

**PRESIDENT**

STU ARCHER  
7340 SW 132 ST  
MIAMI, FL 33156-6804  
(305) 238-0911

**VICE-PRESIDENT**

HARVEY BENEFIELD  
1261 ALGARDIA AVE  
CORAL GABLES, FL 33146-1107  
(305) 665-6384

**TREASURER / EDITOR**

JERRY HOLMES  
192 FOURSOME DRIVE  
SEQUIM, WA 98382  
(360) 681-0567

## The Last Stage Coach out of Dodge

*By Robert Kloepper*

It was late in the fall of 1979. The revolution in Iran was in full swing. The Shah was out and the Ayatollah in. Armed people were everywhere and nobody knew who was in charge. Foreigners and some Iranians wanted to leave the country as soon as possible. I was a 747 FEO laying over in Rome. Our pattern called for us to fly FCO to IST to FCO and then next day to JFK. We did the FCO to IST leg but when we arrived at Istanbul we learned that the rest of the ID was cancelled. Now after minimum layover in IST we were going to Tehran and then straight on to FRA.

Shortly before pickup time there was a knock on my door. There were three stewardesses standing there, one of them was sobbing. They told me that they had spoken to their families and were afraid to go to Tehran. I told them that they would have to make their own decisions. I told them that they were not soldiers nor hero wannabes. They were just flight attendants. No employer has the right to force anyone to put themselves in known danger. I said that if you get fired you would get your job back. I said that I was going but please don't let that sway you because I've done a lot of stupid and dangerous things in my life, and I'm not proud of any of them.

We went to the lobby. Everyone was sitting there talking and comparing thoughts. The pick up time came and went. Finally, the MPT ( a great guy) got up and made a nice speech. He said pretty much what I had said up in my room but he added two very important points. He said that there were two very important

*~ continued on next page*

### No Password Needed for Members Only Section of the Website

Please note - we have changed the access to the online newsletters so that you will no longer need a password to access them. GO TO OUR WEBSITE AT: [www.clipperpioneers.com](http://www.clipperpioneers.com). There is also new information about accessing the members' mailing list. See page 5 for details.

Click on the "Members Only" button on the righthand side to access the current and previous newsletters.

## The Last Stage Coach out of Dodge

*~ continued from previous page*

symbols painted on the tail of the airplane. One was the big blue logo of PanAm, a symbol known and respected all over the world. The other was the American Flag. He said that we would be flying under the protection of the strongest power on earth. That did it! Everyone boarded the crew bus and we were all on our way to the adventure. OMG....he was wrong on both thoughts. The PanAm logo was seen by the revolutionaries as a symbol of western imperialism. And a few days later, the embassy was seized and American citizens held hostage for 444 days. "The strongest power on earth" did little to obtain their release.

At the airport, we spent quite a bit of time with the paper work. We were concerned about a number of factors: ATC enroute and at Tehran, handling, fuel, security on the ground, and much other stuff. We were released from IST to FRA with a technical stop in Tehran.

We departed IST for Tehran. We agreed that if anything didn't look right we would return to IST and call it a day. The flight to Tehran was routine and I don't recall any of it. It was a beautiful fall day in Iran. We were parked out on a hard stand. There were about 15 or 20 young men standing around, each with an AK-47 in his hands. I wondered how many of them were on "safe".

The Captain and I went to the foreword lounge and started working on the paperwork for the departure. We heard that there was mayhem in the terminal and that there was little contact with PanAm in New York. To do a paper weight and balance requires a sharp pointed pencil, a straight edge, and accurate figures. We had a blunt pencil, a curved edge, and guesstimate, estimate, and interpolate. We were helped by the ops rep and a senior load controller. They and their families were leaving with us to FRA. While we were doing paperwork, 4 young men came to the loading door and wanted a tour. The purser told them OK but no guns allowed. They laid their guns down on the platform and proceeded with the tour.

Soon the plane was loaded. There are two ways to spell full. The normal way is full. The abnormal way to spell it is FULL. The MCT and I made a trip through the cabin. We were concerned about load distribution. The load controller and I went down to the pits. The main cargo door was still open. The load looked OK to me. Right at the door there were 55 gallon drums. I asked about them. They were loaded with currency and other valuables. We closed the door. I started a walk around and was immediately joined by two young men with weapons. I told them that could watch me but don't point those things at me and don't point them at the airplane either. At the loading stairs I said, "Goodbye and good luck". I walked up the stairs and we closed the door.

In the cockpit we were concerned about CG and setting for takeoff. We checked and rechecked the take off data card. When we were all happy, we taxied out and took off. Nothing unusual about the take off and flight to FRA. At the Frankfurt airport they had all sorts of TV stuff set up and were broadcasting our arrival live.

