

**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  
5354 ANTIGUA CIRCLE  
VERO BEACH, FL 32967  
(772) 205-2561

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## Flying the Boeing 314 Flying Boat

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS ISSUE

*by William B. Nash*

During World War II, among many other assignments, Pan Am's Boeing 314's flew shuttle flights carrying war materials and personnel between Natal, Brazil, and Fisherman's Lake, Liberia. The crews brought plane and cargo to Natal, then flew five round trips across the South Atlantic before returning to New York. The distance from Natal to Fisherman's Lake is 2150 statute miles (1876 nautical miles). Pan Am B-314's were the only planes in the world which could fly this distance non-stop.

Crossing the South Atlantic between Natal and Fisherman's Lake, we almost always had to pass through the inter-tropical front - a real boomer - that lay diagonally across our track. We tried to go through it at right angles to get the least of it.

Pan Am had carved a base out of the jungle on the shores of Fisherman's Lake, and we landed the Flying Boats in this large body of water. We slept in large tents there. During off-duty we hunted in the jungle and fished for large edible barracuda in the lake. We once found two motherless leopard cubs and raised them at our camp. Sometimes we'd let them out of the cage and let them stalk a chicken. We played rough with them, but when they grew bigger and could knock us down, we stopped that. Trolling for fish at night there the water was phosphorescent and splashed bluish light. The fish could see our flashing lure at which to strike. At this base Malaria was endemic. We faithfully took Atabrine or Chloroquine. Of course, another more pleasant way to take quinine was in gin and tonics.

Pan Am also built their own base at Natal from which we took off non-stop for Africa. We slept in screened huts. I remember they served the sweetest, juiciest pineapple in the world.

To take off from Natal we would taxi up river, around a curve to a bridge. Our take-off was around the bend of the river, finally separating from the water's surface in time to cross the beach with the ocean surf lapping

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### 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). To request a current membership list, email [sue@clipperpioneers.com](mailto:sue@clipperpioneers.com) with your request. Click on the "Members Only" button on the righthand side to access the current and previous newsletters.

## Flying the Boeing 314 Flying Boat

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at our hull. We carried very heavy loads and flew our step-climb to conserve fuel.

Also, to conserve fuel and compute a point of no return, we employed a "how goes it" chart created by Pan Am's engineer-trained chief pilot New York, Harold Gray, in the event of an engine becoming inoperative. Due to the increase of power on the remaining engines we would burn more fuel. If our track ever got into the upper triangle (we called it "coffin corner") we could not make it to either shore. Keeping the chart during an ocean crossing immediately showed troubles, such as excessive fuel consumption or unexpected headwinds in plenty of time to allow choice of options before troubles became critical.

En route on the eleven or twelve-hour flight we usually changed those on duty every four hours. We had crew bunks. Due to the props turning at 1600 rpm to save fuel they liked to vibrate. Because of this it took some time to get to sleep. The vibration growled ever fainter as it moved fore and aft away from us - then grew in volume as it moved back to us. Right at our sleeping quarters it collided and crashed into a super vibration which almost knocked us out of the bunk. Eventually we did sleep.

Heading to Africa, Ascension Island, discovered by the Portuguese in 1501, was off course to our right. Pilots ferrying bombers to Europe landed there for fuel, but during radio silence in the war a number of bombers missed the island and disappeared in the South Atlantic haze. The visibility was not good. They then asked Pan Am to overhead the island on some of our non-stop flights, followed by a formation of ferried bombers. On the first flight, Pan Am found no island at the position on the chart. By flying a North-South line, the crew found that Ascension Island must have been plotted on the chart by Magellan or somebody. It was 22 miles south of its charted position lost in the haze. The poor ferry pilots had been rushed through navigation training, but then couldn't miss Africa when they left Ascension Island.

During World War II on trans-ocean flights, Pan Am crews had to learn how to deal with coded messages. At departure we received an envelope which was not to be opened until we were aloft. This contained the keys to the codes, which were only good for a certain number of hours and then changed. Also, we carried a code machine, a small intricate device built by typewriter companies, through which a received morse code message could be run to make sense: The envelope contained certain settings to be cranked into the machine without which the machines were useless. These settings were also changed at irregular intervals of Greenwich Civil Time. Sometimes the time of a busy navigator would be wasted by taking a message through three codes only to find it was a weather report of weather they had already flown through.

Also the envelope contained useful identification signals. On a night flight out of Lisbon a crew was flying a heavily loaded B-314 at 500 feet for a few hours in order to avoid burning excessive fuel in an early weighty climb. Suddenly they realized they were flying over a huge convoy of cargo ships protected by heavily gunned cruisers and destroyers. One of the Navy ships was blinking a signal calling for an immediate identification code. The first officer ripped open the code envelope, grabbed the Aldis lamp, and began blinking the current identification in time to prevent the anti aircraft guns from being triggered. That envelope

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**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! We appreciate you and the interesting stories you send in for all to enjoy! 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)**

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## Flying the Boeing 314 Flying Boat

contained some very important items!

