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A Clipper Story from the "Good Old Boat" Days

by Jack H. Omohundro

I was hired after an interview with the much revered Marius Lodesen when he was a member of a team of Pan Am captains that was making the rounds of various military bases in early 1945. The powers that be in Washington were asking Pan Am to do more and more, but Pan Am told them that there was a shortage of trained pilots available. One of Pan Am's contacts in Washington noticed that, at this time, there were a number of pilots who had completed their combat tours and were being returned to the States for reassignment and suggested that Pan Am be allowed to interview some of these pilots and hire as many as they needed. To shorten this epistle; I was interviewed and offered a job as a pilot and relieved from active duty with the Air Force to accept this job. At this time, I was a Captain, on flying duty and being paid about \$600.00 a month plus all kinds of benefits. I had completed, (by the Grace of the Good Lord) a tour of 25 combat missions over Europe as first pilot of a B-17 combat crew. During the interview, Captain Lodesen had asked me if I was hired would I be able to be a co-pilot. I must have looked at him with an odd expression on my face - my childhood ambition since I was about seven years old was to be a pilot for Pan American Airways - for I answered him, "yes sir, and may I asked why." He explained that if I was hired I would start as a co-pilot and it was possible that I would be flying with captains who had less flying time than I did and certainly less 4-engined time. Little did I know that I would ride the right seat for 21 years.

I was notified that I was accepted and told to report to Pan Am's Atlantic Division at La Guardia Field, New York. I reported as directed and was told that I would be operating as a 4th and 3rd officer on B-314's operating out of North Beach as the sea plane operation out of La Guardia was known.

Again the Good Lord was with me and I got to fly with some of the finest people that I shall ever know. These were the "Master Over-Ocean" Captains of Pan Am. There were some who, as a veteran flight engineer told me early on, had a bit of trouble distinguishing between themselves and a god, but on the whole they where

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

A Clipper Story from the “Good Old Boat “Days

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great models for an eager young pilot to imitate. I made several trips to Foynes, Ireland, Lisbon, and various stations in Africa and South America during 1945 which was the last year that the 314's operated from New York.

The trip which is the subject of this epistle started out from New York sometime in September with scheduled stops in Bermuda, Horta (Azores), Lisbon, Bolama (just south of Dakar), and ending in Fish Lake Liberia. As I remember, we were scheduled to be out about two weeks. We wound up being out about 20 days - so long that they just melded into one another.

We made our first section of the trip without incident. Our crew consisted of the Captain who shall be nameless, the F/O Lee Nelson, the Professional Navigator was Ray Eppley (?) first and second engineers, first and second radio officers whose names I cannot remember and I think Greg Shortel was our Purser. Chuck Baerd (?) and I were third and fourth officers. I do not recall any passengers but I suppose we had some and there must have been some reason for Pan Am to be making this flight.

Our crew layover hotel was the Palacio in Estoril. We were issued our daily “expense money “in escudos which we eagerly and joyfully spent at the nearby casino. I think we were scheduled to be there for a couple of days before the next plane came from New York which we were to take on to Africa and back to Lisbon. This is where the shortcomings of seaplane operations took over. Our plane got out of North Beach per schedule and into Bermuda but the winds of a nearby hurricane suddenly became too much for operation, so they were kept in Bermuda for several days. They finally left Bermuda and got into Horta but the “swells” were such that the take off for Lisbon was delayed for a couple of days. They finally got into Lisbon and our crew took over and after transit, departed for Bolama. On the 314, one of the main duties of the 3rd and 4th officers was to snag the buoy after landing and secure the line to the nose post so that the plane could be winched in to the docks. The landing area at Bolama was on a broad and fairly swift river so we used “the big line”. The captain landed into the wind but the current carried us pretty far downstream away from the docking area.

Chuck and I went down into the nose compartment to open the hatches and prepare to snag the buoy. It was Chuck's turn to throw the grapple hook. Well, here things started to happen. Our captain swung us around and started to taxi back. As I said, we were pretty far downstream, so he decided to taxi back expeditiously- on the step. As we neared the buoy, I will until this day swear that all I heard was “THROW IT”. Chuck must have heard the same thing — they were shouted out the captain's window - because he threw a strike with that four pronged grapple, took a couple of half hitches on the bow post and inwardly congratulated himself I am sure. That big line pulled that 314's nose down and around and up popped the buoy from its anchor on the river bottom. It took about 2 or 3 hours of taxing up and down the river with no air conditioning before they could repair the buoy so that we could dock. That was Chuck's starring role on the trip. After several more days of rather uneventful happenings, we arrived back at our own North Beach on a bright Sunday afternoon.

