

# TIGHAR TRACKS

THE JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL GROUP FOR HISTORIC AIRCRAFT RECOVERY





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**ABOUT TIGHAR**

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TIGHAR (pronounced "tiger") is an acronym for The International Group for Historic Aircraft Recovery, a 501(c)(3) non-profit educational foundation.

TIGHAR's activities include:

- Investigating aviation and aerospace historical questions and mysteries through archival research, forensic data analysis, and archeological expeditions.
- Producing papers, publications, and videos to further the foundation's educational mission.
- Providing expert historical and archaeological research to government agencies for evaluation of cultural resources related to aviation/aerospace.
- Advocating for accuracy, integrity and professionalism in the field of aviation historical investigation and the preservation of the material culture of flight.

TIGHAR's activities are conducted primarily by member volunteers under the direction of a small full-time professional staff. The organization's research is publicly available via the TIGHAR website.

**ON THE COVER**

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How do you prepare for forty hours over the North Atlantic in an open cockpit? For Charles Nungesser (L) and François Coli, waterproof fur and silk-lined flying suits were a good start. The suits may have been electrically-heated and some accounts say they were yellow, but it's impossible to know from the black and white photos. For this portrait, one-eyed Coli sported his trademark black monocle, but he wore a conventional eye patch for the actual flight. An injection of caffeine before departure was thought to be a good idea.

**ON THE WEB**

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<https://www.tighar.org>

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# Genesis



Forty-two years ago Ric Gillespie was running an aviation insurance agency at Mercer County Airport in New Jersey when his younger brother Bob sent him an article torn from the June, 1980 issue of *Yankee Magazine*. Titled “The Unfinished Flight of the White Bird” it told the tale of a reclusive Maine woodsman who heard an airplane crash on a foggy morning in 1927. Local tradition in far downeast Washington County held that the plane was l’Oiseau Blanc, the White Bird of French aviators Charles Nungesser and Francois Coli who disappeared during an attempted Paris to New York flight twelve days before Lindbergh’s successful crossing. The article ended with, “Perhaps someday a searcher will come upon the White Bird’s rusted engine; and with that discovery will be solved one of the longest standing, most puzzling mysteries in aviation history.”



Perhaps someday, but Ric had a business to run and the taped-together pages went into a desk drawer.

Four years later, circumstances had changed. Divorced, broke, and disenchanted with the insurance industry, Ric left the corporate world in search of more fulfilling work. In cleaning out his desk, he came across the battered *Yankee Magazine* article.

With a degree in history, a long-standing passion for aviation, and a demonstrated talent for accident investigation, Ric decided to see if he could solve the coldest of cold cases: the fate of the White Bird. In April of 1984, with some modest sponsorship from former insurance clients, Ric and his brother Bob

headed for downeast Maine. On the way, they visited Acadia National Park and Bob snapped a photo of his 36 year-old brother on the brink – but of what, neither knew.

After a week tromping the woods and interviewing witnesses in Washington County, the brothers had not found the White Bird, but Ric was hooked. This felt like the kind of hands-on historical investigation he was made for. Another expedition soon followed and public attention grew. Indiana Jones films had popularized “adventure archaeology” and this time the brothers found themselves accompanied by a CBS film crew and featured on Dan Rather’s Evening News. The project needed a name and Ric drew on a quote from Charles Lindbergh’s 1953 book *The Spirit of St. Louis*: “Step by step, newspaper headlines have followed Nungesser and Coli ... only to have them vanish like midnight ghosts.”

After a third expedition, Bob had to return to his own obligations, but that summer Ric met and fell in love with Pat Thrasher. With a history degree and a year of law school, Pat was the perfect partner for Ric’s new career and together they conceived the idea of a nonprofit foundation dedicated to responsible aviation archaeology and historical investigation.

The International Group for Historic Aircraft Recovery was incorporated on January 22, 1985. Ric and Pat were married on May 6<sup>th</sup>, and on August 25<sup>th</sup> they filed an application for TIGHAR to be recognized as a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization. Approval was granted on November 21, 1985.

In recent years, Project Midnight Ghost has been on hold but never forgotten. The search for the White Bird is TIGHAR’s genesis. Now new information and new technology have brought it once more to the forefront.



# THE LEGEND OF THE PLANE IN THE POND

**The Year 2022** marks the 95<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the disappearance of l'Oiseau Blanc and the 38<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Project Midnight Ghost, TIGHAR's search for the solution to the mystery. Our goal is to find identifiable wreckage from the aircraft.

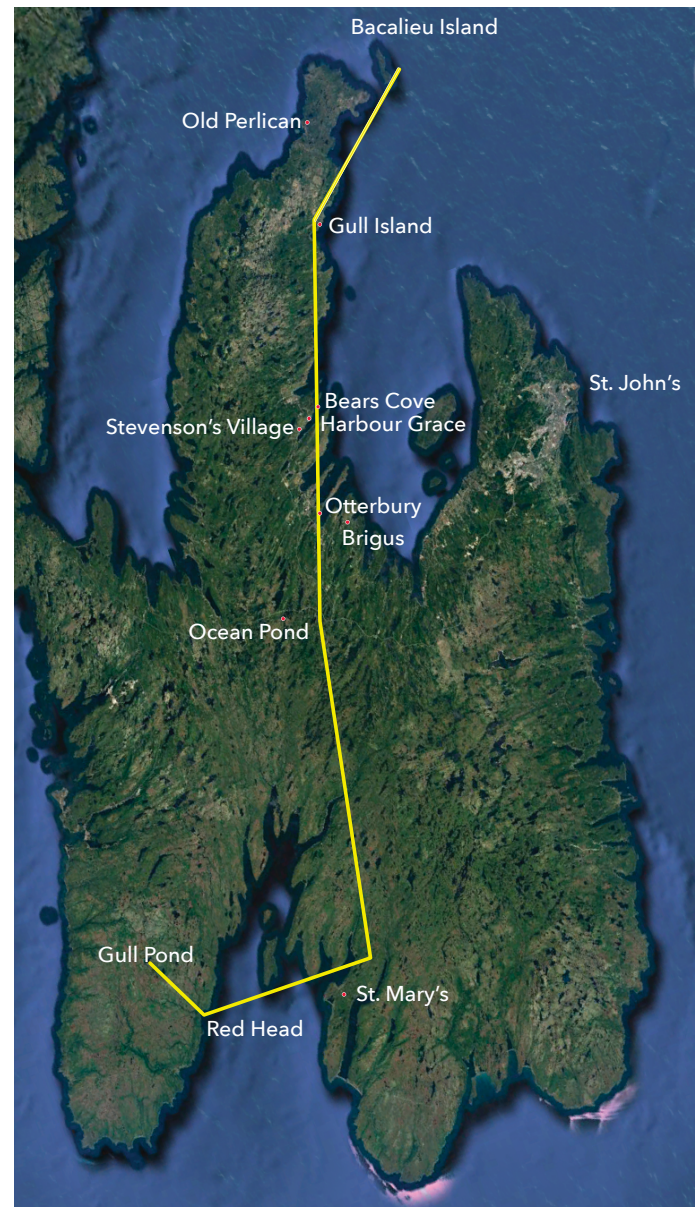
LOOKING IN THE RIGHT PLACE is, of course, the first requirement for a successful search, but with no contemporaneously documented witness to a crash we're forced to rely on stories told and letters written years later by people who claim to have seen wreckage, or even recovered debris, presumed to be from the White Bird. Assessing the credibility of these tales is essential to knowing where to search because, no matter how dedicated the searchers or how sophisticated the technology, if you're looking in the wrong place, you'll come up empty-handed.

From 1984 to 1992 we chased stories that the White Bird had been heard to crash in the hills that rise to the west of Round Lake on the coast of Maine. Twenty expeditions found nothing but more stories. It wasn't until we shifted our investigation to Newfoundland that we discovered anything that might reasonably be debris from a crash. We found it in the Gull Pond, one of many shallow bodies of water on the high muskeg barrens of the Cape Shore arm of Newfoundland's Avalon Peninsula.

Unlike Round Lake, there is solid contemporaneous documentation the White Bird was seen and heard near the Gull Pond. At a time when there were no aircraft in Newfoundland, at least eighteen witnesses, many of whom swore affidavits to local magistrates within days of the event, heard or saw an airplane as it flew southward down the Avalon Peninsula. In the north, Arthur Doyle saw a large white airplane coming in off the Atlantic Ocean. At the southern end, multiple witnesses in St. Mary's saw an airplane flying westward over St. Mary's Bay toward Red Head on the Cape Shore, apparently on fire. Whether the plane was trailing black smoke from a fire or white clouds of steam from

a coolant failure is a matter of conjecture, but only these final witnesses described an airplane in distress.<sup>1</sup>

The archived contemporaneous witness statements are not folklore. They are independent primary-source accounts of events on the



morning of May 9, 1927 reported soon afterward by people who did not know each other, nor did they know of Nungesser and Coli's attempt to fly from Paris to New York until they read news reports in the days following the plane's failure to arrive.

It can, therefore, be taken as fact that the White Bird made landfall in Newfoundland at Bacalieu Island around 9:15 on the morning of May 9, proceeded southward over Harbour Grace, Brigus, and Ocean Pond to St. Mary's, and was last seen in distress, headed west, approaching or over the Cape Shore near a coastal prominence known as Red Head. There the contemporaneous written evidence ends.

That the White Bird crashed seven miles to the northwest at the Gull Pond is a possibility based on what can only be called a legend – a story based on multiple unauthenticated accounts of wreckage seen and/or recovered from the pond. Is the Gull Pond the best place to look for whatever may remain of the White Bird? To answer that question requires an objective evaluation of the constituent elements of the plane-in-the-pond legend assembled from dozens of interviews and a handful of letters – but first it is essential to understand the culture and context in which the legend was born and evolved.