Our flight crew on a Boeing 314 consisted of Captain, First Officer, Second Officer, Third Officer, Fourth Officer, First and Second Flight Engineer, and one Morse code radio Operator, and a varying number of flight service. The Second Officer was assigned as navigator, though all pilots could navigate. The Third Officer was responsible for the ship's papers for immigration, public health, customs, and cargo manifests, etc., which were carried in a 65 pound briefcase. On ships, pursers had much more time to complete those international forms, many in foreign languages. It was a hassle to complete them in the fewer hours an airplane was en route. Gradually, nations agreed to new standardized forms to keep up with the gradually increasing speed of aircraft. The Fourth Officer, often referred to by the crew as the "Bilge Rat", handled the ship's mooring lines, anchors, and hatches, and the important weight and balance of the cargo and baggage load to trim the airplane for level flight.

The Captain and First Officer occupied the front seats for take-offs and landings. En route, the Captain flew with the Fourth Officer, and the First Officer flew with the Third Officer. The First and Second Engineers were on duty separately. Any one of the pilots could put on coveralls and climb out into a wing and into an engine nacelle to assist one of the flight engineers in flight to change magnetos or starters, check the wiring or piping, or to check the sump. Metal particles in the oil sump meant that engine could not be started again. The other engineer manned the station. Our flight engineers were professional, from Pan Am's maintenance section.

Any one of the pilots relieved the radio operator at the Morse code station, though we had to request that the sender slow down to twenty-five words per minute or less. Our radio operators came from ships. They could receive Morse code from a fast "fist" at sixty words a minute. They could hear whole common words as well as letters. They slowed down a little when receiving code, for there were no whole words - just gibberish.

**TO BE CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE**

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## HEALTH TIP: Don't Forget Your Eyes!

**Nourish your eyes.** Eating better and spending less time looking at digital devices is not just good for your body and mind—it's healthy for your eyes, too. Nourish your eyes for today, and tomorrow.

**Nutrition is the key.** Your eyes are unique and have their own nutritional needs. Care for them the right way by choosing healthy foods, such as those that contain Lutein and Zeaxanthin, Omega-3s and antioxidants that support eye health\*.

**Blue light.** We're using digital devices more than ever before, exposing our eyes to high energy blue light from these devices for hours a day, which may impact our eyes over time. If you're spending lots of time in front of a computer, get specially coated glasses that help protect from blue light.

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

## Make Plans for our Next Cruise in 2020!

Dear Pan Amer's: I trust all of you got home safe and sound from our fabulous TransAtlantic cruise. It was wonderful meeting up with old friends and making new ones. I'm very happy to announce our next adventure is a great 11day cruise to the Caribbean. This is for all the Pan Folks and friends. Come join the fun, It is a great cruise and one of the very few for the entire year that will visit Panama and the best price of all. It's a great itinerary. If interested, get a deposit to Carmen, the only cabins available are those listed below.

### Serenade of the Seas Mar. 2, 2020

Inside \$1050 / Outside \$1250 / Balcony \$1950

RATES - are "from", Non-Refundable, per person, cruise only, double occupancy and based on availability at time of booking. Port / government taxes are additional (\$398. per person); surcharge for amenities (gifts, cocktail parties, etc.) is \$125. per person.. Deposit is \$450.00 pe person. Major credit cards accepted but checks are preferred. Make out to Interline Travels, 456 Merlin Ct., Tallahassee, FL 32301.

To reserve call Carmen direct 786-252-7838; [INTERLINETRAVELS@YAHOO.COM](mailto:INTERLINETRAVELS@YAHOO.COM). For questions and further information call Stu Archer (for Pan Am pilot and cruise coordinator) at 305-238-0911.

#### VISITING PORTS OF CALL

PUERTO LIMON

ORANJESTAD, ARUBA

COLÓN, PANAMA

WILLEMSTAD, CURACAO

COLÓN, PANAMA

## 27th ANNUAL FAMILY REUNION und Oktoberfest

**Where:** Two Steps Downtown Grille -Ives Street, Danbury, CT

**When:** Sunday, October 7th, 2019 - from 1400 'til 1700

**What:** LUNCHEON BUFFET

**Beer and Wine:** NO CHARGE Pay Bar: AVAILABLE

**Cost:** \$26.00 per person, all inclusive

**Tell all your Pan Am Friends ~ Casual Dress ~ Copy this notice and pas**



**MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: ALAN VALE - WRITE REUNION IN MEMO**

**Contact:**

**Alan Vale**

**40 Brittania Dr.**

**Danbury, CT 06811-2612**

**(203) 778-2993**

**av747@att.net**

**Print your name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City, State, Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_**

