

NEWSLETTER OF THE AVIATION PIONEERS ASSOCIATION
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JUNE 1996 ISSUE

WE DID IT AND IT WAS
FANTASTIC!

The APA 5th Anniversary Reunion at Harrah's Las Vegas on May 5, 6, & 7, was a smashing success. Those who attended will attest to that. We had a terrific time. Everyone looked great -- we clean up pretty well.

For those unfortunate souls not able to attend here is a run-down of the three days.

At our first party on Sunday evening, greetings, hugs and camaraderie were the order of the day. We received our packet of goodies, including the Magoo color cartoon from Paul Carlson. This year Mr. Magoo flew through puffy white clouds which spelled out HAPPY APA REUNION 1996 as he tried to rein in a frowning DC3 by shouting "Who-aa Nellie".

We want to take this opportunity to thank Paul for being so good to us. He takes time from his busy schedule every year to do the cartoon and we are very appreciative.

Our drinks were hosted by George Batchelor (THANK YOU GEORGE) and went well with the excellent hors d'oeuvres beautifully set out on an "S" shaped table. Hot food was served from gleaming copper chafing dishes and cold canapés, veggies, dips, fruit, etc. were very pretty on mirrored trays. Small green trees placed around the room, adorned with sparkling lights, added to the festive mood.

Following the party, most adjourned to the casino to try their luck or went on to dinner.

Monday was spent seeing the sights, sunning around the pool, or trying to regain what they lost the night before. We didn't hear of any great gains or losses, just minor ones, but it is just as much fun as always. The clink of coins falling into those metal slot machine trays has to one of the greatest sounds on earth (a personal observation, you understand).

That evening we gussied up and gathered again for our dinner dance.

All of our parties were held in the hotel's Reno Room, and for the dinner dance tables were covered with black cloths and gold napkins. Black, gold and pearly-white balloons were placed as centerpieces at each table and a double arch of balloons floated above the stage, framing our band of four musicians, led by Jimmy Duffy. What music they played! We danced and danced, some slow, some fast, some jitterbug, some bumps and grinds (now known as "dirty dancing" -- love it!)

But the best, the absolute highlight, was the distinguished Chairman of our Board of Directors, Dave Simmons, doing his rendition of Louie Armstrong singing "Mac the Knife". It brought the house down. Dave, we'd heard rumors, but you can't fudge on this anymore -- too many happy witnesses. (We've learned that he also does a fantastic African native dance. Maybe next year, Dave???)

Dave was our featured speaker. As a past president of Lockheed Air Terminal he was there for us from

beginning to end and his stirring message, reproduced below, "says it all." Thanks, Dave for being there then and for being here with us now.

And, although he doesn't want to be acknowledged, we also have Dave to thank for providing 8 wonderful door prizes -- wrist watches with our Aviation Pioneers logo on the face. These were won by Sing Gong, Buddy Cox, Eloise Knighton, Jim LeBel, Nancy Anton, Paul Stokes, Jack Elliott and Ben Hill.

Gloria Martin and Stan Dearborn won copies of THE SKUNK WORKS, the true story of America's most secret and successful aerospace operation, written by Ben R. Rich & Leo Janus and donated to us by The Aviation Book Store.

Barbara Barco was the happy recipient of a piece of aviation history in miniature -- a letter opener replica of the Hamilton Standard propeller used on Lindbergh's Spirit of St. Louis, provided by The Nostalgic Aviator.

Both The Aviation Book Store and The Nostalgic Aviator continue to provide door prizes for us each year and we are grateful to them for their generosity.

Ed and Lynn Hogan again have our thanks for contributing two round-trip tickets to Hawaii. This is always a coveted prize and was won this year by Kathy Gong.

Ed and Lynn planned to be at the reunion but were invited to visit Poland as guests of the government, so they missed our fun.

We had another piece of history to award as a special door prize -- a fringed, pink-silk pillow cover, purchased by some lonely GI during WWII -- hand-painted with red roses and Lockheed P-38s in two corners, and in the center a poem entitled "Wife O' Mine". This charming treasure was won by Don Friedman and our thanks go to Dick Neumann for donating the prize.

Ed and Addie McAndrews did their usual exemplary job helping with the check-in, and Ed also gave a beautiful Irish blessing as a benediction. Stan Dearborn led us in the Flag Salute, and Len Rosen spoke about the APA and membership.

On Tuesday morning, the last day of our reunion, we met for a farewell continental breakfast, again in the Reno Room. This time, the balloons were a little closer to the table tops, but still a gay reminder of the previous evening. Juice, fruit (including prunes), cereal (including bran), cheese, muffins, danish, coffee, tea and chocolate were inhaled. Two things we were always good at -- eating and drinking, right?

