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## Turning Finals: The Order of the Double Sunrise

*By John A. Marshall*

The time was May of 1943, early autumn down under on the Australian subcontinent. The Pacific War was raging across the entire western ocean; the Japanese had taken Borneo, Sumatra, and the East Indian archipelago. The city of Darwin, on the north coast, had been bombed by Japanese warplanes; women and children had been evacuated. The commerce of the isolated nation was linked by a very tenuous thread with the rest of the world.

One of the casualties was the air route flown by Qantas Empire Airways that connected Australia with Asia and Europe. Called the Empire Route, it was pioneered and flown by British and Australian airmen, a proud and valuable link with Europe and the Middle East. The route enabled commerce between the two continents to be conducted in a matter of a few days instead of several weeks. Now it was a lifeline that had been neatly and totally severed by the war that was raging throughout the South Pacific.

After considerable discussion and much effort by government officials, the military, Qantas and B.O.A.C. (British Overseas Airways Corporation), the decision was made to attempt an air link that would bypass the enemy-occupied areas in South Asia and fly direct from Australia to India. The problem was tossed into the lap of Qantas senior operations personnel.

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## Turning Finals: The Order of the Double Sunrise

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It was a formidable task. A number of aircraft types were proposed for the operation; most were discarded for one reason or another. Finally, the decision was made to attempt the service on a weekly basis using Consolidated Catalina aircraft. It was a good choice. The Catalina was the result of a U. S. Navy search for a patrol-type flying boat to replace the earlier P2Y and the Martin P3M designs of the early 1930's. The navy needed a machine of greater range and load-carrying capacity, and the PBY was the result. Nearly sixty-four feet long, with a cantilever wing stretching 104 feet, she was powered by two Pratt & Whitney 1830 Twin Wasp engines, and was capable of lifting a load of over 35,000 pounds from the water and carrying it for very long distances. The "Cat" had been put into service by many of the world's air forces, including the British Royal Air Force (RAF) and the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF).

The 3500 mile distance involved in the Qantas plan stretched even the talents of the Catalina, and presented some unique exercises in fuel management. Lack of accurate weather information along the lonely overwater route resulted in the occasional unpleasant surprise when, in mid-ocean, winds were discovered to be much more adverse than forecast. Early on Qantas thought that a stop at Exmouth Gulf, on the northwest shoulder of the Australian continent, could be used as an enroute stop, thus reducing the sea crossing by 500 miles. There was even a U.S. Naval Catalina operation there for a brief period, but it soon became apparent that the base at Exmore was too exposed and too prone to unfavorable sea conditions for heavyweight takeoffs, and the plan was abandoned.

The plan was to operate the service one a week from Perth, on the southwestern tip of the Australian subcontinent. The Swan River provided a broad expanse of lea lane that was entirely suitable for such an operation. An added bonus was that the weather was generally favorable most of the year, although the first proving flight had to be aborted due to nasty weather. The all-up weights lifting off the water were in the neighborhood of 35,000 pounds, the maximum load for the two-engine flying boat. It was decided that the service would operate nonstop from Perth, 3500 miles over the open ocean to Koggala, on the southern tip of the island of Ceylon (now Sri Lanka). The only spot of land available in the event of trouble was the Cocos

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### **REMINDER - TIME TO PAY YOUR ANNUAL DUES.**

*(Your envelope will denote the date through which you are paid.)*

**Don't miss an issue of the Clipper Pioneers' newsletter -  
send in your check today!**

**Make payable to: Clipper Pioneers c/o Jerry Holmes,  
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**SHARE YOUR STORIES WITH US! Email to Jerry Holmes at [jerry@clipperpioneers.com](mailto:jerry@clipperpioneers.com)**

## Turning Finals: The Order of the Double Sunrise

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Islands, a tiny group of coral atolls about halfway along. Finding them, however, was another thing. Radio silence was the rule during these long flights, and there were no navigational facilities on the islands at all. Poor visibility and cloud cover made celestial observations difficult (most of the flights were flown no higher than 2,000' altitude). Add to this the fact that they were passed during the night, made the Cocos alternate a tenuous proposition at best.

