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My reflections from the Flight Deck: A Journey Beyond the Cockpit

By Roy Butler

Retiring as System Director of Flight Training was, in many ways, a bittersweet milestone. The cockpit had long been my sanctuary, an intimate space where the world fell away and the vast horizon became both challenge and companion. Every takeoff and landing, each moment spent at altitude, shaped who I became – imprinting lessons that would serve me far beyond the realm of aviation.

Looking back, it is not only the exhilaration of flight that lingers but the immense satisfaction of guiding and preparing the next generation of pilots. There's a unique fulfillment in knowing that my efforts contributed to their safety, confidence, and competence, laying the foundation for future aviators to soar with skill and integrity. Every debriefing, every simulator session, and every hard-earned lesson was a step toward fostering a culture of safety and excellence.

Yet, the sky's call did not end with retirement. Instead, a new chapter unfolded when my experience opened the door to join Dr. Robert Helmrich's Cockpit Resource Development Research Project at the University of Texas – a venture sponsored by both NASA and the FAA. Here, I found an opportunity to transform decades of practical flight experience into meaningful research, directly influencing the protocols and philosophies that would safeguard countless lives.

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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.

My reflections from the Flight Deck: A Journey Beyond the Cockpit

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The transition from daily operations to research was seamless, for the drive to enhance safety has always been at the heart of my career. The Cockpit Resource Development project brought together experts devoted to understanding the human factors in aviation – communication, teamwork, leadership, and decision-making under pressure. My background as both pilot and instructor provided invaluable perspective: the ability to translate textbook theory into actionable guidance for crews facing real-world challenges.

Through this work, I saw firsthand the critical importance of resilience, adaptability, and leadership aloft. These were not just virtues for the cockpit; they became guiding principles for life itself. We explored the psychology of high-stakes environments, developed better training modules, and championed a culture where every voice in the cockpit was heard and respected. The research was not abstract – it was lived, grounded in experience, and shaped by the collective wisdom of pilots who had weathered adversity and uncertainty.

Collaboration with NASA and the FAA underscored the shared responsibility of everyone within the aviation community. Our findings informed new policies and training standards, echoing throughout the industry and beyond. It was deeply rewarding to see how insights drawn from a lifetime in the cockpit could ripple outward, making air travel safer for passengers and crews across the globe.

To this day, the lessons from that journey remain with me. The cockpit taught me to trust my training, to adapt quickly, and to lead with empathy and clarity. The research reinforced that even the most complex systems depend, ultimately, on the people who operate them.

As I reflect on a career spent both above the clouds and in pursuit of safer skies, I am filled not just with nostalgia, but with gratitude – for the privilege of flight, for those I had the honor to teach and lead, and

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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 28, 2025 was \$6,483.29. 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. It's time to renew if you haven't already! Be sure to clip and send in your check if you'd like to continue to receive the newsletter. Thank you!

My reflections from the Flight Deck: A Journey Beyond the Cockpit

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for the chance to contribute to the ongoing evolution of aviation safety.

The sky may no longer be my daily workplace, but its lessons remain etched in my character, guiding me forward – ever watchful, ever striving for excellence, and ever grateful to have played a part in aviation's remarkable story.

Scammers Use Couriers to Retrieve Cash and Precious Metals from Victims of Tech Support and Government Impersonation Scams

The FBI is warning the public about scammers instructing victims, many of whom are senior citizens, to liquidate their assets into cash and/or buy gold, silver, or other precious metals to protect their funds. Criminals then arrange for couriers to meet the victims in person to pick up the cash or precious metals. From May to December 2023, the FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) saw an uptick in this activity with aggregated losses of over \$55 million.

Step 1: Scammers Instruct Victims to Liquidate Assets into Cash and/or Buy Precious Metal

Scammers pose as tech support or US government officials. Scammers sometimes use a multi-layered approach, posing, in succession, as a technology company, a financial institution, and a US government official (e.g., the "Phantom Hacker" scam). Scammers inform victims their financial accounts were hacked or are at risk of being hacked, and, as a result, their funds need to be protected. Scammers instruct victims to liquidate their assets into cash and/or purchase gold, silver, or other precious metals. Sometimes, scammers instruct victims to wire funds to a metal dealer who will ship the precious metals to victims' homes.

