

THE NEWS

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Jonathan Palmer with family, L-R: Daughter Kimberly Palmer, mom Jeannette Palmer, Jonathan and wife Marnie with grand-daughter Layla Palmer-Delsooz, daughters Kristina and Karen

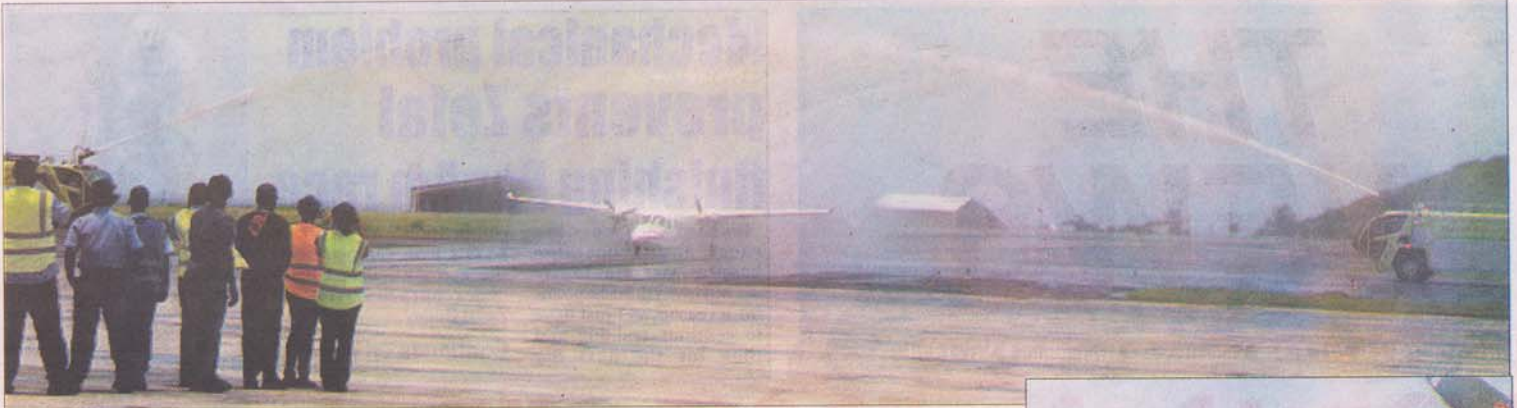
Captain Palmer's final touchdown

"I have lived my dream"

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However, retiring pilot, Captain Jonathan Palmer has fulfilled his dream of becoming a pilot and soaring the skies.



A Salute for Jonathan Palmer as his aircraft lands at Argyle airport

Captain Palmer's final touchdown "I have lived my dream"

While all of us dream, or have dreams, not many of us get to see those dreams become reality.

However, retiring pilot, Captain Jonathan Palmer has fulfilled his dream of becoming a pilot and soaring the skies.

"I have lived my dream," Captain Palmer proudly stated, as he spoke to The News.

It was a sad occasion last Friday August 16th, as Captain Jonathan Palmer landed his final Mustique Airways flight at the Argyle International Airport.

Upon landing at the airport just before noon on Friday, Captain Palmer was given a water salute by two fire tenders which are stationed at the AIA.

That flight on Friday, signalled Captain Palmer's retirement as a commercial pilot.

Pilots are not allowed to fly commercially beyond the age of 65 years old.

Captain Jonathan Palmer celebrated his 65th birthday on Saturday August 17th, 2019.

For the past five years, Captain Palmer has been flying along with his co-pilot Siward Delves.

His retirement brings an end to 46 years in skies.

While admitting that he never experienced any "real scares", Captain Palmer said

safety is always a number one priority for pilots.

He said a "pilot must be very careful with his lifestyle," and avoid consuming alcohol or anything that will affect their reflexes.

He flew for two years as a private pilot and has been flying commercially for the past 44 years.

While he never experienced any major challenges in the skies, Captain Palmer said one of his main challenges was the transition from E.T Joshua Airport, to the Argyle International Airport.

Captain Palmer, who is also the owner of Mustique Airways, said financing the new modern hanger at the AIA was a significant

challenge.

In an interview with The News last week, Captain Palmer said the financial institutions did not respond favourably when he approached them for funding to build the multi-million dollar hanger at AIA.

"The hanger was financed by my family, we couldn't get financing... it was difficult because nobody really believed that the airport was going to be built."

Captain Palmer said he did his own studies on the new airport, and concluded that it would be a safe venture.

"After that, my family committed to build the facility and we put in \$6 million, but it would go up to \$7 million," the airline owner reflected.

"The financial institutions

were unwilling to lend, as they were not sure about the AIA."

The main use of the hanger at AIA is to maintain aircrafts.

He explained that at present, a total of 18 aircrafts are being maintained at the hanger at the Mustique Airways Hanger at AIA.

Captain Palmer said five of these aircrafts belong to Mustique Airways.

This is the second hanger that Mustique Airways has built on the mainland.

In 1988, they had also constructed a hanger at the then E.T Joshua Airport at Arnos Vale.

The Mustique Airways Hanger at E.T Joshua was built at a cost of about \$1.5 million.



Pilot Jonathan Palmer (left) and his Co-Pilot Siward Delves at Argyle airport

Captain Palmer said since the transition to AIA, the hanger at E.T Joshua was donated as a gift and it is now being used as a gymnasium.

The experienced pilot, who is originally from Villa, said he has always wanted to build an aviation industry that would benefit St Vincent and the Grenadines.

Despite the difficulties and challenges, Captain Palmer has lived his dream.

He began working with Mustique Airways in 1981, after returning home from Barbados.

By 1993, he was able to purchase Mustique Airways from the Mustique Company.

As he reflected on his long and illustrious career as a pilot, Captain Palmer is full of gratitude.

"This is not about me, it is about all the people who

helped me, every single body who worked" to make his dream a reality.

The retiring pilot who obtained his commercial license in England, said he has had fears of the skies.

"I have been very lucky and we have a fantastic engineering team and safety is always at our forefront," Captain Palmer admitted.

He said that he has never experienced any real scares during his long career as a pilot.

Last Friday, Director of Airports, Corsel Robertson, staff of Mustique Airways, AIA staff and family, were all present to witness Captain Palmer's final touch down.

Now that Captain Palmer has successfully landed his final flight, he is thankful for the many lessons learnt through the years.



Jonathan Palmer and Director of Airports Corsel Robertson