It was not until the waning days of June, at the onset of the southern hemisphere winter, Qantas' Captain Crowther and a crew of three made the first successful proving flight from Perth, after their first attempt was aborted due to bad weather. In fact, June was an inauspicious month for the beginning of the service. That year the rainy season set in with a vengeance, the winds blew, and the harbor waters were choppy and uncertain. The RAF was pessimistic about the ability of the Qantas crews to continue the service on any sort of a regular basis. In that, they were fortunately mistaken.

(It is interesting to note the subtleties of the rivalry that existed between the Aussie crews and the RAF even then, In Qantas Captain L. R. Ambrose's lengthy and detailed report of the operation he sardonically notes, "Although this service could not have been maintained without the splendid help of the RAF, it is *only just from a historical viewpoint to record that the early RAF survey flights contributed little toward the introduction of scheduled service.*" And this backhanded compliment: "*The RAF pilots were very capable within the limits of their experience and training.*")

Once under way, the Aussie crews discovered that they were plowing new ground in a number of areas. Long range cruise control was not the least of them. The Catalina carried a full fuel load of 1980 gallons, and in the beginning the normal operating procedure called for the use of a constant power setting of 30 inches of manifold pressure and 2100 RPM, which produced a consumption rate of 75 gallons per hour. As the flight progressed and the aircraft burned off fuel and got progressively lighter, the airspeed increased from 115 knots to 135. Over the twenty-five hours of flight, the margins of reserve fuel were slim indeed, and if a headwind of only five knots was encountered the resulting reserve left virtually no margin at all. This was obviously an unacceptable state of affairs. Something had to be done.

**TO BE CONTINUED IN THE NEXT ISSUE**

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## Treasurer's Report

Remaining balance as of Nov. 5, 2016 is \$29,770.73.

I am getting dues checks from people now for next year.

We will have enough money to take us through 2018, and leave enough for the web page after that for several years.

I just read a book – "The Albatross" by Gerry Hawes. It's about the life of an airline pilot. It's about the 737 rudder routine and the UAL 811 incident out of HNL. A novel, which can be purchased through Amazon.com.

Jerry Holmes, Treasurer

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## **Pan Am Philadelphia Area Pilots (PAPAP)**

We meet the second Tuesday of every quarter at the Continental Inn in Yardley, PA at 1200 for a bit of BS before going to our private conference room upstairs for lunch.

Been going on since 1992 and it's a great way to stay together. Contact: Chris Blaydon [215 757 6229](tel:2157576229) or [cblayd@aol.com](mailto:cblayd@aol.com)

## **Flying Boat Reunion clip now available for viewing**

A 15-minute special that aired April 27, 2016 on Ireland's popular RTE TV show "Nationwide" is now available for viewing. China Clipper First Officer Robert Hicks (94); Merry Barton, daughter of Folger Athearn (Pan Am's station manager in Noumea, New Caledonia in 1941); Director of the Foynes Flying Boat Museum Margaret O'Shaughnessy; Ed Trippe and Mary Lou Bigelow were interviewed during the Foynes Flying Boat reunion. <http://www.rte.ie/player/us/show/nationwide-21/10566026/>

## **Come Join the Santa Rosa Breakfast Group!**

The Santa Rosa Breakfast group meets about every six weeks. They have 17 pilots, FA's and FEO's that get together to discuss the old days. Anyone in the Sonoma, Napa, and Marin county areas north of San Francisco who would like to join them should email Dave Criley at [davecriley@comcast.net](mailto:davecriley@comcast.net), and send your email contact. They started out with 5 and have grown to 17. *~from Dave Criley*

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**Pan Am Historical Society has a Facebook page. You can view it here:**  
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Pan-Am-Historical-Foundation/226994925218>

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## **Layovers for Pan Am**

Check out Pan American layovers at [www.paacrewlayover.com](http://www.paacrewlayover.com), where some 81 cities and over 161 hotels are shown in photos.

## **Keep the stories coming...**

Thanks to the guys who have sent us stories! Have you come across an interesting article that you'd like to share with us? Send that along, so others can enjoy! We'd love to hear from you! Please send them to Jerry or Sue by email to: [sue@clipperpioneers.com](mailto:sue@clipperpioneers.com).

