



Contact!

FALL 2003 ISSUE

Editor's Notes...On a recent trip, I was on a Southwest Airlines flight passing through the Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport. The flight was jammed and so was the airport. I remember the first time I saw Sky Harbor Airport in the early 50's. It was mostly a general aviation airport with infrequent scheduled airline service. The terminal was a metal shed with no air conditioning. They were just building what was to be called Terminal 1. The control tower consisted of several underground fuel storage tanks welded together one on top of the other with a spiral staircase of a hundred or so steps to get to the top. That tower became a Phoenix landmark. In its first year of operation Terminal 1 handled about 300,000 passengers. At last count the airport handles over 35 million passengers a year through now what are called Terminals 2, 3 and 4. Terminal 1 is no more, and like some star athlete, they've retired its number. Also, the landmark control tower has been replaced by a modern behemoth and is now only a memory.

As we go through this year which celebrated the 100th anniversary of powered flight, we can see there are lots of people whose fond memories are being preserved by recreating important events and establishing first class museums to store and display memorabilia. On December 17, 2003, at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, as part of the Centennial of Flight Celebration, what is called the Wright Experience Team will re-enact the first powered flight with an authentic reproduction of the 1903 Flyer. Just in time for the celebration of the Wright Brothers first flight, on December 15, 2003, as an adjunct to the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, the Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center will open in a brand new facility at Washington Dulles International Airport. Over 200 aircraft and 135 spacecraft will be on display, including the Space Shuttle "Enterprise" an SR-71 Blackbird, a prototype Boeing 707, a B-17 Flying Fortress named the "Swoose", the restored B-29 "Superfortress", Enola Gay, and many, many others. I can't wait to see it. The Reagan Library in Simi California is restoring and will soon have on display the Boeing 707 President Reagan used as Air Force One.

And speaking about important aviation events, be sure to mark your calendar and plan to attend our Aviation Pioneers Annual Reunion on April 24, 2004, again at the

Sportsmen's Lodge. Another great program is being planned for the 2004 Reunion and we hope you will all be there. More information on the event will follow shortly.

The two pictures on the front cover are published with the permission of Airliners.net and the two photographers named. Thanks guys!

Dick Neumann Reports...I recently read an aviation history book, published in 1974, entitled "The Only Way to Fly, The Story of Western Airlines, America's Senior Air Carrier" by Robert J. Serling. It got me comparing what the book was saying and what I knew of the story from my own knowledge.

The success story of Pacific Southwest Airlines, Kenny Friedkin and J. Floyd Andrews is well known. A lesser known chapter of that story was of California Central Airlines and "Colonel" C. C. Sherman. Col. Sherman began initial development of California's now lost system of intrastate airline services from Burbank with DC-3 equipment in 1949. CCA's fares of a \$9.99 one way fare between Burbank and the Bay area and \$5.50 between Burbank and San Diego kicked open the door to low cost air travel in California.

The early growth volume for these low cost flights was dramatic and far exceeded anyone's expectations. CCA's main competitors at the time were Western Air Lines and United Air Lines. Neither had shown any interest in exploiting the corridor markets with lower air fares until CCA began enticing people to fly, not drive between Los Angeles and the Bay Area. Once CCA, and subsequently PSA, were on the scene however, both Majors periodically, with great fanfare and promotional advertising, targeted the low fare intrastate markets and their uncouth non CAB certificated competitors. Generally after sustaining heavy losses for a couple of quarters the Majors would fade away, thwarted by the economics of trying to compete at fare levels that caused them substantial losses. However as they watched traffic volume and new upstart competitors expand at double digit rates new schemes were hatched to destroy the cheeky competition.

