



# Contact!

AUGUST 2001 ISSUE

**Important Date:** Our next Reunion Luncheon will be held on Saturday, April 27, 2002 at the Sportsmens' Lodge. Hal Cope will be our returning guest speaker. Enough said for now, just mark your calendar and stay tuned for more information.

**Reunion Report:** April 28, 2001 - Reunion APA Day arrived, sunshiny and promising as our APA-ers began arriving. Well known meet and greet team; Ed and Addie McAndrews, Jerry Senft, Harry Edelstein and Jan Wantink - had the classic member packets aligned and they contained the spectacular programs, tickets (all color printed, coordinated by Len Rosen and his office force with the computer wizardry of Marguerite Lorenz). Thank you, Len; Thank you, Marguerite and thank you helpers. Within, also, was a perfect Paul Carlson Cartoon - Mr. Magoo fishing Dick Rutan out of the drink. Thank you, Paul, you are a treasure!! On to the fun and games...

Dave Simmons, our chairman, proceeded with his usual charming aplomb - greeting many out-of-towners (George Patterson, Mary Lou Paulson; Ed and Addie McAndrews; Ruby Mercer; Dick & Elaine Draper; a table full of Slick friends, Dick Rutan, his wife, Kris and father, Pop; Dick Rutan's girl Friday, Kelly Hall and her husband, Don; Roy Blackwell and dozens of LA surround guests. Dave gave a special thanks and welcome to George Batchelor whose broken ankle caused surgery, pins, etc., repairs, but did not stop George from attending. "Flew Commercial, no big deal", said George. With his usual generosity, he also gave us the gift of all libation. He has done this every year. You are a "Man for all seasons", friend. Our reunion would not be the same without your presence.

Music during our meal was provided by the Terry Case Quartet, courtesy of Ruby Mercer. Thank you

for adding to the luncheon in such a beautiful way.

Luncheon followed with the usual good food and service by Sportsmens' staff. We thank them.

Dave then introduced our speaker, Dick Rutan, whose subject was "An Arctic Adventure" and it really was - a thrilling potential disaster - overcome by the skill and bold handling by the plane crew. The following is an excerpt (with permission) from the newsletter published by Kelly Hall, *News & Stuff*, PO Box 359, Mojave, California, 93502.

**Stuck on top of the World** - In May of this year (2000), Dick Rutan joined a group of pilots on a sightseeing trip of the North Pole. This was to be a very uneventful pleasure cruise. In fact, Dick had taken his video camera along to tape the adventure for his grandchildren. Beautiful scenery, experienced pilots, new plane, however...

When the AN2 landed at the North Pole, the ice was unseasonably thin. The Cessna traveling with the group first noticed the stress on the ice and motioned for the pilots to do a go around. Powering up the AN2 was not enough. The ice cracked and began to swallow the airplane whole. Dick was in the right seat during this time, and filmed the propeller as it dipped to ice level and began making snowcones. Dick continued filming the egress of the crew, and their Arctic adventure at the top of the world.

The Cessna was unharmed and went to get help. For fourteen hours, those left behind wondered what the next few days would be like. They tied a rope around pilot Ron Sheardown and he climbed back into the sinking plane to retrieve the survival gear. Collectively, there was enough equipment to sustain the castaways for weeks on their frozen paradise.



The crew rallied. They salvaged fuel from the downed plane to start a fire so they could melt ice for drinking water. They put on layers of clothing to protect them from the freezing winds. They built an ice house - called the North Pole Hilton - for shelter. They were settling into their new digs when only 14 hours later, they heard the faint sounds of an airplane. A rescue airplane was dispatched from First Air and they were saved! I'm sure Dick was disappointed that they were rescued so quickly. He was truly in his element. Dick scratched out a huge S.O.S. in the icy surroundings and autographed his artwork with a smiling face in the D. If you hike up that way, be sure to check it out.

I found out about the incident through the media. CBS called me at home late at night and asked what I knew about Dick's accident! What a frightening way to learn that all didn't go as planned.

The story has a happy ending because everyone survived and went back to their respective homes in good health. No one stepped in a slushy spot and got frostbite, no one sank to the bottom of the ocean...

