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Dave Stronach

Tall, dark and personable, Dave Stronach flew his own Cessna for Alert Bay Air Services on a commuter run between Port Hardy and Alert Bay. He moved from there to Port Hardy to work for BC Airlines. When PWA bought BC Airlines, Dave moved to Vancouver where they were based.

On November 21 1976, Dave was co-pilot of a Hercules L100 CF-PWX on a charter flight from Ostende to Lubumbashi in the Congo. The plane crashed killing all 6 occupants. There are two conflicting reports of the accident.

According to the Bureau of Aircraft Accident Archives, the plane was flying too low as it came in to land, hit a 30 metre tree with its right wing and crashed close to the runway at Lubumbashi. According to the Aviation Safety Network, the plane which was carrying power plant equipment, tried to land in a clearing, hit a tree, when part of its wing was sheared off. It hit a large termite mound and crashed near Kisangani, which is 1,400 kilometres from Lubumbashi.

A story exists that the navigation lights at Lubumbashi airport were turned off when the plane came in to land, possibly deliberately due to the suspicion that it was flying in armaments. The Aircraft ran out of fuel while searching for a place to land, attempted an emergency landing, and crashed.

Pacific Western L-100 Hercules C-FPWX / © John Smith 26 Sep.1976 at East Midlands