

Gordon Ballentine



Hanging out at the Aero Club of BC when he was 23, Gord met Don MacLaren, who offered him a job as crew on Pacific Western transports. Soon he had his commercial license and was flying and crewing on a regular basis. In the early 1930s he partnered with Howard Davenport to run a gliding and flight school, and a repair service at the Vancouver airport.

Pre-War Ballentine did whatever flying was required to earn a living; chartering, transporting, inspecting the fishing line, search and rescue. He was at the heart of the Zeballos Gold Rush on Northern Vancouver Island in 1935. In all Gordon flew for Air Travel and Transportation, Canadian Airways and Canadian Pacific Airlines. Later he became Canadian Airways Chief Pilot, and a Personnel Manager with Canadian Pacific Airlines.

Ballard was one of the early generation of bush pilots who pioneered commercial aviation in the rugged wilds of northern Canada. They transported people, equipment and supplies to areas lacking infrastructure. In doing so they had to contend with weather, unreliable equipment, intense cold and the unforgiving geography. All of this was done with the flimsy, crude and unsuitable aircraft of the day. Gordon Ballard spent his entire career at the service of the people of British Columbia.

Aviator

Inducted:

Born: 1905
Vancouver, BC

Died: 2 Jan 2005.
Vancouver, BC



We used to barnstorm up and down the Fraser Valley with our little two-seater airplanes.

You'd fly up to some farmer's field, take him and his family for a ride, and he'd let you use the field and you'd carry whoever came along for whatever you could get."

Gordon Ballard, talking about the early days of flying in BC, Magnificent Distances, 1974

