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Training Hell

By Michael (Mike) Dater

Dave Heathcock's recent essay [vol. 50-7] was a delight, and triggered a few memories of doing battle with the training center, at least those memories that I didn't repress forever. Luckily not all of those battles precipitated nervous breakdowns, even though twenty years later thinking about simulator check rides and upgrades brings on a moderate case of the disquietudes.

For me personally the closest I came to throwing in the towel — or more accurately having the chief pilot throw in the towel for me — was during my initial upgrade to captain on the L-1011. I'll spare you the details, but things went so badly I thought my goose was more than cooked — fricasseed was more like it. It was performance anxiety writ large. It started with the 1011 manual.

Practically everybody who flew the 1011 loved it. It was a pilot's dream come true. Quiet, roomy, and the New York crews of that time (circa 1981) got the garden spots — Europe or the Caribbean. There was no such thing as a bad schedule regardless of one's seniority, meaning no dismal forays into the Middle East, bellowing all night to Delhi or Karachi on HF. Additionally the 1011 had an automated flight system that put the 747's to shame (at least compared with the rope-start edition of the 747, the only model I flew, as copilot for eight years).

But running the gauntlet to qualify on the L-1011 was a true venture into the dark side. The aircraft manual seemed to have been written by a gang of sadists smoking who knows what. It had these new widgets whose new terminologies were unknown to those of us mostly weened on Boeings. Boeing had switches. But Lockheed didn't have switches. Lockheed had switchlights.

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Please note - we have changed the access to the online newsletters so that you will need a password to access them. We're hoping this will help past members who haven't paid their dues to do so, in order to read the newsletter. This password will also give you access to the membership & phone list. GO TO OUR WEBSITE AT: www.clipperpioneers.com.

Click on the "Members Only" button on the righthand side. The password will be: captain.

Dues are \$20 a year or \$60 for the 3 remaining years. Make them payable to Clipper Pioneers, and mail to Jerry Holmes at 192 Foursome Dr., Sequim, WA 98382.

Training Hell

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Glass cockpits hadn't hit their stride yet. Switchlights were new. On a Boeing the pilot had a switch — on/off — and a light next to it; on/off — it was the kind of logic even I could grasp.

Switch lights were different. And reading about them hour after hour in a hotel room as a fledgling — a nightmare. Switchlights were switches that had the on/off light incorporated into them. If a light was on you pushed it, or if the light was off you pushed.

The switchlight stayed in when you pushed it to turn *on* a system, and popped out ever so slightly when you pushed it to turn *off* a system. In other words, to turn a system on or turn a system off, one did the same monkey motion. The paper panels we set up in our hotel room gave no hint of this protrusion, nor did reading about them, except to flummox the victim to a fare-thee-well.

Off light on, switchlight out, on light off, switchlight in, push in for on, push in for out — multiply that mumbo-jumbo a few thousand times throughout all the various aircraft systems and myriad references in normal and emergency operating procedures of the manual and you're ready for the man in the white coat.

I didn't train with Dave on the 1011 but his sentence regarding his time teaching the 1011 — “the less said about that the better” — leads me to believe I wasn't the only problem child in the simulator. (I kept my own logbook throughout my career and noted Bob Ober, Paul Franz, Dave Holland, and Roy Butler drew the short straws and got me.)

Now fast forward. The sim check and oral miraculously passed, God only knows how, but I'm told He works in mysterious ways. The next phase was the airplane itself as landings in the simulators weren't certified in that era.

MIA, Real world, real airplane. It was my takeoff. All the switchlights were in and blessedly off (meaning everything was working properly). Ready for blast off. Our destination that day was San Juan for the bounces, and I vividly recall that after takeoff we leveled off initially around 3,000 feet. We were only airborne for five or six minutes, but I knew instantly that I loved the airplane. That's all it took. I was smitten, awestruck at how easy and user-friendly it was to fly. Unlike the box, what a joy the real thing was. Like all love affairs that eventually end, I will never forget it till the end of my days. (I was rated on seven planes eventually. None got close to this honey.)

I'd imagine little of the foregoing ramble has meant much to any reader doughty enough to get this far, but if nothing else he or she might have gleaned at least a vague notion of the 1011 neophyte's angst. No doubt other planes' manuals were equally daunting and I am sure every pilot has his or her own misery and agonizing tale of woe to tell. I never flew glass but remember hearing horror stories about the 737 (called “The Terminator” at UAL, where I eventually ended up). What is it, though, about manual writing that the end product is so often opaque and unfathomable?

Consider your car's instruction manual. These days every new car seems to have something bewildering and infuriating on its dashboard, but good luck understanding what it is and how it works from the manual. If my car's manual is anything like yours, manual writing hasn't improved much in 35 years. My car's manual is as indecipherable to me today as that L-1011 manual was for me then, and damn near as fat. I guess this is called progress.

