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Turning Finals – Tristar

by John A. Marshall

It was difficult to mistake the startup of an L1011. It didn't matter where you were, in the cockpit of a neighboring airplane, in the employee cafeteria in the bowels of the terminal building, or even strolling through the terminal itself. It began as a visceral rumble, low and deep in the gut, as the big Rolls-Royce engines struggled into life. It was a sound like no other. If you were fortunate enough to see the airplane in question, the visual cues were unmistakable. Great billows of smoke issued from the tailpipe of the offending engine, and more than once I heard children in the terminal cry out in fright, "Look, Mommy! That airplane is on fire!"

Once brought to life and under way, however, the Lockheed L1011 was one of the true pilot's airplanes of its generation. The flight deck was like your living room transformed, spacious and airy, with picture windows in virtually every direction. It was an arm's reach to the overhead panel, where essential switches and controls were located. I sometimes felt that the arena would be better served with a selected array of hanging plants at the cockpit entryway. The unique triple-spoiled engines delivered a sublime combination of power and unbelievable silence. It was an irony that the engine that should provoke such attention on start-up should provide an equally quiescent experience when at full power.

(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. 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.

Turning Finals – Tristar

(continued from previous page)

Hard to describe, the big Rolls' brought forth a very satisfying sonic experience; it was a combination of deep growl and satisfied hum that like its beginning, could be mistaken for no other.

The L1011 had some innovative features, not the least of which was a diabolic invention known as Direct Lift Control, or DLC. I marveled at the engineering mind that thought this one up. I picture a bespectacled, slide-rule carrying, engineering nerd, forever denied the pilot's seat of anything, thrust into a defining role in the ultimate design of the ultimate airliner. Here was his chance to take the measure of every pilot that would ever struggle with this magnificent flying machine on final approach. What we can do, he thought, is arrange it so that no one will ever be able to sit in smug satisfaction on a stabilized final approach and make subtle, finger-tip corrections to the flight path of the airplane. No, we can make it so that every minute pitch correction made in the traditional way; that is, tiny corrections with the yoke, will not just result in an elevator movement, but will move the spoilers as well! With no perceptible change in pitch, the airplane will actually sink below the glide slope with the destruction of lift. Let's see them cope with that! It took some getting used to, believe me.

The airplane was designed as a Mach .84-.85 airplane. For some unknown reason that I spent several years trying to fathom, the technical types at my airline decided that operation at Mach .83 would result in much improved fuel economy with negligible sacrifice in trip time. The end result was an airplane that pushed its way through the sky in much the same way as a water-skier resisted the water, leaning back on its haunches, reluctant. A three-degree body angle in cruise gave one the feeling that you were always on the verge of slipping off the back end of the power curve. At about the same time I was cutting my teeth on the new Lockheed, a close friend and colleague at British Airways was going through what he called the "Tristar course," giddy in his appointment to the first piece of equipment his airline had purchased since the Dakota that was not British. His standing joke was that BEA (partial forerunner of the present British Airways) stood for British Equipment Again. He was like a child with a new toy with the new airliner, and we frequently compared notes.

"Mach .83!" he scoffed. "We program Mach .84, and I always fly it at 85. Makes absolutely no difference in the fuel!"

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Bank balance as of May 29, 2026 was \$23,735.20. The opportunity to renew your membership with your donation is on a form on page 8 of this newsletter,

A SPECIAL THANK YOU to Adam Aron and the Pan Am Historical Foundation for their grant to the Clipper Pioneers in the amount of \$12,000. This gift, along with an anonymous donation we received for \$5,000 and the dues you are sending in will keep The Clipper Pioneers newsletter going for the rest of 2026.

If you have not sent in your dues for 2026, be sure to clip and send in your check if you'd like to continue to receive the newsletter. Thank you!

Turning Finals – Tristar

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So I tried it. I was getting tired of the habitual complaints of the flight attendants that they spent half the trip walking uphill, so that by the time they reached the far side of the ocean they felt as though they had walked across it. (It made a convenient excuse for declining attendance at the evening's crew party.) I kept careful logs of the fuel consumption on a succession of trips, and concluded that there was indeed very little difference, and that as a rule we could shave eight or ten minutes from an oceanic flight plan.

My initial checkout in the airplane was a departure from the norm. The Lockheed was being hustled into service, and besides yours truly, there were three other check airmen who would be the bow wave of the newly qualified pilots on the Tristar. We would then undertake the checkout of the line pilots that followed.

Ground school was a sublime exercise. The print shop had all it could do to keep up with the publication of chapters in the systems course; piles of barely dry manual inserts were delivered daily to the classroom just in time for the day's instruction. The plan was for the four of us to fly directly to Palmdale to finish the flight training and rating in Lockheed's own flight simulator. However, the best laid plans ...

Four days before our departure for the coast, the Palmdale simulator suffered a major meltdown. It was not terminal, but for our purposes it might as well have been. No simulator, no training; no training, no rating. The final implications were obvious. What to do? In a frantic maelstrom of activity, we tried in vain to procure some simulator time, anywhere, at any cost. TWA, Air Canada, Delta, Saudia... anyone and everyone who had even the remotest access to an L1011 simulator was contacted, begging for time. It was all for naught.

Airplanes we had, proving runs to fly; miles to go before we sleep.