***Please update your email address and phone number if it's been changed!  
Email or write to Jerry Holmes - 192 Foursome Drive, Sequim, WA 98382  
or email to: [jerryholmes747@gmail.com](mailto:jerryholmes747@gmail.com)***

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***Having trouble viewing the membership list online?*** When you open the list, go to the top of your screen - you should see that it is set at a percentage. Click on that to make it larger.

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## PAN AM REUNION - MARCH 17, 2017

### 10 Night Southern Caribbean on Serenade of the Seas r/t Fort Lauderdale

**To: Tortola, St. Kitts & Nevis, Dominica, Antigua, St. Maarten**

We at Interline Travels and Royal Caribbean would like to extend our sincerest welcome back to all Pan Am families as we once again host your next reunion cruise aboard this beautiful luxury liner. Indeed, our ultimate goal of exceeding your expectations will make this cruise not just a vacation but, an adventure at sea. This wonderful ten day cruise visits the Caribbean's most scenic ports each displaying an unmistakable charm, history and natural beauty all their own. The stories are captivating, the beaches mesmerizing and the carefree charm intoxicating and we want you to experience it all.

While onboard indulge in the spa, build a scrapbook of memories or simply relax poolside. Dine on gourmet food as well as twenty four hour room service. Be entertained by world-class performers from across the globe that keep you busy morning to night. Socialize with Pan Am friends in our complimentary cocktail parties, customized amenities and select meeting areas. Enjoy Broadway musicals, spectacular shows, thrilling casino action, live comedy and music, bars, dancing and much more. It's going to be a great cruise, come join us. Call in your Crown & Anchor number and dining selection.

**Cabins:** Inside (from) **\$799** / Ocean view (from) **\$959** / Balcony(from) **\$1389/** (No Jr. Suites presently)

Rates are per person, cruise only, double occupancy and based on availability at time of booking. Port charges/tax are\_ additional at \$370.97 per person. Deposit \$450 each; final is due 12/5/2016. Cabins are capacity controlled; once our allotment is gone new prices take effect. Singles pay 200% of cruise fare and port charge. Insurance will be added according to category.

**Tortola** and the other British Virgin Islands were long the haunts of pirates of the Caribbean. The hidden coves of pearl-white beaches now shelter sailboats, yachts and sunbathers but the island's buccaneering spirit lives on.

**St. Kitts** was a tropical prize over which the European powers fought for more than a century. Discover French and British heritage in Basseterre and the complex colonial legacy amongst the ruins of fortresses and once-grand estates

The famed nature island, **Dominica** is home to bubbling seas, lush rainforest, black-sand beaches and volcanic terrain. In its capital you'll find a unique architectural style and friendly culture shaped by English, French, Africans and Caribs.

**Antigua** boasts 365 white-sand beaches, world-class sailing and lush nature. Culture buffs can explore the colorful capital of St. John's or visit the former British imperial naval base of Nelson's Dockyard on the south coast

One island, two cultures: welcome to **St. Maarten**. Experience Dutch and French culture and enjoy gorgeous coastline, lush tropical landscapes, great selection of restaurants and plenty of duty-free shopping.

**Call Carmen for reservations Toll Free (1-888-592-7245),**

**Cell (786-252-7838) preferred), Office (305-598-0363)**

**Call Stu for information (305-238-0911)**

**INTERLINE TRAVELS 456 Merlin Ct., Tallahassee, FL 32301.**



## A Look Back...

Take-Off - It was the height of the "Roaring 20's" and the promise of aviation ignited the imaginations of people around the world. Pan American Airways was born in the Fall of 1927 in a whirlwind of corporate horse trading and a scramble to meet a Post Office deadline: Fly the mail from Key West to Havana by October 19th, or forfeit the Foreign AirMail contract. Thanks to a last minute and very fortuitous charter, the deed was accomplished, the 250 pounds of mail delivered, and an unparalleled adventure in commercial aviation began - one that would last over six decades.

*(from panam.org)*

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## My Own Social Media...

