

## **Reflections of Another Day by Norm Howard.**

I was hired February 1, 1954 by Mr. **R.L. Alexander**, Sudbury's first Airport Manager.

Station Agents were **Ian Golden, Art Tully, Al Thow** and **Bill Lucas**.

The airport then, as now, was situated 14 miles from the city but looked like an outpost in the arctic. There were three construction shacks which we inherited from the company that built the runway.

The larger one housed the TCA manager's office. Operations room and waiting room. The other two were used by the D.O.T. for offices and for storing equipment.

We spent a full year in those shacks before we moved into a permanent building. During the winter, it would get so cold in the shack, that we often lit a fire in the garbage cans to get some heat.

At times, the oil furnace did not work that well. Flushing the toilets was another problem. The water would overflow onto the floor and, on colder days, would freeze making it almost impossible for passengers to keep their footing while checking in. It was not uncommon to wear gloves and flight boots while on shift.

It was a real treat in those days to work the larger aircraft such as the Viscount, Constellation and the occasional Northstar charter as Sudbury was serviced by DC-3 aircraft.

Our equipment then consisted of two mechanic's carts, one hose loading stand, one passenger stand and one battery cart - all hand-pushed. We also had very "modern" de-icing equipment, two long handled floor mops and two galvanized pails.

Captain **Van Exan** was the first to pilot a DC-3 aircraft into Sudbury.

Personnel on hand to greet this giant bird were: District Sales Manager **Grant McLarty**, Sales Representative **John Sinden** and **Cec Padget**, Reservations Supervisor along with the city fathers. I recall Capt. Van Exan calling in and asking for wind direction. We were all outside looking up to try to spot the aircraft because at the time it was snowing heavily. **Russ Alexander** had a mike plugged in outside trying to spot the aircraft as it flew overhead. John Sinden put a needle on a cork in a pan of water to find out which way was north. This information was passed on the captain who landed the aircraft safely.

We have come a long way since then...

Others who served as District Managers of the Sudbury area were **Len Sampson, Jack Goddard, Bob Warren** and our present manager, **Harry Fase**.

Following **Russ Alexander** as Airport Manager was **Ken Bain** and our present Manager is **Bud Chapman**.

Other personnel who at one time worked in Sudbury are: **Jim Greg, Vern Lalonde, Maurice Donnelly, Bill Howie, Jim Young, Will Rheaume, Bill Ellis, Eric Vanderholdt, Down Westman, Tim Murphy** and **Harry Young**.

Some of the pilots who flew into Sudbury during those first years were Capt. **Belanger, Bill Gwynne, Al Aickman, Bob Roach, Jack Desmarais** (known as Ace McCool), **Jack Uren, Paul Gibson, Jim Chivers, Mike Furgela, Bob Watson** and **Al McRae**.

I am proud to be the only original Air Canada employee at the Sudbury airport. During the past 30 years, I have observed all the changes and progress made by the Company and look forward to witnessing its future growth.

Norm Howard 1984.