



GOLDEN CONTRAILS

... and oft' the setting sun is pleased to trim the clouds with molten sails,
and lace the way of passing jets with golden condensation trails.

APRIL 2002



AGE OF THE CLASSICS

THE HOUSTON MUNICIPAL AIR TERMINAL

Captain's Corner

Despite the aftermath of September 11, Continental continues to collect accolades for the good planning and hard work since that time. If you've been following the Daily News Update, you've seen the references to being included in the "Best Places to Work", "Most Admired Companies", etc. They've also been recognized as virtually the only major carrier to continue many amenities like meal service, blankets and other comfort items which are appreciated by passengers.

Rather than trying to conserve money by eliminating these niceties, Continental has adjusted capacity (tried non-revving lately?) and continued to increase the savings generated by using paperless business practices where feasible. As our contribution, we've been asked to use eTickets when traveling. Your Golden Eagles staff has been coordinating with Continental to make it easier to get new individual retired employee numbers and photo ID badges. See K. D. Thompson's article for more information on that.

Even though our 2002 convention is still several months away, please plan to join us this year in Las Vegas. With the invaluable help of Ben and Chris McKenzie, we have made arrangements to meet at the Tropicana again. The dates this year will be October 9 and 10, with golf beginning October 8. At this writing, we have not yet decided on our speaker but are pursuing some interesting possibilities, so stay tuned. Details will follow in the Golden Contrails and at www.thegoldeneagles.org.

Last year, thanks to Birdie Bertrand, The Golden Eagles Web site was launched. Now that it has been available for awhile, we'd appreciate your comments about it. Have you used it? Has it helped you? Could it be more helpful? Do you have any suggestions to improve it? Please send your comments to me at rolbrown@juno.com, or to any of your current officers. We'll consolidate your comments and do our best to fine tune your Web site.

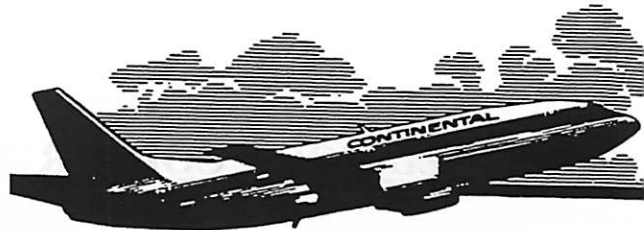
We have many talented people in our group, and we encourage you to share your talents with us. No doubt many of you have read Birdie Bertrand's "A Collision with Collusion". Bill Childress has also written a very interesting book called "Take Off Power", in which he shares the story of his life and interests through the years. Dick Grigsby is a fine poet, and I suspect there are other stories, poems and various works we'd like to hear about. Please tell us about your artistic endeavor or your passions in life. We'd like to know you better!

It seems like in retirement, the time just flies by! We hope as your time flies by, you're enjoying every moment of it. Have a great Spring and Summer and keep in touch; we look forward to hearing from you!

Roland Brown
Roland Brown



RESERVE CAPTAIN'S CORNER



TIME is the magical word that all of us fear and love. **TIME** spent with friends is priceless. Some of our teammates who have made their last flight are CHARLIE BECKER, GEORGE CHILDERS AND GARY FERGUSON. With these thoughts in mind what better way to enjoy life than to spend that precious **TIME** with your friends and fellow pilots. This is all made possible at the convention in Las Vegas this year. Make your plans early to attend this convention.

We have a great convention planned for October and we hope that we can get a large turnout to enjoy the golf, shows, eating, drinking, gabbing and of course gambling. Primm Valley offers a great golf challenge and the shopping at the outlet mall is fantastic.

For those of us who have RV's, Primm Valley has a great campground located directly behind the casino. If you are going to the convention and would like to join others who are going to be arriving by RV you can send me an email (bmmcgolf@aol.com) or call 936-448-1386 for information.

Continental Airlines Golden Eagles is a great organization providing information on travel, benefits, etc to all of our retired colleagues. We need to encourage all who are eligible to join and attend the Las Vegas Convention. Bring a friend, tell a friend we need your support to make everyone feel welcome and enjoy the fellowship of your fellow pilots. To be eligible you must have worked for Continental Airlines and over the age of fifty.

There is a special invitation for the former Texas International, Frontier Airlines, New York Airlines, Peoples Express and Eastern Airlines pilots who now or have worked for Continental Airlines to join the Golden Eagles. We would love to have you join us and share your stories and adventures. Remember, we only talk about the good times, airline politics are strictly forbidden.

