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747 Retrospective.

One of the great triumphs in aviation history since Day 1 goes by the simple name “Boeing 747”. You can learn all the basics starting with the Wiki 747 entry, then there’s a host of excellent books to read. Also, a real “must see” is Sam Chui’s nostalgic YouTube video – “The Last British Airways B747 Flight – An Emotional Farewell”. Sam has done a bang-up job covering the recent retirement of the 747 from British Airways. You can find this item by googling it by its title.

The 747 is such a magnificent story. In digging through old files lately, I came across some ancient Boeing PR photos and press releases. Inspired by Sam’s video and what I started unearthing around CANAV Books HQ, I decided to share a bit more about the 747, not that the interweb isn’t already bulging with material (I just know that you whiners out there know perfectly well where to find your favourite 747 content if this selection isn’t your cup of tea – yes there are whiners for any topic I can dream up). Mainly, you regular folks will be enjoying a few old 747 Kodachromes that Wilf White and I took in decades gone by, plus a few other pix that are credited:



Models of the Boeing 707-320B Intercontinental (left) and the new Boeing in 1/ 100th scale show the difference in size between the two Jetliners. The 707- 320B, largest Jet now in airline service, has a wing span of 145 feet, length of 152 feet, and gross weight of 328,000 pounds. It will carry up to 199 passengers. The new Boeing 747 has a wing span of 195 feet, length of 228 feet, and gross weight of 680,000 pounds. It will carry up to 490 passengers. The 707-320B Is powered by four Pratt & Whitney JT3D turbofan engines each rated at 18,000 pounds of thrust. In comparison, the 747 will be powered by four Pratt & Whitney JT9D turbofans each rated at 41,000 pounds of thrust. Pan American World Airways announced the first order for the 747 on April 13, 1966, contracting for 25 aircraft, 23 in the all-passenger version and two in the all-cargo configuration—with first delivery in September, 1969.

To start spreading the word about its idea for a huge passenger jetliner, in the mid-1960s Boeing began sending the press 8×10 “glossies” showing scale models of the 707 vs These gave a rough idea of the size of the proposed 747, which eventually was dubbed “Jumbo Jet”. Check out the simple description accompanying the photo. True to form, the press was skeptical. “Time Magazine”, for example, declared that the 747 was guaranteed to be a dud. (Boeing Photo)



Air Canada was quick to place its order for the 747. The type first appears in the company's 1968 budget as a proposal to purchase three. President G.R. McGregor simply explained how Air Canada would be sidelined in the industry, if it didn't join the global 747 "club". The price per airplane was \$23 million. The company's first 747-100 series — CF-TOA — was delivered to Dorval on February 11, 1971. Taking the official photos was the great Ed Bermingham. With his office at Dorval Airport, Ed had two main clients – Air Canada and CAE Inc. Talk about a dream job for a fellow who had begun as a kid tinkering with old cameras! If you have our book *Aviation in Canada: The CAE Story*, you'll be familiar with Ed's magnificent photography. Here, "TOA" arrives, then taxis in. What a red letter day in the history of Air Canada and "YUL" Dorval. "TOA" would enjoy a long career before being sold to Guinness Peat Aviation in 1984. Thenceforth, it served carriers from National Airlines as N749R to People Express, Middle East Airlines and Flying Tiger Line. In 1988 it became N890FT owned by First Security Bank of Utah (banks and insurance companies often own the airliners we assume the operators must own). In 1992 "TOA" became N620FE with Federal Express. It finally went for parting out and scrapping at Marana, Arizona in 1995.



Ed Bermingham also photographed Air Canada's second 747-100, CF-TOB, on its delivery to YUL on March 18, 1971.



CF-TOB served into 1985, then had a long afterlife with operators from Iberia of Spain to Middle East Airlines of Lebanon, and Canada's iconic Wardair (1986-1990). It ended c.1995 with Air Atlanta Icelandic, then went to Marana, where it was scrapped in 2003. I caught "TOB" landing at YYZ on October 1, 1972.



This Air Canada B.747-200 was to have been CF- TOF, but instead was delivered in 1975 as C-GAGA. It was sold in 1988 to Canada Lease Financing, then leased back by Air Canada. I shot



"AGA" on 35mm b/w film at YYZ on May 16, 1975. Notice the Lancaster beyond. That's G-BCOH (ex-RCAF KB976) on its ferry trip from Edmonton to the UK for the Strathallan Aircraft Collection. A few of us got on the ramp for this festive event, but I'm glad I also grabbed this shot of "AGA" for the record (as we used to

say). My vantage point was the rooftop parking lot in YYZ's famous (and long gone) Aeroquay/Terminal One. Over the decades "AGA" served other airlines on and off (e.g., Garuda of Indonesia). It finally left Air Canada in 1999 for Marana. It was bought for spares in 2003 by the great Detroit cargo carrier, Kalitta Air. The leftovers became scrap in 2013. Here's "AGA" landing at YYZ on July 31, 1993.



Air Canada's B.747-400 "combi" C-GAGL leaps into the blue at YYZ on May 27, 1997. Delivered in June 1991, "AGL" had been financed by Air Canada, but was sold in 1993 to GE Capital Corp., then leased back. It served into late 2004, then went to Guggenheim Aviation Partners. In 2006 it was flying for Air China, had subsequent operators, and most recently was ER-BBC with the Moldavian cargo line, Aerotranscargo. On a recent trip, on January 23, 2021 it operated from Nur-Sultan in Kazakhstan to Budapest, Hungary. While most straight 747-400s have little use in today's market, any "combi" (convertible from passenger to cargo) is greatly sought after, especially in Covid 19 times, when billions of doses of vaccines are being transported globally.