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Pacific Yellowfin

by Ash Cutchin

During the late nineteen sixties and up until I was transferred to New York in 1971, I spent many layovers in Agana, Guam because so many of our flights transited there. Sometimes we had as many as eight or ten San Francisco or Los Angeles flight crews spending twenty-four or more hours in Guam between flights. Because airline crews seem to have a knack for ferreting out the best places to eat and the best beaches for sunbathing, we got to know the place fairly well. A naval officer's club was a favorite. Taxis were rare and expensive, so fortunately Pan Am provided each layover crew with a car, and because Guam is a U. S. territory, our driver's licenses were valid. The cars were cheap, low-end, four-door sedans perhaps five years old, but they ran. I remember one day my friend Jerry tried to teach me how to snorkel, but I was not very good at it. I mainly remember stepping on some kind of thorny little sea critter. Jerry was experienced enough to wear sneakers. I was not.

My most memorable layover in Agana was one day when I joined three other crewmembers and the boat owner on an offshore fishing trip. We were on a cargo flight which arrived from Honolulu and we had a crew change with a twenty-four hour layover before proceeding to Cam Rahn Bay the next day on a similar flight. Many times we carried thirteen cargo pallets (a full load) which contained one hundred percent ammunition, usually hand grenades or other explosives. We did not receive hazardous duty pay.

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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.

Pacific Yellowfin

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On a previous layover this particular captain had met at a local hangout an American civilian named Dave who worked for the U.S. Navy, and who owned a small cabin cruiser. While sharing a couple of beers, they discovered that both had a passion for deep sea fishing and they arranged to go fishing the next time that Captain was in Guam. I was fortunate enough to be with that same Captain when we arrived in Guam from Hawaii in the middle of the night. When asked if any of us would like to go fishing the next day all three of us replied, "Sure, how much does it cost?"

"All we have to do is pay for the fuel, which will probably be less than \$100, so if we split the cost it's about \$25 each plus or minus. The hotel will provide us with box lunches for five bucks each. We can go tomorrow morning after we get some sleep. Meet me in the crew lounge at ten o'clock; I'll call my friend and tell him it's a go."

After about six or seven hours' sleep I arose, grabbed a quick breakfast, picked up my box lunch, got two Pepsis from the vending machine, and met the other guys in the crew lounge. We drove to the marina, met the boat owner, made some small talk as we loaded our meager meals aboard, and were underway by about eleven a. m. or shortly thereafter. Except for my twenty-nine-day voyage to Vietnam aboard a troop ship, I had only been offshore a couple of times, salmon fishing out of Fisherman's wharf in San Francisco, so I was a greenhorn on this trip. My father had gone fishing a few times out of Hatteras when I was a youngster, but always with some of his co-workers. He usually returned home with a wash tub half full of dolphin (mahi-mahi) which I had to help him clean. He also had a dark pink, sunburned face and arms and he smelled of beer. I knew they had a good time. In those days the road to Hatteras from Oregon Inlet was made of perforated steel planks.

Because Guam is a volcanic island with a steep drop off, we reached the fishing grounds within ten minutes of departing the marina. My flight captain, who was obviously an experienced boatman took the helm while Dave, the boat captain, lowered the outriggers, attached the lures to the lines and set the rods in place. "You just head for that point straight ahead," he told the helmsman, "And don't worry about running aground, the bottom is a thousand feet below us." I watched him carefully because I wanted to learn how to do this, never before having fished this way. He let two lines run straight behind the stern, and he attached the outboard fishing lines to the outrigger lines with a hefty toothpick and a rubber band. "Watch those rigger lines," he instructed us, "That's where we're most likely to get a strike. He took over at the helm while his four clients (or guests) sat and watched and anxiously waited.

We trolled back and forth and back and forth in a large race track pattern, always staying within about a mile of shore, and always near the base of that mountain peak he called 'the point.' I dozed awhile on a bunk inside the cabin, and then ate my ham and cheese sandwich at about three o'clock. The other

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Bank balance as of April 30, 2024 was \$19,381.27. The opportunity to renew your membership with your donation is on a form on page 4 of this newsletter, which will go toward continuing forward. Thank you to the those who have mailed in your donations in 2023-24 already! Be sure to clip and send in your check if you'd like to continue to receive the newsletter. Thank you!

