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**Wardair/CP Air 747 Retrospective**



Delivered in November 1973, CPAir's B.747-200 C-FCRA "Empress of Italy" is seen at Vancouver in September 1986. This was about when "CRA" was sold to Pakistan International Airlines, becoming AP-BCL. It served PIA to about 2000, then flew under Sierre Leone registration — 9L-LOR. It finally was N899TH in Thailand, where it was seen derelict in 2007 (since scrapped). In its final years, "CRA" clearly was with some sleazy operators. Who knows what illicit cargos were flown, but all those secrets vanished in the scrapyard. (A good book covering this topic is Matt Potter's *Outlaws Inc: Flying with the World's Most Dangerous Smugglers*.)



wardair-cf-djc.jpg

From my first book, *Aviation in Canada* (1979) comes one of my favourite pictures. Shown is the handover at Boeing of Wardair's first 747, CF-DJC, on April 23, 1973. Boeing and Max Ward went all out for this glorious event, having Max's pioneer plane (a De Havilland Fox Moth), his first 707 and his first 727 all part of the celebration. What a gorgeous set-up shot. I wouldn't be surprised if the great Gordon

S. Williams was behind the lens for this shot. Gordon had begun shooting airplanes on the West Coast since he was a boy, then spent his working decades as a Boeing photographer. (Boeing Photo P48939) Maintenance and overhaul were the other side of the 747 business. Here is “DJC” as I saw it on July 12, 1973. Wardair in Toronto must have been promised good weather this day, for some serious work was under way. In 2021 retired Wardair head of maintenance, Dan McNiven, recalled that, if this was an engine change, it would have taken a crew of five about 5½ hours, engine run-up included. Air Canada would have taken more like three days to do the same job in the luxury of a hangar (which Wardair didn’t have at YYZ in 1973).



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Wilf White photographed "DJC" in the UK in August 1985. "DJC" was named "Phil Garrett" in honour of one of Canada's revered WWI and pioneer bush fliers. It later flew in Canadian Airlines International, Nationair, Garuda, Saudia and Air Atlanta Icelandic colours. Sadly but inevitably it was broken up at Manston in the UK in 1999.



B747-200 C-FXRA of Wardair about to land at YYZ in June 1983. Dubbed “Herbert Hollick Kenyon” after another pioneer bush and Arctic pilot, “XRA” was delivered from Boeing in June 1978. In 1986 it was sold to British Caledonia Airways, where it flew as G-GLYN. Other adventures ensued, the last in 2000 when it was with Philippine Airlines as RP-C8850. It made its final landing soon afterwards at Marana to be scrapped.