

The following book reviews are extracted from the first four pages of the Pre-Publication Manuscript of

# Pilot of Fortune

© by *Ted Beaudoin*

*Welcome to this pre-publication manuscript of my book*

Here is what **James Griffith**, a retired Air Canada 747 captain, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, Canada, had to say about it in his review ...

**Pilot of Fortune** is... *“a must read for anyone interested in flying ...”*  
... writing style ... *“is unique for a biography.”*

Pilot of fortune is a complete rewrite of an original book, ***Walking on Air***, first published in 1986, detailing the life and times of pilot extraordinaire, **Sheldon Luck**, member of Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame. The original was based on interviews with Sheldon Luck and others, including extensive research from sources that were available in the 80s. The new book is significantly amplified by additional information gained from first-hand interviews with those involved but who were previously unavailable, a greatly-expanded information base, and a wide selection of new illustrations.

The author turns what could merely be a chronological account of a pioneering pilot's achievements into an adventure by taking the reader along with Sheldon on a journey through several distinct eras of flight. In all Sheldon was proficient on 57 types of aircraft from bi-planes in the 30s to turbo props in the 80s. His career took him from private pilot to commercial bush pilot, to chief pilot of Canadian Pacific Air Lines, to WWII Ferry Command, to building the DEW line, to water bombing, to corporate pilot, to finally enjoying the realm of recreational flying after retirement which included, in between, almost every kind of pilot job in the industry.



**Sheldon Luck in 1941 Vancouver Sun photo with famous American poet Robert W. Service (With permission from the Vancouver Sun)**

Author Ted Beaudoin's style is unique for a biography. His chapter titles and sub titles suggest catchy newspaper headlines and the text reads like a newspaper article, perhaps reflecting Beaudoin's experience as a print media journalist. His use of a buoyant, newspaper style creates an entertaining rather than a pedantic tone. The many hours of recorded interviews bring Sheldon's persona vividly to life suggesting that the text reflects accurately, Sheldon's own syntax. The book seems a little disjointed at first, especially the first three chapters where the names of the many start-up airlines can, at times, be a little confusing and repetitive but it soon flows into an engaging yarn.

Mr. Beaudoin successfully weaves the biography of a man who is truly a pilot of fortune into the fabric of Canadian history and the prominent role that aviation has played in it.

Sheldon Luck's adventures include just about every aspect of the development of Canada's natural resources including fur trapping, mineral exploration and exploitation, heroic rescues, the building of arguably the best airline ever in Canada, the development of trans-continental transportation during WWII, the building of the distant early warning radar lines during the cold war, forest fire suppression, and general aviation. It is a must read for anyone interested in flying or Canadian history or both seen through the eyes of a very dynamic and inclusive participant.



And here is what **Stan Taylor**, a retired elementary school teacher in, Leaskdale, Ontario, Canada, had to say about it in his review ...

***Pilot of Fortune ...is ... an "amazing book"***

**Stan Taylor**

Member, Editorial Committee  
Science Teachers Association of Ontario

Sheldon Luck was most fortunate to have Ted Beaudoin write his biography. Ted's style is readable for 9 year-old girls and boys to 99 year-old men and women. The imminent story-teller, Ted Beaudoin, rather than giving a travelogue of facts pertaining to Sheldon Luck, gives us the life of one Canadian on an adventurous journey whose life unfolds dramatically in explicable detail. Ted Beaudoin leaves no rock left unturned in his quest to inform the reader of one man's incredible life.

Who was Sheldon Luck? His Canadian Aviation Hall of Fame citation reads: "For nearly five decades he has displayed resourcefulness with the highest order of professionalism in his devotion to the advancement of aviation, which together with his qualities of leadership, have been of outstanding benefit to Canadian aviation."

Few pilots in the world have flown in such diversified areas. He has been intimately involved as an aviation administrator and in all areas of flying activities including: bush pilot, charter operations, airline pilot and aerial fire- fighting. After flying for over 51 years, Luck compiled over 26,000 hours as pilot-in-command on 57 different types of aircraft."

*Pilot of Fortune* is readable for all ages with the occasional challenging word that would make the most experienced journalist run for his dictionary. In the early chapters, I detected Windsorisms - my interpretation of the dialect from my home town of Windsor, Ontario. In point of fact, his sometimes tongue-in-cheek, satirical approach is not inclusive to Windsorites. It is our different dialogues which make us unique as Canadians.

I was privileged to have read about Sheldon Luck, *Pilot of Fortune* and I strongly recommend this book to all Canadian Schools and to anyone interested in Canadian Aviation.



**Stan Taylor:**

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