As I said in the article, a few days later the revolutionaries seized the embassy for 444 days and held hostages for that period of time. Looking back, I don't think that we should have gone on this mission. There was no upside for us, no thanks, no good job, no nothing. I have always wondered at what level at PanAm the decision was made to send a random down line crew on a dangerous mission like this. Except for the MPT, I was probably the oldest crew member on this trip. If any of them are alive and interested, I would love to hear from them to rehash.

## Breaking at Least a Few of the Rules

*by Captain Robert Lee Bragg, edited by Dorothy A. Boyd-Bragg, Ph.D.*

On a flight out of Hong Kong (HKG) in the mid-1990s bound for Los Angeles (LAX), I received a rather forceful complaint about my co-pilot from the pursuer. Simply put, he refused to tip porters and the baggage people were complaining - loudly. She had been fielding numerous complaints - and not for the first time.

That being the case, I felt compelled to talk to him about it, especially as he was being paid to do so, like everyone else. Tips were factored into everyone's pay over compensation. I tried to make my talk with him as "short and sweet" and private as possible. My efforts to make it low key were, however, wasted. He quickly became very obviously annoyed with me.

Among his first remarks was, "How I manage my money is my own business and not yours." I'm afraid my response to that was equally curt, "Well, when people don't pay their just expenses, like tips, it's everybody's business as it brings discredit to all those who are in the profession. If you use the services of a porter, you should tip. If you carried your own bags, which you don't, there'd be no problem." Things degenerated a bit before silence descended.

To put it mildly, the rest of the flight was extremely quiet. There were just the two of us in the B-747-400 cockpit, and you could have heard a pin drop most of the time. In retrospect, it certainly could have been worse. The hotel, at least, did not make an issue out of his behavior. I had had an earlier experience with that.

A decade earlier, in London, at the Sheraton Park Tower Hotel in Knightsbridge, there was a complaint about a considerable number of crew members, especially flight attendants, who regularly congregated for extended periods of time in the rather elegant lobby of the hotel in their running suits, and some of the same individuals also had a bad record regarding tipping at the same hotel. The hotel certainly knew who did what - crews stayed there regularly.

In due course, the Park Tower complained through the proper channels. The hotel rightly charged that a number of crew members "were using the hotel's services and failing to abide by the normal rules for tipping and dress." I got involved because I was an ALPA representative on the hotel committee which inspected the hotels used by Pan Am. In the end, essentially, the hotel asked that Pan Am find another place for their crews to stay. At their request, the airline's contract with the Park Tower was not renewed. It was really too bad for the majority who had played by the rules. The Park Tower was a very nice hotel in a great location. Sadly, it's too often the case that the people who play by the rules suffer when an insensitive minority break them for their own advantage or whim - at least it was true in aviation circles.

**The last print issue of this newsletter was scheduled for Dec. 2018. However, because of quite a few requests to keep the newsletter going as a print edition, it has been decided to continue with it for at least another year (or until the funds run dry).**

**We'd like to have more stories to share! If you have a story you'd like to send, please send it in sooner rather than later! Email to: [sue@clipperpioneers.com](mailto:sue@clipperpioneers.com).**

**Don't forget to check out our website at: [www.clipperpioneers.com](http://www.clipperpioneers.com)**

## My Over the Ocean Near-Miss

*By Gordon Young*

As I've stated before, those of us who have been around aviation for a time have encountered situations or incidents which might have gone two ways: if south, we may have left the planet; if north, we were still standing and smelling like a rose.

This is one of those incidents.

In the waning days of Pan Am, I was flying the A310 from Helsinki to New York. As we passed over a reporting point on the west coast of Norway, ATC asked us to change our altitude at the request of Iceland Control. About one or two hours after our altitude change, our oceanic reverie was interrupted by a very excited voice on the radio wanting to know who we were. We both changed to a discrete radio frequency to sort things out. The voice belonged to the captain of a German charter outfit, named LTU. At that time, they were flying L1011s. He stated they, "had been forced to take evasive action to pass 600' behind our aircraft" This got everybody's attention. Evidently, they had come off the northern British Isles (Shetlands, Hebrides or the Danish Faroe Islands).

When our tracks intersected, our aircraft was at such an angle that we did not have visual contact nor TCAS alarm. Thankfully, they did! Either the old Mark I, Model II Eyeball or their TCAS. I thanked them and we both agreed to file safety reports. We went on to New York, where I reported to the Chief Pilot. After a few months, I asked the ALPA Safety Chairman in NY about my report and what had transpired as a result of it. His response was, all they heard was a pregnant silence. Somebody in Iceland Control had screwed up.

Woops! "Business as usual!"

And what am I doing now?

