

NEWSLETTER OF THE AVIATION PIONEERS ASSOCIATION

CONTACT

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MARCH 1997 ISSUE

COMING ATTRACTIONS

You will all want to be part of the next APA reunion scheduled for Saturday, May 3, 1997, at the Sportsman's Lodge in North Hollywood. Cocktails (hosted by George Batchelor) at 11:30 a.m., lunch at 12:30 p.m. We also will have a Friday evening reception in the lobby area of the Sportsman's Lodge Hotel, from 6:00 p.m. until 8:30 p.m.

We know that we're late, we're late for this very important date and hope you will bear with us this year. Circumstances beyond our control put us far behind but we ask for your indulgence and cooperation (more on this in the President's Message). **Please return your reservation form ASAP.** Thanks for your understanding and cooperation. Always remember — the reunions of our APA are never complete unless **YOU** attend.

APA MEMBERSHIP

The absence of our September 1996 issue of CONTACT has caused a serious shortfall in our treasury and we hope you will all take heart. Some of you sent your

1996-97 membership dues and we thank you. Many also made extra donations to help us and we want you to know how very much we appreciate your thoughtfulness and interest. We always include a second membership form in CONTACT'S fall issue but since it didn't mail, we missed all of the membership dues that are generated from that newsletter. So...if you have not sent your membership dues, please do.

LOOKING BACK

John Leslie wrote us a very nice letter following his attendance at the reunion which we want to share with you:

"Thank You - Thank You - Thank You... for the wonderful APA reunion this year. You and the officers and directors outdid yourselves this time, and anyone who was healthy enough to attend and did not, really blew it. The hotel had very good facilities for the registration area and then the room for meetings worked out very well also. The three days seemed to fly past so quickly I really hated for it to be over. I met people toward the end that I would have wished to spend more time with, but we left it

by agreeing to pick it up again at the next reunion. I got some addresses and phone numbers of long lost friends. The changes to LAS since the days we operated flights there in the 50s and 60s could never have been dreamed of in your wildest dreams. I worked for the Dunes Hotel from 1958 to 1961 and it's not standing any longer. Margie Sorthun and I had worked the Dunes counter at BUR and Ester (Pope) Paquette was one of our flight attendants - and we three were the only Dunes flight people at the reunion. Margie also was with the Hacienda as res., counter, and flight attendant and Boyd Michaels, who was a Hacienda Captain, were the only ones I saw at the reunion that I know were Hacienda people. I had not seen Boyd since 1972 at Wake Island when he came through as Captain for TIA on DC8s. Those hotel flights in unpressurized aircraft in the summer over the desert were something to remember. The Hacienda DC4 with the piano playing enroute and the Champagne service and the Dunes with the C46, mostly, but sometimes a DC4, so tail heavy the crew had to run the engines up to get it up on the step so the tail stand could be pulled, or, on arrival,

inserted before shut down, and the stack fires when you were on the ramp with a fire extinguisher, holding your breath, watching to see if the prop would stop rotation and you would have to use the extinguisher. The ramp people today miss all the fun of the "old days" and hand loading all baggage off a cart or in the front pit of the C46 off a step ladder. We didn't make much money in those days but we did have a lot of fun. Seeing Mary Lou and Joan and Margie and Vi and Carl Schipp and Rush and Russell and Dick Blatz and his lovely Joan, Ralph Cox and Buddy, George Carroll etc. etc. etc. was such a pleasure. I had seen some at the '93 reunion but a few I had not seen in 30 years or more. Meeting Captain Kim Schribner was a treat and I look forward to reading his book. Anyone who missed this reunion missed seeing Dave Simmons bring down the house with his singing ability. The band stopped and gave him a big hand, and then he followed up with a dance routine most men could not do at age 25. He could start a whole new career with a singing-dancing night club act.

I could go on and on but the whole reunion was a delight this year and I hope you keep up the good work and stay with a reunion of several days in a place where it is fun and LAS had so much to offer and the fabulous food at great prices, so much to do and so little time as it was, I did not get time to go to a show this trip and there was so

much available. Many thanks to Mary Lou and Rush and Ester for suggestions on places to go locally. Yours truly, John Leslie.

Thanks John, for taking the time of write. Your letter sums up all the fun and warm feelings generated by our last reunion. We're happy you had a good time.

LOOKING FORWARD...

WHAT? Next reunion

WHEN? Saturday, May 3, 1997

WHERE? Sportsman's Lodge, Restaurant, North Hollywood, CA

Luncheon cost will be \$30.00 per person and George Batchelor will again host libations.

The Sportsman's Lodge offers us so many plusses — easy location and access to other amenities in the area, good food, free parking and if you would like to stay overnight, the hotel has granted a discount for rooms if advance reservations are made.

