

de Havilland DHC-1 'Chipmunk

The Chipmunk was designed to succeed, in all of its rôles, the de Havilland Tiger Moth biplane. This first indigenous design at de Havilland Aircraft of Canada Ltd, Downsview, Toronto is an all-metal, low-wing, tandem two-place, single engine aircraft with conventional tailwheel landing gear and fabric-covered control surfaces. The wing is also fabric-covered aft of the spar. A clear perspex canopy covers the pilot/student and passenger/instructor positions (front and rear respectively).

The Chipmunk prototype flew for the first time at Downsview on 22 May, 1946 with Pat Fillingham of de Havilland, Hatfield, England at the controls.

G-AKDN, constructor number 11, was one of two pre-production Chipmunks sent to England in 1947 for evaluation by the Aeroplane and Armament Experimental Establishment at RAF Boscombe Down. As a result of these trials, and having won the subsequent competition for the Ministry of Supply's tender, the fully-aerobatic Chipmunk was adopted as an *ab initio* trainer for the Royal Air Force, and its Reserve and University Air Squadrons. Similarly, but somewhat later, the Royal Canadian Air Force also employed the Chipmunk as its primary trainer.

Following its service with de Havilland, Hatfield as a demonstrator aircraft that routinely performed at the Society of British Aircraft Constructors, Radlett, and Farnborough shows, G-AKDN went on to The London Aeroplane Club in July 1950 - a gift of Sir Geoffrey de Havilland. As a club aircraft it had an especially distinguished career as a racer. It won the Goodyear Trophy as #54 in May 1952 with Pat Fillingham at the controls. It won the Kings Cup Air Race in June 1953 again with Pat Fillingham at the controls. It won the National Air Race Kemsley Trophy in June 1955 with J N 'Nat' Somers at the controls, and again with J N 'Nat' Somers at the controls it won the Grosvenor Challenge Cup in July 1956.

G-AKDN returned to Canada in 2002 and is now based in Saskatoon. In May 2006 it participated in the 60th Anniversary Celebration of the de Havilland Chipmunk at the Toronto Aerospace Museum's *Wings & Wheels Heritage Festival* at Downsview (YYZ). G-AKDN is now the oldest airworthy Chipmunk in the world, and represents the start of the Canadian-designed de Havilland aircraft dynasty.

Technical Details

Designation: DHC-1A-1

Constructor Number: 11, G-AKDN

Engine: 145 hp de Havilland Gipsy Major 10 Mk 2; four-cylinder, inverted, inline

Maximum Cruise Speed: 118 kt/136 mph; Never Exceed Speed: 174 kt/200 mph.

Empty Weight: 1,430 lb (650 kg)

Maximum Takeoff Weight: 1,925 lb (875 kg)

Span: 34 ft, 4 in (10.47 m)

Length: 25 ft, 5 in (7.75 m)

Height: 7 ft, 0 in (2.1 m)

Wing Area: 172 ft² (16.0 m²)