

A Tribute from the MAN ON THE GROUND to the MAN IN THE AIR  
on the occasion of the opening of ZURAKOWSKI PARK on July 26th. 2003

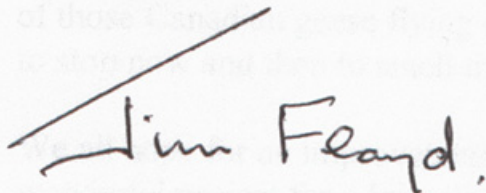
The date is March 25th. 1958. The MAN ON THE GROUND is tense today as he watches the pilot in whose skill and trust he has placed his reputation and future, climb into the tiny cockpit of the white winged monster, to take it from mother earth on its first test flight.

As the giant bird goes up and away the MAN IN THE AIR is also feeling the unique sense of loneliness that comes with the knowledge that he is now in sole charge of this complex piece of flying machinery and that his skill and courage in taking it on this first flight could be a major factor in the future of the project. He is also aware that much of the decision-making had been outside of his control and he had to trust that the MAN ON THE GROUND had made all the right decisions to ensure that he had a safe and reliable aircraft that would meet the required performance.

As he takes the bird through its paces, the loneliness of the MAN IN THE AIR gradually recedes as he gives his undivided attention to the flying of the aircraft and is in constant communication with the chase planes beside him and the technicians on the ground. The MAN ON THE GROUND is still feeling lonely, even though he is surrounded by colleagues who were also involved in the five years of design and build of this beyond-the-state-of-the-art aircraft. He was thinking of the 38,000 parts that had to function properly and the endless problems that had been encountered in putting this flying wonder together. He was aware that despite the fact that this project had been accomplished by a dedicated and talented team, the final responsibility for anything that may go wrong in this or later flights would rest squarely on his shoulders.

There is an unspoken bond between the MAN ON THE GROUND and the MAN IN THE AIR, since their's is the kind of individual loneliness that can only be understood by those who have faced an all-embracing responsibility alone ----- and yet together.

Today, on this very special occasion, the MAN ON THE GROUND salutes the MAN IN THE AIR and joins all attendees in offering Jan Zurakowski the affection, respect and admiration that he so rightfully deserves.



The MAN ON THE GROUND

Former VP Engineering Avro Aircraft.



The two old friends cut the cake at the 40th. Anniversary of the first Flight