It was a wonderful reunion! All comments were very positive -- in fact, an informal poll informed us that you had such a good time you

would like to do this TWICE A YEAR. Now, we don't know about that, but we are glad we did it at least once.

For those of you (like me) who have not been to Las Vegas for a long while, you wouldn't know the place. It goes on forever, it seems, but we did not find getting around too difficult. We took a taxi (E-ticket ride) to the downtown area which has changed A LOT. The Golden Nugget is now a huge, very subtle, but elegant casino, a soft gray-white at night, outlined with small white lights. Fremont Street has been turned into an open-ended mall (no traffic) covered with a huge dome-like structure on which a periodic laser light show is displayed, with music, of course. During the show, western dancers romp and stomp and bison stampede from one end of the dome to the other, a distance of approximately 3-4 blocks. While we waited for the show to begin, we were treated to a beautiful sight -- through the open end of the dome a full moon hung in the sky, framed by the dome. It was so magnificent we at first thought it was staged. It wasn't.

Back on the Strip and just across the street from Harrah's, our hotel headquarters, are The (beautiful) Mirage and Caesar's Palace (we saw the white tigers, the dolphins, the huge shark tank covering the entire wall behind the main check-in desk, had a wonderful lunch in a rain forest, checked out Planet Hollywood,

and marveled at the fabulous talking Roman fountain (how do they do that?). Other hotels are just a good stretch of the legs (or short tram ride) away.

Timing was not right for us to see the volcano erupt or to be captured and spirited away by pirates (darn, another fantasy thwarted), but you can bet we'll try again next time.

Yes, there is only one Las Vegas and some of our Aviation Pioneers helped its growth by flying in so many of those one-nighters. It is truly a world-class resort destination with something for everyone -- even hotels geared toward children.

Next year we will go to the plan suggested by Dick and Elaine Draper to establish the first Saturday in May as our official reunion date. So, please plan now to join us. We will look forward to seeing you there.

Sincere thanks to Mary Lou Paulson, a Las Vegas resident, for helping with the reunion arrangements and doing the preliminary leg work for us. It was a great help to have her input; she really "greased the skids", making the other arrangements easy. She also got a Visitor's Guide from the Chamber of Commerce for everyone.

And to Ruby Mercer many, many thanks for your help -- for making arrangements for the balloon decorations, the contribution toward the band and your assistance in arriving a day early to help get things

ready! What would we do without you?

Ruby spends summers at her home in Cheyenne, Wyoming, where she headed after our reunion to work on the annual rodeo.

It was very nice to have Buddy Cox, son of Ralph Cox and Mary Lou Paulson with us at the reunion.

Thanks for coming, Buddy, we hope you enjoyed it.

Aviation pioneers are an endangered species and we wish we had more sons and daughters as APA members to carry on for us.

Jorge Carnicero, from Washington D.C., was planning to be with us in Las Vegas but canceled at the last minute because of an automobile accident. We don't know if he was involved, or whether it was a family member, but wish him well. Jorge, let us hear from you.

Audrey and Helen Glore, who live in Waynesville, Missouri, report that Audrey was hospitalized in Arizona on the way to the reunion. Hope you are feeling better, Audrey, so we can see you next year. WRITE!

Following our 1992 reunion, the Daily News, a San Fernando Valley newspaper, ran a picture of R. B. Hall and wife Millie in their old airline uniforms which they wore to that reunion. R.B. would like a copy of the picture. Can anyone help? If so, send the picture to us and we will

forward it.

DE-SKUNKED

The former home of the Skunk Works at Lockheed has been turned into a shopping center. A Bay Area company purchased a 115,000-square-foot building and has leased it to Fry's Electronics.

ITEMS

Church Bulletins are a source of many very humorous announcements. Here are some for your amusement: "This afternoon there will be a meeting in the South and North ends of the Church. Children will be baptized at both ends."

"The Service will close with 'Little Drops of Water'. One of the ladies will start quietly and the rest of the congregation will join in."

"On Sunday, a special collection will be taken to defray the expenses of the new carpet. All those wishing to do something on the carpet please come forward and get a piece of paper."

"The ladies of the church have cast off clothing of every kind, and they may be seen in the church basement on Friday afternoon."

"Thursday at 5:00 p.m. there will be a meeting of the Little Mothers Club. All wishing to become little mothers will please meet the minister in his

study."

"Wednesday the Ladies Literary Society will meet. Mrs. Johnson will sing 'Put Me in My Little Bed', accompanied by the preacher."

AND OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF BABES ...

Be wary of First Aid given by 4th graders. A recent quiz supplied the following instructions:

Fainting: "Rub the person's chest or if a lady, rub her arms above her head."

Fractures: To see if the limb is broken, wiggle it gently back and forth."

Asphyxiation: Apply artificial respiration until the victim is dead."

