

**PRESIDENT**

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

**VICE PRESIDENT**

CG "DINO" VLAHAKIS  
54 WESTVIEW LN  
LEBANON NH 03766-2016  
(603) 448-3729

**TREASURER / EDITOR**

GENE PATTERSON  
1202 EAST RIDGE VILLAGE DRIVE,  
CUTLER BAY, FL 33157  
(305) 235-7613

## Reserve on the B747-400

*by Gene Woerner*

I checked out as Captain on the B747-400 with United Airlines in March 1994, and being junior, ended up on Reserve for the first 4 months.

On my second day on Reserve, I got a phone call from the crew desk assigning me to a flight the next morning with a 0900 report.

The Flight was to ferry a B747-400 from San Francisco to the United Maintenance base at Oakland. OAK is roughly 9 miles from SFO directly across the San Francisco Bay with parallel east west runways. While I was trying to figure out how this was going to work, with no help from the crew desk, I got out of bed at 5 am that morning without having had any meaningful sleep.

Arriving at dispatch, I met the First Officer, hoping that he had done this flight before, only to be disappointed to find out that neither one of us had ever done this flight before. It was going to be the blind leading the blind!

I then made the decision to treat this as just another routine flight, and with the help of the dispatcher, we filed a flight plan that took us through the gap to the west of San Francisco, a right turn back to the northeast of the Oakland hills, with a right base to a relatively long final for landing on RWY 27 at OAK.

We completed our paperwork and boarded the aircraft at an international gate. When the left most forward door, L1, was closed and armed, we both realized that we were now the only two people on board and all alone. It was eerie!

*~ 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). 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.

## Reserve on the B747-400

*~ continued from previous page*

In the cockpit, we had to make sure that all the doors lights were out, as maintenance had told us to only arm door L1.

Start up and taxi out was routine. Once we had gotten our clearance and departure control frequency, everything seemed routine. Since neither one of us had done this before, I opted to make the Take Off.

Expecting RWY 28 for Take Off, we were unprepared when we were told to taxi to Runway 01Left! We asked the Tower Controller for a short delay as we approached the Runway, as this change threw both of us off guard. After a short briefing, we felt ready and notified the Tower that we were ready.

It was a beautiful day and we would get Radar vectors, so I treated it just like a Simulator check ride, having been thrown a curve, when everything was going great until there is an unexpected change in plans.

When we were safely airborne, the First Officer switched to departure control, and once we made contact he asked us what we intended to do.

Since I had flown around the Bay Area frequently as a Private Pilot, we asked for a Bay Tour with radar vectors to a landing on Rwy 27 in Oakland. It was a gorgeous day and the whole Bay Area, including downtown San Francisco was visible, the Golden Gate Bridge, Alcatraz, the Bay Bridge and more. I briefly marveled at doing this and getting paid to do this.

The whole flight including the Bay tour had lasted about 20 minutes when we landed in Oakland.

All in all a memorable flight. Unfortunately, we had no cameras, so no photos to bring back to memorialize our flight. As it turned out, after arriving at the United Airlines Maintenance Base, we were informed that we were going to ferry another -400 back to SFO. That, however, is going to be a story for another day.

---

## 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](http://www.clipperpioneers.com))

**Bank balance as of March 30, 2023 was \$16,191.58.** The opportunity to renew your membership with your donation is on a form on page 7 of this newsletter, which will go toward continuing forward. Thank you to the those who have mailed in your donations in 2023 already! Be sure to clip and send in your check if you'd like to continue to receive the newsletter. Thank you!

## “Navigators of the First Global Air Force”

From *On Celestial Wings* by Col Ed Whitcomb

November 1995

The University of Miami band blared its music through the majestic Biltmore Hotel as 44 khaki-clad cadets marched onto the stage of the big ballroom. It was a historic occasion because we were first graduating class of professional aerial navigators for the United States' military services. We were to become known as the Class of 40-A. On stage with the 44 of us were representatives of the University of Miami at Coral Gables, Florida, the United States Army Air Corps, and Pan American Airways – the organizations that had put together America's first navigation training program. It was among the first programs of World War II in which business, military, and university personnel combined efforts in the interest of national defense.

The date was 12 November 1940. World War II had been raging in Europe for more than a year, and Adolph Hitler had sent his troops into Poland, Norway, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands. Fighting, death, and destruction were far away from US shores. America was enjoying peace with a president named Franklin Delano Roosevelt who had vowed that he would never send an American boy to die on foreign soil. Congress had passed laws enacting the draft, but the men on the platform in Coral Gables were not concerned about that. There were all volunteers who anticipated one thing: to fly!

