



# Skywriter...



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**September 2010**



*Carl Forman Departs from Carstairs/Bishell after enjoying the annual Bishell Fly-In.*

# From the Cockpit

By Robin Orsulak

Another summer has passed and they just seem to go by faster every year. I hope everyone has enjoyed their summer and I hope some of you; if not all; experienced an aviation related event or adventure. Looking back I've personally had a busy summer attending some fly in breakfasts, taking in a few airshows and going on a few road trips that were tied to aviation related activities. I also had the fortunate opportunity to fly with some fellow aviators and take their aircraft for a few flights as well... always a good thing. Looking forward, we can anticipate our COPA for Kids event planned for the first weekend in October and if you would like to get involved please contact Carl Forman or myself. The club will be seeking a director at large for the interim as the position is vacant. Please contact me if anyone might be interested.

As the fall season approaches, we can look forward to some real nice flying weather ahead (hopefully) and take advantage of the cooler smoother air out there. Now might be the time to look at some maintenance issues with your aircraft as it pertains to cooler weather. Although not from the cockpit specifically, it is time for rodent control with the cooler temperatures arriving, you may want to take measures in the aircraft as well as the hangar. Wouldn't want any mice nibbling on your rib

*Club members meet and chat at Glenn Bishell's Fly-In Breakfast in June.*



stitching!

I am anticipating a fun meeting ahead as I can hardly wait to hear about everyone else's adventure's over the summer as well as elaborate on a few of my own. As usual, I am reminded just how much fun and adventure we aviators have the privilege of enjoying. Always aware of the uniqueness of our activity and the discipline required to partake is also a reminder of the responsibilities inherent. That being said, I look forward to seeing you all again at our next regular meeting and as usual..... be safe, have fun.... and take along a friend.



## Calgary Recreational and Ultralight Flying Club

### COPA Flight 114

Meetings are held on the second Thursday of every month, except July and August, starting 7:00 PM at the Northeast Armory, 1227 – 38 Avenue NE, Calgary.

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### Skywriter

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# CAVU Dreams

*By Ken Beanlands*

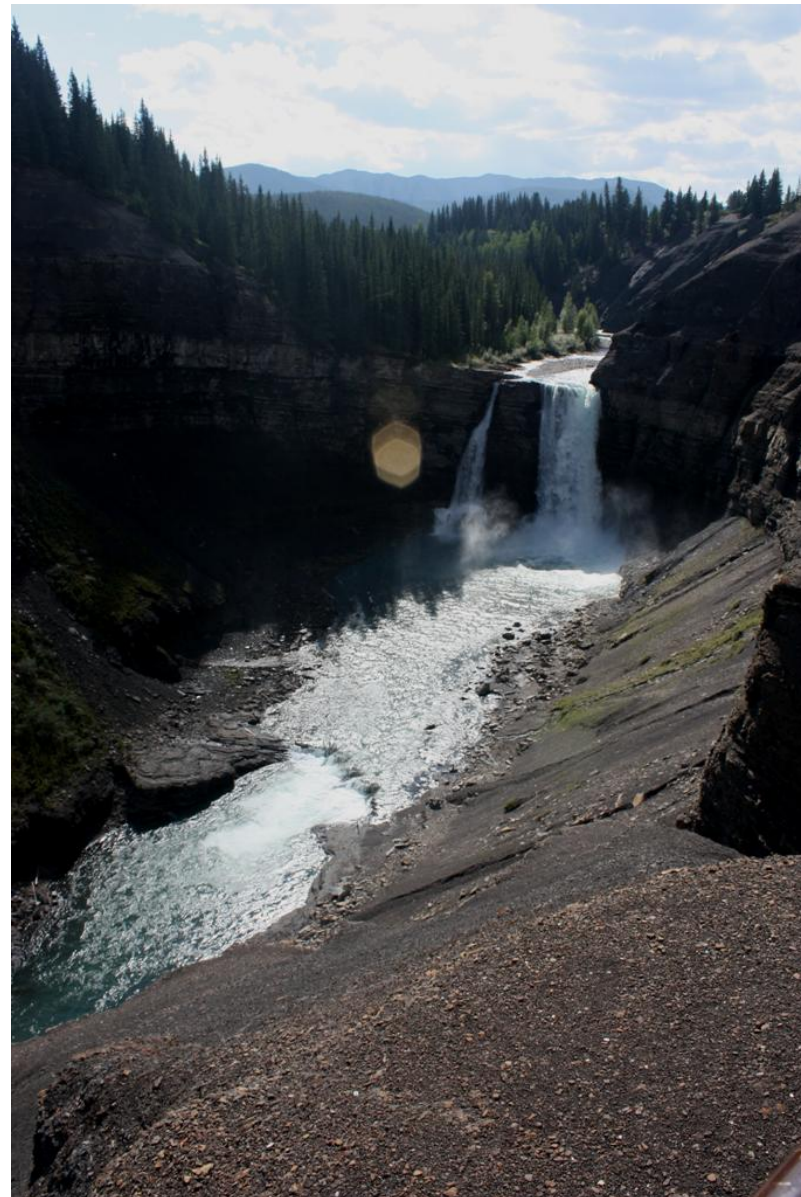
This past year has certainly been a year of mountain flying for me. It's included a Boxing Day site-seeing tour through the mountains, short trip into the mountains to Invermere, and a long excursion over several mountain ranges to Portland. However, the airstrips visited were all around 3500' or lower and relatively unchallenging density altitudes.

