



## Jim (Jimbo) Pearce

Jimbo Pearce was born in 1945 to Nancy and Dennis Pearce; his father was a ferry pilot in WWII and in 1942 flew the new DC3 which Jimbo himself flew 30 years later. The family moved to Vancouver in 1950 and from there to Victoria in 1959. In high school, he became heavily involved in competitive swimming, holding 5 Canadian records in 1962, but unfortunately none in 1963/64, killing his ambition to swim in the 1964 Tokyo Olympics. He was offered 5 swimming scholarships to American Universities but chose to take none of them, instead going to UBC where he would swim with their Thunderbird Swim Team.

In his second year of University, Jimbo switched courses to Architecture, discovering soon that his lack of drawing ability was a serious drawback. In March 1966, floundering at University, he visited Vancouver Airport and, watching a jet land, decided that his future path was to be in aviation. His father, who had hoped for him to be a lawyer, was less than pleased. Jimbo however believed he had inherited his father's 'pilot gene'.

At **Bill Sylvester's** Victoria Flying Services, it took Jimbo a month to fly solo but a year to get his Commercial Pilot's licence, mainly due to the need to work in order to pay for his lessons. By February 1967 He was commercially licensed with a multi-engine endorsement, a night rating, a float rating, and no job. Fortunately he had some connection to **Don Thompson**, the owner of **Alert Bay Air Services**, who hired him as a dispatcher/dock boy. He began to learn his trade from Don and soon realised he had a lot to learn. In 1968 he became base pilot for **A.B.A.S.** in Port Hardy. Jimbo was working long hours with very little time off and on one particularly trying day involving a drunken logger, his drunken girlfriend and an impossible attempt to get them to Booker Lagoon in a massive fog bank, he received a phone call after he landed back at Port Hardy. It was from **Don Braithwaite** to ask if he would consider moving to Trans Mountain Air Service flying Cessnas and Beavers out of The Spit at Campbell River. The answer was 'yes'.

.From 1968 to 1980 Jimbo flew for Trans Mountain, B.C. Airlines out of Tahsis and Vancouver, Trans Provincial Airline out of Prince Rupert, Air West in Vancouver, Air Span Flight Charter out of Vancouver where he became Vice President, and West Coast Air out of Ocean Falls. He flew Cessna, Beaver, Mallard, Twin Otter, Single Otter, and Goose aircraft. He was offered a job with Air Canada in the 70's but could not accept it as the pay in the first couple of years was too little for him to live on.

In 1980 when Jim Pattison bought out several airlines to form **Air B.C.**, Jimbo became very involved with the union and negotiated the first contract with the company. In 1985, he was fired, mainly he believes because of his union activity.

Jimbo then worked for Branson Lodge as a charter pilot, Waglisla Air, out of Bella Bella, and did some work for Tofino Air and Harbour Air. He worked for Kenn Borek Air out of Calgary where he flew charters to the Arctic, Pakistan, and Burma among other places. He then went to Saskatchewan and did contract work with Air Saskatchewan and after that worked in the Maldives from 2006 – 2010. At 65, after 2 heart attacks and with 25,000 accident free hours flying, he retired to live in Nanaimo near his daughters and grandchildren.

*More detailed information on Jimbo's career can be found in his book 'Rainbows and Thunderstorms' available in the BCAM Library/Resource Centre.*