## The New Found Launde

The first European visitors to Newfoundland were Norse adventurers who established a settlement at its northern tip in 1021, but the Vikings didn't stay. Nearly 500 years later, Italian explorer Giovanni Caboto, dubbed John Cabot by his employer King Henry VII of England, sailed into the harbor of what is today the city of St. John's on June 24, 1497 – the feast day of St. John the Baptist. Upon his return to England, the Tudor monarch hailed the discovery of "new found launde."

The first permanent European settlers were English, Scots, Irish and French fishermen who arrived around 1610 to fish the vast schools of cod on the nearby Grand Banks. Newfoundland became a British colony in 1825 and in 1907 became a dominion of the British Empire and remained an independent member of the

commonwealth until confederation with Canada in 1949. Today, the people think of themselves as Newfoundlanders first and Canadians a distant second.

## The Cape Shore



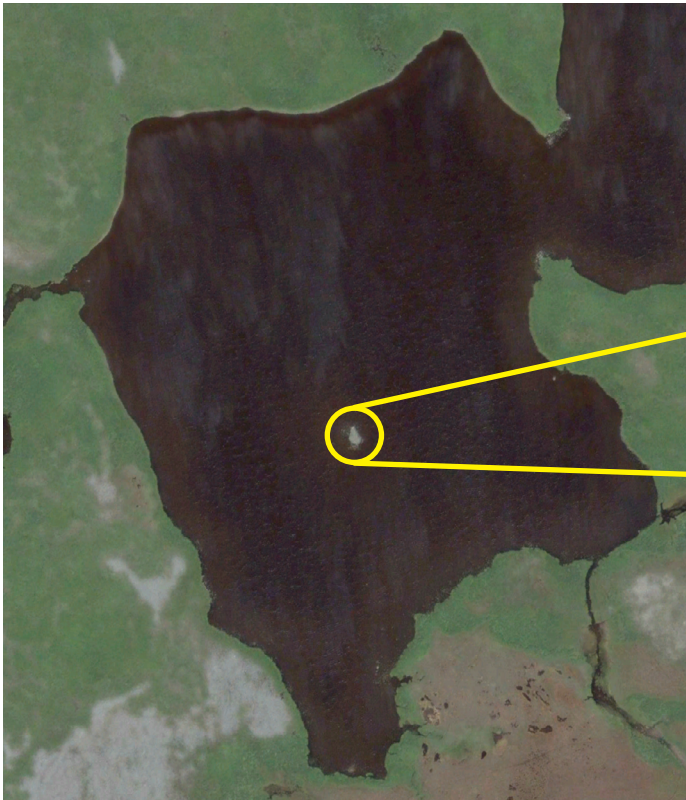
Roughly thirty-five miles long by fifteen miles wide, the peninsula in the southwest corner of the Avalon Peninsula with Cape St. Mary's at its southern tip, is known as the Cape Shore. The handful of hamlets strung out along the one road that circles the peninsula are located at coves that once sheltered the dories of cod fishermen. The Cape Shore villages were first settled by Irish immigrants in the early 19th century and remain primarily populated by Newfoundlanders of Irish descent. To this day, many residents of some Cape Shore communities share a common surname. Just about everyone in Patrick's Cove is a McGrath (pronounced McGraw) while the families who live in Angel's Cove a few miles away are nearly all named Coffey.

Until World War II, the area was relatively isolated from news of current events. In 1927 newspapers reached the Cape Shore only twice a week via horse drawn mail wagon, and the unpaved road was often impassable due to mud and wash-outs until 1941 when the newly-established U.S. Navy base at Argentia took over maintenance of the Cape Shore road. The first commercial radio station in Newfoundland did not begin broadcasting until 1932.

The interior of the Cape Shore peninsula is a high barren bog cut with stony streams and dotted with shallow ponds. Known locally as “the country,” the ground is muskeg – rocks covered with mats of dense soggy moss. People venture into the country only to trap beaver and muskrat, hunt grouse and caribou, or fish for trout.

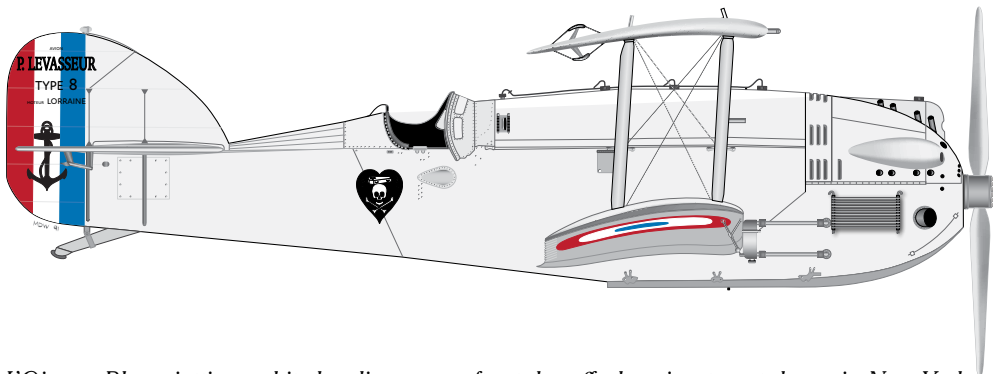
## A Pond By Any Other Name

A Google search of Gull Ponds in Newfoundland will yield dozens of results, but none of them is the Gull Pond of the Plane-in-the-Pond Legend. The pond is shown on topographic maps as Goose Pond, a name it was given by English surveyors in 1773, but this is the Cape Shore and pond names are fungible. Local people have little use for published maps and pond names are set by local tradition. To some, Goose Pond is “the Gull Pond.” To others, it is “the Branch Gull Pond” because it is the headwater of the Branch River, or “the Big Gull Pond” to distinguish it from three small surrounding ponds. Nobody calls it Goose Pond.



*The section of the Gull Pond associated with the legend is a 55 acre body of water roughly half a mile long by a quarter mile wide, varying in depth from about a foot close to shore to a maximum of about seven feet. Its most distinguishing feature, and the central element in the legend, is a small rocky island situated more or less in the middle of the pond, inaccessible from the shore except in the winter when the pond is frozen..*

The following is TIGHAR’s chronological reconstruction of events drawn from numerous interviews with multiple people who related sometimes conflicting versions of various parts of the legend. Most of the descriptions offered were recollections of incidents that occurred many years in the past. All should be recognized as stories that may or may not be true except for the few occasions when an event is documented in a contemporaneous written account.



*L’Oiseau Blanc jettisoned its landing gear after take off, planning to set down in New York Harbor on its boat hull. The Gull Pond would provide sheltered water for an emergency landing.*

# THE EARLY WITNESSES

## Nicholas McGrath Born 1888, Died 1971

On a Sunday or Monday in May of 1927, Nicholas McGrath, 39, of Patrick's Cove, was trapping muskrat on the Branch River a few miles southeast of the Gull Pond when he heard three explosions in rapid succession off to the northwest.

The following winter, while hunting caribou, Nicholas was crossing the frozen Gull Pond when he saw a piece of blue-painted metal through the ice in the shallow water near the northwest side of the rocky island. Remembering the explosions he heard the previous spring, he thought an airplane must have crashed in the pond. He did not connect the crash with any particular airplane or flight.

May 9th, the day the White Bird went missing, was a Monday. The aircraft's three large fuel tanks were in the nose immediately behind the engine and might logically explode in the event of a crash. These facts were probably not known to Nicholas when he told his story to an amateur historian from St. John's some time after 1967 and before his death in 1971.<sup>2</sup>

## Anthony McGrath Born 1913, Died 1994

In the winter of 1940, Anthony McGrath, 27, was hunting caribou in company with Ronald McGrath, 14, when he saw a five-foot tall piece of metal sticking up out of the ice in the northwest part of the island in the Gull Pond. The metal was lightweight, riveted, painted robin's egg blue on both sides, and attached to wood framing. Anthony twisted the metal back and forth until it broke free. Burdened with caribou meat, they were unable to take the metal home to Patrick's Cove so Anthony stashed the piece in a stand of "tuck" (tuckamore – a tangled stand of dwarfed and gnarled spruce trees) near the southwest end of the Gull Pond. When he later went back to retrieve it he couldn't find it. He believed it had been taken by Patrick "Patsy" Judge and Judge's father in law James Joseph Doyle of Gooseberry. The piece was later destroyed in a barn fire.

Anthony McGrath was apparently unaware of Nicholas McGrath's story and claimed to have been the first person to see pieces of the plane in the pond. Anthony told his story to TIGHAR's Ric Gillespie in August 1992. His account agrees with what he told another interviewer shortly before his death in July 1994. Anthony was 79 years old in 1992 and 81 in 1994.<sup>3</sup>

## Ronald McGrath Born 1926, Died 1980

In 1973 or '74, Ronald McGrath told a fisheries warden he had seen what might have been part of a wing – no date mentioned. He may have been referring to the piece Anthony collected and hid in the tuck.<sup>4</sup>

## John McGrath Born 1900, Died 1985

According to Anthony McGrath, his older brother John, born in 1900, had a piece of the plane – very light metal, 18 to 20 inches long, which was torn apart as if it had been in an explosion or had hit something very hard. No mention of paint or where it was found.

In a 1969 interview with journalist Jack Fitzgerald, John McGrath appears to have been the first person to associate the plane in the pond with the White Bird. In 1994, John's son Dermot McGrath

told an interviewer that when he was a child (probably in the late 1960s or early 1970s), his father kept the piece safe and would not let his children play with the “souvenir of the White Bird.” In later years, when interest in the plane in the pond died down, the piece of metal disappeared and may have been thrown out.<sup>5</sup>

## Patrick “Patsy” Judge Born 1912, Died 1984

If there is a star witness in the legend it is Patsy Judge. Patsy recovered at least four pieces and is the only one of the early witnesses known to have contacted authorities in an effort to discover the identity of the plane in the pond.

He recovered his first piece of the plane in the pond in company with Nicholas McGrath’s son Patrick and two of Patrick’s cousins, Ignatius and Leo McGrath. Patsy later said the year was 1932. He would have been 20 years old. Patrick McGrath said it was “sometime in the ‘40s.” Patsy’s daughter Florence thought it was 1942.

