

## Jack (Blackie) Apsouris



**Born:** 1934  
North Vancouver

**Died:** December 31, 1996  
Sechelt B.C.

**Family:** Wife Victoria  
+ 3 ex-wives  
4 daughters, 3 sons  
Stepchildren and  
grandchildren

Pilot

Featured in Knowledge TV  
Documentary "Blackie's  
Coast" and a "B.C. Moment"

Blackie Apsouris was a legendary pilot. He earned his private licence in 1955, flew his first Beaver in 1957 and then flew the B.C. Coast until his death. For many young pilots, the seaplane operations were a training ground for a position with one of the major airlines – the only way to make real money as a pilot. This was not the case with Blackie who turned down an offer with a commercial airline in 1961. For him, a life on the coast meant the ability to have a home base, in his case Sechelt where he moved in 1971, and to fly through an area of outstanding beauty while being able to challenge himself as pilot.

Blackie flew floatplanes for most of the small operators on the coast. When Norm Gold unwisely bought Airwest Airlines operation in Port Hardy he had great faith in Blackie and appointed him manager. When he arrived in Port Hardy he found an appalling situation. The base manager was nowhere to be found and there were 2 very green pilots covering the most challenging flying country in B.C. Blackie got things under control at which point Norm instantly sold off to ABAS. Norm had always insisted that his pilots looked professional and wore ties. When he resigned after the sale, Blackie cut his tie in half and sent it to Norm with his letter of resignation. The last company Blackie worked for was Tyee Airlines, started in 1960 by Al Campbell. He was the Chief pilot until he decided to strike out on his own.

A rugged individualist, Blackie was a one man show. He told a good story and Jack Schofield had plans to write and publish his stories. Sadly, Blackie died a month before this got off the ground. While other pilots were working for commercial enterprises, he was doing fun things like flying for 'The Beachcombers' and 'Danger Bay'. Knowledge Network in B.C. made a mesmerising documentary "Blackie's Coast" of Blackie flying in his beloved Beaver DHC-2 "Blossom" through the islands and inlets on the B.C. Coast. A 'Canadian Moment' was made using a short extract from this. Another venture of his was a partnership with Craig Murray, the owner of Nimmo Bay Resort, to develop a Heli-Fishing business, which continues to run.



After his funeral, Blackie A.K.A. 'the flying Greek' took a farewell flight along the B.C. Coast in "Blossom" accompanied by his brother and piloted by a friend.

