The Alaska Bush Pilot Chronicles: More Adventures and Misadventures from the Big Empty by Mort D. Mason

Readers of Flying the Alaska Wild marveled at Mort Mason’s true tales of braving the elements at the extremes in a Piper Super Cub. But the bush pilot, adventurer, and raconteur was just beginning, and in this book he revisits his most memorable moments of flying by the seat of his pants through blizzards and white-outs, on assignments at times hazardous and sometimes simply whacky, always with a sense of humor and due respect for the limitless wilds of Alaska beneath his wings. The world of a bush pilot really is the final frontier, and for thirty years Mort Mason was there, clocking enough heart-stopping miles to make most life-stories utterly incredible. In The Alaska Bush Pilot Chronicles Mason recounts more of his unlikely adventures in the face of Alaska’s unforgiving weather and terrain. His stories gives readers the rare chance to experience the disappearing thrills and challenges of meeting the American frontier on its own unyielding terms.

My Personal Review:
Mort Mason’s latest, The Alaska Bush Pilot Chronicles, is great reading for anyone, particularly pilots and those who want to be pilots. He captures the side of flying that few today experience; that of the Bush Pilot. We dinosaurs love the memories, and the young pilots will gain appreciation for self reliance and knowledge of their equipment.

All pilots love swapping stories about their adventures, whether it’s routine or a real white-knuckle experience. Mason captures that mood to the point that I could almost picture myself sitting with him and a couple of other pilots, coffee on the table, hands in use demonstrating a slip, crab or ground loop. His remarkable detailing of names, places, tail numbers and other flight details is something to behold. He covers both the good and
bod about flying the back country, much of which should apply to any flight. He does it in such an entertaining manner that this book will be a winner to those who fly only their reclining chair.

As an old Army pilot who accumulated several thousand hours in tail dragger aircraft (Bird Dogs, Beavers, Otters) before helicopters took over the bush-type military flying, I can safely state that Mort Mason really grabbed the feeling of a slow approach to a specific point, hanging on the prop, slipping to squeeze into a tight spot and stalling at touchdown -- not 2000 feet down a runway. Heck, when we used paved runways we tried to stop on the runway numbers just for the thrill of it. Mort Mason and his contemporaries did it all day, every day.

In these days of high tech flying, where a pilot can take off from Florida and go directly to a map coordinate in Iowa without ever using any of the basic skills beyond programming the GPS, this book gets to the real art of flying. It's filled with humor, some great aviation history, a little nostalgia and a lot of great "hangar flying" tales...you know, "There I was, fuel running low..."
I love it!

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