The four young men were hunting caribou and saw blue-painted metal sticking up out of the ice near the island. Patsy collected the piece which, according to Patrick McGrath, was a sheet of very lightweight metal, painted dark blue, “the color of a Tetley Tea box,” no rust, trapezoidal in shape and measuring approximately two feet tall by eighteen inches along the bottom and twelve inches across the top. There was a riveted lip



*Patsy Judge died in 1984 before TIGHAR’s Newfoundland investigations, but in 1992 Ric Gillespie interviewed Patrick McGrath, who was with Patsy when the piece was recovered.*

around the edges.

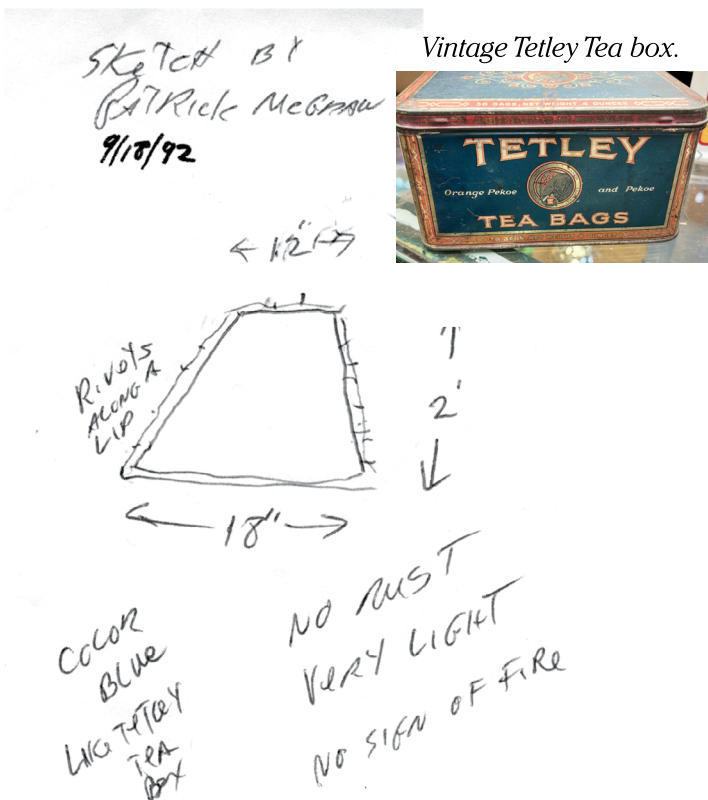
In a 1994 interview Patsy’s wife Bridget, then 81, said he sent the piece to the government in St. John’s for identification but never heard back.

In the winter of 1948, Patsy, then 36, in company with Leo McGrath, 28, and George McGrath, 16, recovered three more pieces, chopping them out of the ice with an axe.

- One piece was described as being light metal, rusty, roughly six inches by six inches, burnt in places, with spots of blue paint.
- Another piece was said to be V-shaped, about twelve inches by eight inches, burnt in places, with spots of blue paint.
- A third piece was given to George McGrath. No description.

On April 6, 1948 Patsy wrote a letter to Claude Noonan, an executive with a large corporation in St. John’s for whom Patsy had been a hunting guide.

*“I was in the country last week, accompanied by Leo McGrath, and came across parts of an*



*Sketch by Patrick McGrath, 18 September 1992.*



*aeroplane, which have been there quite a long time. I was wondering if it might be the plane called the BLUEBIRD, as it has spots of blue paint still on it.... You may know someone who can throw light on this. I am sure it must be fifteen or twenty years ago since the plane fell as the iron is rusted out."*

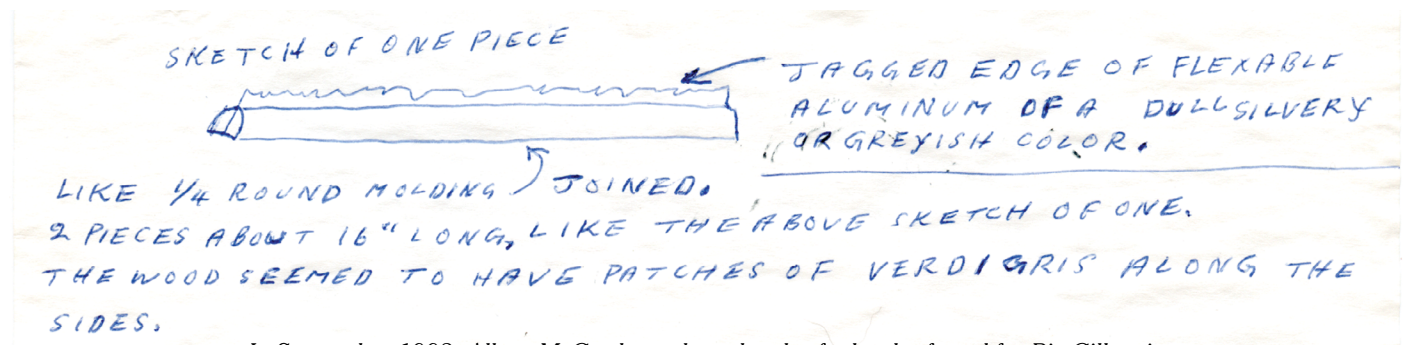
Patsy's 1948 letter is the earliest surviving contemporaneous written mention of airplane wreckage in the Gull Pond. No aircraft called the Bluebird ever went missing, but why did Patsy think the plane in the pond was named for any color bird? Virtually all of the aircraft that vanished while trying to fly the Atlantic had names – The Dawn, Saint Raphael, Old Glory, Endeavor, etc. – but only the White Bird had a bird name. Sydney Cotton's June of 1927 search for the White Bird included flights over the Cape Shore. In 1948, Patsy probably remembered the search (he was 15 in 1927) but misremembered the name of the plane.

Noonan made inquiries and on May 1, 1948 the Director of Civil Aviation replied saying he had no knowledge of any civil aircraft being missing in that area in several years and offered the suggestion that it might be one of the aircraft that "left Europe about twenty years ago of which no trace has ever been found." He thought the U.S. authorities at Argentia may be interested and suggested the information be passed to them.

According to his son James, Patsy followed the suggestion and gave the V-shaped piece to a Captain Spratt, USN, who took it to the U.S. Navy base in Argentia where it was examined. The examination supposedly confirmed the metal was not part of any American aircraft and suggested it belonged to the undercarriage of a plane because of the V shape.<sup>6</sup>

## Albert McGrath Born 1926, Date of Death Unknown

In July 1950, Albert McGrath found two pieces of the plane that had been carried by ice down the Branch River. They were jagged strips of very flexible bluish-white or gray aluminum attached to bleached quarter-round wood molding. He carried them for a while but threw the pieces away.<sup>7</sup>



*In September 1992, Albert McGrath made a sketch of what he found for Ric Gillespie.*

## Enter The White Bird

The October 26, 1969 issue of The Newfoundland Herald carried the banner headline "A KEY TO WORLD AVIATION HISTORY LIES BURIED NEAR PATRICK'S COVE." An article written by Jack Fitzgerald revealed "secret" information disclosed in an exclusive interview with John McGrath, then living in Colinet but formerly of Patrick's Cove. John said wreckage recovered from Big Gull Pond by James J. Doyle and Patrick Judge was identified as undercarriage of an airplane. McGrath believed the plane to be the White Bird, "a small blue and white aircraft" that "set out from France in 1921 with two pilots on board in the first attempted east-west crossing of the Atlantic."<sup>8</sup>

Although wildly inaccurate in its details, this is the first documented instance of the plane in the pond being linked to the disappearance of l'Oiseau Blanc. Up to this time, knowledge of the plane in the pond appears to have been limited to the McGraths of Patrick's Cove and Patsy Judge and his father-in-law James Joseph Doyle who lived in Gooseberry two and a half miles up the road.

John McGrath was the older brother of Anthony McGrath who recovered a piece of the plane in 1940. In a 1992 interview, Anthony said his brother John had also collected a piece of the plane and, in a 1994 interview, John's son Dermot said when he was a child (this would be around the same time the Herald article was published) his father would not let his children play with his "souvenir of the White Bird." However, the 1969 article makes no mention of John McGrath having a piece of the plane.

According to Fitzgerald's article, John McGrath connected the plane in the pond with the White Bird because:

*The day following the takeoff of the White Bird the engines of a plane were heard flying over the Patrick's Cove area of Placentia Bay. Suddenly the engines stopped. It was a stormy day, visibility was nil and people only possessed a limited knowledge of aircraft in those aviation pioneering days.*

*No move was made to check the possibility of the plane having crashed, simply because that possibility had not entered the minds of anyone in the community.*

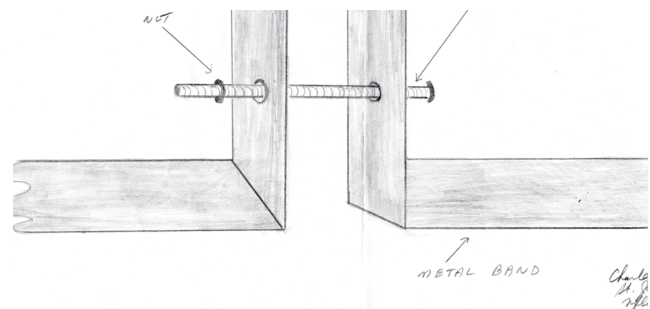
*A couple weeks after the incident some residents venturing six miles into the woods to a pond known as Big Gull Pond saw what they believed to be part of a plane sticking up out of the pond.*

There is no evidence anything like that happened. May 9, 1927 was neither stormy nor foggy, but there are accounts of Sydney Cotton's plane being heard over Patrick's Cove during his search for the White Bird in June 1927. The strongest evidence that the plane in the pond might be the White Bird is the body of documented accounts that trace the aircraft's path on the morning of May 9th down the Avalon Peninsula and across St. Mary's Bay to within seven miles of the Gull Pond – but none of that is mentioned in Fitzgerald's article.

