The Province ita industry training authority

TOP IN TRADES

Name: **Tony Stacey**

Age: **66**

Town: **Ladner**

Trade: **Aircraft Structural Technician**

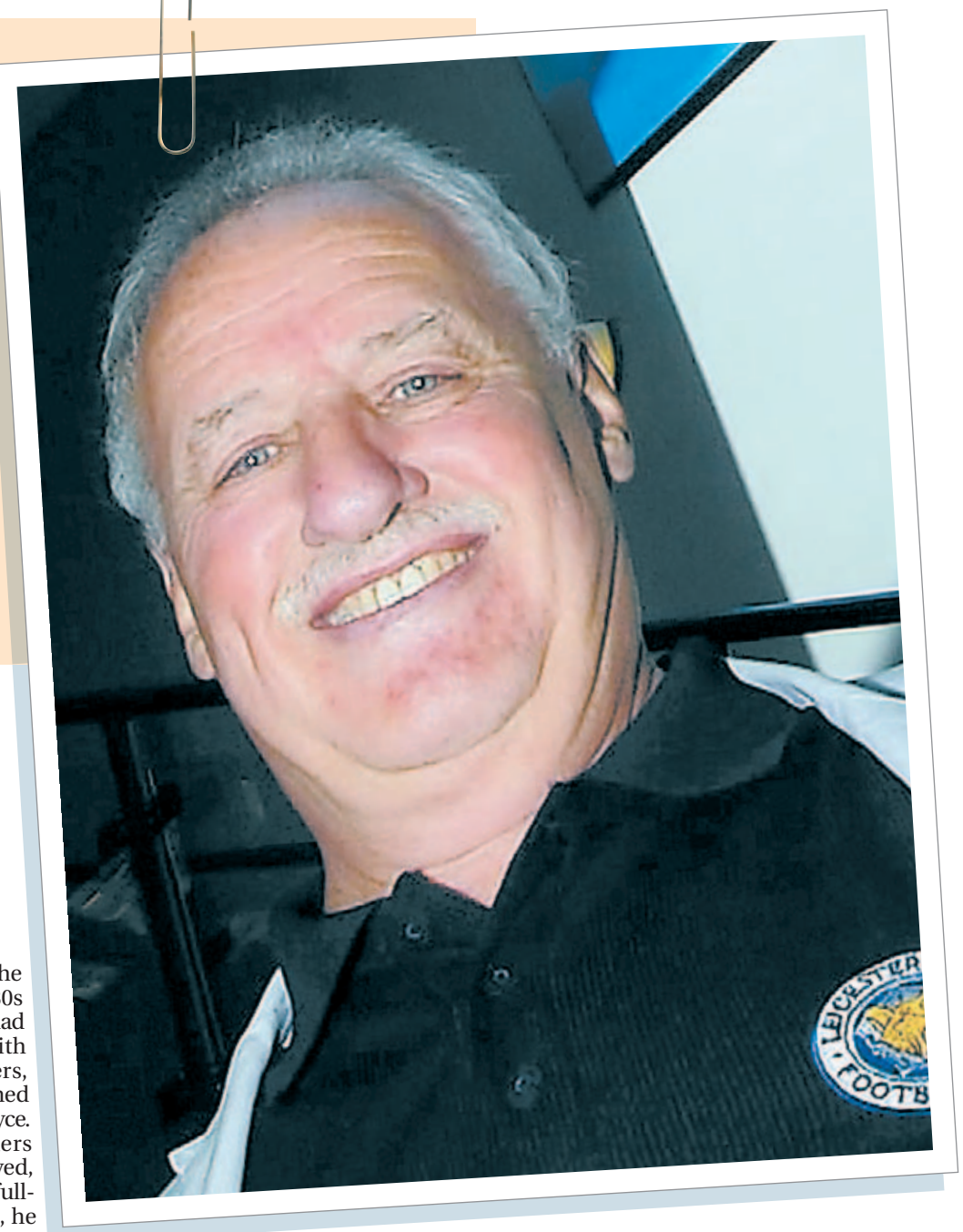
Employer: **Avcorp Industries Inc.**

Years in the trade: **51**

Quote: **"Aircraft are very interesting to work with and work on. There is an exact nature to it – you make various items, then you put everything together. I can see airplanes . . . and I know part of that aircraft came from our facility."**

What the judge said: **"He has an extraordinary commitment to apprentice training in his industry and he is extremely accomplished in his field professionally."**

What the sponsor said: **"Tony has unsurpassed dedication to fostering the development of young and older workers through training and apprenticeships. He has also demonstrated strong leadership qualities within the workplace, labour movement and the community."**



RIC ERNST– THE PROVINCE

Advocate for apprentices

BY WENDY McLELLAN
BUSINESS REPORTER

After 25 years as an aircraft sheet-metal worker, Tony Stacey thought he had seen it all. Then he moved to B.C.

"Right away, I noticed there were no apprentices at all in my company," said Stacey, who practiced his trade in England, Germany and Australia before arriving here in 1980.

"It turned out Canada had no apprentices at all learning aircraft structures — the workers just came from high schools and trained on the job."

Aircraft-structural technicians build and finish aircraft components based on exacting specifications, then assemble and install them in the aircraft. The trade requires specialized tools and every part of the job requires inspection and double-checking for accuracy.

On-the-job training worked fine for employees who remained with one company, he said, but their skills were not as useful to other employers with different needs. When the industry slowed down in the early 1980s and many workers were laid off, Stacey had no difficulty finding contract work with local aircraft structures manufacturers, thanks to the trade certification he earned in his apprenticeship at Britain's Rolls Royce.

Stacey noticed his skilled co-workers weren't as successful at staying employed, and as soon as he was recalled to his full-time job at Avcorp Industries in Delta, he started researching how to bring apprentices into the shop. "It was bugging me — I didn't understand why they didn't exist.

"At about the same time, my company started talking about it and working toward an apprenticeship program," he said.

Stacey joined Avcorp's in-house training committee and became active in his union, the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers.

The federal and provincial governments signed an agreement in 1988 with Avcorp and the union to create an apprenticeship program for aircraft-structures technicians.

Five years later, the trade was recognized and Avcorp hired Canada's first apprentice technician for a four-year training program.

Stacey went on to join more union and government committees that focused on training and apprenticeships.

He served as president of his union local and worked as an instructor in the trade program at the B.C. Institute of Technology. He then helped develop an Avcorp in-house training program so apprentices could do coursework in the workplace. It allows apprenticeships to continue earning wages and the firm doesn't lose its workers for a month every year.

SUNDAY:
Arne Johansen, ironworker

Avcorp is proud to employ skilled tradespeople like Tony Stacey who train new employees and lead by example. Avcorp wishes to congratulate Tony on his recognition and receipt of a Top in Trades Award from Industry Training Authority and The Province.

For more information and interest in a hi-tech aerospace career at Avcorp, please visit our website **www.avcorp.com**.

Avcorp designs and builds major airframe structures for some of the world's leading aircraft manufacturers.

50 years AVCORP