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Landing on Runway 01R at San Francisco International

by Gene Woerner

We departed Tokyo's Narita Airport in the early evening for our overnight flight to San Francisco. I was the Captain on a United Airlines B 747-400. The Crew consisted of the Captain, and two First Officers, one of them being the relief Pilot.

In the cockpit also, an FAA Inspector, there to observe the operation of the flight as well as the crew. He sat in the cockpit jump seat during the Take Off and climb, which I performed. Everything was routine, and after about 45 minutes at cruise, he excused himself and returned to his business class seat on the upper deck.

It was a routine flight. We had a 120K tailwind component for most of the flight, and after about 9 hrs and 30 min, we were approaching the San Francisco area. The FAA Inspector had reentered the cockpit and was sitting in the jump seat behind me.

It was a windy and cold January morning with gusty winds out of the northwest. The First Officer copied the local SFO weather from the ATIS (Automatic Terminal Information Service), which indicated that the landing runways were 28 R and 28L. Because the wind was so strong all take offs were from the same runways.

After being switched over to NorCal approach, we were told to expect an ILS approach to 28 R. The 747-400 was an all glass cockpit, and all the approaches had to be programmed into the flight display. It took a few second to input all this information.

We were now all set up for the approach and landing on 28R. On final, the ceiling was ragged but still visual flight rules. Passing the Dumbarton bridge, we saw it below; however, we did not have the runway in sight

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Landing on Runway 01R at San Francisco International

~ continued from previous page

yet. I was still flying with the Autopilot connected as we approached the San Mateo Bridge and the final approach fix. With the runways now in sight, the tower informed us that the wind had swung around to the north at 35 knots, with gust, and we should break off the approach and set up for a visual approach and landing to Runway 01R.

I couldn't believe what I heard! In all the years I had flown out of SFO, I had never landed on 1R, never saw any other airliners land there. No approach procedure and no visual cues to tell you how you were doing on the glide path. For a split second, I debated whether to go to our alternate, but then I disconnected the Autopilot and made a left turn to set up for a visual approach to Runway 1R.

The approach to Rwy 28 is over the bay at sea level; however the terrain for an approach and landing on runway 01, was a low mountain range sloping toward Highway 101, and then just beyond the highway was the touchdown zone for Rwy 01R. No approach lights, nor VASI (visual approach slope indicator) - only a Radar Altimeter that kept telling us how high we were over the ground approaching the touch down zone. I was sweating, totally forgot that we had an FAA inspector looking over my shoulder. Luckily, everything worked out just like I had been doing this regularly all my career.

After clearing the runway, we all took a deep breath, the FAA Inspector slapped me on the shoulder and told me that was his first ever landing on Runway 1 and that we all had done an outstanding job. I felt good but realized that I was soaking wet. I was ready for a stiff drink.

Flying is never dull even on the best of days whether VFR or IFR.

First Trips on Pan Am

by Gary Gulbransen

My first Pan Am trip was as RCO on a day trip DC-8 from JFK to Port-o-Prince to Santo Domingo and back. A Reserve Co-pilot was needed due to duty time limitations.

Observing the landing from the observer's seat, first officer flying, I thought we looked a little low, but what did I know?

It being my first line trip, I did the walk-around with the Flight Engineer who pulled leaves and branches out of one of the main landing gears. He took a handful up to the First Officer and asked him if he thought he was a little low on landing. We never mentioned it to the Captain.

At Port-au-Prince, the crews would walk over to the airport fence and buy wooden salad bowl sets from natives. The story was you should put them in your freezer once at home to kill all the weevils in the wood.

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.

Don't forget to check out our website at: www.clipperpioneers.com

Almost the End of my Career

by Captain Robert Lee Bragg, Pan American and United, edited by Dorothy A. Boyd-Bragg, Ph.D.

My first cross country flight started off terribly. I couldn't find my first check point, so I did just what my instructor at Auburn had told us to do, go back and start over again. The second time I was able to locate the check point with ease and get to my destination. I naively thought that things were starting to look up.