So come one, come all for a great day of renewing old acquaintances.

SOMEONE VERY SPECIAL

Occasionally, we hope to be able to feature APA members whose stars continue to rise in the business world through their hard work and dedication to a dream. Their stories are very interesting and we all share pride in their outstanding accomplishments. This issue's

superstar is **George Batchelor...**

A descendent of one of America's oldest families — the Cherokee Nation — George was proudly born in Shawnee, Oklahoma, and lived there until 1939 when he left to pursue his education and employment in California. He found work as a sheet metal mechanic for North American Aviation and attended Compton College.

Three months after Pearl Harbor, he decided to join the Army Air Corps, and during the war flew virtually every type of aircraft. He was recognized with the Air and Victory Medals for delivering fuel and supplies and evacuating wounded soldiers from behind enemy lines.

Following the war, George saw an opportunity to utilize surplus aircraft no longer needed by the government. In California in 1947, he founded Arrow Air, working out of his first office, made from two big engine boxes. Arrow Air prospered until regulatory pressure forced its voluntary shut down in 1953.

Thereafter, George pursued other successful entrepreneurial ventures within the aviation field, and in the process became a visionary by pioneering and perfecting the unique concept of leasing used aircraft and providing maintenance and parts for a comprehensive support system for airlines.

George moved to Miami in 1964 because his son, Falcon, suffered from Cystic Fibrosis, a debilitating and terminal disease. He hoped that the cleaner air and salt water would alleviate his symptoms. Falcon died from complications attributed to the disease in 1990 at the age of 35.

Currently, the Batchelor Companies, comprising International Air Leases, its subsidiaries and affiliates employ over 500 people at their Miami headquarters. This includes Arrow-Air which was re-formed in 1979.

Arrow has additional offices in New York, Atlanta, Columbus, Ohio, and San Juan, Puerto Rico. Today, Arrow has the unique distinction of being the largest cargo airline in San Juan and has been a long-time supporter of the Puerto Rican economy.

George's gifts to charity have made him a superstar in the world of philanthropy. Chesterfield Smith, a past president of the American Bar Association, says that George "does more in the way of really substantial contributions to multiple needs around our community than anybody else I know."

Charities closest to George's heart are those dedicated to children's welfare and the environment, but his charitable giving has reached many other organizations. His causes include the University of Miami School of Medicine, Doctors' Hospital, Baptist Hospital, Mount Sinai Medical

Center, St. Thomas University Law School, WPBT Channel 2, The Zoological Society of Florida, Sunny Shores Sea Camp, Miami Museum of Science, New World School of the Arts, Daily Bread Food Bank, Hearing & Speech Center of Florida, New Hope Foundation, CAP, and Encounters in Excellence.

These are but a few of the non-profit organizations in the Miami area which have benefited from George's generosity. He has also been a dedicated supporter of our Aviation Pioneer s Association.

George was inducted into the Oklahoma Aviation Hall of Fame on November 7, 1996, at the Oklahoma Air and Space Museum in Oklahoma City. Other famous inductees include Wiley Post, C.R. Smith and Clyde Cessna. Bill F. Spohrer, President and founder of Challenge Air Cargo, Inc. was also inducted on November 7.

We are very proud of you George, and wish you continued health and success.

BAM

The Burbank Aviation Museum has a permanent home! After years of concerted and often frustrating effort to establish a museum to commemorate the contributions made to aviation in the Burbank area, the ribbon was finally cut to open the facility, located in a chamber of the beautiful Portal of Folded Wings at Valhalla Memorial Park in Burbank.

Originally constructed in 1924, the Shrine to Aviation was dedicated in 1953. Many famous aviators, including the co-founder of Lockheed Aircraft Co., Carl B. Squire, and Matilde J. Moisant, the second licensed female pilot in the US are interred there.

SOME BUZZ

There has been plenty of buzzing here in So. California lately with the efforts of the Burbank-Glendale-Pasadena Airport to expand facilities, runways, parking, terminals, etc. Much opposition is heard from the antis who say "not needed; too much noise; too many flights; too much ground traffic"; etc., etc. The pros cite the need to enlarge to meet public demand, employment opportunities, look-to-the-future area growth, increasing congestion at LAX.

We are certainly a group who recognize the helping hand given us when Lockheed Airport "let us in" so we could then complain about the rent, gas prices, usage fees (just like poor relations visiting, which is what we were). Fortunately we had Dave Simmons, our Guardian Angel, with farsightedness and a sense of humor for our endless brassy activities, looking out for us. The airport authority could use a guardian angel, too.