In those days, the arrival of one of the Clippers was an event that was watched by hundreds from the rooftop of the arrival building. Our landing out in Flushing Bay had been observed and we were now taxiing in to the dock just behind the arrival building. It was my turn to “throw the hook”. The captain was bringing the

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Bank balance as of March 31, 2022 is \$6,904.76 With the current balance, we can print a few more months of the Clipper Pioneers. The opportunity to renew your membership with your donation is on a form on page 8 of this newsletter, which will go toward continuing forward. Thank you to the many who have mailed in your donations in 2022 already! Be sure to clip and send in your check if you'd like to continue to receive the newsletter. Thank you!

A Clipper Story from the “Good Old Boat “Days

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Clipper in ever so nicely, no wind, nothing to worry about - but fate does strange things. As neared the buoy, I somehow overshot it and the grapple fell empty of the line and buoy. This necessitated turning that 314 around without reverse pitch, thrust or rudders, but he did it beautifully and approached the buoy again. So help me, I missed that damn buoy again!! We made another 360 and approached the buoy. This time, the captain could no longer contain his feelings, for he stuck the megaphone out his window and in a voice that I am sure was heard by God and the hundreds of people watching, “if you miss it again, follow it in”.

End of story and end of my life on the B-314. She was a great lady and I wish that I could have had more than a passing memory of her, but time and tide wait for no man. I had a wonderful life with Pan Am and 34 years full of wonderful memories. This trip was just one.

Beer Buys Forgiveness

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

We were departing Melbourne for our return flight to Auckland, in 1985, this being a round trip flight from Auckland to Melbourne and return, when we had started all four engines, had been given the all-clear signal from maintenance, and had started our taxi when, within about two feet, it became very obvious that we weren't able to taxi the plane because the nose wheel steering would not work.

I called maintenance back to the plane and told them about our problem; and, it didn't take them any time at all to find it and to admit that they had forgotten to replace the nose gear pin, which is removed whenever the plane is pushed back away from the terminal. When a nose gear pin is removed it disconnects the nose gear steering and allows the nose wheel to swivel and the plane can be easily pushed back with a cart. After replacing the nose gear pin, they apologized profusely.

With a very serious expression on my face, despite the fact that I was talking on the intercom and they hadn't a clue whether I was smiling or frowning, I then told them that it was “an old and established United policy” that, anytime maintenance forgets to re- install the nose gear pin, they have to send the two pilots two beers. I really laid it on.

The next day when the crew arrived from Melbourne, the captain said he had a brown bag for us. When we opened the bag, there were two bottles of Fosters' beer in it. The captain was impressed and asked how we ever got maintenance to send us beer. I told him the story of the forgotten nose gear pin.

To this day, I don't know how I came up with the “old and established United policy” story, but it sure worked and the beers were great. I should have used the story more often, with appropriate variations of course. Beer does, indeed, buy forgiveness.

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

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

Watch Me Take Off - The Life of Ian J. (Jim) Duncan

Book written by Ilona Duncan

For young Ian, flying airplanes seemed like an unreachable dream. His parents, poor Scottish immigrants, had left their homeland in the 1920s with the hope of a better life in America and higher education for their children. They settled in Butler, Pennsylvania, where Ian's father worked as chauffeur to a wealthy landlord. The family lived on the estate, in an apartment above the carriage house. Then, in 1949, fourteen-year-old Ian was hired as a hangar boy at a nearby airfield. Thus began a career in aviation that rose to remarkable heights.

In "Watch me Take Off" Ilona Duncan commemorates her husband's life and achievements during an era of joyous and adventures flying. The book is about life's vicissitudes, about love and heroes, and a man from a generation that believed in humility, integrity, personal responsibility, and hard work. The book is available in bookstore and online.

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/>

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.

Thanks to those of you who have sent us stories! Keep 'em coming!

PAN AM 15 DAY MIAMI TO ROME CRUISE



Dear Pan Amer's:

Come join us on our next transatlantic reunion cruise on Royal Caribbean's Explorer of the Seas. Reserve restful days at sea to splurge in Spain, France and Italy with ports of call to die for. It's going to be fabulous – don't miss out – bring family and friends along ! Your cruise includes gourmet meals, entertainment, accommodations, group activities, cocktail parties and much more.

Itinerary – April 23, 2023 from Miami to May 8, 2023 Rome, Italy

Date	Port	Arrive	Depart	Boarding
Sun 23Apr2023	Miami, Florida	-	4:00 PM	Cruising
Mon 24Apr-01 May	Cruising High Seas	-	-	Docked
Tue 02May2023	Malaga, Spain	8:00 AM	6:00 PM	Docked
Wed 03May2023	Cartagena, Spain	8:00 AM	6:00 PM	Docked
Thu 04May2023	Palma De Mallorca, Spain	7:00 AM	5:00 PM	Docked
Fri 05May2023	Provence (Marseilles), France	9:00 AM	6:00 PM	Tendered
Sat 06May2023	Nice (Villefranche), France	8:00 AM	6:00 PM	Tendered
Sun 07May2023	Ajaccio, Corsica	8:00 AM	6:00 PM	Departure
Mon 08May2023	Rome (Civitavecchia), Italy	5:00 AM	-	

Rates from:

Inside \$859 / *Inside Virtual Bal / Outside \$959 / Balcony \$1399 / Suites \$1999

Prices: Per person, subject to availability at time of booking and do not include port charges and taxes (\$354.pp) or amenity fees (\$150.pp) (cocktail parties, pay restaurant get togethers, etc).