The airplane didn't fare quite as well. A recovery mission was planned, but after 20 hours in the air in early August, the search crew could not find the airplane. Satellites on board the AN2 tracked the area, but it is feared the airplane will be forever displayed on the bottom of the Arctic Ocean.

*Kelly Hall, News & Stuff, September 2000.*

It was fortunate that the AN-2 was accompanied by a Cessna, which was immediately sent back home to "First Air" to get help - which it did - proving that taking one of the kids along is not always a bad idea.

Evidently, the North Pole is a livelier place than we have been led to believe. It seems that a group of Trekkers arrived on foot; cold, low on food, exhausted just as the Rutan relief plane was taking off - and another plane seemed to be sinking into the ocean. These Trekkers had reserved a pick-up plane and were stunned to view the two depart. Where is our plane?? They immediately made good use of the Rutan leftover supplies and the Hotel North Pole Hilton and lo and behold, their plane arrived - and what tales they can tell!!

So - conclusion - when you make your North Pole arrangements, you now have a set of guidelines to stay within. Some of us, however, plan to ignore them and stay in the lower 48, cowards that we are!!

Dick said the two questions he is asked most are 1. (By kids) "How do you go to the toilet?" and (By adults) "What and when will your next adventure be?"

Thank you, Dick, for a scintillating description of one of your days (Now - what do you do for fun?) APA-ers loved it and we can't wait for the next chapter - AND THANK YOU FOR A SCARY AFTERNOON!!!

We then proceeded to the prize drawing. We had many unusual, beautiful, one of a kind items. Len Rosen and Marguerite Lorenz supervised the ticket drawing and prize distribution with talent and speed. Thank you for this event handling - you were pros.

Among the generous donations of prizes were:

A beautiful photo art piece by Hal Cope (created and shipped by him from Africa).

A stunning acrylic painting portraying a cowboy on horseback by the well known artist, Leroy Neiman, purchased at auction in Wyoming and donated by Ruby Mercer.

A trip to Hawaii for two including air transportation, hotel and food donated by Hogan Pleasant Hawaiian Holidays - a spectacular gift to us each year from these two good friends. Lynn and Ed, you have our love and respect.

A local getaway to the Sportsmens' Hotel - One night for two with breakfast and as another gift, Sportsmens' Lodge provided a prize of Brunch for Two.

There were many items from the Smithsonian Institute catalog, including:

a replica of the famous "Hope Diamond Pin"

"Ghosts of the Sky" Books and Calendars

Two Space Robots

Nautical instruments in miniature

Beautifully framed, World War II treasure, "Fortress on Fire"

The Smithsonian Institute gifts were purchased with funds donated by 2 Directors and 2 Members. We have expressed our thanks to them.

A warm thank you to all who donated (we could not have the successful event we do without you) and a hearty congratulations to every winner!

In lieu of our usual benediction prayer, Ida Hermann read a beautifully stirring lament - written by Hal Cope. Hal, thank you for your heart rending, thoughtful writing (from your APA friends and admirers). We have included a copy of "Lest We Forget" in with this newsletter.



**Chairman's Message:** Seeing long-time friends, with so much shared history, was great fun. What a wonderful organization we have, to provide a place and time for friendships and memories to thrive. We have included a membership form. We thank all of you who have supported our organization with your dues and donations. If you have not already renewed for this year, a membership application is enclosed. If you know anyone who would care to join, get us their name and we'll send them an application, the more the merrier.

Next year's reunion will feature Hal Cope as our speaker. We are already receiving donations for the prize give away and the Sportsmens' Lodge is ready to welcome us again.

I would like to thank Ida Hermann for all her hard work and attention to detail. We just couldn't do it without you, Ida! Until next time,

God Bless! -*Dave Simmons*

### **Bagattelle:**

**UCLA's MacGowan Little Theater:** Recently offered a riveting theatrical documentary: "Charlie-Victor-Romeo" (aviation code for "Cockpit Voice Recorder") wherein the audience has a frontal view above the nose - directly into the cockpit of planes in trouble, manned by crews fighting for control/survival. This stunning performance recreates the last moments of six actual air disasters based on the Black Box transcripts. Gripping? Yes! Sound effects, real audience becomes passengers. Sobering. An ode to the planes and crews. If it comes your way, see it!

