

Old airplanes never die — they don't even fade away!

**Employees Restore Vintage Lockheed
as Colourful Career ends with Honours.**



Manufactured in 1937, this Lockheed L-10A Electra was the first new aircraft purchased by Trans-Canada Air Lines (TCA).

Transferred to the RCAF in 1939, it was then used as a transport plane for six years, with a brief interruption in 1941, when it was loaned back to TCA for six months.

From 1946 to 1962, it was owned by a number of individuals and companies, both in Canada and the United States.

The much travelled and colourful veteran returned to Air Canada last month before retiring finally to a place of honour among memorabilia of Canadian aviation.

The company's first new aircraft, **CF-TCA**, the silver Lockheed that since followed Amelia Earhart into aviation history, has made its next-to-last flight.

Now at the Dorval Base for refurbishing, from there it will be presented to the National Museum of Science and Technology for permanent display at the Aviation Museum at Ottawa's Uplands airport.

Following is a brief history of how the aircraft was re-acquired and preserved.

Executive Vice President **H. W. Seagrim** led the search for CF-TCA which was delivered to Trans-Canada Air Lines on October 6, 1937. Seagrim felt the aircraft should have a permanent home in Canada where it could take its rightful place in Canadian aviation history.

A good clue to the vintage aircraft's present whereabouts was found in the January 1968 '**Between Ourselves**' magazine story about the duplication of famed aviatrix Amelia Earhart's round-the-world flight. The plane used was good old CF-TCA!

It was flown around the world by **Ann Pellegrino** to commemorate Earhart's fatal 1937 flight.

Sam Milthorp, Manager, Contract Services, Purchases and Stores took the lead and contacted then owner **Lee Koepke**, North Central Airlines mechanic who was one of the people involved with the commemorative flight.

Negotiations were completed and CF-TCA again belonged to Air Canada.

She was ferried to Montreal International Airport and taxied over to the Maintenance and Engineering Base where the old bird was greeted with nostalgic smiles.

The meticulous task of restoring the 31-year-old "airliner" began and the first of many problems was soon encountered. Inventiveness, ingenuity and more than a fair measure of affection were required to refurbish the aircraft after its interior had been altered by a dozen owners.

The original seats had by this time been replaced and a search was undertaken for a similar set. After much shopping around, a number of similar, but slightly larger seats were located. They were cut down, re-upholstered and installed.

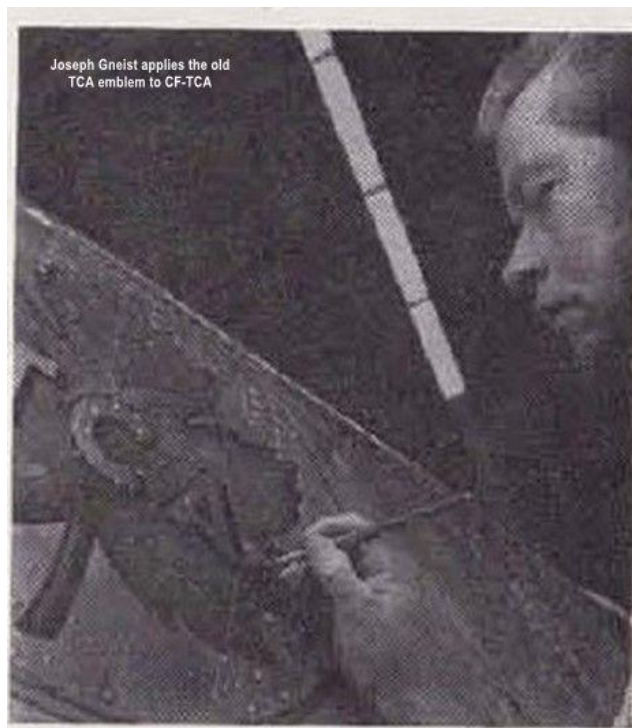
It was no longer possible to locate the exact type of material on the seats and for the sidewalls and overhead lining. "Material very closely resembling the original was found from a supplier in Montreal, and only a person with overly accurate photographic memory could tell the difference," according to **George Land** Superintendent, Overhaul Programs, who was one of the employees in charge of the project.

"We really had to dig for some of the small parts that were missing," said **Bill Cook**, Foreman, Finishing. "Someone had removed the adjusting handles on the seats, so we found that the window handles in Ford pickup trucks would substitute very nicely. The ashtrays in the side panels had been removed and we searched everywhere for a set until I discovered that the ones in the back seat of my car would fit perfectly," he said.

One of the owners over the years had replaced the Lockheed's windows with blue Plexiglas and these had to be removed and replaced with new clear plastic ones shaped in the Base Shops.

The original TCA maple leaf logo posed still another problem until the artist who designed it in Winnipeg was located and reproduced it on a sheet of aluminum which he sent on to Montreal.

Joseph Gneist applies the old TCA emblem to CF-TCA.



Some modern navigation equipment which various operators had installed had required the addition of antennas on the outside of the aircraft and the removal of some others. The unnecessary ones were removed and the missing ones replaced. One antenna was built especially in the Maintenance Shops.

The old luggage racks netting was missing from CF-TCA when the company reacquired it and suitable replacements were located from a Grand Manan Island, New Brunswick fishing net manufacturer.

Through improvisation and a lot of dedicated work from Maintenance Base employees, together with cooperation from various Canadian firms, old CF-TCA was once again as good as new.

Mechanics **Helmut Schulz**, **Stan Fafoutis**, **Marcel Bourdeau** and **Pat Fay** are shown at work on old CF-TCA.



Source: Between Ourselves magazine
January and May 1968