Each day that passes, I send a prayer or acknowledgment, gratitude and thanks to the man above who watches out for us mere mortals who fly in metal machines around this spinning dirtball in space.

P.S. I am aware that I am now one of the "old guys" and I am reminded of an old Marine Corps toast-"Here's to absent comrades."

### Brief Report about the Cruise

The annual PanAm Cruise Reunion was aboard The Royal Navigator of the Seas, from Miami to Southampton, England from April 22 - May 6, 2018.

A few photos from the Clipper Pioneers Cruise are posted on our website, at [www.clipperpioneers.com](http://www.clipperpioneers.com). The folks at the Bonjardim's in Lisbon were so happy to see some of the Pan Am crew members and their friends back at the Chicken House. 1 May 2018, it was a very special day and a good birthday party for Dick Vitale. What a great cruise. Stu

NOTE: Articles and comments are welcome about the Cruise! Please submit them for the next issue, so we can share the adventures with those who didn't go.

## **“It Did Not Want to Fly”**

*By Gordon Young*

I don't know about all of you, but as I get older my mind starts to wander. This is a tale about the “good ol' days”.

Back when Pan Am encouraged the establishment and growth of “third world” countries, national airlines as a feed for PAA's “round-the-world” flights (in South Africa and the Middle East):

A check/standards pilot friend of mine was sent by PAA to help the operation of the Afghani airline used at the time. Back then, they were flying DC3s and C-46s with a group of various pilot types.

One day, a pilot lost an engine and with one good engine, he landed on a remote dirt road. In due time, they changed the bad engine with a new engine. Then they sent an “administrative” pilot to fly the plane out to Kabul. The pilot locked the brakes and started to push the throttles up, a measure taken, I guess, because of the dirt road. This was not the usual rolling takeoff.

You can guess what happened!

The plane tipped over on its nose while the two engines thrashed themselves to death.

Once the dust had settled, one of the Afghan locals who had been watching the whole affair, leaned a wooden ladder against the open cockpit window and solemnly pronounced, “Allah did not want the bird to fly!”

This story was worth a smile and a beer when told to me then, and it still is now!  
Keep smiling!

---

## **New Lockerbie website**

A new website has been created for Lockerbie. It can be viewed at [www.lockerbie103.com](http://www.lockerbie103.com). It might be a worthwhile site to check out, especially for those who plan on visiting Lockerbie. Be sure to enter the web address in the browser (not Google Search, etc.) with the www. Otherwise, they will get hundreds of Lockerbies and 103s and may not find the web site after 15 pages. ~Claude Hedspeth

---

You are a part of this wonderful Pan Am “family”. Are there memories you've written down that you'd like to share with us in this newsletter? We've gotten some great response, and there will continue to be interesting stories coming up in 2018. Please share yours with us, as well! 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)***

---

## 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)

---

## 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*

---

## Port Jefferson Lunch

from Al Vale

As in the past, the 3rd Thursday of June, that would be June 21st. There is a hitch or maybe two. The free parking lot, that we have used in the past, is no longer available. There are several commercial lots within walking distance of the ferry, but they are charging as much as \$16 for the day. Using Mapquest, I found one for \$4.

Anyone with a handicapped sticker can park at the terminal free.

The other hiccup is that the ferry people don't know how many boats will be in service at that time. That makes the departure time a bit iffy. Dan D'Angelico is working with the parking people and the ferry people to try and simplify matters.

---

## 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/>

---

## 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.

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



*...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

**Stephen Yonych Sr.**, 88, passed away at Waterbury Hospital Saturday, April 21, 2018, in the company of his family. He is survived by wife Sheila Fisher Yonych; children Alexis, Gail, Stephen, Kevin, Kate; sister Lillian; and five grandchildren. Stephen was a veteran of the USAF, serving during the Korean War, then went on to fly for Pan American Airways and United Airlines. He was born in New York City on June 23, 1929, to William and Mary (Sobeska) Yonych, who lived in Galway, N.Y., on a farm where he grew up. They were emigrants from the Ukraine. He lived life to the fullest and will be missed by many.

**Captain Darrel Lee Rogers (Lee)** passed away peacefully last July 2017 with his family, at the home of his son, outside Sao Paulo, Brazil. He is survived by his wife, Maria, to whom he had been married for 68 years, his two sons, three grandsons and two great grandchildren. Lee was born in Taft, California in 1920 and began flying with Pan Am in 1942 in Miami. Over the following 38 years in his career as a pilot with Pan Am, he flew the Consolidated Commodore Flying boat, the Sikorsky S-42, the DC-3, the Boeing Stratoliner 377, the DC-4, DC-6, DC-7, DC-8, the Boeing 707 and finally the 747 & 747SP. He was based in Miami, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, New York, Lisbon, Portugal and Sidney, Australia. He spent many years of his life in Brazil where he retired in 1980. Lee never tired of telling his friends and family members stories about flying with Pan Am all over the world. He loved visiting various countries, appreciated different cultures and languages and adopted Brazil as his own home later in life. Lee often insisted on taking his family on many of his trips with Pan Am and would always remind them that when in any foreign country, one should always be respectful and considerate. Pan Am and flying were his life long loves and those of us who knew him treasured his company as he was always patient, considerate, loving and simply the perfect gentleman. He left his family and friends a legacy of a loving man who conducted his life in a manner many of us strive to imitate.