We came in early August 1940 to what became the fountainhead of navigational knowledge.<sup>1</sup> Few people traveled by commercial airlines in those days. We came by bus, boat, train, and automobile from the crowded streets of New York City, the lonely rangelands of Montana, and the peaceful small towns of the Midwest. Many of my classmates were first and second generation Americans of Serbian, Jewish, Italian, Polish, and English extraction. It was an all-American group including, among others, the family names of Markovich, Berkowitz, Boselli, Vifquain, and Meenagh.

The class members were young men in their early twenties, bright-eyed and eager to succeed in navigation school so they could fly. We had only a vague idea of the complexities of celestial navigation. None of us had ever known an aerial navigator nor could have had any idea of the perils the future held for us. We could not have envisioned that we would be flying courses where no man had ever flown, dropping bombs on civilian cities around the world and seeing our classmates shot out of the sky.

My roommate, Theodore J. Boselli, a former champion bantamweight boxer from Clemson University, would later navigate the first presidential plane. Walter E. Seamon, son of the mayor of West Jefferson, Ohio, would also be assigned to the president's plane. George Markovich, a brilliant graduate of the University of California at Berkeley, would guide a plane called the *Bataan* for the great Gen Douglas MacArthur in his flights around the Southwest Pacific. Russell M. Vifquain, the blonde-headed son of an Iowa college professor, had led Iowa State University to be runner-up in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) gold competition. In the years ahead he would be with Gen Curtis LeMay dropping tons of incendiary bombs into the crowded heart of Tokyo, Japan. Jay Horowitz, a happy Jewish boy from Sweetwater, Tennessee, would suffer more agony as a prisoner at the hands of the Japanese than anyone could have imagined. These and many others were my classmates as we entered into the academic phase of celestial navigation.

~ continued on next page

---

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

---

## “Navigators of the First Global Air Force”

*~ continued from previous page*

But it was 1940, and we were in the city of Coral Gables. The US was at peace and our thoughts were not of war. Our home during the 12-week course of training was the stately San Sebastian Hotel at the corner of Le Jeune and University streets. In our first military formations we wore T-shirts, civilian clothes, and a variety of uniforms from previous military organizations. We were a second “Coxey’s Army” ready to be molded into military men and more importantly, celestial navigators. •

Capt Norris B. Harbold, a 1928 product of the United States Military Academy at West Point, was in charge of the detachment. He had a history of efforts to promote celestial navigation training in the Air Corps. We conducted close-order drill formations on the streets near the hotel where there was scant vehicular traffic. Coral Gables on the outskirts of Miami was a sleepy and almost desolate city after the big land development boom and later depression of the 1930s. There were dozens of city blocks where streets, sidewalks, curbs, and fire hydrants supported vacant lots overgrown with weeds.

The cadets marched in ragged military formations across the street to the “Cardboard College” – a group of buildings intended to serve the University of Miami until a new campus was established. The university’s grandiose plans for new buildings had stopped dead with the advent of the big depression. But the temporary facilities were adequate for our 240 hours of ground training in navigation and meteorology.

The development of the navigation training program had come about in a very unusual way. Gen Delos Emmons, chief of General Headquarters of the US Army Air Corps, had been aboard a giant Pan American clipper on a fact-finding mission to Europe in 1939. All night the big silver clipper lumbered along on its flight from New York to the island of Horta in the Azores. While other passengers dozed, General Emmons observed the plane’s navigator industriously plotting his course by celestial navigation. The general stood on the flight deck in awe of the proficiency of the work. Then as the stars faded away in the light of a new day, the navigator pointed to a dark mound on the distant horizon dead ahead of the aircraft.

That is the island of Horta,” announced Charles J. Lunn, the navigator.

“Amazing!” exclaimed the general.

“It would be more amazing if it were not there,” replied Lunn matter of factly.<sup>2</sup>

General Emmons had more than a passing interest in this feat of expertise in celestial navigational. Axis victories in Europe suggested alarming possibilities for US involvement in the European war. The Air Corps urgently needed a lot of well-trained and highly skilled navigators. General Emmons knew that there was no program in the Air Corps to do the job although the Air Corps had tried on several occasions to establish celestial navigation schools. At that time, most military flights were conducted within the continental limits of the United States. Therefore, there was little stimulus for flying officers to do more than make a hobby of celestial navigation. A few officers including Norris B. Harbold, Eugene L. Eubank, Albert F. Hegenberger, Glenn C. Jamison, Lawrence J. Carr and Curtis Le May had taken particular interest in

*~ continued on next page*

## **“Navigators of the First Global Air Force”**

*~ continued from previous page*

celestial navigation; but by the spring of 1940, the Army Air Corps had only 80 experienced celestial navigators. It would need thousands to man the new bombers on order for the Air Corps.<sup>3</sup>

“How many men could you teach to do this?” Emmons asked Lunn.

“Just as many as could hear my voice,” was Lunn’s succinct reply.

The conversation planted an idea in the general’s mind. With whatever else he may have learned on his fact-finding mission to Europe, he came back to Washington, D.C., with an idea for training navigators.

