

Trivia

# Bombing on Quebec Airline flight had nothing to do with terrorism

**Q.** Although terrorism on airlines is more common these days, I'm told there was a Canadian airline that was bombed in the 1940s. What can you tell me about it.

**A.** The incident you probably refer to is a Quebec Airlines flight from Montreal on September 9, 1949 that exploded in mid air. A bomb had been placed in a baggage compartment, and the explosion killed all 23 passengers.

The subsequent investigation identified one of the dead as Rita Guay. A couple of weeks later, police arrested her husband Albert and charged him with murder. It seems that Guay had two accomplices, his mistress Marguerite Pitre and her brother Genereux Ruest. Pitre had owed money to Albert Guay and one of her tasks for him was getting the dynamite and delivering a parcel containing the bomb to the airport. Ruest had a workshop that made the timing device for the bomb.

Guay's motivation was to collect the insurance money upon his wife's death, and after he was convicted in 1950, he made a full confession and implicated his two accomplices. Guay was hanged in 1951 while Pitre and Ruest were later found guilty and hanged.

**Q.** Friends take part in a sport called orienteering. Is it a Canadian invention?

**A.** No. Orienteering was invented about 100 years ago in Sweden as a training game for the military and remains hugely popular in Europe where as many as 75,000 participants may show up for an event.

The sport didn't arrive in Canada until the 1960s and began growing in the 1970s when it began getting government funding. The sport is like an aerobic way of solving puzzles. At an event, runners carrying a compass and specially drawn maps compete to find their way around a course in the shortest time. They run through woods, streams, and

hills, and must pass a number of specific checkpoints on their maps, known as controls, to win. Determining the easiest and fastest way through the course is the challenge.



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