

# AIRCRAFT SPRUCE & SPECIALTY CO.

## A COMPANY HISTORY



**Bob and Flo Irwin**

The foundation for what is now Aircraft Spruce & Specialty Co. dates to the summer of 1956 when Flo and Bob Irwin founded Fullerton Air Parts at Fullerton Municipal Airport in Southern California. Bob, born and raised in Kansas City, MO., a pilot since the 1940's and active in the CAP and other aviation groups, knew airplanes and the parts that were needed to keep them flying. Flo, a native of Rochester, New York, had no aviation background but learned the business quickly and knew what it would take to keep customers coming back... fair prices and good service. Fullerton Air Parts grew into one of the largest retail aircraft parts suppliers in the western states during the next nine years.

In 1965, Bob and Flo Irwin sold the business and founded another one which sold only one product, aircraft grade spruce lumber for aircraft construction and restoration. Aircraft Spruce Co. quickly added more products to its small catalog and adopted the name Aircraft Spruce & Specialty Co., with a goal to offer everything pilots and aircraft builders need. As Aircraft Spruce served more customers and more and more products were added, staff grew from 2 in 1965 to over 180 today.



**201 West Truslow Ave, Fullerton CA.  
Home of Aircraft Spruce from 1973 to 1997**

Jim Irwin, Bob and Flo's older son, grew up in the business, working in jobs such as cutting metal and spruce, pulling and shipping orders, and managing kit programs such as the Vari-Eze back in 1975 while still in college. Graduating from California State University at Fullerton in 1978 with a degree in business administration (marketing), Jim acquired the company and became president in 1980. Jim's wife Nanci, who graduated with an accounting degree from the University of Southern California in 1977, is vice-president and works full time managing the company's accounting and data processing departments. Jim Irwin has logged over 5000 hours as a multi-engine, instrument rated pilot since 1976 and Nanci Irwin is a licensed private pilot as well. They fly the company Cessna 425 extensively on business throughout the Southwest. Jim and Nanci Irwin have four children: Mike, Krissy, Jeff, and Rob, who are all members of the Aircraft Spruce management team. Mike and Jeff are pilots and fly the company's Navion Rangemaster.



**Present Home of Aircraft Spruce West  
(225 Airport Circle, Corona, CA.)**

Flo and Bob Irwin, along with Jim's younger brother John, moved to Lake Havasu City, Arizona in the fall of 1983 and founded ACS Products Co., which manufactures a line of products which is distributed by Aircraft Spruce. Flo Irwin passed away on June 10, 1989, but the legacy of this warm, outgoing, and talented businesswoman lives on in the businesses she founded and built to serve the aviation community. John Irwin, his wife, Frances, and Bob Irwin now manage the ACS Products Co. operation. Bob Irwin was an instrument rated pilot with more than 2000 hours logged and based his 1968 Navion Rangemaster at Lake Havasu City until May 2000 when Bob retired as a pilot, after fifty years of flying, and moved the Navion to Chino Airport for his grandchildren to fly. Prior to acquiring the Rangemaster in 1976, Bob owned a Vultee BT-13B and a 1949 Ryan Navion. Bob Irwin passed away on June 26, 2015 at the age of 95, after being active in general aviation as a pilot and businessman for over 65 years.



**Present Home of Aircraft Spruce East  
(452 Dividend Drive, Peachtree City, GA)**

Aircraft Spruce was housed in downtown Fullerton, CA. from its founding in 1965 until late 1997. The last 24 years in Fullerton the company was operated in a historic Fullerton former citrus packing house, which we eventually outgrew. In the fall of 1997, Aircraft Spruce moved to a new, 62,000 square foot facility in Corona, California. In the Spring of 2004, Aircraft Spruce East moved to a new 56,000 Sq. Ft. facility in Peachtree City, GA from its old home in Griffin, GA. Aircraft Spruce Canada was opened in Toronto in December 2006, and moved to a new facility at Brantford Airport in Ontario in late 2008. In late 2012 Aircraft Spruce Canada moved into a new 20,000 square foot facility at Brantford Airport. We are proud of the tradition of our company that now dates back some 52 years, and are pleased to have had the opportunity to help aviators around the world build the plane of their dreams. Our growth, from a single room in 1965 to 120,000 square feet in three facilities that we have today, has been a direct result of the loyalty and patronage of our customers. Our goal is to continue to provide the very best in products, prices, and customer service to our friends in the years to come.

**CELEBRATING 52 YEARS OF SERVICE TO AVIATION!  
1965 – 2017**