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Thanksgiving in Dhahran

by © 2024 Ash Cutchin

In my story about Christmas in New Delhi, I mentioned that I was often somewhere downline during the Thanksgiving Holiday. Such was the case on one of several trips to Saudi Arabia. If I remember correctly, the flights out of JFK were not daily, and so sometimes our layovers (always boring) lasted two or three days. On one such trip Captain Sam Isbell told us he had been invited by a friend from back home in Kentucky to join him and his wife for Thanksgiving dinner and to bring his cockpit crewmembers along. Sam's friend worked for Aramco, the Arabian-American oil company. So, Sam and the first officer and I (and perhaps another pilot and flight engineer) made our way to the friend's home. We were grateful for the opportunity to spend a little time with Sam's friends and enjoy a traditional American Thanksgiving meal of turkey and all the trimmings. We Pan Am guys were not the only dinner guests because I definitely remember that another Aramco couple were also present.

The conversation during dinner was what you would typically expect of Americans during such an occasion until the other man from Aramco asked our host about a mutual friend of theirs, saying something like, "Did you hear about Mike (or John or Pete or whomever)?" The host's reply was negative. His friend continued, "He and his family just went home unexpectedly day before yesterday. Caught us all by surprise."

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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.

Thanksgiving in Dhahran

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This was sometime in the mid nineteen eighties, and of course I don't remember all the exact wording of the conversation, but I had two teenage daughters, and the story made a lasting impact on me, and I will paraphrase. It seems that the man's local banker or financial advisor had called their mutual friend and asked how he wanted to manage his teenage daughter's growing bank account in some investment earning more than simple interest.

"What bank account?" the father of the eighth-grade girl asked his banker?"

"I'm talking about the \$25,000 which she has accumulated so far this year," replied the banker. That comment drew everyone's rapt attention away from the delicious meal, and suddenly we were all ears. Upon further investigation the girl's father learned that some young local Saudi man stopped by the girl's school every afternoon in his Ferrari and he and the young lady drove off in the convertible to who knows where... perhaps his villa or a hotel. Within twenty-four hours of learning about this situation the father removed his daughter from the school, packed a few bags and the family immediately headed back to the USA. I never did hear the rest of the story, but I have always assumed that her parents let her keep her college fund.

Christmas in Teheran

by John Marshall

The year was 1977. I was a first officer on the 747 out of New York, with not too bad seniority. Needless to say, I was stunned when I got my December line and discovered that I was not only flying over Christmas, but would spend Christmas day in Teheran, a layover that definitely was not high on my list of favorites.

It was a flight 2 and 1 trip, out to Bangkok and back, and on Christmas we would leave Delhi at the usual 3 AM and head for Iran, arriving mid-morning.

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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 November 29, 2024 was \$14,126.00. 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 Teheran

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We had picked up three Los Angeles-based flight attendants in Bangkok (Crew tracking worked in mysterious ways) and after arrival at Mehrabad Airport our tired and unhappy little bunch boarded the crew bus and headed for the Intercontinental. We were greeted in the lobby by a jaunty Pan Am rep who informed us that the company had a suite reserved for us to help celebrate the Christian Christmas, and if we wished, we could go up any time. We all looked at each other. The captain looked around at the crew and with uncanny timing, saved the layover. “Come on, guys. Let’s at least go up and have some eggnog”. Tired as we were, we felt that if the Company had gone to that effort, it would be impolite to refuse, and we went upstairs.

We walked into the suite and were stunned to find a fully decorated Christmas tree, a table laden with wine, eggnog and plates full of snacks. A tape player in the corner softly crooned Christmas music. The LA girls had been together for several days and had purchased trinkets for the crew.

We sang carols and exchanged the small gifts and dined on the tasty local snacks laid out for us. We were surprised to see the day passing into the afternoon, when our delightful Pan Am rep stopped in and informed us that a table had been reserved for the crew that evening at the Royal Peacock Restaurant, the fanciest at the hotel. Dinner would be on Pan Am. Fully into the spirit of the occasion, we all met for drinks and dinner, that lasted well into the night. We were a happy, bonded crew that retired to bed. Thankfully, we had a late pickup the next morning.

I spent several Christmases out on the line, in places like Tokyo, Sydney, and Frankfurt, but this holiday in Teheran was definitely one of the most memorable.

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

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A Clipper Story from the “Good Old Boat “Days

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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 ask 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 were 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 into the docks. The landing area at Bolama was on

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A Clipper Story from the “Good Old Boat “Days

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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 taxiing 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 into the dock just behind the arrival building. It was my turn to “throw the hook.” The captain was bringing the 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.

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.

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

Safety Tips - Avoid Fraud

Stay safe online. Don't send sensitive information such as credit card numbers by email because it's not secure. Look for clues about security on Web sites. At the point where you are asked to provide your financial or other sensitive information, the letters at the beginning of the address bar at the top of the screen should change from "http" to "https" or "shttp." Your browser may also show that the information is being encrypted, or scrambled, so no one who might intercept it can read it. But while your information may be safe in transmission, that's no guarantee that the company will store it securely. See what Web sites say about how your information is safeguarded in storage.

Resist pressure. Legitimate companies and charities will be happy to give you time to make a decision. It's probably a scam if they demand that you act immediately or won't take "No" for an answer. Some scammers may also demand you pay off a loan immediately or damaging consequences may occur, always take time to look into who is requesting the money before you pay up.

Fully understand the offer. A legitimate seller will give you all the details about the products or services, the total price, the delivery time, the refund and cancellation policies, and the terms of any warranty. Contact the seller if any of these details are missing, if they are unable to provide the details, it may be a sign that it's a scam. *(from <https://fraud.org/prevention-tips/>)*

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: _____
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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