A decision had to be made, and it was that we would use our own airplanes and just do it the Old Fashioned Way. The four of us would get the rating in the airplane, without benefit of simulator. It was a daring and innovative plan, particularly in view of the fact that we had by that juncture virtually abdicated any concession to doing any training in an airplane. God forbid!

We each would get four hours in the left seat, live flying, under the auspices of a Lockheed instructor pilot.

TO BE CONTINUED IN THE NEXT ISSUE

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.

How to avoid a travel scam this summer

Summer is here! If you haven't made your vacation plans yet, you might be looking for a deal. While you look for bargains, scammers are looking for ways to reach you...and your money. Here are some things to know to help you avoid travel scams.

Travel scams can crop up when you're searching online for hotels or flights. Scammers sometimes use paid ads and put their number alongside a well-known company's name, or link to a website that only looks like it belongs to a hotel brand or airline. To avoid these scammers, scroll to the unpaid search results and check that you have the right website or contact info for the business you're looking for. Or better yet, type the company's website directly into the browser, if you know it.

Scammers have driving vacations covered, too, sending texts about fake "unpaid tolls" and demanding immediate payment. If you're not sure that text is real, reach out to the state's toll agency using a phone number or website you know is right — not the info from the text.

Here are some other ways to avoid travel scams:

Get all the details of a travel offer before you commit. If the organizer can't or won't give you more specific details (other than saying "you'll stay at a 'five-star' resort"), walk away.

Do some research. Look up the names of travel companies, hotels, rentals, and agents with the words "scam," "review," or "complaint." See what others say about them before you commit.

Look at how they ask you to pay. Only scammers say the only way to pay is by wire transfer, gift card, payment app, or cryptocurrency. They prefer these methods because, once they've collected the money, it's almost impossible to get it back.

Learn more at ftc.gov/TravelScams. Spot a scam? Tell the FTC at ReportFraud.ftc.gov.

(from <https://consumer.ftc.gov/consumer-alerts/2026/06/how-avoid-travel-scam-summer>)

AI Pros and Cons

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is one of the current hot topics going around. As with all new technologies, there are always pros and cons. One issue that is signaling warning flags is the increasing ability of AI to look and feel "real". Be careful of what you see and hear, and test against what you know.

A couple of good tips comes from Forbes: Avoiding AI scams requires constant diligence, and independent verification – for contacts with whom you are unfamiliar, put trust aside. Even for contacts with whom you are familiar, stick to the adage of "trust, but verify."

Avoid interacting with people you do not know in real life or have not met in person before. Do not click links in unsolicited messages. *(More to come on this issue in future newsletters.)*

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

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

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 at vimeo.com/165162602. China Clipper First Officer Robert Hicks (94); Merry Barton, daughter of Folger Athearn (Pan Am's station manager in Noumea, New Caledonia in 1941); Margaret O'Shaughnessy Director of the Foynes Flying Boat Museum; Edward Trippe; and Mary Lou Bigelow.

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

Timothy Grady Sullivan, beloved husband, father, grandfather, pilot, and humorist, who went to his heavenly home on June 12, 2026, at the age of 85.

Born on February 8, 1941, in Princeville, Illinois, Tim was the son of John Charles Sullivan and Dorothy Kominsky Sullivan. He grew up in Dunlap, Illinois. He spent many years in Belmont, California, before ultimately making Boca Raton, Florida, his home for the past 37 years. He shared more than 51 years of marriage, travel, adventure, and family with Erna de Lange Sullivan and was the proud father of Timothy Sullivan Jr., Kristine Sullivan Moeller (Darin), Andrea "Dre" Sullivan Garcia (Rich), and Alana Sullivan Garcia (John).

Tim loved to fly. He earned his pilot's license at 17 years old and continued flying until he was 75. Over the course of his lifetime, he logged more than 26,000 flight hours, spending almost three full years of his life above the clouds. His career took him around the world and fueled a lifelong love of travel.

After attending Bradley University for two years, Tim entered the United States Air Force through Officer Candidate School, where he later served four years as a fighter pilot. His call sign was "Clark Kent," and at age 21, he was among the youngest fighter pilots in the Air Force at the time. He later began a 37-year career with Pan Am, ultimately serving as a Boeing 747 captain.

It was through Pan Am that Tim met Dutch flight attendant Erna de Lange Sullivan, the woman who would become his wife and partner for more than 51 years. Among their many experiences, Tim and Erna participated in Pan Am's efforts to help evacuate people from Vietnam before the fall of Saigon, a moment they remembered throughout their lives. If there was an airplane in the sky, Tim was looking up. He could identify aircraft at a glance. Flying was never just a job for Tim. It was part of who he was.

Before his aviation career, Tim raced speedboats on the Illinois River as a young man and later became an accomplished sailor, winning numerous races out of Coyote Point on the San Francisco Bay. Whether on the water or in the air, he loved being on the move.

Those who knew Tim will remember his sense of humor, his love of flying, and the pride he took in his family.

A Celebration of Life will be held at 1:00 on Friday, July 17, 2026, at Calvary Chapel, 1551 W. Camino Real, Boca Raton, FL 33486. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made in Tim's memory to the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research or Samaritan's Purse.

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 100th Anniversary Legendary Voyage - Oct. 2027

MARK YOUR CALENDAR! RETRACE THE CLIPPER ROUTE BY SEA

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INTRODUCING PAN AM'S NEWEST PORT

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

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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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