

# Days of Yore Salutes the Royal Canadian Air Force!

It's not often that a little town like Didsbury Alberta has an opportunity to pay tribute to a national icon like the Royal Canadian Air Force, but this year, at the Days of Yore Living History Festival, that's exactly what this town of just over 5,000 people is going to do!

The RCAF Centennial is an opportunity to showcase Air Force personnel and their accomplishments, demonstrate air and space power, enhance the reputation of the RCAF, and proudly honour its distinguished history and heritage.



Thanks to the efforts of the 700 (City of Edmonton) Wing Royal Canadian Air Force Association, and with the blessing of the Town of Didsbury Council, the Mountain View Arts Society is bringing flyovers of vintage and current aircraft at the 2024 Days of Yore Festival!

The Mountain View Arts Society supports art, culture, and heritage in Mountain View County and the surrounding Central Alberta communities between Red Deer and Calgary. In its 10<sup>th</sup> year, Days of Yore is a living history festival entertaining and educating the public to cultural traditions, lifestyles, and activities of bygone eras through authentic representation of those times.

It is an honour to be able to participate as one of many anniversary celebrations held throughout Canada this year, and to showcase the RCAF during its Centennial.

Besides having a booth at Days of Yore where you can visit with members of the 700 Wing RCAFA and learn more about how they commemorate the noble achievements of the men and women who have served as members of Canada's air forces, it is the 700 Wing that is sponsoring two flybys on both days of the festival. The first takes place at 1:05 pm with a flyover of a 1952 North American Harvard; the second is scheduled for 4:15 pm by the Royal Canadian Air Force (subject to military availability).



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## ABOUT THE HARVARD Mk IV

During World War II, and for some years afterwards, the distinctive growl of the North American (NA) Harvard was a familiar sound in Canadian skies. Recognized as one of the most outstanding aircraft of its era, it was chosen as the advanced single-engine trainer for the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan. As such, it served as a transitional aircraft upon which pilots who had learned the basics by flying Tiger Moths, Fleet Fawns, or Cornells would advance their skills so that they were prepared to fly combat aircraft such as the legendary Hurricanes and Spitfires.

The aircraft was known as the T-6 Texan in the USA and as the Harvard in service with the British Commonwealth air forces. In all, more than 20,000 airframes were built in California, Texas, Montreal, Fort William, Ontario, and in Australia.

A total of 3,350 were produced in Canada, more than any other type. Beginning in 1940, 2,800 were built by Noorduyn in Montreal and during the 1950s, another 550 were constructed by Canadian Car and Foundry in Fort William, Ontario.

Well suited to its training role, the Harvard was a high performance aircraft which had enough bad habits to teach inexperienced pilots to respect the even more powerful fighters they would soon be flying. Strong, but unforgiving, it required a delicate touch to maintain the proper attitude upon take off and landing. Following the war, the Royal Canadian Air Force kept the Harvard on strength until 1966, training pilots for their duties with NATO.

A training base in Claresholm, just south of Nanton, utilized the aircraft for this purpose during the 1950s.

The distinctive growl of the Harvard is produced by its 600 horsepower Pratt & Whitney engine together with its nine foot propeller which, when in fine pitch at high rpm, approaches sonic speeds.

The aircraft flying at Days of Yore is a Harvard Mk. IV owned and being flown by Brock Allison.

This aircraft was built by Canadian Car and Foundry limited in Fort William (now Thunder Bay), Ontario and delivered to Royal Canadian Air Force as serial Number 20377 on August 19<sup>th</sup>, 1952.

It served until May 17<sup>th</sup>, 1967, and has spent time at Penhold and Calgary.