This was all to end last month with an impromptu trip to Ram Falls. I arrived at Carstairs relatively late that morning but found Pat Cunningham and Mike Sweere were still on the ground contemplating a destination. Since we were nearing lunchtime, we decided to head to Boston Pizza in Lacombe. Mike's wife, Marilyn and daughter, Erin also joined him in the Cessna 170.

After a nice lunch, we walked back to the airport and started to consider where we should head to next. Mike suggested we head to Ram Falls and check out the abandoned strip there. I had heard about the strip before but had never visited it. I was in!

The trip there was beautiful as we made our way through the hills and valleys of the foothills. As we arrived over the strip I realized that density altitude was not going to be the only challenge with this airstrip. The winds were light but across the runway. The approach had a rather tall hill in the middle of it requiring a steep approach. The wind direction was also creating a good updraft through the approach.

The downwind and base legs were flown at about 1800' above the field so that the approach would clear the hill tops. Once clear of the high terrain it was a full sideslip to the threshold for me through the updraft and turbulence. I actually ended up with a nice landing and taxied to the end of the runway to wait for Mike's landing.



With all three planes safely parked at the end of the runway, we walked across the road and into the Ram Falls Provincial Park to check out the falls themselves. I was quite impressed with the park and the work they've done to provide a great viewing platform overlooking the river and falls.

After taking a couple of dozen pictures, we decided to make the long trek back up the stairs from the platform and head back to the planes. It turns out that the planes were as big a hit with the park visitors as the falls. By the time we took off, there were about a dozen vehicles waiting to see us depart. I did a quick calculation on the Garmin during the back track and realized that with the field elevation 5600' and a temperature of 26°C, the density altitude was 8500'!!! I decided to take it up to full power and lean back to get peak RPM before releasing the brakes. Even with this, I used up around 2500' of the 3500' strip. I cleared the trees at the end of the runway with a safe margin before passing over the edge of the falls and instantly gaining another 200' or so as the valley floor dropped out beneath me.

With all three planes safely off the strip, we turned towards Carstairs and the end of a great day of flying.

Remember that Thursday, September 9<sup>th</sup> is our next meeting. Hope to see you all there and be sure to prepare to tell you summer flying stories.



# 2010 Air Adventure Tour Part 3

By *Stu Simpson*  
Photos by *Warren Arnholtz*

## Day 5

Our day at the Arlington Airshow is best covered by one word: Hot!

The temperature easily hit 100 degrees (37 C) on the ramp there, and we were guzzling water constantly.

We saw a few CRUFC members there, too. Troy Branch and Carl Forman flew to the show in Troy's RV-10. And Calvin Thorne hopped a ride over in an RV-6.

The other word that characterizes Arlington for me is 'disappointing'. I've read for years about what a great event this is, with no end of vendors and a nearly unmatched airshow. For sure, there were plenty of great airplanes to look at on the grounds; and there was a good display of vendors and their wares, too. But the airshow itself was a joke.

For one thing, the spectator's area was way too distant from the show line. The show planes were all small aircraft and difficult to see at such a distance. As far as I could tell, the airshow consisted of about half a dozen civilian aerobatic acts, each of whom did just about the same maneuvers as the act before them. It was not exactly spellbinding.