Sir: I haven't got a computer, but I was told about Facebook and Twitter and am trying to make friends outside Facebook and Twitter while applying the same principles.

Every day, I walk down the street and tell passers-by what I have eaten, how I feel, what I have done the night before, and what I will do for the rest of the day. I give them pictures of my wife, my daughter, my dog and me gardening and on holiday, spending time by the pool. I also listen to their conversations, tell them I 'like' them and give them my opinion on every subject that interest me...whether it interests them or not.

And it works. I already have four people following me: two police officers, a social worker and a psychiatrist.

*(from August 2016 RUPANEWS)*

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## Share Your Memories

Pan Am was the airline that practically invented aviation. It pioneered air navigation and communications, and its list of "firsts" in the industry is awe-inspiring. Known as the "Queen of the Skies," it was the benchmark by which all other airlines were judged. ~Helen Davey.

You are a part of this wonderful "family". Are there memories you've written down that you'd like to share with us in this newsletter? Have you come across an interesting article that you'd like to share with us? Send that along, so others can enjoy! We'd love to hear from you! Please send them to Jerry or Sue by email to: [sue@clipperpioneers.com](mailto:sue@clipperpioneers.com).

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## IN MEMORIAM

**Tom McCool** of Sequim WA passed away on Dec. 24, 2016 of age-related causes.

**Paul Allen Mathews**, age 91, died peacefully on December 29, 2016 in Portland, Oregon. Paul was born on August 27, 1925 in Boise, Idaho to Bertha Scheidler Taylor and Paul Mathews, Sr. His greatest loves were his family, flying airplanes and photography. Paul proudly served in the US Air Force and was a pilot for Pan American Airlines for over 30 years. He is survived by Vanita Mathews, his wife of 69 years, and sons: Kirk Mathews of Hisham, Montana and Brad Mathews of Ketchum, Idaho. No services are planned. Donations to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital at [www.stjude.org](http://www.stjude.org).

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**For more information about each of these friends who will be missed, click on "In Memory Of..." at our website: [www.clipperpioneers.com](http://www.clipperpioneers.com). Know of someone from Pan Am who has passed? Email the obit to Jerry Holmes at [jerryholmes747@gmail.com](mailto:jerryholmes747@gmail.com)**

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*...and God will lift you up on Eagle's Wings, bear you on the breath of dawn,  
make you to shine like the sun and hold you in the palm of His hand.*

## IN MEMORIAM

**Stu Beckett** passed away on Jan. 7, 2017. Born in Daytona Beach, FL to wonderful parents on Nov. 15, 1935. He served as a Pan Am 747 Captain. Stu spent his last day on this earth in quintessential Stu fashion. He and Patti spent the day together, as they often did, and made a trip to CVS to check out the specials; he worked in his workshop, he spent time with his granddaughter, Tori Raine, and he plowed the very long 1 mile driveway to the house he loved. He called his daughter, Suzann, to offer to bring meals for her kids who were participating in the Boar's Head Festival at Asylum Hill Congregational Church. His death was a freak accident, but the family has comfort that he died as he lived – on his terms. While working as a pilot he had many close calls, but this time was the time God actually called him home.

**Paul Mathews**, age 91, died peacefully on Thursday, December 29, 2016 at Mirabella in Portland, Oregon. Paul was born on August 27, 1925 in Boise, Idaho. Growing up, he spent time in Boise, Seattle and Anchorage. His greatest loves were his family, flying airplanes and photography. Paul proudly served in the US Air Force flying P-51 Mustangs and P-38 Lightnings. He later served in the Boise National Guard. He was a pilot for Pan American Airlines for over 30 years. He flew all over the world for Pan Am, served as Chief Pilot of Pan Am's Seattle Base and was a check pilot for the FAA. Paul was also the owner/artist of Paul Mathews Photography serving commercial clients in Western Washington.

**Woodrow I. Lawson**, "Woody" as we all knew him passed away in Miami, FL. Nov. 2016, prior to Thanksgiving, and just prior to his 99 th birthday. He had a great life and all of the Pan Am pilots loved flying with him.