*Interior with Virtual Balcony – High-definition screen that spans floor to ceiling, providing real-time views of the ocean and destinations. Inquire on pricing.

Deposit \$450.pp. ; all major cards accepted. Mail amenity fee check to Stuart Archer upon reserving (7340 SW 132 St., Miami, FL 33156). Insurance, available and advisable on invoice.

More information in future emails. Call 1-844-278-9745 Air & Sea for flights.

To reserve: call Carmen 786-252-7838

Cruise information call former Pan Am Capt. Stu Archer 305-238-0911

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

Do You Know About Events that are Upcoming?

There are many events and get-togethers that may be of interest to our readers. If you know about one, or have a group that gets together on a regular basis - or even once in awhile - please let us know so we can share with our readers! :)

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

There are no reported obituaries for this issue.

David Wilson - April 4, 1937 - June 28, 2021. Born in Lincoln, Nebraska, Dave attended UC Boulder and then in 1961, entered the US Air Force as a fighter pilot. In 1964, he joined Pan Am and began his career as an airline pilot, retiring from United as a 747-400 Captain in 2000. Dave was an avid skier, tennis player and fisherman and enjoyed traveling with his wife.

Dave is survived by his wife of 40 years, Angela, sister Lorna, sons David and Darren, their wives Amy and Kelly and grandchildren Kai, Bodi and Zanna. Known for his humor and intelligence, Dave will be missed by any who knew and loved him. Funeral services were private. In lieu of flowers, please donate online to parkinsonsresource.org or 1-877-775-4111.

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**

THINGS YOUR BURGLAR WON'T TELL YOU...

GREAT INFO FOR THE PEOPLE WHO KEEP THINKING, "THIS WILL NEVER HAPPEN TO ME"!!!

1. Sometimes, I carry a clipboard. Sometimes, I dress like a lawn guy and carry a rake. I do my best to never, ever look like a crook.
2. The two things I hate most: loud dogs and nosy neighbors.
3. I'll break a window to get in, even if it makes a little noise. If your neighbor hears one loud sound, he'll stop what he's doing and wait to hear it again. If he doesn't hear it again, he'll just go back to what he was doing. It's human nature.
4. I'm not complaining, but why would you pay all that money for a fancy alarm system and leave your house without setting it?
5. I love looking in your windows. I'm looking for signs that you're home, and for flat screen TVs or gaming systems I'd like. I'll drive or walk through your neighborhood at night, before you close the blinds, just to pick my targets.
6. Avoid announcing your vacation on your Facebook page. It's easier than you think to look up your address.

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THINGS YOUR BURGLAR WON'T TELL YOU...

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7. To you, leaving that window open just a crack during the day is a way to let in a little fresh air. To me, it's an invitation.

8. If you don't answer when I knock, I try the door. Occasionally, I hit the jackpot and walk right in.

Sources: Convicted burglars in North Carolina , Oregon , California , and Kentucky ; security consultant Chris McGoey, who runs crimedocto.com; and Richard T. Wright, a criminology professor at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, who interviewed 105 burglars for his book Burglars on the Job.

Why Sleep is So Important to your Health

We intuitively know we need sleep. When you don't get a good night's sleep, you'll likely feel drowsy, you won't quite be able to think as clearly as usual, and you might be moody and irritable. That's because one of the key functions of sleep is to restore the brain.

"Sleep is something the brain needs," Pelayo explains. Our brains run on electricity, which means the chemical energy the brain uses to function has waste products (called metabolites) that need to get cleaned out. That's what happens during sleep, Pelayo says. The brain flushes out those waste products and replenishes the energy the brain uses throughout the day (called adenosine triphosphate, or ATP).

You likely won't be measuring your daily ATP levels, but they do affect your ability to function in big ways. If you don't get a good night's sleep and those chemical processes don't happen, the next day you'll likely notice: It's tougher to concentrate. It's harder to remember things. You're moody and irritable. Your judgment might be skewed. You have less patience. You're more likely to make rash decisions or have a tough time making decisions. You're more emotional than usual. Your hand-eye coordination is a little bit off. Be sure to give your body enough sleep!!

(from <https://www.everydayhealth.com>)

RENEW TODAY!

In order to keep the newsletter and website going for the Clipper Pioneers, it's time for renewal donations. If you haven't already, please send your donation to: Clipper Pioneers, P. O. Box 3457, Sequim, WA 98382. Thank you!

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

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Phone #: _____ Email: _____

Amount Donated: \$ _____

(Make check payable to: Clipper Pioneers and mail to: P. O. Box 3457, Sequim WA 98382)

Thank you for your continuing support of the Clipper Pioneers!