However flawed the information and reasoning behind the headline, the Herald article launched a new era in the Gull Pond saga. Suddenly the plane in the pond was no longer a local curiosity known only to a handful of people but a "KEY TO WORLD AVIATION HISTORY." Fitzgerald wrote, "If McGrath's theory is right then the first east west crossing of the Atlantic was made by two French pilots Nungesser and Coli whose skeletons should be located at the bottom of Gull Pond." (Yes and no. If they reached Newfoundland it would be the first east to west crossing, but the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale does not recognize as an official record a flight that ends with the destruction of the aircraft and the death of the crew.)

The following summer, in July or August of 1970, the Cape Shore parish priest, Father Charles McCarthy, 35, had Patrick McGrath, then 47, show him where he had seen wreckage many years before. Wearing a wet suit, mask and snorkel, McCarthy searched parts of the pond. On the rocky bottom in about one foot of water near the island, McCarthy found two metal bands connected with a six inch threaded bolt and nut. The ends of the bands were jagged as if broken by force, not corroded away. He thought it looked like something that might have been used to secure a tank or some heavy object.

The piece was lost after McCarthy left the priesthood the next year and moved to California.<sup>9</sup>



Charlie McCarthy sketched what he found for Ric Gillespie in 1993.

## The Phantom Letter

The revelation that the plane in the pond might be of great historical significance prompted competing claims about who had been the first to see the wreckage. Nicholas McGrath told a dentist from St. John's that he had heard explosions in May 1927 and saw metal under the ice the following winter. Anthony McGrath claimed he had been the first, twisting a piece out of the ice in 1940. Patsy Judge defended his claim to fame by saying he had recovered a piece of the plane

in 1932, had later sent it to England, and had received a letter in return confirming the piece was from the undercarriage of either the Bluebird or the White Bird. Such a letter would, of course, be of tremendous significance.

According to a 1994 interview with Patsy's son James,

*About 25 years ago [ca. 1969] a man visited Patrick Judge and proceeded to ask questions about the plane in the Gull Pond. He offered Patrick 10,000 dollars if he would turn over the letter from England. Patrick could not find the letter and refused to give any more information (the man didn't identify himself). Patrick's wife was very upset because of the incident. She did not want Patrick to tell the man anything. This man was not French but was not from the area.*

In 1973, the story reached Robert Parker, producer of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation series "Up Canada" in Toronto. Seeking to track down a copy of the letter, Parker contacted Ralph Martin in England. Martin confirmed he had received a piece of metal from Judge and had given it to someone at an AVRO Aircraft factory near his home, but he had no further information.

In a May 24, 1974 letter to Ralph Martin, Parker thanked him for his help and said he had spoken with the Managing Director of Hawker-Siddeley which had acquired AVRO in 1963. The executive promised to search the company's back files and make inquiries of senior employees but cautioned that a fire several years ago had destroyed a number of old records. TIGHAR has since confirmed that an October 3, 1959 fire at the Chadderton AVRO plant near Martin's home destroyed large sections of the production and office facilities.

Unable to confirm Judge's claim about the letter, Parker dropped his investigation. Patsy Judge was incensed and, on June 18, 1974, sent a hand-written letter to Ralph Martin (spelling as in the original).

*Dear Sir*

*I know you will be surprised to Hear from me. I am writing you conserning the peice off metal which I found in 1932. As you remember I gave you a Portion off this to you. and this was in 1947. and you presented it to a place in England and they in turn wrote me a letter saying it was undoubtfull a part off the under carrige off the plane called either the Blue Bird or the White Bird. perhaps you can find out which plane they were searching for here in 1928?*

*At the present time there is a group searching for it in the Pond where I found this plane and they are trying to deny that I was the first to find this Part and trying to say it was years later. So if you could write me a letter conserning this transacton between you and I in 1947 this would prove I am Right in what I am saying.*

On July 4, 1974, Martin replied.

*Dear Mr. Judge,*

*Thank you for your letter of 18th June.*

*I was not really surprised to hear from you as the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation had been in touch with me regarding the piece of metal which you found many years ago.*

*Whilst I wish to assist you as much as I am able I fear that I cannot obtain any information whether the plane was called Blue Bird or a White Bird. All that I am able to say is that I remember you giving me a piece of metal when we were staying on your land with Mr. and Mrs. Peters way back in 1947.*

*This piece of metal was given by me to the Avro Aircraft people, a firm which is now a part of a larger organization called, I think, the Hawker Siddely Aircraft Corporation...and I understand that they wrote directly to you on their investigation. I did not have any copy of that letter.*

*However, I understand that the Manufacturers concerned have had a fire since writing to you and I believe that the correspondence in question was destroyed.*

*All that I can therefore confirm is that you handed me a piece of metal which was delivered as I have stated and I thought the reply had been sent and received by you.*

*Hope this may be of some assistance.*

A TIGHAR researcher's notes from July 6, 1993 telephone interview with Ralph Martin, then 88, provides more information.

Martin owned a textile mill in Bradford, Yorkshire, and Mr. Peters was his agent in Newfoundland for the sale of cloth to the Newfoundland police, Salvation Army, etc. Peters took Martin and his wife on a camping trip to Gooseberry Cove, where they met Patsy, who owned the land they camped on. Peters knew Judge because they used to come into St. John's to make their weekly purchases. Patsy supplied the camp with eggs and milk.

After two days, Patsy brought a piece of metal to Martin. He told Ralph that he thought it was part of the undercarriage of an airplane. Patsy said they had heard an airplane going over while he was fishing in a pond; he found this piece.

Martin was the first foreigner Patsy had met, the first Englishman. He thought the piece was from a plane that was either English or was going to England. Patsy didn't mention what year he heard it, or what year it came over.

The piece was comparatively light. It was about 12 to 14 inches long, about 3 inches at its widest part. It was bent and somewhat crumpled, with a lot of strange numerals stamped on it. Ralph thought it was aluminum or stainless steel, as it showed no corrosion and was bright and shiny. No wood or rivets.

Martin gave the piece to the A.V. Rowe factory which made Lancaster bombers. This factory was about 5 miles from his mill. The piece he described was as is, he doesn't know what Patsy may have done to it between the time he found it and when he gave it to Ralph. Patsy believed that it was from an undercarriage. When Patsy told him this, he had no reason not to believe him, since Ralph had no experience with airplanes. Martin thought it looked like a support piece and didn't come from a wing or the fuselage.

When he gave it to A.V. Rowe, they asked him where he got it. He told them the story, and they got very interested. He never heard from them what it was. Didn't remember who he gave it to. He never heard the White Bird mentioned.

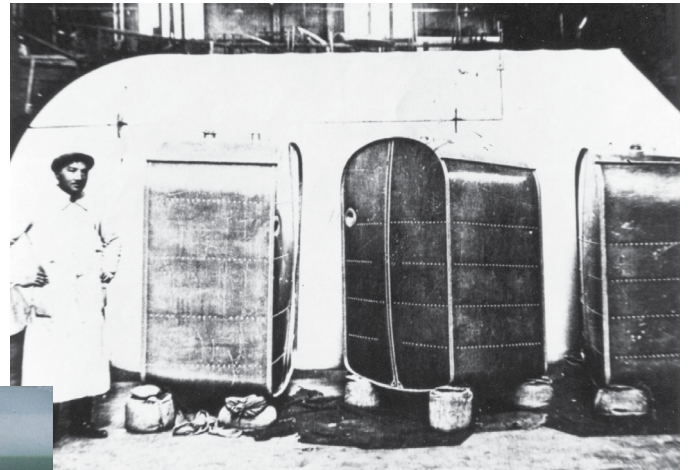
While there is no doubt that Patsy Judge gave a piece of metal to Ralph Martin who then passed it on to AVRO, the letter Patsy said he received in return makes no sense.

- It is inconceivable that anyone at AVRO in 1948 could have identified a component of the one-off 1927 Levasseur PL-8 without consulting French authorities and it is equally inconceivable that such an identification could take place without making international news.
- Patsy was on record in 1948 as believing the plane in the pond was the Blue Bird but in his 1974 letter to Martin it was "either the Blue Bird or the White Bird." The 1969 Herald article had identified the plane as the White Bird. It appears that Patsy included that option in his 1974 letter to enhance his credibility.
- Patsy already believed the piece was from the undercarriage of an airplane when he gave it to Martin, so he had that information before the piece went to England. According to Judge's son James, it was the U.S. Navy in Argentina who made that identification.
- No one claimed to have actually seen the letter identifying the metal except Patsy himself. Ralph Martin took Patsy's word for it that he had received the letter. Patsy never mentioned AVRO. He said only that he had received a letter "from a place in England." Judge's son James thought the letter came from "the manufacturer of a lost plane called the White Bird or Blue Bird." The White Bird was a product of Société Pierre Levasseur Aéronautique which had been out of business since the 1930s.
- When someone called Patsy's bluff and offered him \$10,000 for the letter he couldn't find it.

- It is difficult to conclude other than that the letter was Patsy’s invention to bolster his claim to fame.
- Nonetheless, Patsy’s identification of the piece he gave to Ralph Martin as a part of the undercarriage of the White Bird could be correct. L’Oiseau Blanc dropped its wheels after takeoff but the attach points on the plywood fuselage for the jettisonable undercarriage were “Acier speciale” (special steel) of the general shape and dimensions described by Martin.<sup>10</sup>

## The Artifacts

- At least eight pieces of metal thought to be from the plane in the pond were alleged to have been found and recovered before the possible connection to the White Bird was publicized in 1969. Six pieces were recovered from the Gull Pond: one by Anthony McGrath, one by John McGrath, and four by Patsy Judge – and two pieces were found along the Branch River near the Gull Pond by Albert McGrath.
- At least four pieces were recovered after 1969: one by Father Charles McCarthy in 1970, one by TIGHAR in 1992, and two more by TIGHAR in 2021.
- Of the twelve artifacts, only the three found and recovered by TIGHAR are known to still exist.
- From the beginning, the wreckage seen at the Gull Pond was ascribed to an airplane crash, and yet none of the artifacts said to have been recovered, or known to have been recovered, is diagnostic of an aircraft. The sole exception is the piece allegedly identified by the U.S. Navy as part of the undercarriage of an aircraft – but, alas, that identification is not documented. Ralph Martin’s description of the object he gave to AVRO sounds like a support piece for the White Bird’s jettisonable undercarriage – but without the artifact there is no way to be sure.
- There are similarities in the descriptions of the objects recovered. The majority of the artifacts, including one collected by TIGHAR, feature blue paint. Nearly all are described as lightweight or very lightweight metal and free of rust, suggesting the metal was aluminum sheet. The White Bird’s engine cowling and three enormous fuel tanks were made of aluminum sheet and appear to have been painted, although the color is not known.