### **George Batchelor - Benefactor:**

Our stalwart member - George Batchelor - casts a tall shadow in Miami, Florida where he maintains his home and business. And he also draws from his heart of gold to cast golden gifts to the needy there.

Most recently, George has made a leadership gift of Ten Million Dollars to the University of Miami/School of Medicine/Department of Pediatrics, to create the Batchelor Children's Research Institute - dedicated to research into diseases affecting children, adolescents and young adults.

George's son, Falcon, was diagnosed with Cystic Fibrosis at age 14 and given: perhaps 3 years to live. George refused to accept this as a fact and took Falcon to Robert M. McKey, Jr., MD - former director of University of Miami's Cystic Fibrosis Center. Under Dr. McKey's care, Falcon lived to 35 years - "A priceless gift to our family," George said, and George returned the gift: The Batchelor Children's Research Institute.

George has been instrumental in donating \$14.7 M to University of Miami, personally and through his companies International Leases Foundation, Enterprises/Endowments and he has recently announced that he will donate another \$5,000,000!!

Among the many commendations George has received for this magnificent gesture was one entered March 15, 2001 in the United States Congressional Record - House - by Florida State Representative Ileana Ros-Lentinen, and another, a proclamation by the Miami-Dade County, Office of the Mayor and Dade County Commissioners - proclaiming May 3, 2001 as "Batchelor Children's Research Institute Day: and "George E. Batchelor Day."

We at APA love you and admire your generous "Heart of Gold", philosophy and what you have accomplished.

**Just for Fun:** From the LA Times: **Dear Abby,** Recently, I was informed two of my poems would be printed in prestigious poetry publications. My wife and I decided to celebrate by going to Busch Gardens. After some reflection, we decided I should go to the beach alone. This reminds us of the old adage: "A Bard in the sand is worth two in the Busch."

**One of the seasons first fires** was burning early July in the Thousand Oaks/Simi Valley area of Los Angeles. In addition to the 300 firefighters, fire departments and helicopters, there was a venerable DC-2-spreading red fire retardant ahead of the blaze to slow it. Ruby Mercer says, "We owned two DC-2's; they were wonderful planes."

**Van Nuys Airport** recently hosted the fabulous Air Show - "The Triumph of Flight" - Aviation Expo 2001. Featured were flyovers by; a Navy F/A-18 Hornet; the F117A Nighthawk Stealth Fighter; and Top Gun Fighter Jets. Also starring were the last flying B-29 Super Fortress, "Fifi" and a B-24 Liberator, "Diamond Lil". One of the B-29 pilots is called "Son of Fifi", named for the Bomber in a turn-around. These planes (among others) were rescued by the CAF (Confederate Air Force) who searched for them and rebuilt/refurbished as needed. Fifi and Lil are equal to the "Stealth Aircraft" and Fighter Jets as crowd pleasers. The Valley Chapter of the WWII Women's group, the "Ninety Nines", also sponsored and lent active support to the Expo. A very excellent, well-planned show.

**A new Aviation Documentary**, "Chasing the Sun", is getting top ratings from its rich film-quality cinematography of lovingly refurbished classic planes. The attendant aerial sequences are gorgeously photographed, images are evocatively burnished to a fine sheen. The information the series imparts is fascinating as well. Current episode points out that planes were initially considered novelties and the realm of daredevils, until the Post Office started using planes to ship mail more quickly (the first trip, alas, didn't work so well - the pilot went in the wrong direction, so the first air mail was actually delivered by train). After that, things went up.



## To Those Who Remember:

by Richard "Dick" Pollard

Jack Pedesky put me on as a F/O with Captain Herman's Great Lakes Airlines in the 1950's at Burbank. So I read his bio of then and now with great interest. He and Jack Bierman, chief pilot at Admiral Airways were two of many that gave me a helping hand after leaving the service for the second time in 1953.