**# in your party: \_\_\_\_\_ Print their names:** \_\_\_\_\_

## CRUISE: VISITING PORTS OF CALL –

PUERTO LIMON - Come to Puerto Limon ready to meet a raw and beautiful side unlike any other in Costa Rica. Go off-road and through prehistoric forests in places like the famous Veragua Rainforest Park. Jump onboard a Costa Rica cruise and glide on a canoe over the

Tortuguero Canal, meet wild creatures at the Costa Rica Wildlife Sanctuary, or get in some of the region's best surfing at the Salsa Brava reef break, just an hour's drive south of the port.

COLÓN, PANAMA - Home to the Panama Canal's Atlantic Ocean entryway, Colón is the second-largest city in Panama. Start your adventure at the Gatun locks, where you can watch ships being raised by water lifts to the higher elevation of the canal. Then, visit the Portobelo Natural Park and take in the beauty of its 16th century forts. Or head to the beach at Playa Maria Chiquita for clear Caribbean Sea waters and white sands. Cruise to Colón, Panama and check out Portobelo National Park, where you can see 17th-century Fort San Lorenzo or go bird-watching along the Achiote Trail in San Lorenzo Protected Forest. Or take the one-hour trek to Panama City, the Caribbean's urban heartbeat. Experience the Panama Canal in all its engineered glory as you witness ships being lifted in the Gatun locks to enter Gatun Lake. Ships then traverse through the lake and exit the canal on the Pacific Ocean side, going down again in the Miraflores locks. Panama City Tour & Canal Locks - CO52

COLÓN, PANAMA - Cartagena de Indias boasts romantic colonial architecture and a Caribbean coast glittering in shades of bright white and aquamarine. Saunter through the leafy Plaza de Bolivar, photographing multicolored streets like Calle Segunda de Badillo. Cruise to Cartagena to dance to the beat of merengue, salsa and Colombia's very own cumbia at places like Bazurto Social Club. Discover Proclamation Square, where the town people gathered in 1811 in support of the declaration of independence from Spain, and walk the 16th-century fortifications of Castillo San Felipe de Barajas. Enjoy Cartagena's natural grandeur on its many beaches, like Bocagrande, Playa Blanca and placid Rosario Islands National Park, just 45 minutes away from the city.

ORANJESTAD, ARUBA - Welcome to Aruba— or as the locals say, Bon bini. Here Dutch traditions mix with island charm. The capital and port town of Oranjestad, is best known for its colorful Dutch Colonial 'gingerbread' houses painted in bright Caribbean hues. While Aruba is only 20 miles from tip to tip, it is packed with incredible contrasts. Cruise to Aruba and go from relaxing in a tropical paradise to trekking rugged desert in no time. The southern coast is one giant photo op— a bustling port town surrounded by powdery white beaches and crystal-clear aquamarine waters. To the north, waves crash onto a rocky coast, scattered with cliffs, cacti and divi-divi trees. Best of all, you don't have to choose which spots to hit— just which to hit first.

WILLEMSTAD, CURACAO - Curaçao is a treasure trove of cultural attractions, rich history, and natural scenery — from desert landscapes and rugged cliffs to 38 spectacular, and mostly secluded, beaches. Sint Anna Bay separates the two sides of the capital of Willemstad. Punda, the original settlement, is a tidy grid filled with shops and unique markets, restaurants and open-air cafes. Not to mention the famous tropicalized Dutch architecture in vibrant hues. Otrobanda (literally, "the other side") is a maze of narrow streets and even narrower alleyways. And at only 40 miles long, a wide variety of island adventures are within easy reach during your Curaçao cruise.

### Treasurer's Report

The current bank balance is \$18,086.22 as of Aug 18, 2019. Checks to be written from that balance will include printing, mailing and website hosting & updates, and maintenance / updates of the membership list.



## 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

## 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.

## Check Out the Lockerbie Website

A 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 Hudspeth

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

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. Visit <https://www.panam.org/shop/669-panam90-book> to order.

## Thank You for the Stories You're Sending In! Keep 'em coming!!

We've been getting some good stories about memories of your times with Pan Am, and we want you to know we appreciate it! Keep them coming, and you will see them in the upcoming issues! Are there memories you've written down that you'd like to share with us in this newsletter - short or long? Have you come across an interesting article that you'd like to share with us? Would you share pieces from a book you've written? Send them to [sue@clipperpioneers.com](mailto:sue@clipperpioneers.com) or [jerryholmes747@gmail.com](mailto: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

**Donald Hyatt** passed away peacefully surrounded by his loving wife and friends on Thursday, July 25th, 2019 at Renown Medical Center in Reno. He was 83 years old. He went to work flying for Pan American World Airways in 1966. While employed with Pan Am, he met the love of his life, Ellie Macher-Ryan on Christmas Eve in Tokyo, Japan. They were married in 1973. After the demise of Pan Am, Don flew for Korean Airlines and retired in 1996.