*L’Oiseau Blanc had three large aluminum fuel tanks. In this photo, two of the three appear to be painted. The color is unknown.*



*TIGHAR Artifact 1-21-P-1. When it was recovered it had a film of oil on the interior surface.*

- Most of the artifacts were described as deformed in ways that suggest an explosion or severe impact – which is consistent with Nicholas McGrath’s account of hearing explosions. The artifact TIGHAR recovered in 1992 is a fractured section of a cylinder made of high-quality steel that appears to have blown apart from internal pressure, i.e. an explosion. When first recovered, the interior surface had a film of oil suggesting the cylinder had been part of a machine.

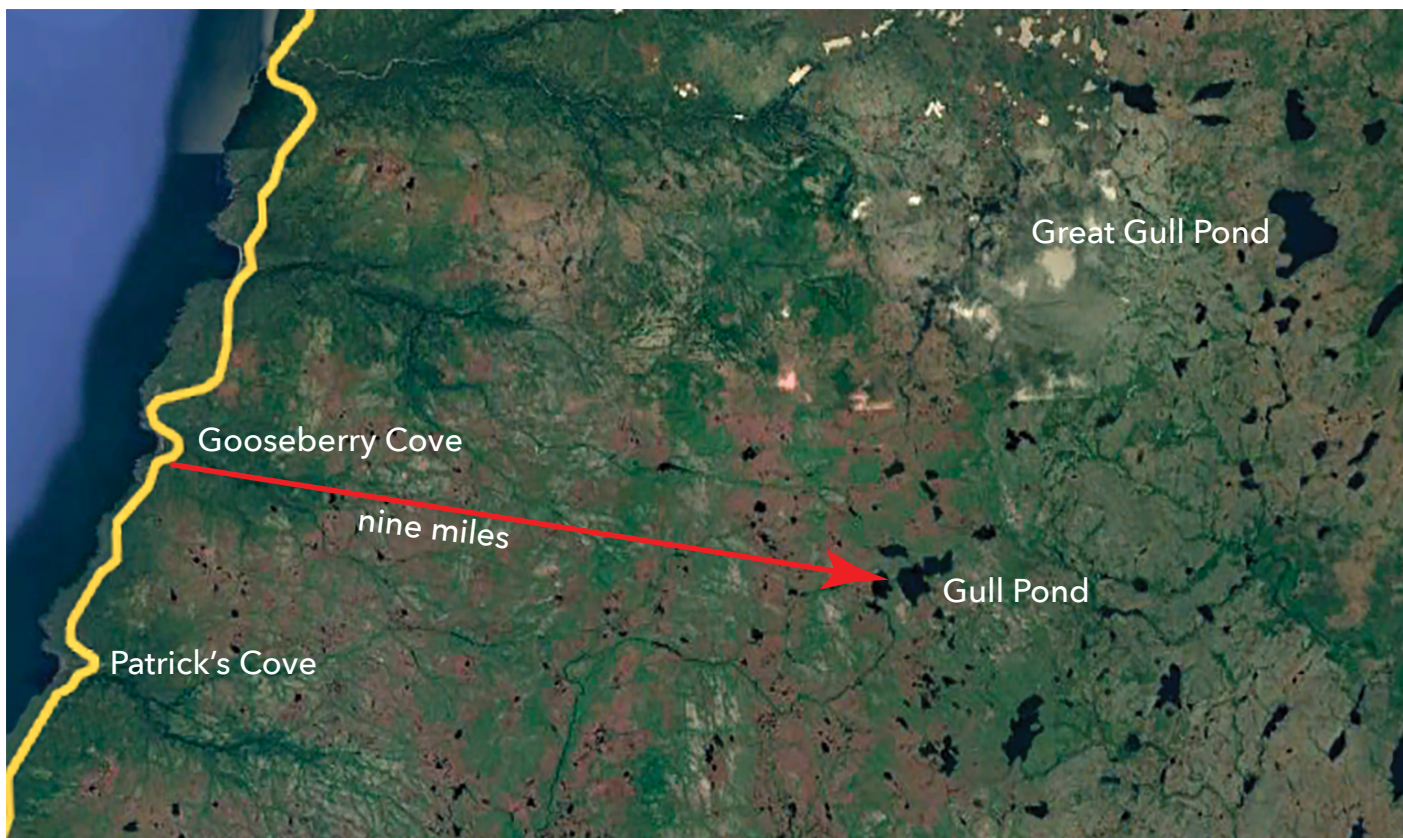
## The Question of Credibility

The dozens of interviews with people who claimed to have direct or secondary knowledge of the plane in the pond were all conducted after the October 1969 publication of the Herald article which proclaimed the plane to be the White Bird. We have no way of knowing to what extent the interviewees' recollections of long-past events were colored or influenced by what they now knew, or thought they knew, about the famous lost airplane. Also, there are no audio recordings or transcripts of both sides of the interviews. All we have are the interviewers' notes of what they were told, so we have no way of knowing to what extent the information they recorded were answers to leading questions.

All of the information in the post-1969 interviews and letters must, therefore, be taken with the proverbial grain of salt. It is worth noting that Nicholas McGrath claimed to have heard three explosions on a Sunday or Monday in May 1927. The Herald said the White Bird disappeared in 1921, so his recollection, at least, does not appear to have been altered to fit the Herald article.

So, what do we have in the way of hard evidence?

- The 1948 correspondence between Patsy Judge, Claude Noonan and the Newfoundland Civil Aviation Division reliably establishes that, in 1948, Judge said there was what he believed to be “parts of an airplane with spots of blue paint on it ... on the island of Great Gull Pond nine miles south southeast of Gooseberry.” There is a pond shown on maps as Great Gull Pond twelve miles east northeast of Gooseberry, but that's not the pond Patsy was talking about. The pond at the location given by Judge is the Gull Pond, also known as Big Gull Pond, Branch Gull Pond and Goose Pond. All of the witness accounts agree with that location.
- Judge also believed “it must be fifteen or twenty years ago since the plane fell as the iron is rusted out.” The Civil Aviation Division confirmed that no aircraft were known to be missing in that area in recent years.
- The artifact TIGHAR recovered in 1992 fits the location and description of what Judge said he saw in 1948 in that it was found near the island in the Gull Pond, is largely “rusted-out,” and has spots of blue paint. The TIGHAR artifact appears to be debris from a machine that exploded.



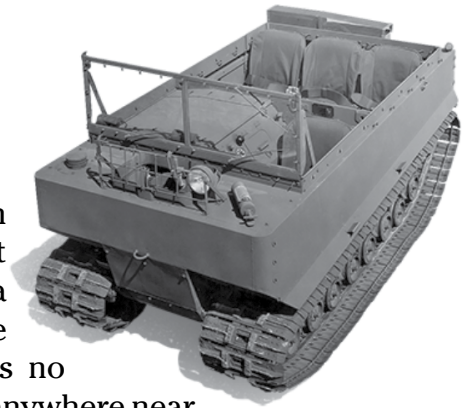
## The Null Hypotheses

The hard evidence suggests a machine of some kind suffered an explosion on or near the island in the Gull Pond at some time several years prior to 1948. The hard evidence is consistent with the loss of the White Bird but alternative possibilities must be considered.

### Alternative Hypothesis #1:

**All of the witnesses were in error. There was never a plane in the pond. The debris Judge reported and the artifact TIGHAR found were not from an airplane.**

So what sort of machine could have come to a violent end on or near the island several years before 1948? Machines of any sort were unknown on the muskeg until after World War Two, when a few surplus M29 Studebaker “Weasel” small tracked vehicles were reportedly used to transport hunters into the country. There is no aluminum sheet in a Weasel and no M29s are known to have been anywhere near the Gull Pond, much less known to have blown up. If one did, its wreckage would not look rusted-out in 1948.



### Alternative Hypothesis #2:

**The plane in the pond was an aircraft other than the White Bird.**

More than a dozen aircraft were lost during attempts to fly the Atlantic. In theory, any one of the unaccounted-for aircraft could be the plane in the pond. The missing aircraft most often mentioned as an alternative to the White Bird is The Dawn.

The Dawn was a Sikorsky S-36 eight-place amphibian powered by two Wright J-5 Whirlwind engines. On December 23, 1927, The Dawn took off from Curtiss Field, Long Island headed for Harbour Grace, Newfoundland. Aboard were Norwegian pilot Oskar Omdal, navigator Brice Goldsborough, engineer Frank Koehler, and Frances Grayson, a wealthy divorcee who financed the flight and hoped to be the first woman to cross the Atlantic by airplane.



*Mrs. Frances Grayson and the aircraft in which she hoped to be the woman to cross the Atlantic by air.*

The weather was predicted to be bad, and it was. The Dawn didn't arrive at Harbour Grace. Searchers found no sign of the missing plane but there were radio messages heard indicating the flight was in trouble and reports of an airplane being heard over a number of towns in the northern part of the Avalon Peninsula, but not on the Cape Shore.

A message in a bottle was found on January 9, 1929. Accounts of the contents of the message vary, but all indicated the plane was down at sea.

# CONCLUSIONS

There appears to be no plausible way for the wreckage seen and recovered from the Gull Pond prior to 1970 to be from a machine other than an airplane. Patsy Judge and the other Cape Shore witnesses were correct. An airplane crashed at the Gull Pond.