Have a great spring and summer. See ya'll in Las Vegas.

Ben
Ben McKenzie

EDITORS' CORNER

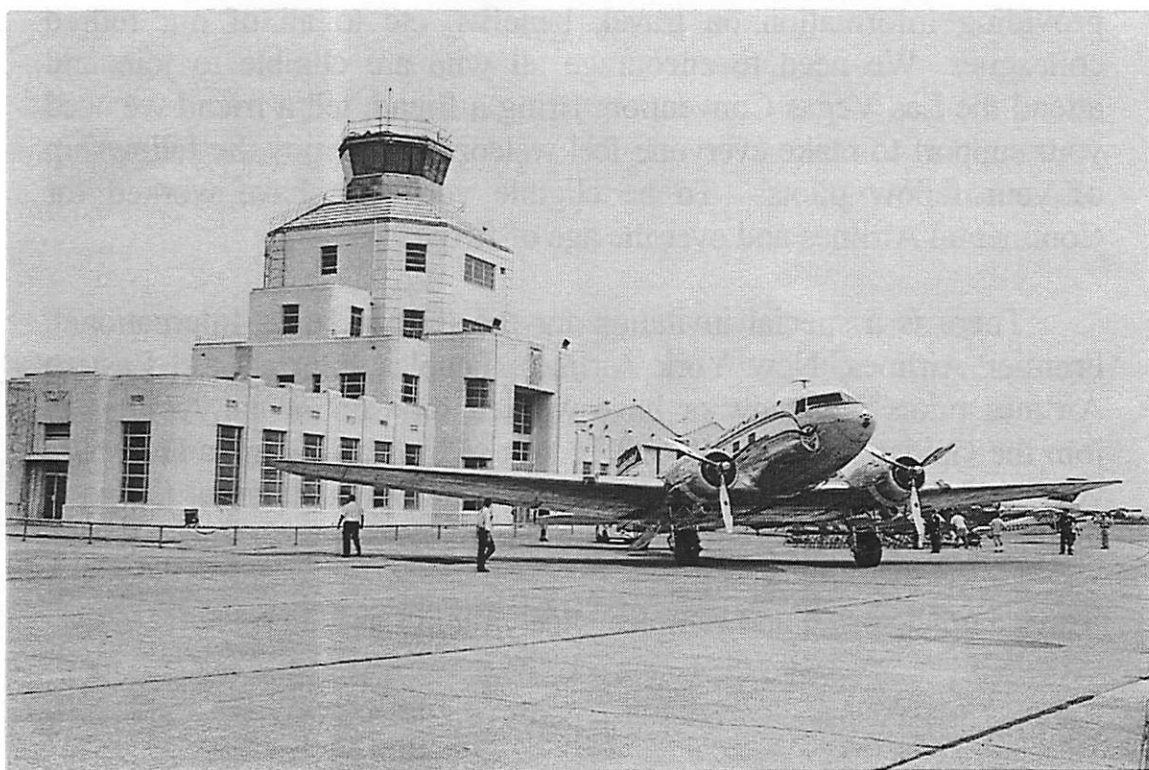


FRONT COVER... "Age Of the Classics." The Houston Municipal Air Terminal depicts the art deco architecture of the Terminal, circa 1950. Original painting by Jonathan Frank.

"HOW THE OTHER HALF LIVES"... This Navy F18 Fighter Pilot first person account comes to us from Dr. John Grigsby, forwarded from his "Wild Weasel" group via e-mail.

BACK COVER... A group of TransTexas hostesses, perched on the horizontal stabilizer of a TTA Starliner, circa 1949.

NEXT ISSUE... The next issue of Golden Contrails is planned for September and will contain information and forms you will require to make reservations for the October Convention in Las Vegas at the Tropicana Hotel.



THE 1940 AIR TERMINAL MUSEUM

Saving Our Aviation Heritage for Future Generations

By T.J. Zalar, Curator

One of the more historically significant projects in the United States relating to our aviation heritage has begun in Houston, Texas. In part, the foundation of commercial aviation lies in the vintage aircraft like the Lockheed 10 Electra, Douglas DC-3, Lockheed Constellation and a few other recognizable icons of the past. However, even more significant are those airport terminal buildings designed and built to accommodate the aircraft and passengers in the mid-twentieth century. Quite literally, these structures represent the birth of commercial aviation. Most have been razed, bulldozed in the name of progress. Few are left having miraculously dodged the wrecking ball to become education centers that illustrate first hand the rich history of our commercial aviation past.