LETTERS

We have heard from Buddy Brown who writes that he has moved into

his new home in Knoxville, TN. He and wife Nancy are busy decorating the house and landscaping the yard, but took time away to visit old flying buddies in Dallas and give a speech to a group of Experimental Aircraft pilots on super-sonic flight. From there he flew to Del Rio, TX, to attend a reunion of the original group of U-2 pilots. Upon his return home, there was a call from BBC (British Broadcasting Company) in the UK. They were making a TV series on events that could have changed history in the 60s, 70s and 80s, and they wanted to interview him for the series. He doesn't know how much of his interview was used or whether it will be shown in the US, but it was scheduled for airing in the UK last fall. In September he and Nancy attended a Strategic Air Command "50 Years of Reconnaissance" reunion in Omaha.

He says that he misses us, enjoys our newsletters and expects to attend our next reunion.

AWARDS - HONORS

Tony LeVier — one of Lockheed's most respected test pilots and a part of the 1943 "SKUNK WORKS" — was recently honored with a Pioneer Award at "Wings Over Long Beach".

Richard "Dick" Rossi was presented with the Distinguished Flying Cross by Chief of the Air Force, General Fogleman, AVG Flying Tiger Reunion in Dallas, Texas in December 1996.

REMOTE WAR

Have you heard about the man wounded in the buttocks when somebody threw a pair of scissors at him. The police report states that his attacker was "someone he knew who was angry over the constant changing of TV channels". We don't need a rocket scientist to tell us the attacker was his companion, angry in a way all women understand. Some say that men's urge to change channels is an instinct from the Stone Age that compels guys to keep searching, searching, in a ceaseless quest to benefit the tribal unit by locating a mastodon, which could be used for food, or by monitoring the show "Baywatch" which causes electrical fires. So, you see ladies — he is just obeying an ancient "hunter-gatherer" instinct.

BABY BOOMER

Memories of WWII are kept alive by computer programmer John Davis, a boomer who wants to make sure the memory of that war doesn't fade away. In 1994 he created "World War II: Keeping the Memory Alive" on the Internet, where he daily notes what was happening on the battleground and home fronts on that same day in 1942.

His is a 54 Years Ago archive and can be accessed at <http://members.gnn.com/jbdavis/ww2.html>. He also posts photos from government collections.

KID STUFF

Let's hope the following test answers came from little kids: "Water is composed of two gins, oxygin and hydrogin. Oxygin is pure gin. Hydrogin is gin and water."

"Nitrogen is not found in Ireland because it is not found in a free state."

"When you breathe, you inspire. When you do not breathe, you expire."

"Three kinds of blood vessels are arteries, vanes and caterpillars."

"The skeleton is what is left after the insides have been taken out and the outsides have been taken off. The purpose of the skeleton is so that there is something to hitch the meat to."

"Before giving a blood transfusion, find out if the blood is affirmative or negative."

"The moon is a planet just like Earth, only it is even deader."

"A fossil is an extinct animal. The older it is, the more extinct it is."

"Equator: a menagerie lion running around Earth through Africa".

"To remove dust from the eye, pull the eye down over the nose."

"To prevent contraception, wear a condominium."

A TRYST WITH A TWIST

A tiny sports car leaves a lot to be desired as a midnight trysting spot, two secret lovers have discovered.

Wedged into a two-seater, a 200 pound, pain-racked, near-naked man was suddenly immobilized by a slipped disc, trapping his woman companion beneath him, according to a doctor writing in a medical journal.

The desperate woman tried to summon help by honking the horn with her foot. A doctor, paramedic, firemen, and a group of interested passers-by quickly surrounded the couple's car, part of which had to be cut away to free the couple.

The distraught woman, helped out of the car and into a coat, sobbed, "How am I going to explain to my husband what has happened to his car?"

OBITUARIES

AUDREY ELVIS GLORE, 78, of Waynesville, died on June 11, 1996. The son of the late John and Elizabeth (Bone) Gore, he was born December 15, 1917 at Esther, Missouri. Audrey grew up and attended school in the Leadwood/Frank Clay, Missouri, area.

A veteran of WWII, he was a 2nd Lt. in the US Army Air Corp, and received the Asiatic Pacific Service Medal, American Theater Service Medal and the WWII Victory Medal for air offensives over

Japan, Southern Philippines and Ryukyus. Blessed with being able to make a living doing what he loved, he had over 30,000 hours of flying time. He flew for North American and Ozark Airlines before becoming President/CEO of Skyway Airlines at Fort Leonard Wood. He was a long time, active member of the Waynesville United Methodist Church and the Masonic Lodge #375 AF & AM, Scottish Rite Valley of Joplin, Abu Ben Adem Shrine, Harry S. Truman #152 Chapter of National Sojourners, the Optimist Club, Toastmasters and was an Ex-President of AARP.

He was active in his community and enjoyed flying, traveling, fishing, golf, air shows and motorcycle races.

