

Robert Parsons Engle C.M., B.S.

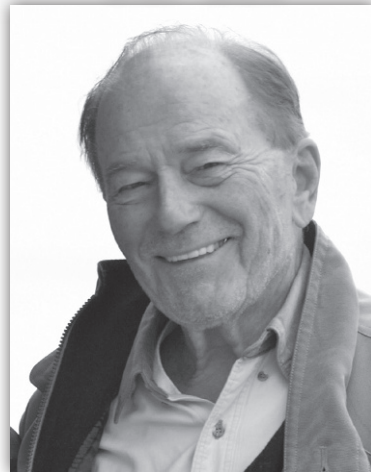
1923 - 2014

Robert (Bob) Engle passed away peacefully, with his wife Roxy by his side, at their home in West Vancouver on the 19th of September 2014, age 91. He is remembered as a devoted husband and father, consummate businessman, dedicated yachtsman and true aviation pioneer.

Bob was a World War II veteran and graduate of Yale University but his keen interest in aviation, as well as the influence of his grandfather's tales from the Klondike gold rush and his mother's experiences in Dawson City, made him determined to seek his fame and fortune in Canada's north. So in 1956, he flew his new deHavilland Beaver across Alaska and northern Canada before deciding to settle in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. There, he flew under contract to Wardair until founding his own company, Northwest Territorial Airways (NWT Air) in 1961. Starting as a bush charter operator with deHavilland Otter and Beech 18 aircraft, his operation quickly grew in size, adding DC-3s in 1967, DC-6s in 1971, and Lockheed Electras in 1973 and ultimately, Lockheed Hercules and Boeing 737s. The company similarly expanded in scope, with the introduction of scheduled services to the Central Arctic in 1968 followed by full trans-territorial airline service in 1980, and ultimately as an Air Canada affiliate in 1988. NWT Air was subsequently sold to First Air in 1997.

Bob built the first large hangar at Yellowknife airport and his numerous other business interests in the north included Air Northwest, Northwest International Aircraft Leasing, Northwest International Airways, Northwest Transport Ltd. and NWI Jet. To recognize his 50-year contribution to the northern business community, in 2007 in conjunction with the NWT Air 45th anniversary reunion, a new industrial subdivision adjacent to the Yellowknife airport was named the Engle Business District in his honour.

He was the founding President, Chairman and the first Honorary Life member of the Northern Air Transport Association. Bob served as the NWT director in the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, became an Honorary Life Member of the Yellowknife Rotary Club and Honorary Colonel of 440 Squadron RCAF. He founded the Northern Aviation Heritage Foundation, a non-profit society to promote and recognize aviation pioneers in Canada's North and also served with the Order of



St John, as a Citizenship Judge, a board member of Northwestel Inc. and as a patron of the Heritage Garden Foundation on the Grounds of Rideau Hall.

Bob's significant and varied contributions to northern aviation were first recognized in 1990 with his investiture as a Member of the Order of Canada. He was also awarded the 125th Anniversary of the Confederation of Canada Medal, the Queen's Golden and Diamond Jubilee Medals, and the Pioneer of Canadian Aviation Award from the Western Canada Aviation Museum. In a final affirmation of his legacy as a true northern aviation pioneer, Robert Parsons Engle was inducted into the Canadian Aviation Hall of Fame this past May.

Bob pursued a lifelong interest in yachting and for many years sailed the Great Slave Lake in Polaris I and II. And since 1997, Bob and Roxy focused their time and energies on their beloved yacht Serenity Now, cruising the Pacific Northwest waters of his youth, and as far as Baja Mexico.

Bob was a true Northern Gentleman who aggressively pursued life with a strong faith and great passion, and is survived by his wife Roxy, son James and daughters Emma (Daniel) and Alexandra, father-in-law Duff Pennie, brother-in-law Mark (Barb) Pennie, sisters-in-law Virginia and Elizabeth Engle, nephew Bill (Nanci) Engle, numerous other nieces and nephews and his faithful canine companion, Dakota.

A Celebration of Life and Reception will take place at the Royal Vancouver Yacht Club, 3811 Point Grey Rd, Vancouver, BC at 2:00 PM on the 18th of October 2014. There is onsite parking at the Yacht Club with additional parking on the street.

In lieu of flowers, Memorial donations may be made to the Northern Aviation Heritage Foundation, PO Box 2970, Yellowknife, NT, X1A 3W8.

To leave a condolence please go to www.mckenziefuneralservices.com. As well, please indicate in your condolence if you will be attending the celebration of life service on October 18th. For any further questions please call McKenzie Funeral Services at 604-926-5121.