



PRESIDENT
STU ARCHER
7340 SW 132 ST
MIAMI, FL 33156-6804

VICE PRESIDENT
CG "DINO" VLAHAKIS
54 WESTVIEW LN
LEBANON NH 03766-2016

TREASURER / EDITOR
SUE FORDE
P. O. BOX 3457
SEQUIM WA 98382

Christmas in New Delhi

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During my 25 years with Pan Am I spent most Thanksgiving holidays somewhere other than at home. I was very fortunate, however, to spend most Christmases at home with my family. I was usually very successful when bidding October and November lines so that I had a large carryover into December, often 30 or more hours. (That is why I was down line for most Thanksgivings). For December I usually bid a line which had a long trip over Christmas and a couple of shorter patterns. That way the Christmas trip was the only pattern I could drop and still stay under maximum monthly flight time. I often regretted doing that and I was sure it would come to bite me sometime in the future. It did.

Shortly after becoming a 747 flight engineer, I was on standby for the month of December, spending the week immediately before Christmas in my commuter apartment in Queens, NY. Sure enough, the phone rang about Dec. 22, and I was assigned a long trip out to Delhi on freighters. Both pilots were also on standby, a check Captain being the First Officer. I forget their names. We spent one layover in Frankfurt and then arrived in New Delhi on the afternoon of Dec. 24. Shortly after I arrived in my room, the phone rang. It was a flight attendant with whom I had flown on another recent trip. She was from Germany, and I think her name was either Heidi or Helga, I forget. She said, "Hi Ash. Our crew is having a little party in my room and then we're going to dinner in the hotel restaurant. Would you like to come with us?" They were operating the passenger flight. I replied that I'd love to join them; I have

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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.

Christmas in New Delhi

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no other plans, but what about my two pilots? Her response was, "We don't particularly like them." I agreed to meet them in the restaurant.

After a few minutes of preparation, I proceeded to the restaurant atop the hotel... a Sheraton I believe. There I joined her, two other lovely ladies, and a couple other tables of her crew and we prepared to enjoy Christmas dinner, courtesy of the hotel. I'm terrible with names, but I definitely remember that she was German, and the other two ladies at my table were from France and Switzerland. The German lady said, "It is a custom in my family to enjoy a bottle of wine with our Christmas meal." She immediately signaled a waiter to come to our table and she asked for the wine list, which he promptly brought to her. She perused the list and ordered some French red wine, sorta like she knew what she was doing. Within one or two minutes he was back, showed her the label; she nodded her approval, and he removed the cork and poured a sip into her glass. She tasted it, again indicating that it was acceptable, and he poured some into each of our glasses. She said a toast, something like "Merry Christmas to all of us and to our families back at home." At about this time my two pilots arrived and took a table immediately behind me, and commented about how lucky I was to have such lovely table mates. The next thing I remember is that the waiter then brought me the check, the amount being in rupees. I was new to India and asked him how much in dollars.

His reply, in his Hindu-accented English, was "Eighty-five dollars, sir." I had sipped only a small taste (I actually prefer beer) and I remember saying, loud enough for every other crewmember to hear me.

"EIGHTY-FIVE DOLLARS! YOU'VE GOTTA BE KIDDING ME!"

"Sorry Sir, that is the price." In the meantime, the German girl poured herself another glass, and then the French girl picked up the bottle and studied the label.

"My God," she exclaimed. "They don't even serve this in French restaurants and if you can find it in a shop it sells for TWO dollars!"

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Keep the good stories comin'!

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.

Bank balance as of October 31, 2024 was \$15,299.92. 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 2024 already! Be sure to clip and send in your check if you'd like to continue to receive the newsletter. Thank you!

Christmas in New Delhi

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"Sorry sir, that is the price." I then told him to let me speak with his boss. The head waiter arrived and said the same thing, "Eighty-five dollars, sir."