Mr. Stan Weise gave me a job as F/O on a DC-3 when he and Col. Sherman were operating Standard Airlines out of Long Beach in 1947. Stan was Captain on one of a flight of three C-46s, one of which I was co-pilot for Chuck Tomcal, an old Army Flying Sargent, from Miami's 36<sup>th</sup> Street Airport to Chabua, India in June 1944. Flew the old route down through South America over to the Azores, on to Accra on the mainland of Africa, then straight over the continent to India. A trip that ended at Chabua Army Airfield at the foot of the Himalayas Mountains. Flew the Hump 99½ times, with one bail out in China. Standard Airlines with Chief Pilot Bill Butler until I was recalled to service in 1949 to fly the Berlin Airlift in Germany with those old, then new C-54s. Stayed in the USAF long enough to serve in the Forgotten War, Korea 1952/53. Again with C-54s out of Tachikawa, Japan.

From 1954-1963 I flew for Captain Herman's Great Lakes Airlines, Col. Sherman's California Hawaiian 1049A Connie, and Admiral Airways 1049s. As you all remember, it all came to end in 1963 for the non-scheds. Only CAMs left to fly, no more ticketed passengers, no more flying job.

From 1963-64 LANSAs airlines in Lima, Peru flying a 1049 Connie up to Cuzco, Machu Picchu, and over to the jungle town of Iqitos near the Colombian and Brazil borders on the head waters of the Amazon River. Flight Engineers John Kinzer and Don Thomas made life on the aircraft a hell of a lot safer, and in the bar more fun, but there was no career there, so back in the service and Helicopter School at Fort Rucker, Alabama. What war? Election 1964.

From 1965-67 Chief Warrant Officer in the US Army flying a UH1B Huey Helicopter 1117<sup>th</sup> Aviation Company, Viet Nam. Help!!

From 1968-1984 Captain Bill Butler gave me a job with Trans International Airlines, later purchased by Transamerica Corp, and I flew Captain for them on DC-8s for 10 years, the DC-10s for 3 and Boeing 747 for my final 5 years. Eighty percent of the flying was international. Does any one remember Buck Prentice? A very helpful good friend for me at TIA. The best flying job anyone could have had, with never a dull moment. Thank you Bill and Buck, where ever you are.

The now is the life of retirement with what is financially termed as Critical Mass, in Palm Springs and Newport Beach. And on it goes with my wife, Georgia, a Stew at TIA when we met 31 years ago. All the best to those who made it all possible via the idea and birth of the non-scheduled airline.

## Then and Now: Henry "Hank" Bush

- 1928** First flight with Clarence Chamberlin in Stinson Detroit at Holmes Airport, New York
- 1931** First flight in Ford Tri-Motor at Newark Airport, NJ
- 1938** Training at Ryan School of Aeronautics
- 1938-39** Aeronautical Engineering at San Diego State College in conjunction with position as
- 1939** Apprentice Engineer at Consolidated Aircraft Corporation.
- 1940** Commercial Aviation and Celestial Navigation at University of Southern California, Hired by CMA, "Mexicana", in Operations at Grand Central Air Terminal, Glendale, CA
- 1941** Flight training in DC2/DC3. Instrument training in Link at AA in Burbank.
- 1942-45** Pan-American Airways/Naval Reserve qualification in connections with operations in the Pacific.
- 1945-46** Stunt flying with Paul Mantz at Grand Central, and first LA-NY cargo operation.
- 1946** Flew Russian General Zukov from Miami to Santiago, Chile in DC-3 with first night landing in South America (inadvertent).
- 1946-47** Joined Lowel Yerex's swashbuckling TACA Airways in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, and bush flying in Central America, and Venezuela/Colombia.
- 1947-60** Hired by LAV-Venezuelan Airlines, International Routes, South America, USA, Europe.
- 1960-63** Worldwide flying with the Non-Skeds. Also US Army Lt.Col. service in the Nike-Zuss program at Kwajalain, in-flight tracking the ICBM's re-entry from California.
- 1963-74** Hired by TCA, flight navigator, first officer, Captain, New York to the Caribbean, and MAC contract worldwide. 10 years MAC flying to bases in Vietnam with TCA and American Airlines.
- 1975-76** Private and personal cargo operation flying out of Singapore, Jakarta and Djibuti to European and African destinations utilizing the B707-320.
- 1977-78** Hired by Singapore Airlines, Captain capacity, International Operations.
- 1979-80** Hired by TMA. Round the World cargo flying out of Beirut.
- 1981-98** Private flying, gliding, and soaring around the world.
- 1998** First Sky Dive from 14000 ft, with a 6500 ft. freefall. At my age it was a real challenge. I'm still getting the creaks out of my joints, and unbending my spine. I don't believe I would recommend it for most pilots...  
.waaaaaah! We get used to landing airplanes not jumping out of them. But try it if you want the thrill of a lifetime.  
More flying, gliding, soaring and sky dives...maybe...if I recover.  
Running Air Transport International, my consulting company and writing novels, stories, scripts and an autobiography.
- 2000** Still alive and doing well...still flying...how about you?