I was so bored that I fell asleep in the shade of Troy's wing watching the second or third act, which was a two-ship of Yaks. When I woke up 20 minutes later I heard the same radial engine sound, but saw only one plane emulating precisely the Yaks' performance. I wondered where the other plane was until I realized it was a T-6 Texan now performing. I went back to sleep.

I won't be heading back to Arlington for the airshow.

## Day 6

I couldn't believe our luck as I checked the forecast. It called for another great day of flying weather, and even the chance of a tailwind.

Warren and I departed Harvey Field way ahead of Ken. He graciously agreed to drop the car and then walk back to the field from the rental office, since it didn't open early enough for us.

Arnholtz and I decided to follow Interstate 90 through the Snoqualmie Pass and on to Ellensburg, where we'd gas up. From there we'd head across Washington State to Coleville, file to cross the border and then depart for Castlegar, only 40 minutes north. Ken filed with Flight Service to follow the Stevens Pass to the Wenatchee area, and then on to Coleville and Castlegar. We planned to stay with my Dad there for the last night of the Tour.

Once airborne, we sopped up the morning and remarked contentedly on the beautiful landscape surrounding us. Mount Ranier captured all our attention on the southern horizon, its snow cap glowing brightly under the early sun, while the jagged spires of the Cascades scraped the sky to the north. Who'd want to miss flying like this? I wondered.

Soon after we cleared the Snoqualmie Pass, I got to thinking; we didn't really need to stop at Ellensburg. We could go on to an airport further east for our first fuel stop. I began checking the map and the flight guide looking for a conveniently located spot that sold fuel.

"Dragonfly One to Two," I called.

"Go ahead, One."

“Warren, what do you think about skipping Ellensburg and going on a bit further to Ephrata, about 50 miles northeast of there?”

Warren was silent for a moment, then, “That sounds good to me. You go ahead and I’ll follow.”

“Roger that,” I affirmed, and altered our course more to the left.

### An Unexpected Treat

In time, we cleared the last big ridge of the Cascade foothills, known as – and I’m not kidding here – Whiskey Dick Mountain, and started our downhill slide toward Ephrata.

Ephrata is an old World War II bomber training base, and it shows. The triangular runway layout seems to have been the standard in both Canada and the U.S. then. A few hangars from that era still survive at Ephrata, sturdy and seemingly impervious to time.

I curved around onto final about a quarter mile back and fought the thermals right down to the asphalt. I taxied off the runway, absorbing the sights of a new airfield and feeling just a bit strange about this place. I couldn’t put my finger on it, but there was some sort of familiarity here. Likely, I thought, just because so many of airports look the same.

Warren taxied up to the pumps just after me and we set about fuelling. We soon finished with the avgas and walked to the terminal to start calling in our flight plan and border crossing info. I gazed again across the ramp and out at the baking runways. I’d never been here before, but what was it about this place?

As we stepped into the terminal lounge a movie poster stared out from the far wall, and it all snapped into place. The poster advertised the movie ‘Always’, and I instantly realized this is where they shot part of the film!

I learned long ago that Libby, Montana, was the location for half of the airport scenes, but for 20 years I’d wondered about the location of the other airfield used. This discovery was a very enjoyable thrill for us, especially since we’d spoken so recently about the movie and its shooting locations. The PBY used in the movie was still on the airport, too, though it sported a new coat of paint. I couldn’t wait to get home and watch the movie again.

### Back to Canada

We left Ephrata after filing with Flight Services and Canada Border Services. The remainder of the flight across Washington State was bumpy in the late morning thermals, until we turned north along the Columbia at a place called Seven Bays. We could

see some weather building in from the north and I found it ironic that it should only bother us once we crossed back into Canada.

We hit the border just southwest of Trail, BC, and eye-balled Castlegar in the distance. We made our calls to the FSS there and soon touched down on Runway 15. Ken was already there waiting, having done the whole trip with only a brief stop at Coleville.

We beat the inbound thunderstorm by about 20 minutes.

### Day 7

#### Last Legs

It was another stunning morning as we left Castlegar northbound up the Kootenay River toward Nelson. Shortly beyond there, we turned more easterly along the valley and continued to drift upwards. The spot where we’d cross the mountains east of Crawford Bay sat at about 6500’. I’d be pretty in the crossing if we had an extra 500’ in the bank.

Morning flight in the Rockies is simply a feast for the senses, immersing anyone aloft in all the colours and textures of the sky, the forest, the mountains and the water. The angle of the early sun highlights these features better than at any other time of day. And even though pilots float god-like above it all, the spectacle serves to remind us of just how finite we and our fragile machines really are. No matter how often I see them, mountain mornings in the air never fail to affect me.