Step 2: Scammers Use Couriers to Retrieve Cash and/or Precious Metals from Victim

Once victims obtain the cash and/or precious metals, the scammers send couriers to retrieve the items at victims' homes or public locations. Scammers may direct victims to authenticate the transaction with the courier using a passcode, such as the serial number of a US dollar bill. Scammers tell victims they will safeguard the assets in a protected account on behalf of the victims. In reality, victims never hear back from the scammers and lose all their money.

Tips to Protect Yourself

The US Government and legitimate businesses will never request you purchase gold or other precious metals.

Protect your personal information. Never disclose your home address or agree to meet with unknown individuals to deliver cash or precious metals.

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Scammers Use Couriers to Retrieve Cash and Precious Metals from Victims of Tech Support and Government Impersonation Scams

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Do not click on unsolicited pop-ups on your computer, links sent via text messages, or email links and attachments.

Do not contact unknown telephone numbers provided in pop-ups, texts, or emails.

Do not download software at the request of unknown individuals who contact you.

Do not allow unknown individuals access to your computer.

Report It

The FBI requests victims report these fraudulent or suspicious activities to the FBI IC3 at www.ic3.gov as quickly as possible. Be sure to include as much transaction information as possible:

The name of the person or company that contacted you.

Methods of communication used, including websites, emails, and telephone numbers.

Any bank account number(s) to which you wired funds and the recipient name(s).

The name and location of the metal dealer company and the account to which you wired funds, if you were instructed to buy precious metals.

Victims aged 60 or over who need assistance with filing an IC3 complaint, can contact the DOJ Elder Justice Hotline, 1-833-FRAUD-11 (or 833-372-8311).

From FBI PSA Alert (<https://www.ic3.gov/PSA/2024/PSA240129>)

Since May 2023, the FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center has reported a surge in these scams. In September, an FBI warning estimated that losses from the scams now total more than \$186 million

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

Thank You for the Stories You're Sending In! Keep 'em coming!!

If you enjoy reading the Clipper Pioneers newsletter, and would like to see it continue, please send in your renewal if you haven't already, for 2026. Funds are dropping, and we may not have enough to continue without your help! Form is on page 8.

PAN AM MUSEUM CRUISE APRIL 25 - MAY 2, 2027

Welcome Aboard the Magnificent AmaMagna - An Unforgettable Voyage with Purpose

Set sail on a once-in-a-lifetime journey along the legendary Danube River, where timeless history, vibrant culture, and stunning landscapes come together — all from the luxurious comfort of the AmaMagna.

This isn't just a cruise. It's a celebration of heritage, a gathering of kindred spirits, and a meaningful way to support the Pan Am World Museum! Join fellow Pan Am enthusiasts and adventurers as you explore the heart of Southeast Europe in unparalleled style and sophistication. April 25 - May 2, 2027

PRESENTING GEMS OF SOUTHEAST EUROPE on AmaWaterways AmaMagna

If you are thinking of joining us, don't delay! Take full advantage of our discounts, extended solely for our group. We've had a wonderful response so far, it's sure to be another fabulous trip!

Only \$400 deposit - balance is not due until 90 days before cruise. (\$200 is non-refundable).

For more information, visit <https://thepanammuseum.org/travel/cruise2027>

Start planning for the 3rd Biennial Pan Am World Museum Fundraiser Cruise!

Writer seeks Pan Am pilots to interview

My name is Jason Ross. I am a writer who is attempting to speak with former Pan Am pilots who went on to fly with United, following the purchase of the Pacific routes in 1986. I'm looking to interview several pilots for the writing of a potential book focusing on United's purchase of the Pacific.

A little about myself. I grew up fascinated with aviation and especially aviation history. Influenced by family members who worked for Pan Am and served in the Air Force, I started my career as an Air Force officer. Over time I became passionate about organizations' cultures and how they have led to success or failure, and everything in between. Ultimately, this led to my interest in the acquisition of Pan Am's Pacific routes and individuals' experiences with the acquisition. If you are interested in sharing your experience, I can be reached at jason.r.ross@gmail.com. Thank you again for your help.