*Sent to us via email, Monday April 23rd, 2001 from Hal Cope:*

If there is time permitting on the agenda of this years APA reunion, I would appreciate it if my message could be passed on (attached) to the group on April 28. Someday, some one is going to put to paper the history this group of individuals made in the air transportation system of the US over the objections and opposition by those who were anointed by the Civil Aeronautics Act of 1938. Thanks, Hal

*This was read as the Benediction by Ida Mae Hermann at the Aviation Pioneers Association 10th Annual Reunion.*

## ***LEST WE FORGET***

Once again, I was saddened by the news that one of our group had "gone west". That Bud Milligan's flight plan had been cancelled. As I look through my time worn and tattered address book, I am further saddened by the number of our old friends and comrades who are no longer with us to attend the annual reunion of APA.

The "non-sked" industry, which was 144 strong in the late forties, was whittled down to a meager few, thanks to the efforts of the Civil Aeronautics Board working hand in glove with the major scheduled carriers of the time. Now, our physical numbers are bowing to the relentless and unforgiving march of time. Even though each of us "old timers" will physically cease to exist, the impact, we, individually and collectively, made on the air transportation system of the United States of America will long survive our physical passing. We left forever the indelible imprint of our beliefs and efforts on the psyche of the airline industry imbedded in the solid rock of history.

I think it would be appropriate to observe a few moments of silence in recognition of those who have "gone west" and in memory of their contribution to the history we made during the "era of the non-skeds".

Thank you. God willing, the creeks don't rise, all things being equal and if my flight plan is not cancelled, I will be with you in 2002.

Best wishes to all,

Hal Cope



**Hal McNicol** and his excellent publication- "FCI Newsletter" very kindly includes our annual reunion data in an issue. This gives us another few hundred exposures to "Seekers of Truth". Recently, in a conversation with Hal, we discovered a common experience - a circling flight over the French Penal Colony, Devil's Island, which is off Northern South America (Atlantic side). Panagra (Hal flew for them), Pan America (Ida was a passenger), et al, gave this little tour to passengers and there was always a craning of necks by the viewers. Hal and I agreed that the small size, red earth and lack of vegetation was a surprise. Next reunion, we may have a show of hands from those who have made that flight and a moment of silence maybe, thankful we were over it and not on it. (FCI address is 8939 South Sepulveda Boulevard, Suite 310, Los Angeles, California 90045-3627) Reading FCI definitely gives one a flavor of what is happening in Aviation.

#### **New Museum**

The Air Force Flight Test Center Museum officially opened in July. It's located on the intersection of Rosamond and Lancaster Boulevards on Edwards Air Force Base.

This privately funded museum welcomes visitors, but you have to call and arrange entry onto the base. The driver must have a valid driver's license, vehicle registration and proof of insurance. For more information and permission to come aboard, please call 661/277-8050 on the day you plan to visit. The museum is open Tuesday - Saturday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.

**We have received  
a donation of \$100.00  
from Jan Petersen,  
in memory of her father  
Bud Milligan  
(deceased, September 9, 2000)  
Who was greatly admired and  
a good friend  
to so many of our members.  
Thank you, Jan,  
your Dad is sorely missed.**

**Ed and Lynn Hogan are celebrating  
50 years of marriage on August 12, 2001.  
We join with their family and friends in  
congratulating them and wishing them  
many more years of happiness.**

**See you next time, The APA Board**