**Robert N. Bacon**, long time resident of Largo, passed away on August 2, 2019. He was born in Baltimore, MD on February 2, 1936. He was a U.S. Marine fighter pilot, where he flew F-8 Crusader among other jets. After 20 years of honorable service, he retired as a reserve Major. In 1965, as an airline pilot with Pan Am and subsequently transitioned to United Airlines in 1992, where he flew for another 6 years before retiring. In 1982, he and his beloved wife relocated to Largo, FL, where they enjoyed many happy years together with family and friends.

**Warren C. Kepner** of Columbus, N.J. passed away Friday, July 26, 2019, at his home. He was 95. Born near Harrisburg, Pa., Warren joined the U.S. Air Force at the beginning of World War II at the age of 19. He flew 52 missions in a B-17 Bomber as a top turret gunner. Warren was a veteran of three wars, WWII, Korea, and Vietnam. He remained in the Air Force for 22 years, retiring as a Master Sergeant in 1969. He then went to work for Pan American World Airways as a flight instructor until he retired in 1989.

**Maurice "Morie" Turner Legare** passed away on July 12, 2019 at the age of 86. He was born on March 20, 1933. Morie attended Whitworth College, Spokane, Washington, where he participated heavily in the Young Life ministry, and excelled in sports and academia, graduating in 1955. After graduation from Whitworth, he joined the U.S. Navy, went to flight school, and became a Naval Aviator. He was a combat helicopter pilot in Vietnam, and in 1966, was appointed Officer in Charge of Search and Rescue Detachment 5, and flew missions from the USS King (DLG-51). He and his men (dubbed "Legare's Bears") participated in many heroic rescues, but one memory he often shared was when he and his crew made two water rescues of F-105 pilots who were hit over North Vietnam, and managed to ditch or parachute into the Tonkin Gulf. It was an important and historic event, which is recorded in the operational history of the USS King. For this and other feats, Morie earned the Air Medal, the Vietnam Service and the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, along with the National Defense Service Medal. He earned the rank of Lieutenant Commander, and served in the Navy for 10 years. After his military career, Morie served as a Flight Engineer (FE) for Pan American World Airways from 1967-1991. His family loved hearing about the many adventures, life-saving calculations, and narrow landing victories Morie experienced in that role. When Pan Am was sold to Delta Airlines in 1991, Morie was able to transfer to Delta, and was a senior FE until his retirement in 2002.

**For more information and full obituaries 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) or [sue@clipperpioneers.com](mailto:sue@clipperpioneers.com), or mail to: Sue Forde, P. O. Box 3457, Sequim, WA 98382**

## Update on the Clipper Pioneers Newsletter

Nine more! We need 9 more paid subscribers to continue with our bulk rate. Of the 500+ members who are receiving the newsletter, only 191 have sent in checks. If you would like to continue receiving the Clipper Pioneers newsletter, please let us know by filling out the form below and sending it in!

If we haven't heard from you by the time we get the next newsletter ready to go out, your name will be dropped, and you'll no longer receive it by mail.

Please be sure to fill out the form below and send in your check, payable to Clipper Pioneers if you would like to get the newsletter for this next year. (Disregard if you've already sent in your check!!)

Those of you without email or internet, please so indicate on the form. Thank you!

We also would love to print your stories / memories or other items to share with our other members. If there are times we don't have enough "new" stories to run, we'll run some of the stories from issues that were printed years ago that bear another telling. :)

Looking forward to keeping Pan Am - the greatest airline - alive in memory and in print. We'll also be updating and revamping the website to modernize it.

### PLEASE MARK ALL THAT APPLY:

☐ YES, I'd like to continue to receive the print issues of the Clipper Pioneers newsletter. Please send me the newsletter by mail. Enclosed is my check for \$\_\_\_\_\_.

☐ I would prefer to receive the newsletter by email. My email address is:\_\_\_\_\_.  
I am enclosing a contribution to help cover the cost of sending by email in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_.

☐ I do not have an email address.

☐ I am sending a story or memory for the newsletter to share with others.

☐ I do not wish to continue receiving the newsletter. and understand that this is the last issue I will receive.

Your Name:\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_

Email Address:\_\_\_\_\_

COMMENTS:\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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**or email to: [sue@clipperpioneers.com](mailto:sue@clipperpioneers.com)**  
**or fill out the form at [www.clipperpioneers.com](http://www.clipperpioneers.com)**