Standing my ground, I then said, "Let me speak with your boss. We are not some dumb tourists. We are Pan Am crewmembers. We travel all over the world. We know good wine, and this is not eighty-five dollar wine," echoing the French girl's knowledge of the label.

Meanwhile, my two pilots, sitting behind me, said, "Come on Ash. Don't be such a cheapskate. Buy the wine for the ladies." I think they were simply jealous that they had not been invited to this party. In a minute or two, the Food and Beverage Director arrived and said we would have to pay for the wine. I insisted that we would not, and finally he gave up and agreed that we would not have to pay. About half the bottle had been consumed, and the waiter grasped the bottle and our glasses, quickly removing them from our table, while the Food & Bev man disappeared.

One of the girls then exclaimed, "Look!" She pointed to our waiter, who stood in a nearby little nook, and was carefully pouring the wine from our glasses back into the bottle. We will never know for sure, but we suspect they added water, re-corked it, and sold it again later. We finished our meal in peace. The next day, Dec. 25, several of us walked to the U.S. Embassy, where we had dining privileges in the employee cafeteria, and had lunch. The French girl looked at the wine list, and sure enough, that same wine was on the list. The price... Seven dollars.

First encounter with Pan Am was quite an experience

by Captain Lew Gage

On September 28th, 1963, when I was a student pilot with about 150 flight hours under my belt, I heard that President John Kennedy was going to be in Redding, California to dedicate the Whisky Town Dam and Reservoir, about 15+ miles north west of Redding, California.

At the time I owned a 1941 Taylorcraft airplane and flew it whenever I had the slightest excuse to do so. That T Craft had no radio or other means of communication or navigation. You looked out the windows for other aircraft as traffic and the same to spot landmarks to navigate by.

I also was not very savvy on anything the FAA might provide as useful information such as TFR (temporary flight restrictions) areas or whatever they were called in those days. I did have a hunch that probably there were restrictions about using the Redding, California airport that day but why would I let

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a little thing like that deter landing my simple little tube and fabric T Craft there??

So, I proceeded to fly up to Redding and 1000 feet overhead the airport I could see there were two really big four engine, swept wing airplanes parked at the north end of the runway. The windsock looked like the 5 knot wind was out of the north so I made a downwind, base leg and final to land to the north. Well, of course the T Craft used about 200 feet of the runway to get down to taxi speed and so I just turned to the right and saw a B17 (four engine WWII bomber) parked there at the very south end of the parallel taxiway. There was a deputy sheriff in uniform standing near the B17 and he motioned me to park my little T Craft, which I did, right under the wing of that B17. As I exited the T Craft the deputy walked over and told me I was not supposed to be landing at Redding during the time that those four engine beauties were on the airport. Well, although I kinda knew that that was the situation, I just played dumb, which was easy for me to do since I was rather ill informed about what was taking place at the Redding airport that day. So the deputy said for me to stay where I was and not plan to take off again until those two 707's departed. I was worried when that deputy walked up to me but he was a very nice guy and only required me to do what I had wanted to do in the first place, see what was happening at the Redding airport that day.

I always carried binoculars with me in the airplane and I could see that about 10 minutes after the visit by the deputy sheriff there was some auto traffic that pulled up to the two 707's. They were about 4000+ feet away but I could see very plainly people getting into those gigantic airplanes. The one 707 had the United States of America painted on it while the other had a funny looking BLUE Ball insignia on the tail and said Pan American Airways, which was the press charter airplane, I had no idea who they were, but that sure was a big airplane they were flying. Well, in about 10 or 15 minutes, the USA airplane began to move onto the runway and line up for takeoff. Then it came down the runway, accelerating very fast and about 2/3 of the way down the runway, the nose came up and it lifted up and flew away, southbound.