We reached the Kootenay Lake where a ferry plied its way eastbound, leaving a foamy white wake in the water. I checked the map, looking for Redding Creek Road, a logging and utility trail that marked our path over the next ridge. It stood out easily against the deep forest green and bare brown clear cuts.

We crossed the ridge at about 7000’, which was the highest altitude we’d need for the remainder of the trip. The only other high pass ahead was the Vermillion Pass near Castle Junction on Highway 1, which sits around 5400’. In other words it was, on average, all downhill from there.

We coasted through the St. Mary’s Valley and turned north at Kimberly. The airport at Invermere, our next, and last, fuel stop was less than an hour north. Ken left us at this point, electing to go straight over the Divide and on to Carstairs. He filed a ‘flight plan’ by phone with his wife Renée, and kept heading east. We wished him luck and promised to get in touch once we got home.

Our Merlins were soon over top Columbia Lake, the

headwaters of the Columbia River. Here we were at its beginning, having just days ago come within sight of its end. How strange, I thought, that so much of our adventure touched that mighty river.

The wind aloft in the Columbia Valley had been kind to us, giving us a gentle push and a smooth ride. But at Invermere it turned my landing, or rather, landings, into a circus show. I was very grateful when Merl finally stopped bouncing and I was able to roll up to the gas pumps.

Fuelling went quickly, and as we taxied out I spoke with a Twin Seneca pilot inbound from the Calgary area. He reported that Calgary was IFR when he'd left there a while ago. But I knew the forecast and maps called for steady improvement through the day, so I wasn't very concerned, especially since we were still an hour and a half back from Calgary.

We followed Highway 93 through the Kootenay and Vermillion valleys. It was a great thrill to fly along next to some of the mountains, seemingly close enough to scrape them with a wing tip. Pilots get to be up close to the details of these high peaks and see things that are simply invisible from the highway and the valley floor.

We popped out into the Bow Valley over Castle Junction and the Trans Canada Highway. I looked east, hoping to catch a glimpse of what the weather might be doing along our route. Everything was clear for us, though we could only see as far as Banff.

On we flew, approaching the corner in the valley past Canmore. If there was going to be weather, the mouth of the Bow Valley is where it would be piling up on us. But a heli-tour pilot in the area gave no indication of any meteorological messiness ahead.

Our Merlins rounded the last corner in the mountains and Warren and I breathed a final sigh of relief. The way ahead was clear and passable with a good ceiling, though it dropped steadily to the east.

There were more choppers at the heli-tour base adjacent to the intersection of Highway 40 and the TransCanada. Warren and I traded position reports and intentions with them, and we all promised to stay out of each others' way.

Scott Lake Hill was next with the few wisps of cloud that topped it. Once past there, a steady descent would be in order to stay clear of Springbank's recently expanded airspace.

Just for kicks I picked one of the small clouds ahead and made straight for it. Merl and I zipped through it. Suddenly, the smell of the cloud gripped my memory. It smelled exactly like the air in Hawaii. I could only

pass it off to extreme humidity, but I've never before smelled clouds like that. It was very enjoyable.

Warren and I spent the rest of the flight ducking lower and lower to be clear of the lingering remnants of the earlier bad weather. My Anywhere Map was again very helpful avoiding the unusually shaped airspace boundaries near YBW.

Ken sent a text message stating that he was down safely at Bishell's. Turns out he had his own adventure with the weather and had to divert to near Sundre before turning for home. Warren's and my timing turned out to be pretty good, I guess.

The end of our voyage drew closer as Calgary's skyline grew larger in our sight. There's always a strange mixture of excitement, fatigue and regret at the end of these trips. We want to be home, to be back with our loved ones; but the flying and exploring – the true aerial adventure – is so intoxicating that we just don't want it to end.

Our Merlins shot across the south end of Calgary, taking quite a kicking from an incorrigible southerly wind. Warren and I bid each other farewell at the southeast corner of the city; I banked away on course for Kirkby's, and he for Indus. The wind still refused to cooperate at Kirkby's, gusting now near 20 knots and causing me a frustratingly bad arrival. I'd really hoped for better for the last landing of the trip.