That the airplane was not the White Bird is possible, but the documented hearings and sightings that put l'Oiseau Blanc within seven miles of the Gull Pond and in apparent distress on the morning of May 9, 1927 make the Levasseur PL-8 of Nungesser and Coli by far the most likely candidate for the plane in the pond.

Returning to our original question:

**Is the Gull Pond the best place to look for whatever may remain of the White Bird?**

**The answer is yes.**

## Notes

- 1 Newfoundland witnesses spreadsheet.
- 2 Nicholas McGrath: Dr. James Miller interview with Nicholas McGrath and his son Patrick McGrath circa 1970; Ric Gillespie interview with Nicholas McGrath's son Patrick McGrath 9/18/1992.
- 3 Anthony McGrath: Ric Gillespie interview with Anthony McGrath 9/18/1992; Robin McGrath interview with Anthony McGrath 7/1994; Robin McGrath interview with Anthony's son Robert McGrath 7/1994.
- 4 Ronald McGrath: William Roche conversation with Ronald McGrath circa 1973.
- 5 John McGrath: Robin McGrath interview with Anthony McGrath July 1994; Robin McGrath interview with John McGrath's son Dermot McGrath July 1994. *Newfoundland Herald*, October 26, 1969.
- 6 Patrick "Patsy" Judge: Ric Gillespie interview with Nicholas McGrath's son Patrick McGrath 9/18/1992; Patrick Judge letter to Ralph Martin 6/18 1974; Jay Veith interview with Florence Coffey 6/28/1993; Robin McGrath interview with Patrick McGrath July 1994; Florence Coffey interview with Bridget Judge 7/18/1994; Patrick Judge letter to Claude Noonan 4/6/1948; Jay Veith interview with Ralph Martin 7/6/93; Florence Coffey interview with James Judge 7/17/1994; Civil Aviation Division letter to Secretary for Public works 5/1/1948
- 7 Albert McGrath: Ric Gillespie interview with Albert McGrath 9/21/1992; Albert McGrath letter to Ric Gillespie 9/28/1992..
- 8 *Newfoundland Herald*, Vol. 24, 10/26/1969; Ric Gillespie interview with Anthony McGrath 9/18/1992; Robin McGrath interview with Dermot McGrath 7/1994.
- 9 Charles McCarthy: Ric Gillespie interview with Charles McCarthy 11/5 1993; Note and pencil drawing sent by Charles McCarthy to Ric Gillespie 12/1/93; Ric Gillespie interview with Patrick McGrath 9/18/1992; Ric Gillespie interview with Hubert McGrath 9/17/92.
- 10 Phantom Letter: Florence Coffey interview with James Judge 7/17/1994; Robert Parker letter to Ralph Martin 5/24/1974; Patrick Judge letter to Ralph Martin 6/18 1974; Ralph Martin letter to Patrick Judge 7/4/1974; Jay Veith interview with Ralph Martin 7/6/1993; *Levasseur Album Photographique, Avion marin*.

Source materials are reproduced on the TIGHAR website at <https://www.tighar.org/Projects/PMG/PMGResources.html>





# THE NEWFOUNDLAND EXPEDITIONS



In the course of eight trips to Newfoundland between September 1992 and September 1994, TIGHAR researchers did extensive archival and oral history research and, on six occasions, conducted data collection and search operations at the Gull Pond.

## PMG XXI: OCTOBER 24-25, 1992

A four-person TIGHAR team spent two days at the pond, camping overnight. A metal detector search of the immediate area around the small rocky island in the middle of the pond turned up a badly rusted section of a cylindrical structure made of high-strength steel that had apparently exploded. When discovered, the interior surface of the artifact had an oily residue. Remnants of light blue paint on the exterior surface match descriptions of objects reported found near the island in the past. None of those objects are known to survive. The artifact recovered by TIGHAR is conserved at The Rooms, Newfoundland's provincial museum in St. John's.

The discovery of an artifact consistent with the Legend of the Plane in the Pond confirmed the need for further investigation of the Gull Pond.



*Ric Gillespie (L) and Lanny Lanoue (R) on the island. Lanny is at the location where the artifact was found. TIGHAR photo by P.Thrasher..*



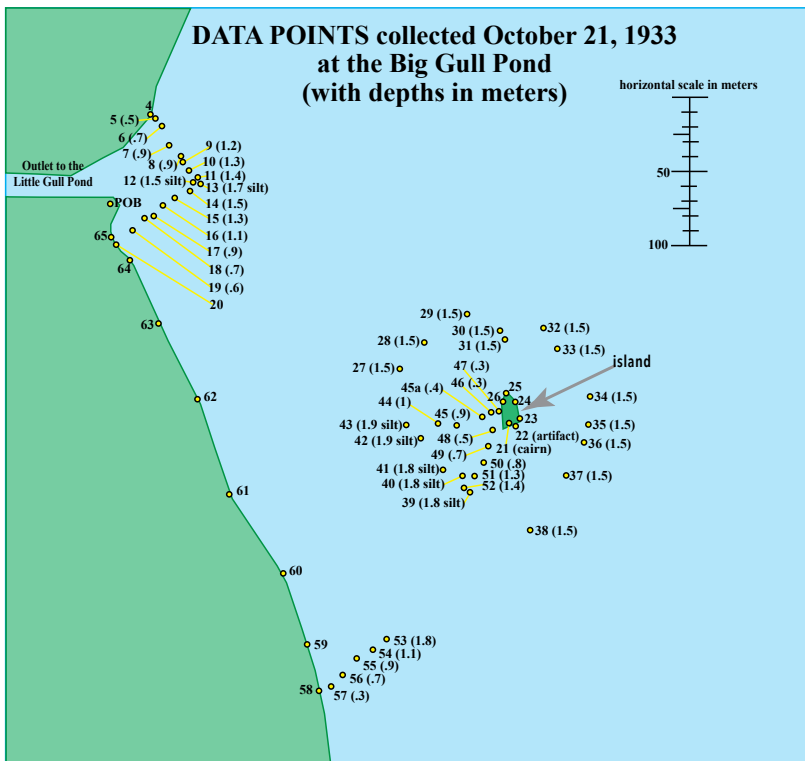
*TIGHAR Artifact 1-21-P-1, Newfoundland Borden No. CgAI-01/1, September 30, 2021. Photo by L. Daly.*



*TIGHAR Artifact 1-21-P-1 within minutes of recovery October 25, 1992. TIGHAR photo by P.Thrasher.*

## PMG XXII OCTOBER 14-23, 1993

A year later, a five-person TIGHAR team collected data on the depth and nature of the pond bottom using a tripod-mounted theodolite with infra-red ranging capability on the shore. A team member in the pond carrying a graduated range pole with an infra-red reflector sampled 65 locations. The pond was found to have a maximum depth of seven feet. Shallow areas have a rocky bottom. Deeper areas have a flat clay bottom with a layer of silt and, in some places, aquatic vegetation.



John Clauss takes a reading on Ric Gillespie during the October 1993 survey. TIGHAR photo by P. Thrasher.

## PMG XXIII DECEMBER 15-19, 1993

A three-person TIGHAR team and a Newfoundland archaeologist investigated a small adjacent pond where early aerial photos showed an object thought to possibly be wreckage. Breaking through an inch of ice, the team searched the spot but found nothing and concluded the object in the old photo was probably a beaver dam.



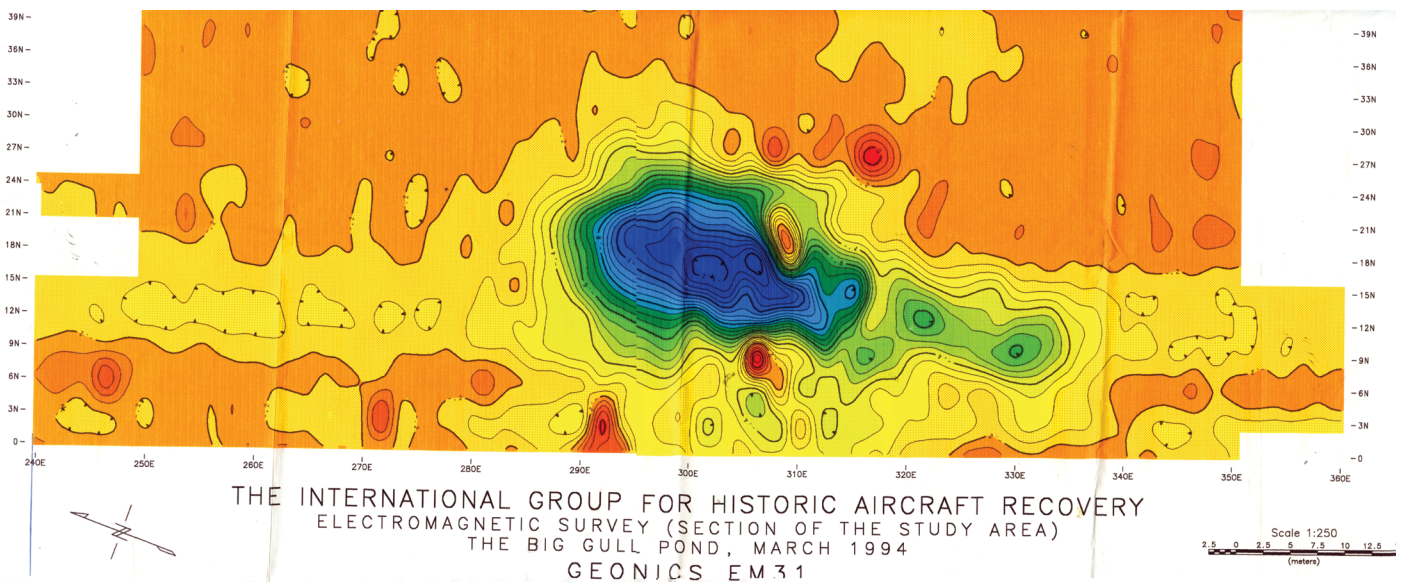
Cold work. (L to R) Ric Gillespie (complete with beard), archaeologist Roy Skanes, TIGHAR member Dick Reynolds. TIGHAR photo by P. Thrasher.