After I got on the ground, however, I soon discovered there was no one, absolutely no one, in the vicinity to prop the plane. My immediate reaction was to call Auburn and tell them to come and get their plane - a Champ7EC - for the moment I had had it with flying. Luckily, I thought better of doing that. My change of heart was very much linked with the fact that an old guy suddenly came into view at the airport.

I asked him if he would prop the plane for me. He was no fool and made it clear that he would not. I think I must have done some really fancy talking because I finally persuaded him just to hold the brakes for me while I tried to prop the plane myself. That worked. I think he rather liked the idea of getting into the cockpit.

Even though most planes then, in the late 1950s, had to be propped, I decided that I didn't like the idea of propping planes at all. Too many things could go wrong. In truth, most of the things that could conceivably go wrong went wrong for me that day. I often wonder what made me continue with my training. Too bad no one was filming the farce that day. It must have been funny to everyone but me.

Breaking a Few of the Rules

by Captain Robert Lee Bragg, Pan American and United edited by Dorothy A. Boyd-Bragg, Ph.D.

I've always tried to abide by the rules. I've always believed that good pilots had to know and obey the rules for the safety of all concerned. Yet, we all occasionally stray from the path. Right after I got promoted to captain, I celebrated. I didn't plan it. It was spontaneous.

I had just flown into Rome from Tehran as captain of a B-707. It was about 8:30 in the morning, and I decided to celebrate at breakfast. I quietly made arrangements with the waiter at our hotel to provide the crew with some good Italian wine at breakfast —served in coffee cups so as not to attract attention. It was great as I recall, but, looking back, I now realize that in doing what I did I broke at least three rules that I regard as somewhat important. I drank in public while in uniform; I drank at the hotel at which I was staying; and I drank with flight attendants - the latter being a rule I adopted a bit late in life when a fellow pilot partied with flight attendants and they refused to fly with him the next day. Live and learn.

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

A Documentary Series about Pan American Airways on PBS

When Pan Am's M-130 flying boat "China Clipper" took off for the first scheduled flight to Manila on November 22, 1935, it riveted the attention of people around the world. At that moment Pan Am vaulted to a commanding position and the world changed forever as a result. That's the story brought to life in "Across the Pacific." Newly unearthed archival motion pictures, photographs, and original sound recordings as well as stunning graphics, help bring this history back to life.

The film by Moreno/Lyons Productions tells the epic story of how Pan American Airways became the first to bridge the mighty Pacific - the first airline to cross any ocean. Focusing in particular on the contributions of Pan Am's visionary leader Juan Trippe, aircraft designer Igor Sikorsky, and radio engineer Hugo Leuteritz, the three-part program is currently broadcast on PBS. "Across the Pacific" premiered on VPM PBS in Richmond Virginia May/June 2020. You can watch each episode on the home page of the Clipper Pioneers website (www.clipperpioneers.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/>

Healthy Living Tips

It's very important at all ages to socialize and be around others, especially family and friends. A great way to stay active and meet new friends - and engage with old ones - is by utilizing your Senior Center. From crafts and hobbies to computer classes, it's a great way to keep the mind interested and active.

Another way to keep your brain active is to go back to school. Taking a class at a community college, study another language, take an online class (there are many of them out there, just type "free online classes" into your search engine, or go to youtube.com and look for subject matter of interest to you).

Volunteering to help in your community offers exercise and satisfaction, and is one more way of keeping mind and body healthy.

Ideas from <https://www.everydayhealth.com/news/easy-ways-seniors-can-boost-mental-health-well-being/>

Bank balance as of Nov. 30, 2021 is \$7,113.02. With the current balance, we can print about six more months of the Clipper Pioneers. We will be including the opportunity in future issues to renew your membership, which will go toward continuing forward. Thank you to the many who have mailed in your donations to keep this newsletter going! If you'd like to contribute to keep the Clipper Pioneers going, please send your check payable to: Clipper Pioneers, P. O. Box 3457, Sequim WA 98382.