Upon his return, he contacted Juan Tripp, president of Pan American Airways and Dr. B.F. Ashe, president of the University of the Miami. Their meetings culminated in an agreement whereby Pan American would provide navigational training with Charles J. Lunn as the chief navigation instructor. The University of Miami would provide food, housing, and classrooms for instruction at the rate of \$12.50 per cadet per week. The cadets were in place, and the program was under way even before the agreement was signed.<sup>4</sup>

Charlie Lunn seemed the most unlikely person to be teaching a university class. His academic credentials were woefully deficient. He had no college degrees whatsoever. He had never attended a college or university. The fact was Charles J. Lunn, chief navigator instructor at the University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida, in 1940, had failed his sophomore year at Key West High School. He was a high school dropout.

Charlie and his sister had stood at the head of their classes in grammar school and in high school until Charlie’s interests turned to girls and basketball. At 16 years of age, he was a good enough athlete to draw \$10 a game playing for the Key West Athletic Club team. However, as a result of his extracurricular activities, his academic standing declined to the point that he decided to leave school.

Nineteen years later, he found himself standing before a class of college-trained and educated students from all parts of the United States. Many of them had college degrees in engineering, education, and a variety of other fields. It was Charlie’s job to train them in the complicated art of celestial navigation.

When Charlie left high school, his father made it clear to him that he was to get himself reinstated in high school or get a job to support himself. Since he had grown weary of dull classroom life, Charlie set out to find a job.

In 1921 there were few employment opportunities in Key West, Florida for a 16 year old school drop out. Sponging (gathering sponges from the sea) and fishing were about the only jobs available on the island and such jobs were not attractive to young Lunn. The 7<sup>th</sup> US Navy Base, where many naval vessels stopped for fuel and water, was one of the chief employers in Key West. Charlie was unable to find a job there because 18 was the minimum age for employment with the government.

Like other boys his age, he was fascinated by the ships which came into the Key West Harbor. He had talked to sailors about their voyages to far away ports and learned that it would be possible to get a job as an oiler on an oceangoing ship.

*~ to be continued in next issue*



---

## 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)

---

## 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/>

---

## 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.

---

## Flying Somewhere? Useful Tip for Air Traffic

FlightAware is a free flight tracker that will change what you think about live flight tracking and aviation data. It can be seen at: [www.flightaware.com/](http://www.flightaware.com/)

---

## 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

---

## 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).

*...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 none to report in this issue.

**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 Sue Forde at [sue@clipperpioneers.com](mailto:sue@clipperpioneers.com), or mail to: Sue Forde, P. O. Box 3457, Sequim, WA 98382**

## 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! :)

***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](mailto:sue@clipperpioneers.com)***

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

## 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: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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!***

**PAN AM MUSEUM FOUNDATION  
COME CRUISE WITH US!  
Join us on a fabulous luxury Silversea Cruise!  
Mark Your Calendars: August 2 - 9, 2023  
CRUISE ITALY & CROATIA IN STYLE**

Come sail with us in Pan Am style and support the Pan Am Museum! Enjoy exclusive amenities and guest benefits by booking your suite through this fundraiser.

We've secured the very best pricing and a liberal cancellation policy for our exclusive PAMF group (all pricing excludes airfare and transfers). In addition, our special pricing will be guaranteed until Dec. 31, 2022.

Open to friends and family! Space is limited! Many suites offer a 3rd guest with a pullout couch.

**Venice to Venice: August 2 - 9, 2023**

**VOYAGE ITINERARY**

Silver Spirit – 7 Days

Leaves Port: August 2, 2023

Voyage SL 230802007

Day 1: Venice (Departs at 7pm)

Day 2: Trieste, Italy

Day 3: Zadar, Croatia

Day 4: Hvar, Croatia

Day 5: Dubrovnik, Croatia

Day 6: Split, Croatia

Day 7: Kvarner Bay, Croatia

Day 8: Venice (Arrive at 8am)

**For More Information**

**The Pan Am Museum Foundation  
[board@thepanammuseum.org](mailto:board@thepanammuseum.org)  
[www.thePanAmMuseum.org](http://www.thePanAmMuseum.org)**

**What's Included prices starting at \$4,400 per person**

Shore Excursions (1 per port/per day)

All beverages included at all times including premium liquor and wine selection of 150+ bottles

Personal butler service in every suite category

24-hour room service

1:1 Crew to guest ratio

Fully customized mini bar

\$350 Ship Board Credit per suite

All crew gratuities

Exclusive PAMF Welcome Cocktail Reception and other exclusive onboard events

8 Fine dining options offering culinary excellence

Onboard activities and live entertainment

High speed WiFi

Pillow menu

**Visit their website for more information: <https://www.thepanammuseum.org/cruise-benefit/>**