Pacific Yellowfin

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three pilots seemed to be enjoying the boat ride as they swapped turns sitting in the small fighting chair, but I was getting bored as the sun began to drop toward that mountain cliff. All at once the starboard outrigger toothpick snapped, released the trolling line, and the reel started to screech. "Fish on," shouted the boat captain (who was also the mate). "Grab that line." One of the other pilots—perhaps the captain, I don't remember—grabbed the rod and sat down in the chair. "You guys reel in those other lines," he commanded. We each took a rod and began to crank in the remaining three lines, when he said, "Never mind, fish off." I looked astern and sure enough I could see that the captain's line was slack and his rod no longer bent. Fish off, indeed.

Once again I watched carefully as Dave cranked in the line which had contained the fish, inspected the shiny artificial lure, re-attached the line to the outrigger, and then turned the boat around to head back toward the spot where the fish had attacked the lure. My captain said to me, "Why don't you sit in the fighting chair, Ash, since you've never caught a big fish." I complied, hoping that we'd soon have another strike. The sun was setting and I barely could see a small flock of seagulls off that point of land which seemed to be our reference point. The flock of birds was circling ahead and off to the port side as the boat continued toward the point.

Suddenly I heard 'Bzzzzzzzzzzzz,' as the port outrigger fishing line began to stream off the reel. Someone grabbed the rod and placed it in my hands. "Here you go, Ash, he's all yours." I began to crank. I made no progress because line was streaming off faster than I was able to reel it in. "Don't touch that drag!" someone cautioned, so I continued to crank. "Pump the rod up and down. Lift the rod and crank as you lower it." My arms were already getting tired but I continued to follow the instructions of the other guys, all of whom seemed to know more about this chore than I did. But they all hollered at me at the same time. Soon it was almost too dark to see anything but that mountain silhouetted against the orange sunset.

I continued to crank and reel, crank and reel for what seemed like an hour but was probably less than half that. I was slowly gaining line. Dave showed me how to guide the line evenly across the reel spool so that it did not pile up in one narrow space. I don't know how much line was still between me and the fish, but the reel was barely half full. I was making slow progress. Finally Dave reached over and tightened the drag ever so slightly, something he had told me not to do. "That should help. Probably a shark. If we don't get him soon, we'll have to quit, it's getting late." Even though we had not seen the fish, it must have acted like a shark. I couldn't tell because I was new at this; I just continued to pump and reel.

"Yeah," said my flight crew captain, "We have pickup at midnight, and it's a long way to Vietnam and then on to Tokyo. We need to get a short nap at the hotel." Soon it was decided by the majority that I had fifteen minutes to catch this fish or we were going to cut the line. Hoping that no one noticed, I tightened the drag just a little bit more. Then some more. As if by magic I began to fill the spool with

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Pacific Yellowfin

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line. Within five or ten minutes the reel spool was nearly full and the boat captain grabbed his gaff and peered over the stern of the boat.

“I see him,” he shouted. Looks like a tuna. Here comes the leader. Keep cranking, Ash and hold the rod up straight.” With his left hand he grabbed the leader, and simultaneously plunged his gaff over the stern. “Got him!” he said. “Got him! But I need some help.” I could not see what was going on down at the water level, but I was excited. The flight captain and the first officer leaned over the stern, one grabbed the leader and the other helped with the gaff and together they hauled the fish aboard. Yellowfin. Nice one. Good job, Ash.” I don’t remember who said that, but I was relieved that the fish was aboard and I no longer had to crank and pump. I ached all over. The three other fishing lines were already aboard and stowed. While some one or two of us put the fish in the fish box, the boat captain headed for the marina. He seemed to know his way around in the dark, and within about fifteen minutes we were once again in the marina.

A small crowd was gathered on the dock, which must have been a routine event, and someone attached a rope to fish’s tail and hauled it up to the weighing scale. “Eighty-three pounds,” I heard someone say. “Eighty-three pounds. Nice fish.” Because we had no way of keeping it or anywhere to put it, Dave suggested that we give it to the small crowd of onlookers, maybe a dozen local Guamanians. And that is what we did. They exclaimed their thanks over and over again. We paid the boat owner for the gas, thanked him for a super trip, and vowed to try it again soon. That day remains one of the highlights of my time spent on the west coast.

And to this very day that tuna remains the largest fish I ever caught—except maybe that Mako shark I caught out near Diamond Shoals tower which I did not weigh.

Pan Am Historical Society has a Facebook page. You can view it here:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Pan-Am-Historical-Foundation/226994925218>

RENEW TODAY!

In order to keep the newsletter and website going for the Clipper Pioneers, it’s time for renewal dues of \$50 00 (or more if you wish to donate extra to help keep us going!). If you haven’t already, please send it to: Clipper Pioneers, P. O. Box 3457, Sequim, WA 98382. Thank you!