Snakebite: Bleed the wound and rape the victim in a blanket for shock."

APA MEMBERSHIP

It is time again to renew your APA membership for the year. A form is attached for your convenience and we hope you will continue to support us with your membership dues of \$15.00 per family, per year.

We thank those who also make additional donations to help us along the way.

Official membership in the APA entitles you to wear the APA lapel

pin. There is a special place on the Membership Form for anyone wanting to order the pin. Cost is \$7.00 per pin.

OBITUARIES

Margaret Davis informs us that husband Graves C. Davis has died. We don't have any other information.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello everyone! It was so good to see you in Las Vegas! I had fears that I might not be able to attend for what sounds like a ridiculous reason -- I was hit by a bicycle. I can tell you it was no joke! Hurt like %\$#*!! And the kid didn't stay around long enough for me to get his name so I could sue! These kids today have no manners. But I hate to miss a good party so away I limped -- and I'm glad I did. Had a wonderful time showing off daughter Eloise and my 4-year old granddaughter Skylar.

It was gratifying to see those who have not been able to attend the luncheons, such as Kim Scribner and Howard Korth. Howard and I haven't seen each other since 1946!

We have some members who go above and beyond the call, such as George Batchelor, Ed and Lynn Hogan, The Aviation Book Store and The Nostalgic Aviator. Their contributions have been mentioned above but I wanted to add my personal thanks for the support they

give year after year. And to those of you who send donations -- you literally keep us alive and we are very grateful.

Thanks, too, to all those who helped put the reunion together. it was a great success!

I hope you will all attend next year. Remember the date -- first Saturday in May. Other details will be sent to you later. Please don't forget to send your membership dues in to us by the end of September. Thanks in advance.

Love to all -- Terry

LET US KNOW BEFORE YOU GO...

If you move, please don't forget to let us know your new address so you won't be removed from the mailing list. Send information to:

APA
P.O. Box 1724
Studio City, CA 91604-0724

GEM OF THE DAY

Dean Brouse sent the following on airline pilots trying to get the mandatory retirement age raised: "The FAA disagrees, saying that after age 60, pilots just can't hold their liquor any more."

Keep smiling -- it uses up 35 calories!

UNTIL NEXT TIME...

(This speech was given by Dave Simmons at Harrah's Las Vegas on the occasion of the 5th Anniversary Reunion of the Aviation Pioneers Association on May 6, 1996. A real keeper).

A PROUD LOOK BACK

My remarks tonight are in the nature of a proud look back - at the non-sked-supplemental airline industry that emerged following the close of World War II - and my special salute to those men and women who in one way or another, contributed so much to that remarkable chapter in commercial aviation history.

It was a recent newspaper article that caused my thoughts to return to the era of the nonskeds. In that regard, several weeks ago I opened my copy of the Wall Street Journal and there on the front page was this feature article which described how the Department of Transportation, acting through the CAB, was actually encouraging people to start airlines!! The article then told of a man, a convicted felon serving a 5-year prison term, who upon release, had assembled a few knowledgeable airline people. And, with no prior airline experience, he proceeded to found, and commence operations of an airline serving large metropolitan cities!!

The article went on to describe the supply of available aircraft, various sources of financing, and the ease of obtaining the necessary operating

certificates. Hard to believe.

Well, at that point my mind began to drift back in time and I reminisced about the emergence of the nonsked-supplemental carriers, and about those innovative and highly skilled people who developed the success formula for that particular industry. It is amazing to recall, how this relatively small group of folk, in just a few short years, rewrote the book on how commercial air transportation would subsequently evolve in the United States, and throughout the world.

By any standards you might apply, they represented the most versatile group of men and women that ever came together at any one moment in time, to focus on the field of air transportation!! Versatile, yes, also innovative, resourceful and highly entrepreneurial, and those were just some of their attributes! They had the talent in every department that was required to successfully manage and operate an airline.

Their backgrounds in aviation were extremely varied. Many had military careers. Some fought as Flying Tigers in China, or pushed much needed air cargo over the Burma Hump. Others flew combat missions with the U.S. and British air services, or crewed with the Military Air Transport Command. Some flew the Pan Am clippers, those legendary transoceanic flying boats that pioneered the air routes across the Pacific and on to South America and

Africa. They represented a wide spectrum of knowledge and ability. When the war ended, there was a general rush to develop commercial business opportunities for those G.I.s seeking new fields of endeavor. In this climate of activity, the U.S. Government decided to broaden the highly regulated air transportation system that existed in this country at that time. They did this by granting a limited number of certificates permitting operators to engage in supplemental non-scheduled air carrier operations. Coupled with that development, another big plus existed at that time. The war years had witnessed the manufacture of ever larger military transport aircraft that were now available for conversion to commercial air service. And no one knew the flight characteristics of these aircraft better than the nonsked group!!

