

the land too valuable to developers to be used as an airfield.

But upon arrival in Toronto, Leavens Brothers Air Service Ltd., as it was now called, hired several experienced flight instructors and established a flying school. By 1938 this flying school had grown to the largest in Canada.

(1939 rates: Taylorcraft - dual instruction - \$9/hour. 1999 rates: Cessna 152 - dual instruction - \$110/hour.

In September of 1939, with the onset of World War II, Clare and Walt volunteered their services and began the training of civilian instructors for the numerous RCAF Elementary Flying Schools across Canada. Their company overhauled RCAF training aircraft and, most notably, ran the No. 4 Air Observer School at London, Ontario, from November of 1940 to November 1944 as part of the British Commonwealth Air Training Program. With the conclusion of hostilities they got

back to their traditional business and expanded into crop dusting.

Belleville's Leavens brothers and their offspring have controlled the company for 73 years with business ventures outside of the aircraft world including a GM dealership and the manufacture of some of the first fibreglass boats for the Canadian market. For the 50th anniversary of the company in 1977 a member of the second generation, John Leavens, who acted as President and General Manager, helped to find an old Waco 10 and the brothers set out to restore it to its original 1928 state of repair. This airplane, C-GAFD is almost a duplicate of C-FAFD flown by their predecessors in the 1920s. And now the third generation in charge of the company, known today simply as Leavens, has decided to put their family heritage in the form of the Waco 10 into the safe keeping of the Canadian Aviation Museum in Ottawa. Jeff Leavens, son of Ken Leavens of R.R.#4, Stirling, is now president of the company which concentrates on parts distribution for aircraft of all makes. They are also major players in the engine, propeller and accessory overhaul business, operating from their head office at 2555 Derry Road East in Toronto.

With all of this history behind them on this rare sunny day in June 2000, with high clouds floating in a blue sky and a light northeast breeze blowing down Belleville's runway, a good

portion of the Leavens family, including Ken's mother Queena Leavens-Brown, waited patiently for the Waco to arrive. It was a bit late on its schedule, causing some obvious anxiety in the gathering, but when the unmistakable pop of the old OX5, 90 hp engine was heard overhead everyone was on their feet with the excitement of the vintage aircraft passing over them. The pair onboard

Final take off

Continued from previous page. checked the windsock and headed downwind at 65 mph to set up for their landing. A soft touchdown at about 40 mph brought the Waco home to an admiring crowd.

After a short stopover for pictures, congratulations and hugs all around, the ship was refuelled and oiled for her Ottawa flight. As she rose from

the runway in the late afternoon sun, on the final leg of her final voyage, there was a moment when it was 1928 all over again. Somewhere up there, Clare, Art and Walt Leavens were watching and smiling with the rest of the family as she rose into the sky. The old engine never missed a beat and the wind in the wires was ever so sweet