He is survived by Helen, his wife of 56 years, two children, Tamara and Tommy, brother Chester, sister Verna, and five grandchildren.

Audrey and Helen were on their way to attend our last reunion in Las Vegas when Audrey became ill in Tempe, Arizona, and had to return home. Charlie Linza, his good friend for over 50 years, sent us the notice of his death and told us that Audrey thought so much of our APA and our CONTACT newsletter that he asked wife Helen to make sure we received his obituary so it could be printed for all of his aviation friends to see.

JOHN BIGLEY, a long time stalwart employee of Skycoach, San

Diego, died recently of a lung ailment. He spent his military service as an officer in the US Navy. He also worked many years in Saudi Arabia with OPEC. He leaves his widow Barbara (Sullivan) Bigley, four children and five grandchildren.

John, a kind, loving father and friend will be sadly missed.

COL. FRANK KURTZ, Olympic medalist diver and the most decorated Army Air Corps pilot in WWII has died at the age of 85 at his home in Toluca Lake, CA, of complications after a fall. He flew the last surviving B-17 Flying Fortress in the Pacific which was nicknamed the "SWOOSE", so patched up her crew dubbed it as part swan and part goose.

He is survived by his wife Margo and daughter – well known actress Swoosie Kurtz – so nicknamed by news media. Col. Kurtz received the Croix de Guerre, Distinguished Flying Cross, three Silver Stars, three Air Medals and five Presidential Citations. Post war he crash-landed a Swoose in the Australian bush with no injury to his passengers – the then Senator Lyndon B. Johnson and a congressional committee.

Kurtz was later given the honor of flying delivery of the Swoose to the Smithsonian Institute.

ELROY B. JEPPESEN, founder of Jeppesen Airway Manual, died in November, 1996, at his Denver, Colorado, home. He was 89.

Utilizing the knowledge gained from his experiences as a barnstorming pilot with Tex Rankin's Flying Circus, Portland OR, and flying Air Mail for Boeing Air Transport (forerunner of United Airlines) he began to accumulate navigation identity for flying from personal experience and advanced (sometimes grudgingly) from other pilots. He verified data by rechecking routes by car, hiking, climbing smoke stacks and mountains with an altimeter strapped to his back and questioning city/county engineers. From hand written copies – including charts – he advanced to printing and today we have the wonderfully detailed, world-renowned Jeppesen Manual – found in every cockpit.

Jeppesen often reminisced about the “old days” in his first plane at age 16 – with his first license, signed by Orville Wright – a WWI surplus (\$500) open cockpit biplane. “You felt like a bird – a part of the airplane – God, I'd love to do it all again”, he said.

P.H. “ZIP” CYR of Paradise Valley, AZ, died February 5, 1997. He leaves his wife Marjorie, two sons and four grandchildren. Born in Caribou, Maine, and a WWII Air Force veteran, Zip is remembered as a quiet, well-spoken gentleman – greatly admired for his skill as a pilot and ability to carry out the most complex assignments with great finesse. He was one of the original pilots employed by Great Lakes Airlines, circa 1949, Burbank. He will be sadly missed by family and friends.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello everyone! It is good to hear from you. We appreciate your letters and your news for our CONTACT newsletter.

We were not able to get our fall '96 newsletter out to you because our Secretary/Director, Nancy Anton had a hitch in her git-along last September requiring heart surgery. She is on her way to complete recovery and asked that I pass along her “heartfelt thanks for your kind messages and prayers that I know helped my strength return. I expect to be at the next reunion to greet you all personally”.

I can't tell you how much we appreciate your membership response. Keep those cards and letters (and money) coming. Thanks, thanks, thanks, to those who dig deep for extra donations. Without you, we would not be able to do what we do.

I send a very special thank you to Robert Davis in England. He attends our reunions and supports our efforts with very generous donations. He also keeps us informed of aviation news is the UK.

URGENT—Does anyone have a new address for Naomi Gamble Henion (Tillie)? She is no longer at Sapphire Street address in San Diego and mail is returned and telephone is disconnected. Please call or write to Ida Hermann c/o APA address. Thank you.

Love to all — Terry

I INTEND TO...

Members of the Procrastinators Club of America, founded in 1956, celebrate National Procrastination Week in March each year.

The Greek philosopher Hippocrates noted “To do nothing is also a good remedy”. And writer James Thurber offered “It is better to have loafed and lost than never to have loafed at all.”

LET US KNOW BEFORE YOU GO...

If you move, please don't forget to let us know. Send new information to:

APA
P.O. Box 1724
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GEM OF THE DAY

Men who miscalculate are called “mathematically challenged.” Women who miscalculate are called “mothers.”

UNTIL NEXT TIME...