



Vince (Left) and Jim (right) enroute to Little Bay in 1972

Jim and Vince Burton today

Photos supplied by Gord Follett

Following in his Father's

footsteps

By Gord Follett



Dwight Blackwood (Left) and the author Gord Follett with a couple of 6 pound brook trout.

When I first met Jim Burton, I wondered how he managed to get so much work done in a single day. One of the province's top realtors, he also owns and manages one of Newfoundland and Labrador's premier commercial fishing lodges, plus he operates a charter airline business, for which he does his own flying. I recall asking him one time, "when do you sleep?" Then I met his father, Vince. It was at their Otter Creek float plane base in Goose Bay, Labrador, from where they fly guests into their lodges. In his late-60s at the time (though his energy and physical appearance is comparable to someone 20-plus years younger), Vince was at the dock loading fishing gear, suitcases and camp supplies from his van to Jim's deHavilland Beaver, before jumping back in his vehicle and heading to the grocery store. Then he had to pick up some of his departing guests at the Labrador Inn and bring them to the airport. "Some men could get tired just by

looking at those guys," I commented. But while their energy and passion for the industry is indeed one of their main attributes, if I were asked to describe this dynamic father and son outfitting duo in just two words, my response would be "class acts." From their accommodations and world-class fishing opportunities, to their hospitality, hands-on approach and attention to detail, these boys know a thing or two about customer satisfaction. Vince branched out from the airline to the outfitting industry in 1983, though he had actually been involved in other camps since the mid-1960s with another legendary Outfitter, Bill Bennett, who took Jimmy on his first plane ride when he was just six years of age. Spending so much time flying and at camps, it was natural for the kid to begin taking mental notes. Today, some 42 years later, both Burtons remain highly successful in the outfitting business, professionals in every sense of the word, with Vince running a brook trout paradise at Igloo Lake Lodge southeast of Goose Bay, and Jim, a

former air ambulance pilot, operating Flowers River Lodge in the north, which he purchased from his father in 1999 and from where guests fish for Atlantic salmon, Arctic char and brook trout. Wife/Mom Dorothy is another major part of the operation, though she works primarily behind the scenes. Vince's "semi-retirement" focus these days is on Igloo Lake, where he promotes catch and release of its huge brook trout. Actually, he's claimed a number of awards for his conservation efforts, a philosophy by which his son also abides. It is said that an outfitter's success is often measured in "repeat clients." Well, both certainly have that. Vince, a native of Glovertown, has had the same anglers coming back for so many years that he sometimes feels like he grew up with them. "Many of them have become good friends," he said. Says Jimmy of following in his father's footsteps: "I learned from the best. I have the utmost respect for my Dad, as an outfitter, businessman and, of course, a family man." 