Your Name: _____ 0 _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone #: _____ Email: _____

Amount: \$ _____

(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 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 or 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

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.

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

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*

Enjoy Listening to the Pan Am Podcasts

Now in the third season, The Pan Am Podcast brings the history of Pan American World Airways to life through engaging storytelling and insightful interviews with Pan Am employees, passengers, authors, and aviation enthusiasts. <https://podcast.thepanammuseum.org/>

The PanAm World Fellowship Golf Classic is run by new people, still called Pan Am Golf. The new website is www.panamgolf.com. This year October 2024 will be in Las Vegas, Nevada.

*...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

Robert James Nichols (Bob), age 91, formerly of Greenfield, passed away on February 29, 2024. Bob was born on Decem ls. He grew up in the Kansas City area and graduated from North Kansas City High School in 1950. After high school, he attended both Central Missouri State College and Colorado Agricultural and Mechanical College. In 1955, Bob began a decades-long career as a pilot for Pan American World Airways, followed by several years as a pilot for United Airlines until his retirement in 1992. In 1952, Bob married Carole Elaine Shutts, with whom he spent 56 years before her passing in 2009. Throughout their many years together, Bob and Carole were blessed to be parents to eight children—four sons and four daughters.

Robert Staples Steiner was born in Red Wing, Minnesota. Graduated from Austin High School in 1948, studied at University of Minnesota, then enlisted in the Air Force during the Korean War. Bob completed basic training in Waco, Texas Class 52G. He served as a combat pilot in the 58th Fighter Bomber Wing APO 970. Living in NYC in 1956, he was hired on at Pan American Airlines as a navigator. Bob flew for 32 years with Pan Am, retiring as Captain in 1990, flying 747s exclusively. He excelled at golf; scoring six holes-in-one. He was a SIRS member for years. He loved going to Graeagle, CA, where some of his ashes will be scattered, the rest being released outside the Golden Gate Bridge. He will be missed by his family; adopted daughter Karen, son-in-law Chris as well as friends and neighbors. He is reunited with his parents, Wesley and Nancy Steiner; his wife of 64 years Barbara; and faithful dog, Patches. Memorial at Sleepy Hollow Church May 18, 11am. 100 Tarry Rd. San Anselmo.

Ernest A Schwab, 90, of Wilmington passed away on July 11, 2023. He was born in New York City on July 24, 1932 to German immigrant parents, Ernst Eugene and Louise Marazzi Schwab. Ernie earned Bachelor and Master of Science degrees from Syracuse University, where he was a member of the Sigma Chi fraternity. He also held an MBA from the University of Delaware. He started his professional life as a Marine fighter pilot from 1954-58, achieving the rank of Captain. Out of graduate school, Ernie accepted a job with DuPont in Wilmington where he worked in marketing for seven years. In 1966 he returned to his love of flying, joining Pan American Airways until his retirement as Captain in 1989. Concurrently he served part-time as a commanding pilot for the Delaware Air National Guard, retiring in 1986 with the rank of Colonel. After Pan Am, he went to work as a flight instructor for Flight Safety International in Wilmington until his final retirement at the age of 75. Ernie was honored with induction into the Delaware Aviation Hall of Fame in 2015.

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

Ralph William Luther went to be with his Lord, dying peacefully at home on the ranch he shared with his wife, Penny, near Hamilton Montana on April 8, 2024, at the age of 97. He is survived by his wife, their children, Steve and wife Sara, Karen and husband Steve, and Linda and husband Don, six grandchildren and spouses, and eight great grandchildren, all of whom were surrounded by his love and warmth. Ralph grew up in West Michigan where he flew private planes, raced stock cars at a local track and worked various jobs as a young man. He fought in World War II as a paratrooper in the Pacific Theater with the 511th Parachute Infantry and served in the occupation army in post-war Japan. Ralph and Penny were married in Los Angeles, California on Valentine's Day in 1953. They moved to New York in 1955 where he began a lifelong career as a commercial pilot for Pan American Airlines, and later for United Airlines, moving their family from one coast to the other as part of the job. In 1968, he moved his family to a ranch in the Bitterroot valley, Montana, where he lived for the remainder of his life. Ralph retired from flying in 1986 at the age of 60.

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: Clipper Pioneers, attn: Sue Forde, c/o P. O. Box 3457, Sequim, WA 98382.