According to the book, Western President Terry Drinkwater determined that Western had to do something about the growing intrastate competition in California. So... "In the fall of 1949, Western inaugurated the *first scheduled economy coach service on the Pacific Coast using high-density DC-4's, which gave passengers a choice between lower fares and regular first-class Convairs.* Drinkwater had conjured up a scheme to combat the increasing inroads being made on the West Coast traffic by nonscheduled airlines, which began proliferating after the war and were starting to offer some embarrassing competition. *It was impossible to cut fares down to the nonsked's level the CAB would never approve slashes of that magnitude so Drinkwater set up a separate corporation, Western Airlines of California, leased it WAL's own DC-4's and matched the oppositions \$9.95 fare between Los Angeles and San Francisco.*"

When the CAB protested, Terry asked innocently, "Where in the law does it say we're doing anything wrong?" He had made sure everything looked proper; Western Air of California has separate officers, sold tickets through Western Union offices, and Drinkwater piously informed the Board that the two airlines had no interlocking directorates. It was all perfectly legal, and the offspring airline lasted about a year before Terry decided the small profits weren't worth all the trouble; but Western Air of California marked the start of of WAL's coach service."

Now! To what really happened! Drinkwater and Western, et.al., set up Western Airlines of California somewhat as related to above. At the point where Drinkwater decided it wasn't worth the trouble, fact and history get muddled. In 1949 - 1950, Western, and the trunk carriers, received air mail subsidy. The subsidy was administered and controlled by the CAB with comprehensive regulations, rules and restrictions. What derailed Drinkwater's scheme was a Western Air of California DC-4 had an engine failure during a takeoff roll at SFO on a packed Sunday evening flight to Los Angeles. WAC had no backup DC-4 equipment so their SFO Station Manager contacted and contracted California Central Airlines to move his passengers. CCA did so. Then the do-do hit the fan. WAC's check to CCA was drawn on a Western Airlines, Inc., Bank of America account. Charlie Sherman didn't cash the check, just took it to his attorneys.

Next thing, Sherman received a quick cash out of court settlement from Western Airlines (away from the CAB's jurisdiction) and WAC ceased to exist. Subsequently CCA was overwhelmed by PSA and ceased operation. Until its purchase by U.S. Air in 1988, PSA continued to dominate the California intrastate market as well as the additional Pacific Coast destinations to which it had expanded.

Pilot Humor?...The three best things in life are a good landing, a good orgasm, and a good bowel movement. The night carrier landing is one of the few opportunities in life where you get to experience all three at the same time.

Photo Album...Great Lakes Airlines Hangar Party X-mas 1961. Rusty McCullum, Ruth Diffenwierth, Ida and Irving Hermann



Transitions...Dr. Alfred E. Kahn, former Chairman of the Civil Aeronautics Board (1977-1978) best known for deregulating the airline industry among other things, was seriously injured in an auto accident last July. He is recovering from his injuries at a nursing facility in upper New York State.

We get mail...In the May 2003 Issue the question was asked if anyone knew where certain people were.

Omar McClanahan died March 4, 1999. I last saw Mac at a reunion in Burbank in 1990. He and I were very close friends. We kept in contact with each other at least once a month for 25 years. I sure do miss him. He was a wonderful person and a great pilot. A lady named Virginia Hall (Mac's friend) called and informed me of his death.

I am in good health, happy and have been living in Florida for 23 years. I turned in my airfoil in 1988 after 46 years of defying death and dismemberment. I talk by phone to R.B. Hall in Kansas City once in a while. He and Millie seem to be doing ok. It was good seeing some of the pictures in this past issue. I will try to make the next meeting. Yours truly, **Coburn (Coby) Webb.**

Cope Note...Dateline: September 11, 2003...Like millions of Americans I spent some part of 9/11 remembering those Americans that died in the wake of the Twin Towers tragedy. At the same time I was moved to think back on some of our friends who have "gone west."

Bill Butler, Bud Ewing, Capt. Herman, Bud Winder, Bud Milligan, Dan Tibbet, Stan Weiss, Red Hart, Jim

Fischgrund, Fish Salmon, Tony LeVier, Pete Peterson, Kenny Friedkin, Chuck Radford, Bryce Colclasure and others who my mind refused to dredge up from my fading memory bank.