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

Terrible Tommy Thorn

By Col. Ralph Dilullo USMC (Ret)

Hired by Pan Am Nov. 1965 as Reserve Co-Pilot/Navigator (\$450.00 per month, remember that!), our class was restricted to nav only for the first 10 months; then 8 touch-and-go landings on the 707, and we were full-fledged RCO's. I was awarded a 707 Master Co-Pilot Bid 707 JFK and received my rating in May 1967.

So after one month on the line as Reserve MCO, I had approximately 2 Atlantic crossings.

Then came a call from Pan Am Sched. A great trip: JFK-Paris, deadhead to Rome; Rome – JFK. How great was that! Funny thing was, after giving me all the info, Gil Rodrigues, the scheduler, said, "and the captain is Capt. Thorn Goodbye," and hung up. Strange, I thought.

So I report for the flight, I meet the engineer, a new guy – hell, everybody was a new guy – but no captain at check in time. I'm working at the paperwork, when Hardy the ops guy hands me the phone. "You the first officer?"

"Yes sir".

"Well, I'm coming in from D.C. I will be on time for departure, so I want you to do all the paperwork and all the check list right up to Turn 3. Understand?" said the harsh voice on the phone.

"Yes sir." I hung up and handed the phone back to Hardy.

Hardy took the phone and gave me a strange head nod, and muttered something in German.

Out to the aircraft and did as I was told. About 10 minutes from pushback, this burly, "old" man jumped into the captain's seat and proclaimed "I'm Tommy Thorn – we ready to go?"

"Yes sir, Turn 3."

Capt. Thorn requested pushback, he called for taxi, he called for takeoff. He took off; he raised the gear, he raised the flaps, he worked the radio. HE DID EVERYTHING. The only thing I had done was turn on the hydraulic interconnect, and that was probably because he couldn't reach it from his seat.

I did the Doppler and Loran, but he made POS reports, so I finally said, "Hey Captain, what do you want me to do?" He replied (gruffly), "You do what I tell you to do."

"Okay. Yes sir."

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**REMINDER: CLIPPER PIONEERS NEWSLETTER'S
LAST PRINT EDITION WILL BE DEC. 2018**

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Terrible Tommy Thorn

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Same routine on landing in Paris. He did everything. Now we are to stay on the plane and deadhead to Rome. Capt. Thorn takes me aside and says, "I got friends in Paris, so I'm staying. I will DH in tomorrow for the flight back. See you."

Relaxing in First Class to Rome, the new guy FEO says, "Hey, what the hell was that?", to which I answer, "You got me. I never saw anything like that before."

I showed the "new guy" what PAA crews do in Rome, and wondered what would come next. Out to Fumichino the next morning, and sure enough, there was "Terrible Tommy Thorn." Fit and trim and ready to go.

Same routine all the way to "position and hold". (This was an old 707 non fan 300 model; it was July, it was hot, and we were at max gross takeoff.)

Tommy looks at me and says, "You ever make a hot, heavy takeoff?"

"No sir."

"Well, you are now. Let's go."

So off we go – we rolled forever, finally got airborne just above stick sharer. I called for "gear up" as Tommy was unbuckling his harness and getting out of his seat, I kid you not – so I raise the gear, then the flaps as Tommy was putting on his captain's jacket. He looks at me and says, "Can you get across without f——g it up?"

"Yes sir". And he was gone.

Well, me and the FEO did all 3 jobs all the way across the Atlantic – Tommy stepped in for awhile halfway across and he did lower the gear for me on landing.

Neither do I approve nor recommend Tommy Thorn's methods; but Tommy Thorn made a man out of a couple of newbys. I learned Tommy Thorn was a Navy pilot in the 1930s. He flew "Kingfishers" off of battleships – he was different. But he was a great pilot – a little gruff and quite unorthodox, but I would fly again any time with "Terrible Tommy Thorn."

Pan Am Reunion planned at Foynes Museum in 2016

Pan Am Captain Don Cooper (coop@maxthrust.net) and Margaret O'Shaughnessy (margaret@flyingboatmuseum.com) have been working together on plans for a Pan Am reunion at the Foynes Museum next year. Details are not available yet, but bus tours around Ireland are planned. Contact John Madden (jmadden@asktravelworld.com) about tours.

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.

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

PAN AM REUNION CRUISE EXPLORER OF THE SEAS MAY 27,2016

Dear Pan Amer's:

I was delighted with all your gracious letters of thanks in your last Transatlantic reunion cruise. It was a great success and now we call attention to our next 2016 reunion cruise which will be Alaska.