Pan Am Museum Foundation Annual Fundraising Gala

PAN AM MANIA! October 5, 2024 ~ 6:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m.~ Garden City, New York

Join us to celebrate the annual gala of the Pan Am Museum Foundation. This fundraiser helps our non-profit preserve the legacy and history of Pan Am! This year's theme, Pan Am Mania!, celebrates Pan Am's role in bringing the Beatles to the United States in 1964. Don't miss the opportunity to celebrate with our Pan Am family, friends, and airline enthusiasts and help keep the great spirit of Pan Am alive! So, come for a night of Pan Am nostalgia, dancing, socializing, and fun!

With our special Keynote speaker Sam Donaldson. We are delighted to announce legendary newsman and frequent Pan Am passenger, Sam Donaldson, will be our Keynote speaker this year at Pan Am Mania! Mr. Donaldson flew Pan Am frequently during his long tenure as the Chief Whitehouse Correspondent for ABC News. Most often he was a passenger on the Presidential Press Charter flights Pan Am operated that accompanied Air Force One around the world.

Don't miss the special performance by Strawberry Fields, THE ULTIMATE BEATLES TRIBUTE BAND IN FULL COSTUME Featuring former members of the hit Broadway musical "Beatlemania"

The Long Island Marriott has offered a special rate to the Pan Am Museum Foundation for the Gala Weekend. The rate is \$259/night. Please book by September 13th, 2023. For more information, contact Pan Am Museum Foundation, linda@thepanamuseum.org.

PAN AM REUNION CRUISE - APRIL 28 - MAY 12, 2025

MIAMI TO SOUTHAMPTON ROYAL CARIBBEAN'S INDEPENDENCE OF THE SEAS

Dear Pan Amers:

Once again we prepare for our next much welcomed Pan Am reunion cruise. We honor the many requests for a Transatlantic cruise with lots of wonderful and interesting ports of call. Our 14 day cruise departs Miami visiting Kings Wharf (Bermuda), Ponta Delgada (Azores), 2 fabulous days Lisbon (Portugal), Vigo (Spain) then ending in Southampton (England). Take time to melt away land-based stress with a spa massage, build a scrapbook of memories or simply relax poolside. Four days for the crossing is a blessing considering the usual 6 - 8 days. Plenty of time to reach out to old friends, enjoy movies and much, much more. Expect a great time.

Embarking on an oceangoing adventure like this will be no doubt one of the most exciting moments of any traveler's life. The old saying that it's as much about the journey as the destination has never been truer. Adventures await you at each port, shopping, sightseeing famous attractions or sipping a cool drink in a romantic café. So, welcome aboard, I know this cruise will provide you with a lifetime of memories to cherish. Family and friends are most welcomed.

Call in your reservation now; As usual, all major credit cards are accepted but checks are preferred in an attempt to keep down credit card fees and pass the savings toward our onboard amenities, parties and the like. DON'T DELAY ! Call Carmen at 786-252-7838 for prices

Insurance is available and highly suggested and is priced by your category chosen. Inquire on your price. More information will come with your invoice. Flights available through Air / Sea 844-278-9745

Call Interline Travels at Carmen's cell 786-252-7838. If line is busy please be patient and leave your message, I will get to you ASAP Email address interlinetravels@yahoo.com. Address - 456 MERLIN CT. , TALLAHASSEE, FL 32301 Feel free to contact Stu Archer former Pan Am pilot and cruise consultant at 305-238-0911. Email stunjune@aol.com. Carmen Jaquet - cell 786-252-7838 or 305-598-0363 Pan Am Cruise Coordinator

Date	Ports	Arrive	Depart	
Mon 28 Apr	Miami, Florida	-		Boarding
Tue 29 Apr	Cruising			
Wed 30 Apr	Cruising	-		
Thu 01 May	King's Wharf, Bermuda	8:00 AM	5:00 PM	
Fri 02 May	Cruising	-	-	Cruising
Sat 03 May	Cruising	-	-	Cruising
Sun 04 May	Cruising	-	-	Cruising
Mon 05 May	Cruising	-	-	Cruising
Tue 06 May	Ponta Delgada, Azores	9:00 AM	6:00 PM	
Wed 07 May	Cruising	-	-	Cruising
Thu 08 May	Lisbon, Portugal	11:59 AM	-	Docked
Fri 09 May	Lisbon, Portugal	-	5:00 PM	Docked
Sat 10 May	Vigo, Spain	9:00 AM	5:00 PM	Docked
Sun 11 May	Cruising		-	Cruising
Mon 12 May	Southampton, England	5:30 AM	-	Departure