

My first flight was with Captain Connelly on May 24 from Montreal to Toronto and Winnipeg and back. Dennis “Con” Connelly was one of the best and most pleasant captains in the airline. A Spitfire pilot in Great Britain during World War II, he was the first single-engine pilot hired by TCA after that conflict. He also lived in Hudson and our friendship lasted until the day he died. I had the honour of reading a short piece at his funeral.

*“May 24, 1957 is a day I remember vividly. It was the day of my first flight as a first officer on the Super Connie. I could be excused for thinking the aircraft was named after the Captain because it was the day I met Con as he led us all to Winnipeg and back. This was the day in my professional career that I met the perfect pilot. Con was a gentleman in every sense of the word and an expert in what I would call soft command. He didn’t have to establish leadership, he was the leader, He didn’t have to set the standard, he was the standard. It was an absolute joy to fly and work with him and I always remembered what a pleasure that was. In later years, I particularly treasure the time we visited the Spitfire at Vintage Wings in Gatineau, Quebec and he sat in the cockpit and shared some of his wartime experiences with me. We have lost a fine gentleman, a natural leader, a great aviator and for me, a personal friend.”*

An historic inaugural occurred on my second flight as a Super Connie First Officer. It was the first ever non-stop flight from Toronto to Vancouver. The Captain was Roy Cartwright, and he received a letter and two documents prior to the flight which let us know how our day would proceed. He was also saddled with a new co-pilot just out of training with a single day of experience. I’ve always felt that this nine-hour flight, as historic as it was, has been lost in the fog of history.



## INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

PLACE & DATE  
OUR FILE  
YOUR FILE  
SUBJECT

Toronto - May 29th, 1957  
PR-865-1

Captain Roy Cartwright  
Tunstall Street  
Ste. Anne De Bellevue  
Quebec

Dear Captain Cartwright:

You are probably aware that Flight 5/June 1st, which we understand you will be taking to Vancouver, will be launched with considerable ceremony from Toronto and we thought it best to give you some of the details beforehand.

As this is an important flight, being the first non-stop in TCA history, both headquarters and we here would like to get as much publicity as possible by way of the press, TV, etc. We have arranged for a giveaway to the passengers in the form of an hour-glass appropriately inscribed, and these will be placed on board to be given to all passengers and crew members enroute. We are also asking the attendants on board to pass around a form, see attached, and would appreciate if you or the First Officer would co-operate by announcing the official take-off time in order to help the passengers determine the E.T.A. in Vancouver. We do not wish to involve you too much in this contest except to ensure that you will be the final judge on arrival in Vancouver, as indicated in the instructions. There will be photographers and CBC representatives meeting your flight at Vancouver and to obtain the maximum publicity I would like to suggest that the presentation of the watch be made after the passengers disembark from the aircraft.

We are also presenting a gold wrist watch, appropriately inscribed on the back, to Mayor Fred Hume of Vancouver, as well as a cigarette lighter, gift of the City of Toronto to Mayor Hume. We would appreciate if you would, after landing at Vancouver, contact Al Carlson, Regional Public Relations Officer, who will arrange to present these to Mayor Hume. By copy of this letter to Mr. Carlson I am asking him to make the necessary arrangements.

A copy of the schedule of events to take place at Malton Saturday morning is also enclosed for your information. You might, if you will, relay this information to the rest of your crew so they will know what is taking place I wish to thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

D. F. Barclay  
Regional Public Relations Officer

cc: Reg. Public Relations Officer - Vancouver  
Captain Roy Cartwright - c/o Crew Routing, Dorval



## TRANS - CANADA AIR LINES

INAUGURAL FLIGHT - JUNE 1, 1957

PACIFIC MERCURY NON-STOP SERVICE  
TORONTO - VANCOUVER

### SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

#### E.D.T.

- 10.15 a.m. - Georgetown Girls Pipe Band - arrival and parade on ramp.
- 10.30 a.m. - Passengers check in for Pacific Mercury Flight 5 - TCA check-in counter.
- 10.35 a.m. - Arrival Flight 5 from Montreal.  
(A red carpet and decorated passenger stand will be rolled up to the aircraft for send-off ceremonies)
- 10.45 a.m. - God Save The Queen  
- Acting Mayor, Mrs. Jean Newman, accompanied by Mr. Frank Young, TCA Central Region Operations Manager, will be escorted to platform where inaugural ceremonies are to take place. Mr. Young was co-pilot of the first trans-continental flight on April 1st, 1939.  
- D. F. Barclay, Reg. FRD, will introduce Mr. Young and Mrs. Newman.  
- Following her address Mrs. Newman will autograph, on behalf of the City of Toronto, a message to the City of Vancouver. This reads: GREETINGS FROM TORONTO TO VANCOUVER  
FIRST NON-STOP FLIGHT - 8 HOURS

(President, Toronto City Council)

- 10.50 a.m. - A cigarette lighter, gift of the City to Mayor Fred Hume of Vancouver, will be presented to Captain Roy Cartwright of Flt. 5 for delivery in Vancouver.  
- TCA stewardess will present flowers to Mrs. Newman.
- 10.55 a.m. - Passengers board flight. TCA stewardesses and band form "Guard of Honour".
- ~~11.00 a.m.~~ - (Prior to departure individual pictures of passengers and crew will be taken)
- 11.05 a.m. - Departure of Flight 5 for Vancouver.  
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- 11.45 a.m. - Guests proceed to Toronto Flying Club for refreshments and luncheon.

INTERNATIONAL - TRANS-ATLANTIC - TRANSCONTINENTAL



*Ceremonial boarding of passengers on Flight 5, June 1, 1957.*



*Captain Roy Cartwright  
on June 1, 1957 on the  
first non-stop flight from  
Toronto to Vancouver.*



*Captain Cartwright presenting the watch to the passenger who guessed the total flying time of the flight.*

The Super Connie continental cruising altitudes were much lower than jet travel today. If the weather was good we could cross the Alberta and BC mountains at 12,000 feet making it easy to enjoy the spectacular scenery. One sight that always fascinated me was the Frank Slide and we flew right over it. It was a rockslide that buried part of the mining town of Frank which is now part of Alberta. When the slide occurred there was no Alberta, which was created in 1905, and Frank was still part of the Northwest Territories. At 4.10 in the morning of April 29, 1903 over 82 million tonnes of limestone rock slid down Turtle Mountain, obliterating the eastern edge of Frank, the Canadian Pacific Railway line and the coal mine. I have driven by the slide and from the ground view it is startling to see the size of some of the rocks, as big as houses!