Please update your email address and phone number if it's been changed!

Email or write to: Clipper Pioneers, c/o Sue Forde, P. O. Box 3457, Sequim WA 98382 or email to: sue@clipperpioneers.com

PAN AM Reunion - MARCH 12-20, 2022

8 Night Southern Caribbean Cruise on Jewel of the Seas r/t Miami

Dear Pan Am friends: It's about time to cruise !!

Welcome back to the resumption of our annual Pan Am reunion cruises – and how we have missed them. Next March we embark on Royal Caribbean's beautiful luxury liner Jewel of the Seas to exciting and captivating islands in the Caribbean where the ultimate goal is to exceed your expectations by making this cruise not just a vacation but, an adventure at sea. These wonderful ports of call include:

LABADEE, HAITI - SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO

PHILIPSBURG, ST. MAARTEN AND ST. JOHN'S, ANTIGUA

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 well known get together 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. Family and friends are welcome.

Cabins: from * Inside \$599 / * Ocean view \$659 / * Balcony \$999

Rates are per person, cruise only, double occupancy, Non-Refundable and based on availability at time of booking. Port charges/tax are additional at \$361.35 per person. Checks are generally preferred (address below) but all major credit cards are accepted. Deposit \$250 per person upon reserving; final is due 12/2/2021. Cabins are capacity controlled. Singles pay 200% of cruise fare and port charge.

Amenity fee of \$125. per person for onboard activities (parties, gifts, etc.) to be made out to Interline Travels and mailed separately to the address below (no credit cards for this) due with final balance. Insurance is be available according to your cruise price. More information with your invoice. Junior Suites and Suites are on Wait List Status - pricing upon request when available.

To reserve call Carmen 786-252-7838 , Email interlinetravels@yahoo.com

Stu Archer (Pan Am pilot/cruise organizer) for information (305-238-0911) Email StuNJune@aol.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

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, and send your email contact. They started out with 5 and have grown to 17. ~from Dave Criley

Invitation to Lunch & Lecture Reunion

As "president" of the Pan Am Retirees Association in SF Bay Area, I am extending an invitation to all Clipper Pioneers to attend our Dec 4 2021 lunch & lecture reunion at Michael's at Shoreline in Mt. View CA. Guest speakers include Al Topping (Last Flight Out) and Capt. Mark Pyle, who flew the last Pan Am Clipper BGI/MIA exactly 30 years ago on Dec 4, 1991. Please send me an email address to whom I can send an email invitation with details, for you to share with your members. Thank you Al Gilbert 415 516 0359.

Layovers for Pan Am

Check out Pan American layovers at 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. 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.

*...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

Roald Alan Olson (Captain Ole), 84, died peacefully at his home on Sunday, October 17th, 2021. Born October 15, 1937, Roald grew up as the second youngest in a family of eleven on a farm outside Crosby-Ironton, Minnesota. He was a fun-loving kid who enjoyed fixing cars, playing Canasta, working the farm, wrestling, and captaining the football team. While attending junior college in Brainerd, MN he was inspired by his brothers to join the Navy. He drove with a buddy to California to enlist and soon after was selected for flight school in Pensacola, Florida.

Roald flew the Lockheed EC-121 Constellation for the Navy before becoming a commercial pilot. He started with Pan Am in 1964 and flew until 1991, captaining the Boeing 707 and 747 for 27 years, with his home base primarily being in Los Angeles, CA. Some of Captain Ole's favorite memories include flying with his Navy buddies patrolling the Atlantic seas around Newfoundland. He also fondly recalled his flights with Pan Am, including some momentous experiences.