Albert Edward "Ed" Roberts, 90, passed away on December 9, 2016 on Naples, FL. A veteran of the U.S. Air Force, Ed was born on January 9, 1926 in St. Augustine, FL. A Florida native, he was known to his friends as "Ole Man Roberts." Ed was a flight engineer for Pan American Airlines for 44 years. He lived an incredible life and was blessed with many friends all over the world. He was an original member of the Airboat Association of Florida, as well as an avid hunter and sportsman. In his spare time he built airboat engines "for fun." He had as many life stories as he had friends, was extremely generous, and was always there to help anyone in need.

**David Jackson Avery**, CDR USN (Ret.) 95, a longtime resident of Rohnert Park, passed away peacefully after an extended illness on July 7, 2016. He was born and raised on a farm in Glenwood, Georgia. He joined the Navy in the spring of 1941 to become a pilot. His naval career included serving in World War II as a pilot flying float planes from Alameda to the Philippines and back. David rose to the rank of commander, and then continued with reserve duty after the war. He culminated his aviation career working for Pan American Airways for many years, retiring as a captain. He was a member of the Pan American Historical Society, a 32nd degree Freemason, and a member of the Military Officers Association of America.

**Robert Birney Crane** of Darien, CT crossed the bar on Wednesday November 30th, 2016. Born on February the 8th 1920 in Plainfield, N.J., Bob thoroughly enjoyed life for over 96 years. After college Bob turned one of his passions into a career as an airline pilot with Pan American World Airways. Bob remained with Pan Am until his retirement in 1980 except for a period during World War II when Pan American became part of the Army's Air Transport Command. Bob was a senior Captain and Check pilot for Pan Am and as such was often called upon to transport dignitaries and celebrities such as President Sukarno of Indonesia, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi the Shah of Iran, the Rolling Stones, the Beatles and many others. He was also called upon for the evacuation of Saigon at the end of the Viet Nam conflict where he made multiple flights from Saigon to Guam with planeloads of evacuees.

## Understanding, Avoiding Fraud

Confirm professionals are who they say they are. More than 170 designations and certifications are used within the financial industry to identify professionals. Some of them do not necessarily mean a person is qualified or can be trusted to handle an individual's assets. Always ask a financial adviser if he is overseen by a government agency or is authorized to provide advice under the "fiduciary standard of care." Be especially careful when dealing with advisors who try to push certain products or those who suggest short-cuts and blending services. Such professionals are not necessarily criminals, but they may have ulterior motives in mind and not be overly concerned about you or your loved one's financial well-being.

Pay attention to your accounts. Unusually large withdrawals from automated teller machines or cashed checks with signatures that do not match the signature on the account are both indicative of fraud. If you are monitoring a loved one's accounts, question any surges of activity in accounts that are normally somewhat inactive.

Monitor purchases. Sudden purchases, whether it's an updated insurance policy or unnecessary home repairs, may be indicative of fraud.

Never give personal information over the telephone. If you or a loved one receives a phone call from someone stating they are an official and it sounds suspicious:

- Do not answer any questions
- Do not agree to pay any fines or other charges.
- Do not share any personal information.
- Hang up the telephone.

Residents receiving scam calls can file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission at [www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov](http://www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov) or by calling 877-382-4357.

## And speaking about scams...

As we get close to tax time again, be aware of fraudulent tax return scams. As of 2012, more than 940,000 returns were filed by identity thieves using other people's names. How do they make money paying your taxes? They use your identity to claim a tax refund, and if you don't have money coming to you, they lie about deductions to concoct a refund - \$5 billion in ripped-off refunds in 2012, and the number has been growing each year since then.

Protect yourself: File an IRS Identity Theft affidavit, available on the agency's website at [irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f13039.pdf](http://irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f13039.pdf). Also report the situation to the Social Security Administration to protect your benefits, which could be at risk.

If you are the victim of a fraudulent tax return scam, you should also contact one of the three major credit bureaus, and file a complaint with the FTC at [identitytheft.gov](http://identitytheft.gov).

Do you have an upcoming event that would be of interest to the other members? Please forward the information to [sue@clipperpioneers.com](mailto:sue@clipperpioneers.com).