



Naming Committee

Honouring People and Places in Our City

THE CITY OF
Edmonton

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James William Price

(1929-2012)

James William Price risked his life to save fellow passengers after his plane was forced to land on Lake Athabasca during the winter of 1953. Despite the severe injuries that he acquired, he continued to pursue a career as a pilot.

James, better known as “Jim”, was born in Black Diamond, Alberta on September 6, 1929 and grew up in Stettler, Alberta. He was working as a miner in Kimberly, British Columbia when he decided to pursue a pilot’s license and embarked upon a career in aviation.

On January 5, 1953, Jim was the 23 year old pilot of a plane that was forced to land on the ice of Lake Athabasca. While the three passengers suffering from frostbite stayed with the downed plane, Jim walked 56 kilometers in sub-zero weather to summon help in Uranium City, Saskatchewan. When Jim arrived in Uranium City, he would not accept any medical attention until he was able to instruct a Saskatchewan Government Airways pilot on how to find the downed plane and three passengers who later recovered at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton. The 29 hour trek left Jim with severely frostbitten feet that were later amputated. In an Edmonton Journal article, Jim told reporters, “It was nothing outstanding. Anyone else would have done the same thing”.

Despite the accident, Jim continued to fly float planes commercially. He was the only double amputee commercial pilot in Canada. He began a career in the Northwest Territories and Saskatchewan as a prospector, using his beloved Cessna 185 CF-TQT plane while making discoveries. Jim continued to fly and prospect until well into his seventies.

Jim passed away on October 15, 2012 in Stony Rapids, Saskatchewan. He will be remembered by his family, friends, and peers as a courageous, humble, and gentle man.

Written by: Danielle Ferchoff

January 2013

CITATION ON FILE

Northern Funeral Service Ltd. “Price, James William.” Accessed 7 January 2013.

<http://www.northernfuneralservice.ca/obits/obituary.php?id=215094>

Edmonton Journal. “January 5, 1953: Passengers of downed plane rescued from Lake Athabasca.” Accessed 7 January 2013.

<http://www.edmontonjournal.com/news/January+1953+Passengers+downed+plane+rescued+from+Lake+Athabasca/7777783/story.html>