

## Screamin' by at Mach 2...

Every year, the official end of the summer is no doubt the closing of the Canadian National Exhibition.

And with that closing, most people equate Labour Day weekend's Canadian International Air Show as the annual wind-up of the Ex.

Not being an avid aviator, attending the air show has never a high priority with me.

But, when my wife won VIP passes for the show, we found ourselves seated on the edge of Lake Ontario Sunday afternoon, waiting for them to get the show under way.

Ten years have passed since I last attended the air show. I was accredited as a media photographer, shooting for a local magazine. That year one of the Canadian Snowbird pilots plummeted to his death in Lake Ontario.

I looked over Ontario Place and recalled standing on the rocks as the two Snowbirds splashed down into the lake. One pilot had parachuted out, the other wasn't so lucky.

As the introductory announcements came across the PA system, I was delighted to hear the familiar voice of Stu Holloway. Stu is probably best known as that mellow voice originally announcing "It's worth the drive to Acton" in the olde Hide House commercials.

Local shoppers at Georgetown Marketplace Mall will also recognize his voice in the announcements that run throughout the day, directing shoppers to the food court, and telling them when the mall is closed at night.

I first met Stu in his early days, announcing the Miss Acton Fall Fair show. And he was also announcing the air show 10 years ago, when the Snowbirds crashed.

As these thoughts went through my mind, the PA system jumped to life with the screaming guitar intro to the Eagles' Get Over It. An F-18 fighter from the U.S. Navy screamed by the stands at Mach 2, the sound of its afterburners assaulting our eardrums a half-mile behind the

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plane.

The F-18 pilot, a veteran of Desert Storm, had flown numerous missions and could do things with that plane, developing G-forces inside the cockpit we never imagined possible.

The sheer power of today's aircraft is mind-boggling. He pulled the plane into a vertical climb, straight up for three miles, then leveled off to make another pass—totally awesome.

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources water bombers doused a 'fire' on a barge in the middle of the lake, and a demo by our own CF-18s did the Canadian Armed Forces proud.

The show also featured countless civilian aircraft like Wayne Handley's Turbo Raven prop plane that could do a vertical climb, stop mid-climb, then continue straight up. All the while, Handley chatted with Stu over the PA system, sharing his thoughts on the show.

Winding up the show, the Snowbirds aerobatic team executed precision maneuvers in their patriotically painted CT-144 trainers, the team's standard aircraft for almost 30 years.

I was pleased to learn Holloway completed his 25th year as the official announcer at the 1999 show, and was also responsible for assembling the music for the show. With it being the 50th anniversary of the show, it's great to see Stu's been a valued fixture for half that time.

Almost as long as the Snowbirds.



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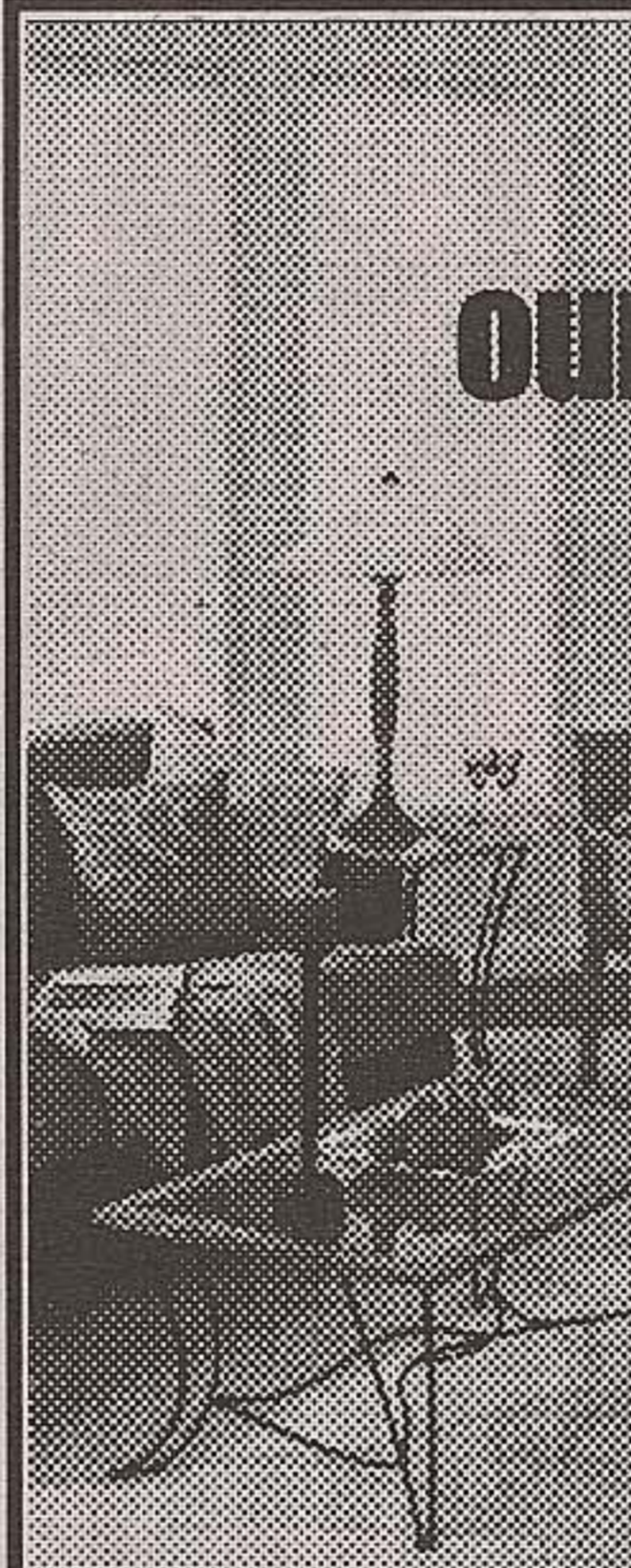
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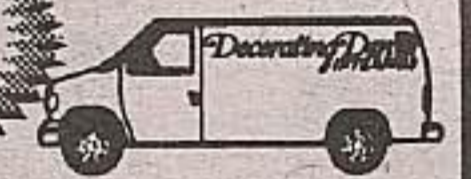
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