Theodore Karl (Ted) Fisch was born in Manhattan (NYC) on December 10, 1926, grew up in the Bronx, N.Y. passed after a long illness on August 21, 2021 in Danbury, CT at 94.5 years, a life well lived. He joined the U.S. Navy in late 1944 and served as a aircraft mechanic on PB4Y's and F4U Corsairs until the end of the Second World War. After his honorable Discharge from the Navy he went to work for Trans World Airlines at La Guardia Airport as a mechanic. In 1952 he joined Pan American in Long Island City as a Flight Engineer/Pilot. He worked his way across many of the Pan American Fleet starting on the Pistons; DC – 6, 7, Stratocruisers, and Constellations. He got on his first jet the DC – 8 in the late 50's early 60's. He spent a short stint on the Boeing 707 and then quickly transitioned to the 747 – 100 and to the 747 – SP. He always spoke of his adventures and friends he made working for the Great Lady Pan American World Airways.

He shall be missed just like Pan American World Airways.

Captain H. Terry Crowell of Salado, Texas went West on his final flight, November 11th, 2021, at his residence with his wife, Patricia by his side. Terry was born in Montezuma, Georgia on December 19, 1935 to Terry Crowell and Willodean Davis Crowell. He went to grade schools in Montezuma and attended the University of Georgia. His airline career started with flying Lockheed Electra, 4 engine aircraft, then moved on to the Boeing 727's, McDonnell Douglas DC-8's and the McDonnell Douglas DC-10's.

On January 07, 1980, Pan American Airways acquisition of National was completed, with Pan American World Airways taking over the National Airlines fleet and route network. He and fellow pilots went to Toulouse, France to train and bring home the first four Airbus 300's adding to Pan Am's fleet. Terry is survived by his wife of 49 years, Patricia Crowell of Salado, Texas.

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. Know of someone from Pan Am who has passed? Email the obit to Sue Forde at sue@clipperpioneers.com, or mail to: Sue Forde, P. O. Box 3457, Sequim, WA 98382

The Way to Go

by Bill Nash

Juan Trippe, in the process of pioneering and developing the world's first international airline, used flying boats because airports did not exist in most nations. Because of his Spanish first name and intelligent approach he acquired many landing rights in Latin America.

Soon Pan Am was operating around the east coast of South America to Rio and Buenos Aires. I flew one of the early "boats" Pan Am used around the coast - the Consolidated Commodore, which took off at 75 mph, cruised at 75 mph, and landed at 75 mph. Eventually Pan Am's Douglas DC3 land planes replaced the flying boats when Pan Am and nations built airports where needed.

Mr. Trippe wanted a faster route from Belem, at the Amazon river's mouth to Rio de Janeiro. A direct route Belem to Rio was over jungle and wild country and required a fuel stop halfway - when there was no fuel stop and no anything. During the 1930's, Mr. Trippe hired Fritz Blotner, a jungle adventurer of many talents to find such a place and build a refueling airport there.

Fritz's trek through jungle and badlands is a story in itself. He found a plateau; flat on top near the Rio Grande, a river which led by water to the Atlantic Ocean.

Pan Am built a wagon-wheel shaped airport on the high plateau and a burro trail up the cliff from the river. Boats and barges brought drums of fuel up the river and burros carried them up to the airport.

Flying DC3's on this route, there was little to navigate by. The squeaky omni directional broadcasting signal was good for about 100 miles and no good at all when electrical thunderstorms were present.

Therefore, we learned to navigate using topographical charts, flying very low to read the rising cliffs and drop-offs.

As we began to near the airport, we would call Mr. Hempel, the German man in charge, by calling, "Hey Hempel" (the airport, however, had a name - Barreiras - pronounced Ba-Hair-Ahs). We sometimes had Hempel hold down his mike button when we were close. The communication frequency gave us a better bearing than the nav frequency.

The runways were yellow gravel. After heavy rain they were very soft, so we kept rolling after landing til we taxied up on the small concrete fueling ramp. We would depart the same way, making a rolling take-off.

Mr. Hempel was a fun guy. He gave us a good meal and showed us the results of some of his local hunting and animal captures. He kept a clear "hot sauce" on the dining table which he and experienced crew members encouraged first-time pilots to try. They still couldn't taste their food when we got to Rio.

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 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!