Best regards, Jason Ross

Stranded in the Sky: Untold Story

Philip Jett is the author of STRANDED IN THE SKY: The Untold Story of Pan Am Luxury Airliners Trapped on the Day of Infamy, which combined the stories of the Anzac, Hong Kong, Pacific, and Philippine Clippers, with a great deal of original research. The book debuted before a large group of Pan Am clipper families on Treasure Island in San Francisco in May of 2023. He may be available to speak to Pan Am groups or associations without charge. If interested, you may visit his website at www.philipjett.com and email him at philip@philipjett.com. His book is available in hardback, paperback, and eBook.

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.

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/>

Places to Visit

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. Check it out at www.flyingboatmuseum.com Enjoy images from Pan Am here: <http://www.timetableimages.com/ttimages/ao1.htm>

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

Christopher Joseph Blaydon, a man whose life was a testament to service, adventure, and love, passed away on August 8, 2025, in Langhorne, Pennsylvania, surrounded by his family.

Chris lived a life full of purpose and passion, dedicating nearly six decades to public service in Langhorne Borough. His legacy is deeply woven into the fabric of the community, where he served as a Borough Council member for 11 years and as Mayor for 20 years. His unwavering commitment to the people of Langhorne is something that will be remembered for generations. Yet, his life's impact extends far beyond the borough.

As a young man, Chris joined the United States Air Force, where he flew missions in Korea. His adventurous spirit never wavered, and he went on to spend 18 more years piloting the C-130 Hercules out of Willow Grove Air Base in Warminster, PA. During his military career, Chris embarked on a remarkable 25-year journey as a commercial airline pilot with Pan American World Airways, taking him across the globe.

Even in his retirement, Chris's commitment to service continued. He devoted countless hours to numerous organizations, including the American Legion, Rotary International, Churchville Nature Center, the Historic Langhorne Association, and the Langhorne Revolutionary War Burial Site, Shade Tree Commission, to name just a few. His passion for history and his sense of community were boundless, and he always had a project that brought him joy and fulfillment.

But perhaps his most enduring gift was the way he connected with people. Chris had an extraordinary ability to make those around him feel valued and seen, regardless of their age, background, or social standing. He had a special way of making others feel important, of listening deeply, and offering his wisdom when it was needed most.

He and his devoted wife of 68 years, Mary, shared a life filled with love, laughter, and cherished memories. He was a proud father to his children, Linda, James, and Scott, and a doting grandfather and great-grandfather to his ever-growing family. To his last day, he spoke of his family with nothing but gratitude, saying, "My biggest prize is my big and beautiful family. I lived a wonderful life that had every element I could have ever wished for... What an adventure!"

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.

Please Send Us Your Stories

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

Pan Am 100th Anniversary Legendary Voyage - Oct. 2027

MARK YOUR CALENDAR! RETRACE THE CLIPPER ROUTE BY SEA

Journey along Pan Am®’s historic Clipper route, visiting 19 ports and 13 countries over 28 days.

INTRODUCING PAN AM’S NEWEST PORT

Spend a day at RelaxAway, Half Moon Cay™, named the #1 private island 20 years in a row.

HISTORIC PORTS OF CALL

From Santo Domingo and Santa Marta to Belize City, explore storied gateways reimaged.

INSPIRED BY AVIATION’S FINEST ERA

Signature touches and exclusive onboard experiences evoke the Golden Age of Travel.

THREE-TIME “BEST SERVICE” AWARD WINNER

Exceptional 2:1 guest-to-crew ratio & voted “Best Service” by Cruise Critic for three years in a row.

DESTINATION DINING™

From familiar flavors to timeless classics, we’re committed to fresh culinary experiences.

19 Ports - 13 Countries - 2 Heritage Brands - 1 Legendary Voyage - 28-Day Legendary Voyage - Pan Am 100th Anniversary - Zuiderdam - Roundtrip Miami - Oct. 30, 2027

Contact Your Travel Advisor to Book Today - @tourwithorit Orit Rindner - Tel: 850-270-7745 BOOK EARLY & SAVE - Holland American + Pan Am Reserve your place today and receive up to 60% off our most popular amenities plus added benefits and upgrades.

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!

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