As a consequence, a number of small airlines were formed, and flight operations were initiated at various airports in the U.S. What an impact those nonsked airlines had on the existing air transportation system in general - and on the major airlines in particular. Domestic airfares were whacked by more than 50%, which in turn ushered in, for the first time, coach type service. Group charter service was also developed in a big way, and large amounts of air cargo, including mail, were transported on a more economical basis. And an aggressive approach was introduced in the procurement of passengers, including extensive nationwide

advertising campaigns.

All of these developments stunned the major airlines, long accustomed to monopolistic routes, lofty airfares, limited competition, and heavily subsidized airmail contracts.

For about a decade, the supplemental airlines proved the value of its coach type service, as passenger traffic skyrocketed. This was the result of aggressive competition, which put air fares within the economic grasp of a large segment of the traveling public for the first time.

The supplementals proved their worth in a totally different operational arena when they responded to the Nation's urgent appeal for assistance, and air-lifted large amounts of much needed supplies to Berlin following the blockade of that city by the Soviets. In addition, many flew passenger and cargo missions to Korea, in support of U.S. Military actions in that part of the world. In both instances, the level of support given was of major importance to the success of the missions.

While a number of supplemental carriers prospered, and in effect became small airlines, their very success contained the seeds of their eventual undoing. The major airlines, stung by competition from the "upstarts" on route after route, took the offensive!

The majors, joined by other

interested parties, began to cry to all who would listen, that such aggressive competition constituted a very serious threat to their government franchised air routes, and would lead to the disruption of the existing U.S. air transportation system. They complained that, whereas they were required to serve many small cities and towns in the nation in addition to large cities, the supplementals flew only the highly lucrative routes between the major cities. In all of this outcry, no mention was made of the many operational and monetary benefits the majors derived from their monopolistic routes.

Eventually their cries did reach the ears of officials in the Department of Transportation and the Civil Aeronautics Board. In short order, CAB inspectors were dispatched to all airports accommodating supplemental air carrier operations. They took on the task of finding things wrong with a vengeance! They examined pilot credentials, safety procedures, air worthiness certificates, flight scheduling, and everything else connected with the operation. It was generally felt these inspectors were instructed by their superiors to find serious flaws in the entire fabric of the supplemental industry!

And it is a sad but true historical chapter - the joint financial and political clout of the major airlines, working in concert with government officials, did sound the death knell of the supplemental airlines, and the

curtain began to fall on an industry that had, in just a few short years, contributed so much to the benefit of so many! And, Congress took what was described as unilateral action, to slam the door on this innovative chapter of air transportation history.

All of this resulted in cancelled certificates for most of the owners, others suffered serious curtailment in the scope of operations. Only a few were successful in making it through this period, as a result of reconfigured flight scheduling, and drastic limitations on activity.

I mentioned earlier that a convicted felon, lacking any knowledge of airline operations, had recently been eased into the ownership position of a new airline. In sharp contrast at that time, a number of the pioneer nonskeds, hounded by various governmental personnel in connection with their inspections, were actually made to feel like criminals.

Well, with the demise of the supplementals, the majors had apparently achieved a full victory -- right? WRONG! While it was not suspected at the time, this "so-called" victory was but prologue to the eventual end of the quasi-public utility approach to air transportation in the United States. Ironically, not too many years later it was the major airlines' time to cry the Bitter Tears of Repression.

It came to pass that a whole new breed of federal regulators began to

cogitate on the value of competition in the market place, and low and behold, deregulation became the "buzz" word of the day.

This turn of events, represented a complete reversal of the government's policy that had put the supplementals out of business not too many years before, which resulted in great financial loss to the owner-operators, and thousands of skilled employees without jobs.

As a consequence of this "new" thinking on the part of the Washington bureaucrats, the airline industry was deregulated, and all of those franchised air routes came tumbling down! This resulted in a whole new ball game for the major players, and much turbulence followed. Soon thereafter, a number of time-honored major airlines that had contributed in such a substantial way to the early development of air transportation, lost out in the competitive market that followed, and they ceased to exist. A very real loss that is felt to the present day.

It's a shame it took the Feds so long to recognize the merit of the message the pioneer nonskeds had demonstrated with such tangible success years before. Had they been permitted to exist, the supplementals may have provided a valuable industry learning tool, that might have lead to more gradual adoption of the highly competitive practices of a deregulated market. Had this occurred, the severe disruptions

experienced during the period of transition to a deregulated industry might have proceeded in a more orderly fashion. Hopefully, there would have been fewer corporate casualties.

Well now, however such events would have played out, it should be a point of considerable pride to those of you who played a part in the nonsked-supplemental legacy - the force of the concepts put in motion by you pioneer operators - have been a factor in reshaping air transportation systems throughout the world.