

Winter storm in wartime Gander

(Robert G Pelley, 2019-09-04)
<http://bobsganderhistory.com>

In other articles on the present website, we already have described the Canadian weather services in Gander, in support of the Royal Air Force Ferry Command. The history of the Newfoundland Weather Centre in Gander dates from November 30, 1938, based a team who previously had been building up its forecasting experience during the flying boat operations in Botwood. However, before the installation of a formal weather office, weather observations had actually begun a year and half earlier, in February 1937, during the Gander airport construction.

With the outbreak of the Second World War, meteorological staff in Gander increased significantly and their expertise in transatlantic forecasting was used in support of RCAF anti-submarine patrols and the RAFFC delivery of planes to Europe.

The first American weather personnel to arrive at "Gander Field" on 09 March 1941 were six enlisted men from the 21st Reconnaissance Squadron having the job to support anti-submarine patrols over the Eastern Atlantic. On their arrival they were helped by the Canadian with whom they were initially co-located, in the Administration Building. They later moved to Hangar 9.

Not all these Americans were familiar with Newfoundland weather! One young duty officer described one trip out to check the guard posts at the end of January 1942 - quite an experience for a young American officer!

[Checking the guard post a wintery wartime day in Gander](#)