

Yellowknife remembers Matthew Bromley

Mourners fill hangar for Saturday memorial in pilot's name

by James Rubec
Northern News Services

Close to 800 people came to share their grief and to celebrate the life of Matthew Bromley at the Adlair Aviation hangar on Saturday, Oct. 8.

Bromley was the 28-year-old Yellowknife pilot who lost his life when his Air Tindi Cessna 208B crashed 40 km from Lutsel K'e on the afternoon of Oct. 4.

The memorial was led by Matt's uncle, Weldeh MLA Bob Bromley.

"Could you all please take your seats, for those who have seats," Bromley quipped, referring to the larger-than-expected turnout. "The support is overwhelming."

Family members, friends, co-workers and leaders in Yellowknife's aviation community were on hand.

Peter Arychuk, president and CEO of Air Tindi, shared his thoughts on young Yellowknifers choosing to become pilots, saying that those who don't aspire to become professional athletes or firefighters may look to the sky.

"I know a 10-year-old that can identify every Air Tindi aircraft by their serial numbers, and paint scheme. Matthew was one of these," Arychuk said.

"Yellowknife loved you."

A recurring theme throughout the afternoon was that Matt knew what his dream was and pursued it constantly.

Some of his friends came from afar. Herb Mathisen flew in from Montreal to attend the service. Mathisen met Matthew in junior high at William McDonald School and they quickly became friends.

"At that age you don't always know why you choose to be around the people you are around, you don't really have time to think about that ... but I'd laugh more when I was around Matt," Mathisen said. "I love you, your family loves you, and by the number of people who showed up here today, Yellowknife loved you too."

Eight years at Air Tindi

Matthew was a recipient of a GNWT aviation bursary and learned to fly at Aurora College's Fort Smith flight school. He was certified to pilot multi-engine aircraft on skis and floats.

On Aug. 25, 2004, Matthew began to work at Air Tindi, working the ramps, loading and unloading planes.

Many also expressed their condolences for fellow crash victim Timothy Harris, 54, and his family. *Yellowknifer* had not heard back from Harris's family or friends as of press deadline.

Harris has worked for years in the power generation industry in the North; previously as the director of operations for Qulliq Energy Corp in Nunavut, and for the past three years as a power line manager for the Northwest Territories Power Corporation. In a release from the power corp., the company expressed its condolences, stating, "(The)



photo courtesy of the Bromley family

Matt Bromley stands in front of an Air Tindi plane. He became a pilot after he started working the ramps for the airline in 2004.

Power Corporation confirms the loss of our friend and colleague Tim Harris as a result of the Oct. 4, 2011, Air Tindi crash near Lutsel K'e. Harris, a power line manager based out of Yellowknife was on business travel for the corporation at the time of his passing. Tim had been with the corporation for three years and was well-known and respected throughout the Northern community.

"Our condolences and support go out to Tim's family and the employees of the Northwest Territories Power Corporation as we all find the strength to face this difficult time."

Two other passengers – Bernice Marlowe and Sheldon Catholique, both of Lutsel K'e – survived the crash.

Many at Saturday's memorial expressed a general sadness. Bob Bromley offered this thought: "We've been to too many memorials lately ... Matt the cousin, uncle, son, co-worker, pilot and friend. Let's remember Matthew and do it with joy."

Donations to the NWT SPCA and Yellowknife Community Foundation are being accepted on behalf of the family in lieu of flowers.