Alaska: Now bigger than ever. **Explorer of the Seas®** takes on the Last Frontier, as the biggest, most innovative ship to ever cruise Alaska. Enjoy views from every room, thanks to new Virtual Balconies that bring real-time outdoor sight to interior staterooms. No journey stays with you, mind and soul, like an expedition through Alaska. From the blue ice of massive glacial fields to the stunning grandeur of the scenery and wildlife, everything big, bold and breathtaking. The ship is beautiful and packed with all the action of Royal Caribbean's Signature innovations—with plenty of time for relaxation, fine dining, and beautiful ocean views. Not to mention experiencing the awe and wonder of being up close to the fascinating glaciers in Alaska. Cruise to the Hubbard Glacier, as well as Tracy Arm Fjord, where the twin Sawyer Glaciers can be seen. Look out for harbor seals, wolves, bears and other wildlife that inhabit this glacial wonderland.

We take this opportunity to invite you, your family and friends to join us on this fabulous Pan Am cruise. The ship sails roundtrip Seattle making transportation easy to get to and return home. Great rates are being offered so everyone may choose the best cabin for your budget.

Itinerary –		Departs	Arrives	
Fri 27 May 2016	Seattle, Washington	-	4:00 PM	Boarding
Sat 28 May 2016	Cruising	-	-	Cruising
Sun 29 May 2016	Alaska Inside Passage	-	-	Cruising
Sun 29 May 2016	Juneau, Alaska	12:00 PM	9:00 PM	Docked
Mon 30 May 2016	Skagway, Alaska	7:00 AM	8:30 PM	Docked
Tue 31 May 2016	Tracy Arm Fjord, Alaska	7:00 AM	12:00 PM	Cruising
Wed 01 Jun 2016	Cruising	-	-	Cruising
Thu 02 Jun 2016	Victoria, British Columbia	9:00 AM	6:00 PM	Docked
Fri 03 Jun 2016	Seattle, Washington	6:00 AM	-	Arrival

Prices:

Inside Cabins from \$599. / Outside Cabins \$1059. request Balcony from \$1389.

Rates - per person, double occupancy (singles pay 200%) and based availability at time of booking. Port charges, taxes and fees are additional at \$412.91 per person. Deposit is \$250. per person (credit card or check). Book Early and lock in your price. Once our allotment is sold, cabins will be at prevailing rates. More information with your invoice. **This invitation is open to all Pan Am, their family and friends.** To reserve or for information please call Interline Travels ASAP or you may miss out on these prices. It's going to be a good one – DON'T MISS OUT !!

Carmen Jaquet, Pan Am Cruise Coordinator INTERLINE TRAVELS
 1-888-592-7245 / cell 786-252-7838 interlinetravels@yahoo.com .

Stu Archer, former Pan Am pilot & cruise consultant
 305-238-0911 (stujune@aol.com)
 INTERLINE TRAVELS, 456 MERLIN CT. , TALLAHASSEE, FL 32301

Pan Am Flt Eng / Pilot Picnic scheduled for September

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The stars are aligned, the moons are rising, and it is time for another gathering of the Nor Cal Picnicers of Pan Am (see the schedule below).

I hope you will find the menu satisfactory. The previously utilized caterer closed his doors and the other choices were significantly pricier so I decided to go simple – pizza and salad – it doesn't interfere with the BS stories running throughout the crowd and allowed me to lower the price.

I look forward to seeing all your wrinkled faces and bald heads (with the exception of the Ladies, who have aged so gracefully) smiling and chatting a mile a minute. You are a special group that made a special airline what it was, and its demise was in spite of your magnificent efforts. No one matched us before or since!!!!

Dan A.

**Pan Am Flt Eng / Pilot Picnic Thurs 9/24/15 The Villages Golf and Country Club, San Jose, CA
- 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM \$20 pp**

Lunch at 12:00 PM includes: Caesar Salad and Four (4) different style Pizzas Dessert (Costco Cookies), Beer, Wine, Soft Drinks, Water. Two Bocce Ball Courts Available for entertainment. There will be a prize for "Best Fitting Pan Am Uniform" and furthest travelled east and north. (Yours truly sole judge.)

PLEASE respond with check by Friday September 18, 2015!

Send check payable to: Dan Affourtit (acting for PAA Picnic Chairman Emeritus Pete Ryden), 7851 Prestwick Circle, San Jose, CA 95135-2143, and marked for "Pan Am Picnic". My E-Mail is dan_a4t@live.com; 408-723-2397. Include your E-Mail if changed recently.

