

Carl Millard turning 85

# Air carrier pioneer is too busy to retire

There will be hundreds of people along with hundreds of stories tomorrow as Carl Millard celebrates his 85th birthday.

Canada's dean of private air carrier operators, Millard flew for the first time in 1932 and has since logged more than 43,000 hours at the controls of at least 40 different types of aircraft.

Over the years he's flown royalty, movie stars, and politicians across the country and around the world. Even though he says he's trying to wind down the business, he is fully certified to jump into the cockpit of one of his planes and

get people where they have to go.

Born near Ingersoll, Ont., he remembers as a lad working on his father's farm, "walking along behind two horses and a hand-held plow as an airplane flew over. More than once looking up I plowed a less than straight furrow."

A friend of his fathers owned a little Waco biplane and took young Carl up for his first flight and he admits he was hooked.

He soloed in 1936 and from 1940-1955 he was a captain with Trans Canada Airlines, the forerunner of Air Canada. He stated out in two-engined Lockheed 10s that seated about eight. He retired in 1955 just as the turbo-prop Vickers Viscounts were started to come into service.

He founded Millardair in 1955, "because I could see that there was going to be a need for a service like mine."

Today, Millard operates his air service a series of hangers along the north side of Pearson International Airport. How he came by his first hanger is quite a story.

"My first hanger belonged to National Defence and sat where Terminal One is now," he said. "I bought it from them in 1961, We jacked it up and rolled it down the runway to the place were it sits now."

Once the owner of as many as 10 DC-3s, Millard still has a few four-engined DC4's but the mainstay of Millardair is a brace to twin-prop Piper commuter aircraft. Millard still flies and he is currently certified as an airline pilot.

"I don't fly that much anymore, just the odd test flight a couple of time a month" he said.

"In fact I'm trying to retire but people won't let me. I still get calls from people wanting to book one of our aircraft.

"Back in the 1950s and 1960s we used to have class loads of students come out here and we'd fly them up over Niagara Falls and the Escarpment as part of an educational flight that was paid for by the boards of education.

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"People still call about that too."

Has he got any favorite aircraft of the scores he's flown?

"I can't put my finger on any one," he said. "I'm like Jesus, I love them all."

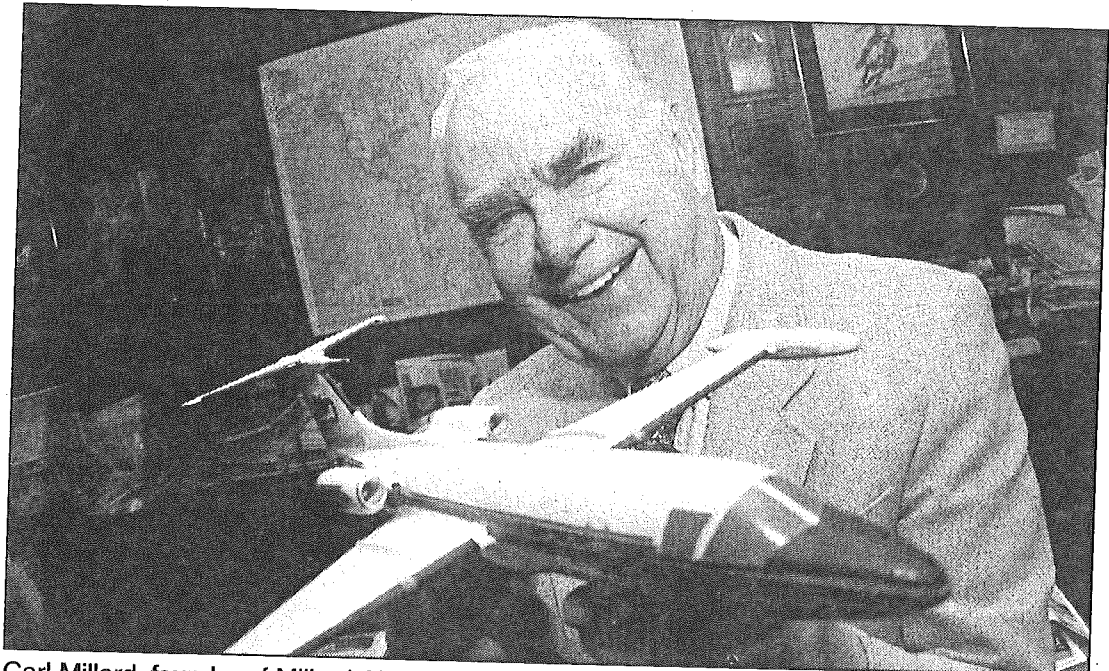
Although he is supposed to be cutting back, Millard is deep into the complete rebuilding of one of his hangars to hold Canada 3000's new Air Bus 330.

The hangar is just being completed and has a door 65-feet high so the tail of the Air Bus 330 or a Boeing 747 can be moved inside.

Much of his other hanger space is being used by other companies and that means Millard is on site every day overseeing much of what goes on.

Saturday's birthday party is expected to attract so many people, two birthday cakes have been ordered.

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Carl Millard, founder of Millard Air (officially known as Carl Millard Ltd.), will celebrate his 85th birthday tomorrow, along with several hundred invited guests, at his hanger on Derry Rd. E.