

# Jack Cuthbert

## Born to fly

AS A BOY JACK CUTHBERT spent a lot of time with his nose in a book. In fact, English was his favourite subject in high school. He attributes his passion for literature to moving around a lot in his youth; born in Vancouver, he lived in Kamloops, Nanaimo and Victoria.

"I was a definitely a bookworm," says Cuthbert, 35. "Moving around so much, I didn't have consistent friendships, yet it gave me the ability to make friends easily."

"I love coming to work because of the people I work with."

Cuthbert's love of books was matched only by his love of flight. Standout movies from his youth involve aviation, including *Star Wars* and *Top Gun*. He laughs, "If Tom Cruise had made a different movie, I might not have become a pilot", but quickly admits he idolized his Uncle Jim, a pilot with Canadian Pacific Airlines: "I always knew I wanted to be a pilot."

Getting into the Canadian Air Force provided Cuthbert with opportunities, including riding with the Snowbirds and help in obtaining his commercial pilot's licence, but he viewed it "as a means to an end, training toward work with an airline." Ironically, he didn't get to fly an airplane until his aviation training at Trinity Western University in Abbotsford, but he met some of the best friends of his life in the Air Force, including his wife, with whom he has two children.

He flew business jets for a number of years, but after the events of 9/11, his wife suggested that he return to seaplanes. Cuthbert has been with Harbour Air for almost three years now and it feels like home. "Harbour Air is an airline and a seaplane service. From management to staff to maintenance, it doesn't cut corners. It hires professionally trained, experienced pilots and isn't afraid to cancel flights for bad weather."

On a memorable flight to River's Inlet with Chief Pilot Cecil Sampert, they got weathered in at Port McNeil. "I worked in the area as a young pilot and felt very comfortable finding my way in a small aircraft. We spent a great night talking with the passengers."

The joys of his job are many. "I love coming to work because of the people I work with. I've been getting to know them through get-togethers that the management sets up." In the world of commercial airlines, hanging out with coworkers after a shift was rare. Harbour Air even contributes to the cost of ice time for employee hockey games. "I always



Jack in his Air Force days

wanted to play hockey," says the affable pilot. "And I meet other staff there, not just the pilots."

Then, of course, there are the customers. "The co-pilot seat is a revenue seat. Seeing someone sitting there, happy as a child, makes me feel really good about my job."

Cuthbert sees himself at Harbour Air for years to come and envisions even more routes and stops. "More and more people are living in small communities. Harbour Air makes it easy for them to commute." —Belinda Bruce

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