where there's less terror and it's a lot firmer!" as somebody once said to me.

Having come down smiling from your first ride, you will be willing to think about the next time. Turn up at the club on a regular basis. You will soon form an alliance with other frequent passengers, and while your pilots are fussing over their aircraft, you won't have to sit around feeling bored. You may find yourself planning great adventures in the air and on the ground. If your flying club encourages group excursions, you're lucky. The advantage of such groups, apart from the sheer fun of it, is that you encourage one another, but be sure to team up with people you can trust.

In summer, you can attend a whole series of fly-in breakfasts. If you're prone to queasiness, take my advice and avoid taking off on an empty stomach. Eat something beforehand and you'll be fine; think of your fly-in breakfast as brunch. Another tip is to avoid gassy beverages. We have found time and again that inexperienced passengers who have been quenching their thirst with coke are the ones who go quiet and pale before their flight is over.

Usually, it will just be the two of you flying. This sounds romantic, and it is! But don't let him gloss over the less romantic part of it. There's drudgery in preparing your aircraft, filing a flight plan and going through all the pre-flight checks. Sometimes you have to wait for hours before setting off and sometimes the weather deteriorates first and stops you going anyway. In minus temperatures, you have to wait for the oil to warm up – only the real fanatics are willing to struggle with iced ropes and wing covers in a bitterly cold wind. In summer, it is not unknown to discover that a bird has made a nest in one of your aircraft's orifices, which means no end of work getting rid of the mess before you can take off.

Always be prepared to help your pilot, or tempers will become frayed. Even the old-timers can seem edgy before flight. Don't worry. They relax once airborne. My husband is like this; however irritable he may be during the walk-around, he'll start to sing as we take to the air.

Perhaps you will be singing as well. You too may catch the aviation bug, and before you know it, you might be thinking of flying ... not as the passenger, but as co-pilot.

By Alison Hobbs



Calendar of Events

- Aug 11 – Spot Landing / Flour Bombing / Volunteer BBQ / Cricket Match
- Aug. 18th – Cornwall Flying Club Poker Run. Raindate Sunday. \$ 20 per person entry fee. Start from any of following airports: Alexandria, Cornwall, Brockville, Lachute, Les Cedres, Morrisburg, Ottawa, Rockcliffe, Smiths Falls or St-Lazare at 10:00 or later. Finish at Cornwall by 4 PM at latest. 50% proceeds to Cheo. 1st Prize 25% proceeds, 2nd prize 15%, 3rd prize 10%. Contact Earle DePass at 613-930-2145 for more info.
- Aug. 25th – PEI Trip.
- Aug. 25th – Classic Air Rally.
- Aug. 25th – Webster Memorial Trophy awards dinner.
- Sept. 6th – Intro, Private Ground School
- Sept. 13th – Night Flying Seminar
- Sept. 24th – Charity Golf Tournament
- Sept. 25th – Ownership Forum
- Oct. 4th – Canada Aviation Museum New Wing Tour
- Oct. 25th Frost Remover Seminar
- Oct. 30th, Intro – Private Ground School Fall Date TBD –Commercial Ground School

Famous last words..

The passenger aircraft was fully loaded and in the air after takeoff when the announcement came over the loudspeaker: "Ladies and gentlemen, we've been working on a fully automatic piloting system for years that doesn't need a flight crew and are proud to announce that it has been perfected. You are the first passengers to fly controlled by software only with nobody in the cockpit. We are proud that during all our testing there has never been a mistake, mistake, mistake, mistake ..."

"Leh we Lime" BBQ Party



Above, Eddie playing the steel pans at Tony's "Leh we lime" barbeque party

"Leh we lime" is a Caribbean phrase that simply means: "Let's have a good time with our friends." Saturday June 23rd Tony invited a few Caribbean musicians to liven up his BBQ with a performance on steel pan drums and some calypso singing. The food was livened up with spicy Caribbean specialities served on this occasion as well as the usual burgers and hot dogs.

June 23rd also happened to be the JAGUAR DAY and Concours d'Elegance at Rockcliffe Airport, with members of the Ottawa Jaguar Club (<http://www.ottawajaguarclub.com>) rolling up in their vehicles, all polished to a shine ... and that includes the engines!

On the Lighter Side

Q: How do you know if there is a pilot at your party?

A: He'll tell you.

It's easy to make a small fortune in aviation. You start with a large fortune.

More Memories....



Canada Day Guest Harvard



Canada Day Guest Tiger Moth



Canada Day - Snowbirds Soar

Spring Clean-up – all types of jobs! Thanks everyone!



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Crosswinds Newsletter

Editor Dorothy Berthelet
Committee members include Brenda Reid,
Alison Hobbs, Joe Scoles, Jeff Nerenberg

Needed: Someone to seek Crosswinds
sponsorship, to help cover the costs.
Contact Brenda Reid, if interested.

To be successful, we need your help. Want
to submit an article – it doesn't have to be
perfect, as we'll help fine-tune it. Want to
provide comments or suggestions? Do you
have some news (e.g. marriages, births) or
photos you'd like to share with RFC
members in the Crosswinds newsletter?
Contact RFCcrosswinds@rfc.ca.

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