

## Villi Douglas



Villi Douglas was the base manager at Port Hardy for every major airline that flew in and out of there for 45 years. He is remembered with affection by all the pilots who landed at the airport. Villi and artist/pilot /author Jack Schofield are the reason the mural exists. When Jack started sketching on a bare wall, Villi was delighted and provided the paint and funds for its completion. The full story of the mural can be found at the BCAM museum Resource Centre.

Villi's flying career started in Denmark where, despite never having had a particular interest in flying, his determination and obvious aptitude secured him one of only 10 coveted spots in the flying division of the Danish Air Force. He spent 18 months in Canada on an intensive NATO training program and later returned to Canada where he began a distinguished career in aviation which lasted until he retired in his 70's.

This career began in Alert Bay, where he honed his skills in float plane flying under the tutelage of **Don Thompson**, and advanced rapidly when he became Operations Manager and pilot with **Alert Bay Air Service**. When **A.B.A.S.** was acquired by **Gulf Air**, Villi became Base Manager at Port Hardy, where he initiated a pilot training program which gave licensed commercial pilots with little or no flying time the opportunity to gain practical experience. This program launched the careers of 50 or more pilots. It was in Port Hardy that Villi met his second wife, **Grayce Parker**, who was a dispatcher.

**Gulf Air** was later sold to **Pacific Coastal** which was purchased by Jim Pattison as part of his bid to form Air BC. This brought new challenges and opportunities to Villi and he and his wife chose to transfer to the lower mainland where he worked at YVR as Operations Manager of South Terminal.

Villi was the voice of the Northern Island, and advocated for an air transportation system that would serve the area population safely in perpetuity.

Villi's career took him to diverse places including China and Nepal. One of the highlights was receiving the Robert S. Day Trophy at the Silver Wing Awards by the B.C. Aviation Council for his contribution to Aviation in Canada.



Villi Douglas 1958 NATO training, Penhold Base, Red deer, AB Yellow Horned Airplane

**Born:** 1938, Copenhagen, Denmark

**Died:** 12 July ,2024

**Family:** Wife Grayce

Daughter Kim  
3 stepchildren Darcy, Daryl, Elayne

Danish Air Force

Pilot

Base Manager

**A.B.A.S.**

**Gulf Air**

**Pacific Coastal Airlines**

Air B.C.