DIRECTIONS: To get to "The Villages" from Hwy. 101 North or South exit at Yerba Buena Rd., proceed East (left turn) to the 4th or 5th stoplight (San Felipe Rd.), turn right and proceed to the 1st stoplight (Villages Parkway), turn left to The Villages and follow the signs for "Visitors" (Left side of entrance). At the Gate tell the guard you are attending the Pan Am Picnic. He will check your name on the "Invite list" and direct you to the Picnic Grounds (Gazebo Park), which is straight ahead and just past the 2nd STOP sign on the right side. Upon arrival please check in and get a name tag.

Thank you. Dan A.

Share the Memories...

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? Please send them to Jerry or Sue by email to: sue@clipperpioneers.com.

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 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***

*...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

Captain Robert 'Bob' Kenneth Frank, 79, of Shelter Island died on August 2, 2014. Bob joined Pan Am in 1965 based out of JFK and flew international routes for 26 years. In December 1990, he captained the MAC 6858 to Dhahran, Saudi Arabia for which he later received the Civilian Desert Shield and Desert Storm Medal for outstanding achievement by the Air Force. He is survived by his children and grandchildren.

Philip J. Mancuso died Friday – July 24, 2015 where he was residing in Hollywood, FL. He was a Flight Engineer for over 35 years. Surviving him are his wife Lupe, daughters Andrea and Kim (from previous marriage), brother Vincent and many nephews and nieces.

Richard Otto passed away in June 2017. A celebration of life occurred 17 June at Ohio Veterans Home. Richard Otto born in November 1925 peacefully passed on with his family by his side. He was a lover of aviation, people, and all modes of transportation that brought people closer. He worked at Pan American flying on the 707 & 747 and rising to Captain. He enjoyed working with all of you immensely. You connected the world. He loved it. He passes his love of aviation on to his sons & grandkids. One of his great pleasures recently was watching his Grand-daughter graduate as one American's newest flight attendants. –Ray Otto

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

Pan American World Airways JFK Base 11th Annual Reunion

is set for

Saturday, Oct. 24, 2015.

Noon until 4 p.m.

**Place: Plattduetsch Park Restaurant, Out door Bierhalle
1132 Hempstead Turnpike, Franklin Square, NY 11010. (Phone 516-354-3131).**

The cost is \$55.00 per person, which includes a buffet, wine, beer, sola and a DJ.

Reservations and checks must be received by October 1st, 2015.

Please make checks payable to:

Delores Shedd, 42 Grand Central Ave., Amityville, NY 11701.

Please include the names of those attending, and updated email addresses.

Questions: Contact Dee/John Shedd at Deejshedd@verizon.net or jjshedd2000@yahoo.com

(This is not a Clipper Pioneers-sponsored event.)

Too Close to Call...

by Preston Reisig
Consumer Education Intern, FTC

Got a question about a product or an account from a big-name online retailer that makes you want to speak directly to their customer service representative? What do you do first? Go to their website, of course. Can't find a phone number there? Then you may do what seems like the next best thing and just type the company name into a search engine. But the FTC warns consumers that it's a mistake to assume that all toll-free numbers that pop up in a search are legitimate customer service lines. Some are run by scammers out to hijack your credit card number or install malware on your computer.

We're used to having easy phone access to major retailers. Scammers know that, too, so they're gaming the system to mislead consumers. Using company names and URLs that look confusingly similar to national shopping outlets and big box stores, scammers hope that consumers will see the look-alike sites at the top of search engine results and assume they're legitimate. Once they have you on the line with your defenses down, scammers try to get you to reveal your credit card number. In a variation on recent tech support scams, others claim to spot a security problem on your computer that they'll fix — for a fee, of course.

Want to stay away from these scams? Here are some tips to help keep you safe.

1. On some search engines, the prime real estate at the top or on the side of results pages is for sale. That's why it's unwise to assume that phone numbers that appear early in the list are always valid. Scammers may even use a variation on the real company's name in their web address, which is why the presence of a familiar-sounding URL is no guarantee the phone number and website are genuine.
2. The most reliable place to go for information is the URL you know is the company's official website. However, not every company chooses to have a toll-free customer service number, and even those that do might not highlight it in all caps and bold it across the home page. Look for a "Contact Us" or "How can we help?" link, maybe on the bottom of the page or on a button bar at the top or along the side. This may take some time to navigate, but it will increase the likelihood that you're going straight to the source.
3. Toll-free numbers aren't the only way companies connect with consumers these days. Some might limit their communication to email. Others offer an online chat function. Some companies direct consumers to enter a phone number with the promise that they'll get a return call from the next available operator. Times are changing, and these are all now possibilities.
4. So what should you do if you spot a fake customer service line? File a complaint with the FTC. Chances are you're not the only one who is experiencing this. By letting us know, you can help us protect others.

Even if it involves some digging on a company's website to find reliable contact information, search carefully and you'll be more likely to stay safe online and strike gold with your search.

(Read more tips to help protect yourself at www.ftc.gov)