**Vincent J. Calamia**, Massapequa Park, New York. Vincent was born on April 23, 1923 and passed away on Tuesday, May 15, 2018 at the age of 95. Vincent was a resident of New York at the time of passing. He is survived by his wife Sina. They were married for 69 years. He was a member of the Clipper Pioneers. "But we'll have our wings and the wind will be with us..."

**Lt. Col. John Becker "Mad Jack" Riederich** (Retired), passed away on April 24, 2018, at 80 years. He "ran out of airspeed, altitude and ideas," as he lost his battle with leukemia, and not without a fight. John was a graduate of West Haven, CT High School, where he was later inducted into the school's Athletic Hall of Fame for athletic achievement, dedication, courage and character. John was a pilot in the military for 28 years where he flew a multitude of aircraft including but not limited to F-102's and F-4's. He had a profound effect on many under his command. He flew for the airlines both Pan American Airways and Delta. John had a wonderful career and life.

**Bob Owens (Robert B)** of Stuart, FL, passed away at age 80 on March 7th. Bob spent most of his career in the IGS and made the merger with Delta. He is survived by his wife Inge.

**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)**

## Protect Yourself Against Scams

Today, thieves are coming up with more and more devious ways to try and trick you into giving them your personal information, one of which is through scams. Scams can take the form of emails, text messages, phone calls, through social media accounts and more. To minimize your risks, it's important to not only know how to detect one but it's also imperative to be aware and stay up-to-date on the latest scams.

What information do thieves want? \* Social Security Numbers \* Bank account or credit card numbers \* Driver's license number \* Insurance policy numbers (medical and auto) \* Date of birth \* State or employee identification number.

### Universal Rules

If something sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

A bank, credit card company, or utility company will never ask for your personal information by email, whether you have an account or not, period.

Never give out personal information, credit card or account numbers on calls/emails/texts that you didn't initiate.

Before clicking on any links within emails or text messages, be sure to confirm the sender is legitimate.

Always be on the lookout for bad English and grammatical errors.

It is of prime importance to know the scams that thieves use to trick you into giving information. They then use the information to steal your identity. Compare this to a defensive driving course. It is not enough to know how to use a phone or the Internet. You must know how to use this technology safely, including increased awareness of situations that could lead to identity theft. For good information about how to protect yourself, go to: <https://www.idtheftcenter.org/Protect-yourself/scams-alerts> (from Identity Theft Resource Center)

---

## Pan Am -- Personal Tributes to A Global Aviation Pioneer

As many of you know, the Pan Am Historical Foundation recently published the highly acclaimed *Pan Am -- Personal Tributes to a Global Aviation Pioneer*, a book that caught the attention of Pan Amers and aviation enthusiasts around the world. The initial sales have been excellent and now into the sixth month since publication, the orders continue to come in.

This book may very well be one of the best -- if not the best -- book ever published about Pan Am. Rebecca Maksel, in the respected aviation journal *Air & Space*, published by the Smithsonian, wrote this about the book: "*Pan Am-- Personal Tributes to a Global Aviation Pioneer* is just that: An insider's look at the airline from those who worked there. In addition to a history of Pan Am, the book also includes the esoteric: an interview with artist Milton Hebald, who sculpted the 15-foot bronze signs of the zodiac that graced the façade of the Pan Am building at JFK; a reminiscence from an employee who worked at Pan Am's Counter Vanderbilt, the largest ticket counter in the world; and a mournful remembrance from a flight attendant who flew aboard the White House press charter the day President John F. Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas. Readers will learn about flights behind the Iron Curtain and Pan Am rescues of American citizens stranded by wars, revolutions, and earthquakes. The airline even had a waiting list for passengers interested in future trips to the moon."

This book belongs in every Pan Amer's library, and we are fortunate to have inventory available from the original print order to offer a special price of \$35 per single copy to friends and family of Pan Am. For those wishing to purchase five or more copies, the savings will be even better at \$30 per copy. Shipping will be free for orders within the United States. For international orders, please add \$50 per copy for shipping due to USPS international postage rates. Visit <https://www.panam.org/shop/669-panam90-book> to order.