I added things up a few days after returning home. We flew a total of 1500 miles in about 19 hours over five flying days. We saw one museum, a ball game, an airshow, and my dad. We touched two provinces and three U.S. states, and BC easily had the highest fuel prices, by about 20%. And, we wouldn't have missed any of it.

I won't forget this trip, this 2010 Air Adventure. I'll remember the weather in the Crowsnest; the Columbia River coursing through the deserts of central Washington; the unexpected treasure of the Ephrata airport; and the smell of Hawaii in a cloud over the Alberta foothills.

I'll remember, too, my wingmen, the images of their planes against mountains, volcanoes and the sky; the laughter and the fun we had; the shared adversity; the friendship.

I won't forget any of it... because those are the things that make the best air adventures.

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# FLYING EVENTS

WEEKLY Lethbridge, AB – The Lethbridge Sport Flyers (COPA Flight 24) would like to invite you to our weekly Saturday morning breakfast, 7:30 am, held at Smitty's Pancake House, 2053 Magrath Dr. S. in Lethbridge, Alberta. To contact us please call our club President, Brian Wilson 403-345-6603 or send us an email at [Lethbridge-Sport-Flyers@telus.net](mailto:Lethbridge-Sport-Flyers@telus.net).

MONTHLY First Thursday of every month High River Airport (CEN4), AB – EAA Chapter 1410 Monthly Meeting at the Dueck Hangar the 18:30hrs to 21:00hrs. Come by and visit! Please contact Paul evenings at 403-271-5330 or [eaahighriver@shaw.ca](mailto:eaahighriver@shaw.ca) or visit [www.eaahighriver.org](http://www.eaahighriver.org) for more details.

September 11, Airdrie, AB (CEF4) – 3rd Annual Show and Shine. Aircraft and Automobiles 10 am to 3 pm BBQ Hamburgers and Drinks available. For more information contact R Zabolotney at 403-804-8094 or [zabo1@telus.net](mailto:zabo1@telus.net)

September 11<sup>th</sup>, Cooking Lake, AB (CEZ3) – Speedy Aviation is holding an open house/pancake breakfast between 7am and 11am on Saturday September 11<sup>th</sup>. Breakfast will be provided by The Firehall Diner, South Cooking Lake. For more information, contact Terry Allen at (780) 934-0503.

September 14<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>, Reno, NV, USA – 2010 Reno Air Races and Air Show. For more details, see <http://www.airrace.org/indexJS.php>

September 18<sup>th</sup>, Rocky Mountain House, AB (CYRM) – COPA Flight 166 Fly-In Breakfast 08:00 til Noon. Everyone's welcome. Come and enjoy. For more information please contact Fred Nash 403 844-3511 or email [frednash@shaw.ca](mailto:frednash@shaw.ca)

September 25<sup>th</sup>, Beiseker, AB (CFV2) – Beiseker Fly-In Breakfast. Festivities will start at 09:00. Coffee, Pancakes and Bacon will be served for \$4. Tell all your friends. Landage road will be dedicated in the memory of the late Jack Landage.

October 2<sup>nd</sup>, Chestermere/Kirkby (CFX8) – CRUFC COPA For Kids Day. Rain date October 3<sup>rd</sup>. Please contact Carl Forman [forman.c@shaw.ca](mailto:forman.c@shaw.ca) for more details or if you'd like to volunteer.

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## FOR SALE

Volksplane VP2 for sale. Modified 2 place Volksplane made into a comfortable single with a 29" cockpit, 354 TTSN. Many extras and modifications including full canopy (fiberglass), cubby style landing gear with springs. Adjustable pilots seat, 4 point harness. VW engine is 1800 cc and is fully balanced with tuned exhaust and a reduction drive of 1.6:1. Climbs at 800 FPM and cruises at 80 MPH @ 3500 RPM using only about 3 GPH. Two 9 gallon wing tanks. Looking to trade up to a two seat airplane or sell. Asking \$15,000 OBO. Contact Guy Christie at c) 403 901-5594 or Bernie Kespe at h) 403 255-7419 Or Guy at [gcepegasus@gmail.com](mailto:gcepegasus@gmail.com) or Bernie at [stardustertoo@shaw.ca](mailto:stardustertoo@shaw.ca). 05/10

1991 Macair Merlin (BULA) 780 hrs TTAF, Rotax 503 DCDI 170hrs SMOH. Dual controls \$18,900 OBO. Arnim Haase, (403) 240-1183, [haaseab@ucalgary.ca](mailto:haaseab@ucalgary.ca)

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