The second 707, evidently belonging to something called "Pan American Airways" came barreling down the runway, but not accelerating anything like the USA 707 did. Now there was a "sheep" fence about 4 feet or so high right at the end of the runway pavement. That PAA non fan 707 was going really fast when it got about 1000 feet from the end of the runway, but still stuck to the runway pavement. It went past me with the nose wheel off of the runway and lifted off right at the end of said pavement. I recall seeing the landing gear rip out about a 100 foot piece of that "sheep" fence with barbed wire and wire netting fence material flying in every which direction. All I could think was, "wow, is that the way they teach those airline guys to operate??"

Well, 2 years and 6 months later that student pilot that was a witness to that straight pipe 707 wiping out someone's "sheep" fence was sitting in class at the SFO airport learning all about operating Pan Am 707 aircraft. Getting employed by that wonderful airline was one of the best things that could have ever happened to me, I loved working at Pan Am. I sat in all of the seats in the cockpit during my 26 years

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First encounter with Pan Am was quite an experience

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at Pan Am. and always felt I was overpaid and underworked. But I will say that seeing that 707 remove that 100 feet or so of fence was a sight to behold.

Former Navigator, Flight Engineer, First Officer and Captain Lew Gage. Still flying my Luscombe and V tail Bonanza at 88 years old. I thank the Lord!!

Foynes Flying Boat Museum, in Foynes, Ireland – features a full scale replica of the Boeing B314 “Yankee Clipper”. This replica was created for the museum from detailed plans by a team specialising in movie sets, and the reviews they have received of the aircraft are fantastic. Check it out at www.foynesflyingboatmuseum.com.

Pan Am Stories: You Can't Make This Up

from Al Gilbert, Pan Am SFO Retirees Association.

I am excited to announce the publication of my book Pan Am Stories: You Can't Make This Up - a collection of amusing and historical vignettes from my personal work experiences and stories told to me by colleagues. Now available on Amazon at [Pan Am Stories](https://www.amazon.com/Pan-Am-Stories-You-Can't-Make-This-Up/dp/1661100000) in paperback and Kindle editions, all sales proceeds will benefit the Pan Am Museum in Garden City, NY. Thank you for your purchase support and your reviews.

Al Gilbert, Pan Am SFO Retirees Association

Protect Yourself from Potential Fraud

Everyone can request free copies of their credit reports once a year. In addition to the rights described above, a new federal law entitles all consumers to ask each of the three major credit bureaus for free copies of their reports once in every 12-month period. Go to www.ftc.gov/credit or call 877-382-4357 for more details and to see when you can make your requests. You don't have to ask all three credit bureaus for your reports at the same time; you can stagger your requests if you prefer. Do not contact the credit bureaus directly for these free annual reports. They are only available by calling 877-322-8228 or going to www.annualcreditreport.com. You can make your requests by phone or online, or download a form to mail your requests.

Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year!

Thank you for continuing to support the Clipper Pioneers newsletter! We wish you a very merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year! We'll look forward to another year of newsletters coming your way throughout 2025!

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/>

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

*...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 obituaries 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. 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.

Staying active will help keep us feeling better

Physical activity is good for your health at every age. If you have never been active, starting regular physical activity now may improve your strength, balance, flexibility, and endurance—being able to move for periods of time without stopping.

Being physically active may help you maintain a healthy weight and avoid chronic health problems as you mature. It may help you reduce symptoms of arthritis, anxiety, and depression. It may help keep diabetes and high blood pressure under control. Being active may also help you live on your own longer by keeping you healthy.

All sorts of activities count—even the things you do anyway, like walking the dog, vacuuming the house, or raking the leaves. Things that don't feel hard or unpleasant—like dancing or playing jump rope with your grandchild—also count. Being active can be hard if you aren't able to move around well, use a cane or walker, or have serious health problems. But you can find some activities to help you move more. For example, slowly raising your arms or legs on a regular basis may help you feel more flexible.

(From <https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/weight-management/healthy-eating-physical-activity-for-life/health-tips-for-older-adults>)

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: _____

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 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