

## **The Early Years of Peterborough Airport**

In the late 1950s Mr. H. Oakman began developing the site of the present day airport. The property was developed as a private airport with two sand/loam runways and limited facilities, used sporadically by both private and business aircraft. As a private facility it was subjected to unscheduled and occasional closures. Over time Peterborough recognized a need for an airport and in 1964 entered into a 5 year contract, with Oakman to provide for a fee, the airport be maintained to a safe standard, be open for use by the public, be staffed daily, have aviation fuel for purchase and an aircraft engineer on site. The contract included an Offer to Purchase

To fulfill this contract Bradley Air Service, Carp Ont. were contracted to operate the airport, on behalf of the city, and establish and operate a Flight Training School and associated business at Peterborough Airport.

I arrived in late 1964 with 3 aircraft and personnel. to two sand/loam runways, fuel pumps, and a basic hangar. The city had situated a small cottage style terminal/office, with facilities, on site. We operated initially as Bradley Aero Engine then incorporated and operated as TrentAir Ltd. TrentAir operated the airport on behalf of the City, providing Flight Training, Charter, Aircraft Sales and Service. Runway 25/07 was maintained throughout the year but limited during spring thaw. As traffic and the requirement increased basic night landing light flares were replaced by basic runway lights.

As the greater need for an improved facility, became ever more evident I and city delegations held discussions with various ministers, and Federal officials. A Regional meeting was brief and the delegation was denied any hope for government assistance. Unfazed this same delegation travelled to Ottawa and presented Peterborough's case for a suitable airport facility. We were met with courtesy and hope. An Airport Commission was formed, and with the assistance of many and much work the City was granted Federal Funds. Transport Canada built a 5000 ft paved runway, complete with night lights. A new terminal was added and the newly licensed Peterborough Airport opened in 1969. TrentAir continued to manage the Peterborough Airport until the late 1970s

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