Each of these guys made a contribution to our industry in their own way in their own time. Because they are gone does not mean they are forgotten just as our industry should not be forgotten. Our industry made a contribution to the air transport system of our country. It didn't have a long life from birth to death but nevertheless its foot prints have been imprinted on U. S. Aviation history forevermore. Those of us surviving our friends and colleagues have a responsibility to keep the nonsked history alive for succeeding generations.

I would urge each and all to take a more active role in the Aviation Pioneers Association, its activities, its archives, and its programs. Be an active player. APA needs memorabilia, photos, recorded memories and essays to record its history. Most of all APA needs your support and attendance at the annual reunions. Father time will take care of thinning out our annual attendance but in the meantime let's don't allow the numbers to decrease from lack of interest and support.

If my name was Knute and I was from Notre Dame and it was half time I would say "Lets give one for the Gipper." Since I am not any of the above I will just say APA needs each and everyone one of us to do what we can. Allen Bender's book coming out (hopefully) later this year will hopefully inspire each of us to do what we can for this worthy and valuable cause.

Obituary...Najeeb Halaby passed away July 2, 2003 at the age of 87. As a Navy test pilot during World War II, Halaby flew the first operational American jet plane and, in 1945, became the first person to make a nonstop, transcontinental jet flight. In 1948, he was made foreign affairs adviser to then-Secretary of Defense James Forrestal, and later served as deputy assistant secretary of defense for international security affairs under President Eisenhower. In 1961, President John Kennedy appointed him head of the Federal Aviation Agency where he was known as a hands-on administrator and for his efforts to establish stringent safety regulations. In 1965 he joined Pan American World Airways, where he served as director and senior vice president until 1968, the year he was elected president. He was elected chief executive officer in 1969 and chairman the following year. In 1978, his daughter Lisa Halaby married King Hussein of Jordan.

More Pilot Humor?...A sweet young lady was at the local airport conducting a survey on Human Sexual Behavior. She comes up to a pilot who agrees to answer her questions. After three or four questions she asks him "and when was the last time you had sex?" Straight away the Captain replies "1959". The girl was shocked. She looks at the Captain and asks "1959, isn't that a long time ago?" The pilot replies, looking at his watch, "I guess so, but it's only 2100 now".

Photo Album...APA Reunion, April 2003. Dean Davis Brouse, Beverly Cunningham, Mary Lou Paulson, Vi Fowler Richards, Joan Le Bel, Rita Hamlin, Inga Severson Stiles, Monique Jones, Diane Wolfe, Barbara Simmons.



More from Dick Neumann...Civil Air Transport (CAT) and Air America were not ordinarily considered Nonsked airlines. However, many Nonsked and Flying Tigers pilots and personnel at one time or another worked with both CAT and Air America and vice versa, so for all practical purposes they were part of the nonsked era, with shared history, activities and lore as well as being providers of essential services to the US government. Bob Rouselot, former Chief Pilot and Director of Operations of CAT and later of Air America was recently awarded (August 2003) the CIA's highest medal and commendation award for his services over several decades in managing CAT and Air America.

This is the first time the CIA has openly acknowledged the services and association of anyone who worked for those organizations. At 83, Bob lives in eastern Oklahoma with his wife Anne and two sons. Bob has been nominated to and will be installed in Oklahoma's Aviation Hall Fame later this year. Wiley Post, Will Rogers, Stan Bernstein and George Batchelor have also been so honored.

Chairman's Message...This year has just gone zipping by. Here it is almost Thanksgiving and the Holidays are about on us again. It's time to start thinking about our next Reunion which will be held on Saturday April 24, 2004 at the Sportsmen's Lodge. I would like to thank all of you who have supported our organization by paying dues and have been so generous with your donations. Also a tip of the hat to our two regular columnists, Dick Neumann and Hal Cope, you guys really have some great stories to tell. We are always looking for newsworthy items or pictures to publish which would be of interest to our readers. So let us hear from you. I want to wish for each and every one of you a safe, happy, healthy Holiday Season and a terrific New Year. God Bless!....Dave Simmons

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OVERSEAS NATIONAL AIRWAYS DC6A

Photo by Mel Lawrence (from airliners.net)



Photo by John F Ciesla (from airliners.net)