## PMG XXIV MARCH 22-31, 1994

In March 1994, TIGHAR returned to the now thickly-frozen Gull Pond to conduct a survey using an EM31 electromagnetic sensor towed across the ice in a small inflatable boat. Grid lines laid out on the ice allowed precision not otherwise achievable. The plan was for 14 hours of data collection over two days, but bad weather aborted the mission after a few hours and only a narrow band along the western shoreline was covered. Nonetheless, the data collected revealed intense electromagnetic activity in what we had been told was a geologically “quiet” pond. The electromagnetic targets were interpreted as possible metal wreckage.



*TIGHAR members Veryl Fenlason (L) and Kenton Spading collect electromagnetic data on the frozen pond in March 1994. TIGHAR photo by P.Thrasher.*



*The electromagnetic data suggested the presence of a large metal object.*

## PMG XXV MAY 21-28, 1994

Two months later the ice was gone and TIGHAR returned to investigate the electromagnetic targets. An EM31 electromagnetic sensor mounted on an inflatable boat was used to re-locate the targets. Divers in dry-suits with hand-held metal detectors did the physical examination. The targets all turned out to be naturally magnetic features, i.e. rocks with high magnetite content. The divers also did visual searching using masks and snorkels. A bathyscope was also used to view the bottom from an inflatable boat. The searchers passed over a few suspicious objects but were unable to relocate them to investigate.



*Above, EM31 deployed from inflatable boat. TIGHAR photo by P.Thrasher.*



*Right, Divers with snorkels investigated targets identified by the EM31. TIGHAR photo by P.Thrasher.*

## PMG XXVI JULY 1994

A two-person TIGHAR team conducted oral history research in Cape Shore communities and made a brief visit to the Gull Pond on ATVs with a Fisheries Warden to investigate reports of illegal search activity. Evidence of activity was found but no charges were brought.

## PMG XXVII SEPTEMBER 17-21, 1994

A four-person TIGHAR team spent five days camping at the pond. Two team members used an EM61 electromagnetic sensor to locate magnetic anomalies. The other two team members were in the pond in wetsuits with snorkeling gear and metal detectors to investigate anomalies and search additional areas. A full week of searching was planned but operations were cut short when the tag end of an Atlantic hurricane brought driving rain and high winds. No artifacts were found.



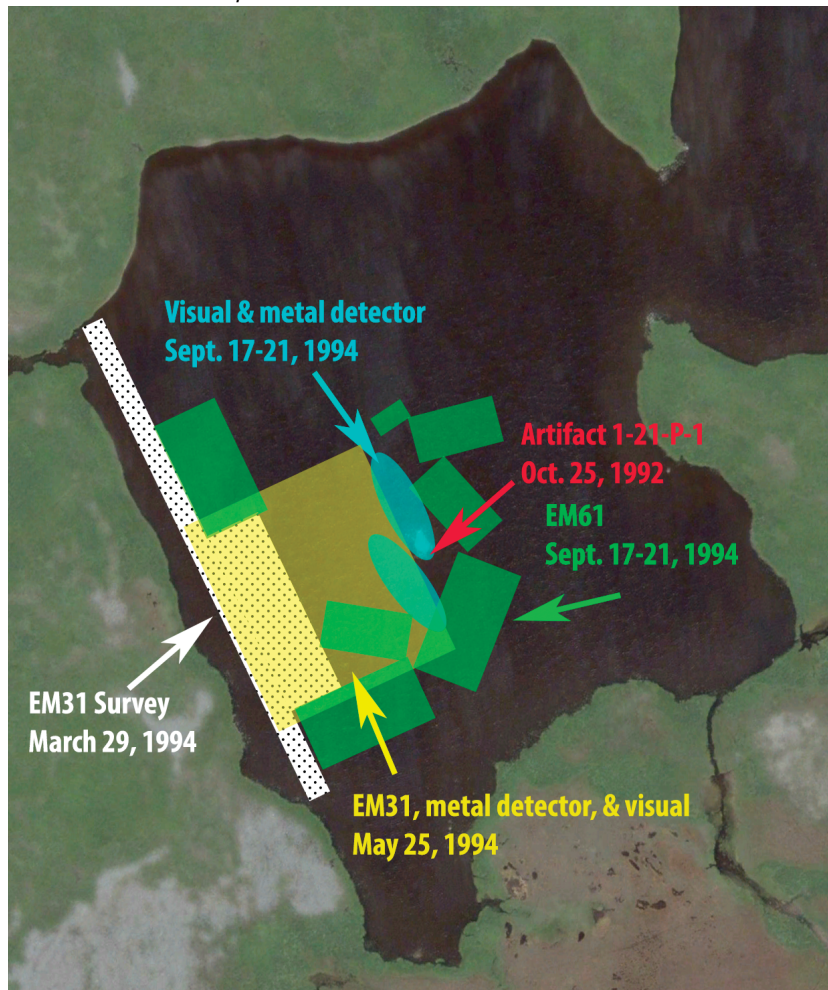
*TIGHAR members David Scott (L) and Kenton Spading operated an EM61 mounted on an inflatable boat powered by an electric trolling motor. TIGHAR photo by R. Gillespie.*



*TIGHAR camp September 1994: With no level surface and nowhere to set tent pegs, the tent was tied to plywood sheets and weighted with rocks. TIGHAR photo by R. Gillespie.*

Ric Gillespie (pictured) and archaeologist Jim Carucci wore wetsuits to search using hand-held metal detectors. Hypothermia became apparent after about four hours in the pond. TIGHAR photo by D. Scott.

This map shows the approximate areas examined between October 1992 and September 1994.



An April 1995 assessment of the work done at the pond concluded the most likely reason TIGHAR had failed to find identifiable airplane wreckage was because either the surviving wreckage is in a part of the pond which has not been surveyed or the wreckage has sunk too deeply into the pond bottom to be detected by the technology used. We decided we needed to search the entire pond with technology deployed from a helicopter, flying an electronically established grid, capable of detecting a metal object the size of the White Bird's engine from a distance of 15 meters. Even if such technology existed, the cost of the helicopter time alone would be prohibitive.

## PMG XXVIII JUNE 4-5, 1996

A two-person TIGHAR team hiked to Green Island Pond, packing in immersion suits and metal detectors, to investigate the possibility that we had been looking in the wrong pond. Nothing was found except the rusted remains of a beaver trap.

## PMG XXIX AUGUST 2006

A four-person TIGHAR team hiked to English Pond to see if there might be wreckage there. Nothing was found.



In 2021, with the phenomenal growth of drone capability and the development of lighter, more effective, remote-sensing technology, a detailed geological survey of the Gull Pond was economically possible.

On September 26, 2021, a drone magnetometry survey revealed why earlier electromagnetic surveys had detected so many false positives. The Gull Pond is far more geologically active than anyone imagined, with large dykes – cracks in the bedrock where highly magnetic magna had intruded millions of years ago – creating areas of intense magnetic “background noise” against which relatively small magnetic objects, like an engine, are impossible to detect. The survey report did, however, identify a few “hot spots” outside the intense areas that do not appear to fit the pond’s pattern of geological activity. Some of these are within areas already searched, but some are not. None of the targets identified in September had been detected or specifically investigated by earlier TIGHAR expeditions.

## A PLACE TO LAND

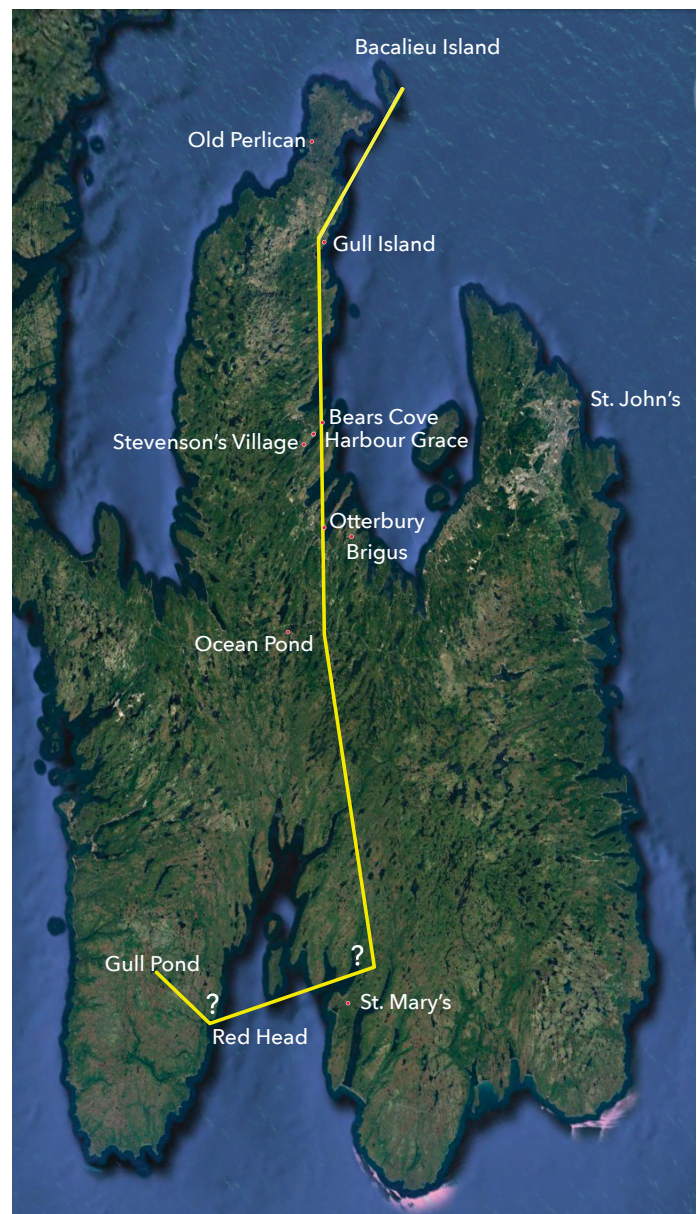
A 1924 chart of Newfoundland recently discovered by TIGHAR Researcher Arthur Rypinski in the National Library of Australia (of all places) appears to answer long-standing questions about how the White Bird may have ended up in the Gull Pond.

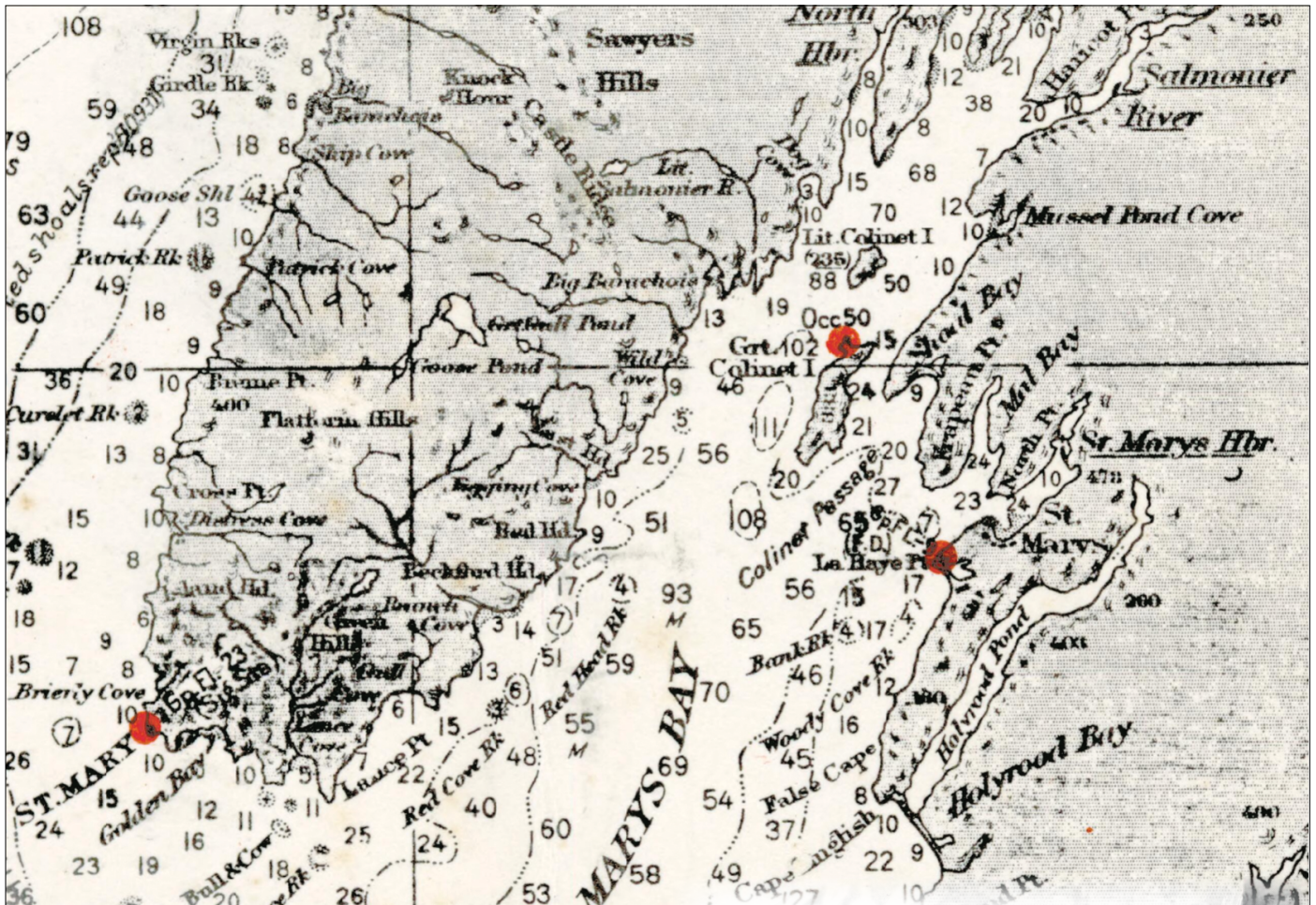
Witnesses traced the plane’s progress southward down the Avalon Peninsula as far as St. Mary’s where it was seen “on fire” – more likely trailing steam from a coolant leak – and heading west across St. Mary’s Bay. L’Oiseau Blanc was designed to land on water, but it had to be calm, protected water. Faced with an overheating engine and a need to find a place to make an emergency landing, why change course and head across the bay?

Witnesses in St. Mary’s followed the plane as far Red Head, a distinctive headland of red rock on the far shore. From that landmark, it’s seven miles (about four minutes at 100 mph) to the Gull Pond, but to get there Nungesser and Coli would need to make a nearly 90° course change to the northwest. Why would they do that?

The answer to both questions seems to be, because they knew where they were going

The chart discovered in Australia is a U.S. Navy Hydrographic Office product “From the latest British and French surveys.” If François Coli had a map of Newfoundland – which seems like a reasonable assumption – it had the same information as this chart.





Although detailed with respect to coastal features (the red spots are lighthouses), the nautical chart has very little information about inland areas. The only pond of any significant size anywhere is Great Gull Pond.

For Nungesser and Coli, searching the map for sheltered water, Great Gull Pond would be the only option. To find it, they need only fly to Red Head and turn northwest. What they could not know is that, on the 1924 chart, Great Gull Pond is shown five miles from its actual location and far larger than it really is. Expecting a large body of water to appear, they might pass up alternatives only to discover the pond at the charted location is a relatively small, rocky pond. It is the pond we know as the Gull Pond.



# A BIGGER BOOK



**FIVE YEARS AGO I SET OUT** to write a book about the selection and evolution of Earhart's Lockheed Electra. It was always going to be a niche book, fascinating to aviation fans, but not mainstream historical nonfiction. The deeper I got into the research, the more apparent it became that there was a larger, much more important story to be told. As facts replaced myths, dots connected and keys to understanding why events unfolded the way they did became clear.

My first book, *Finding Amelia – The True Story of the Earhart Disappearance*, published in 2006, provided a documented narrative of what happened. In the sixteen years since then continued research, new document discoveries, new forensic studies, and multiple expeditions to the South Pacific have completed the picture of not only what happened, but, more importantly, why it happened.

Earhart's fame as a record-setting pilot and advocate for women's rights is well-deserved but the very independence, raw courage, and disdain for convention that propelled her career ultimately proved to be her undoing. Worshipful biographies have treated Earhart's disappearance as an inexplicable mystery, but her end was neither mysterious nor inexplicable. Rather, it was the product of ambition, hubris, and external forces that played out over the last two years of her life in the pattern of a Shakespearian tragedy.

Before she embarked upon her world flight Earhart said, "I have a feeling there is one more good flight left in my system and I hope this trip around the world is it."

*One More Good Flight – The Amelia Earhart Tragedy* will present a meticulously documented narrative that covers the entire arc of Amelia's downfall, from her complicity in her husband's scheme to con Purdue University into buying her a new airplane, to her selection of the wrong aircraft and equipment for a circumnavigation of

the globe, to her failure to acquire the skills and support needed to safely complete the trip.

That her final flight would fail to find its tiny mid-Pacific destination was a near certainty. That Earhart and her navigator would search in vain for Howland Island until they ran out of fuel and crashed into the sea was a distinct possibility. That their search for Howland led them to another island where they landed safely, called for help, and ultimately died as castaways is what actually happened. *One More Good Flight* will present the abundant evidence for the true answer to Amelia's fate.

At an estimated 600 pages, the new book will be roughly twice as long as *Finding Amelia* and include approximately 50 historical photos. The Naval Institute Press will again be TIGHAR's publisher.

Much of the book is already written, but more writing remains to be done. Once the manuscript is delivered, the publisher's production of a work of this size will take several months, so it's too early to say when we can expect publication. What we can say is that everyone who has contributed at least \$100 to the TIGHAR Literary Guild will receive a signed copy. There's more work to be done and we'll continue to accept donations to the Guild.

Watch for updates as the work progresses.



*Ric Gillespie*



# 2022 EXPEDITION PLANS



## FIRST: WATCH THE VIDEO

This eleven minute video will introduce you to Project Midnight Ghost and explain how TIGHAR is working with Newfoundland to find history's most important missing airplane.

You'll find the video on the TIGHAR homepage at [www.tighar.org](http://www.tighar.org), on the Youtube TIGHAR Channel, and on the TIGHAR Channel on Vimeo.com.

## WE HAVE TWO TIGHAR EXPEDITIONS PLANNED FOR 2022.

### PMG XXXI - JUNE (exact dates not yet set)

A small TIGHAR team will make a one-day visit to the Gull Pond to collect drone imagery for the creation of a 3D map to be used in planning and management of the major search operation scheduled for September.

### PMG XXXII - SEPTEMBER (exact dates not yet set)

Four days of operations at the Gull Pond will include physical inspection of targets identified in the September 2021 drone magnetometry survey plus visual and metal detector searches of the pond bottom.

The Gull Pond is wild and remote, but it's not Nikumaroro. We stay at a good hotel in St. John's (a beautiful city) and commute daily via a two-hour drive to an LZ where we meet the helicopter for a short ride to the pond. TIGHAR members who want to observe operations at the pond or be part of a small land-search team will pay their own travel and accommodation expenses plus a \$500 contribution for each day they come to the pond.

You don't need to decide now, but we do need to gauge the level of interest in member participation in the September expedition. Please indicate on the mail-in form (see reverse of this page) to register as a volunteer, or go to [tighar.org](http://tighar.org) and click on the link on the home page.

***No donation required. No obligation implied.***

In the meantime, we do need everyone's help to cover the costs in preparing and carrying out these expeditions. Please contribute what you can to the 2022 Project Midnight Ghost Fund.

**OVER**



I would like to register as a participant in the 2022 PMG Expedition XXXII.

I would like to make a contribution to the 2022 Project Midnight Ghost Fund.

Checks and PayPal also welcome. [Paypal@tighar.org](mailto:Paypal@tighar.org)



Use this form to register as a participant and/or to make a contribution. No contribution is required to register as a participant.



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Email