The old Houston Municipal Airport terminal building has been sitting on Hobby Airport since it opened in 1940. Designed by noted architect Joseph Finger, who designed many of the art deco architecture in Houston in the 1930s and 1940s, the Terminal was built to usher in the new age of commercial air travel. The building continued to serve passengers providing a commercial hub for the American southwest, Mexico and South American. By the early 1950s, passenger numbers had increased significantly enough to warrant a new, larger terminal building on the airport. The 1940 Air Terminal became home to private air transport companies and a weather office. By the early 1960s, the Houston Hobby Airport terminal building was the center for commercial air travel in Houston. The 1940 air terminal building faded from memory and began the long, laborious task of disintegration. In the early 1970s, Texas International CEO Frank Lorenzo saw potential in the structure and began to make plans to restore the historic building as a unique setting for TI central offices. The rapid decline of Texas International put a stop to any plans for restoration and the building once again was forgotten and continued to fall into ruin. For almost 30 years, the terminal tolerated the hot Houston summers, several hurricanes, and even survived the pungent life style of transients who built fires in the grand entrance atrium. In 1998, the Houston Aeronautical Heritage Society began plans to restore the Terminal to its 1950 configuration, which will effectively turn the building into a public education center to teach and inform future generations of our aviation heritage.

The initial phase of the project has already been realized. It includes all necessary technical and administrative planning needed to complete the project and the initial fund raising efforts. Financial commitments have been received from Houston Endowment, Inc., Continental Airlines, and Southwest Airlines. Major grants from the National Trust and the Texas Preservation Trust are also included in the initial fund raising plan. Phase one will include a Visitor Center/Hangar, which will serve as a depository for the growing collection of rare artifacts, documents, books, uniforms and other material associated with commercial aviation. In addition, the Visitor Center/Hangar will serve as

a place for needed educational services for the Greater Houston area including teacher workshops, educational exhibits, student activities, and out reach programs. The large hangar space will showcase vintage aircraft and related equipment including the rare Howard Hughes Sikorsky S-43 flying boat, a Douglas DC-3 airliner, a restored 1950 Phillips 66 "Gashopper" aviation fuel truck and other large exhibits. As part of this building phase one of the Terminal building wings will be completely restored. Visitors will be able to view "work in progress" as restoration continues on other sections of the building.

Volunteer help provides the foundation for the success of many museums and other 501 c(3) non profit organizations. With this in mind, the 1940 Air Terminal Museum is developing a Volunteer Service Organization that will offer opportunities for members to become intimately involved in several areas of museum operations. Volunteers will be needed as trained docents/tour guides and general information specialists as well as to help in retail operations, collections management (library, archives, artifacts) research, educational services and general administration assistance

As an educational institution the staff will take the Museum to the students with the Museum's Flight Case program. Trained volunteers will present special lectures and hands-on activities in the classroom that support the teacher's learning objectives. These volunteers will present samples of the collection to students including objects, documents, maps, visual arts, and garments to make learning fun and exciting while illustrating the impact commercial aviation has had on our society. This program will be offered without cost to all academic levels in history, English, science, music, art and math.

A field trip should be an adventure as well as an inspirational learning experience for students. To help teachers prepare students for a field trip, a pre-visit instructional packet will be offered that will include a five-day activity packet including activities to prepare students for a visit to the Museum. To further help teachers, workshops will be offered either on school campuses or at the Museum to help them develop activities for their classrooms that use aviation to help support their efforts.

Take a Tour

A tour of the 1940 Air Terminal Museum will be unlike any the public has every experienced in similar venues. The Museum will be restored as close as possible to 1950 configuration. The lighting, furniture, general décor will be as if the visitor has stepped back in time. To further add to the educational experience, docents dressed in period garments will guide visitors through completely restored offices and rooms where video monitors will be showing oral histories to further interpret the space. Visitors will enter the Museum on the ground floor of its two-story atrium. The atrium includes the original marble floor, Cordova shellstone wall accents and several of the original tiled counters. Hanging from the two-story ceiling is the original magnificent art deco chandelier. On

the left side of the atrium visitors will see airline counters recreated in their original locations. The atrium will include exhibits illustrating aviation's role in Houston's tremendous growth and vitality, and a gift shop, which will occupy the original site of the Terminal's lunch counter. The interconnected offices in the right wing of the building will be restored to accurately depict the various functions of an airport in 1950, including airline dispatching, flight planning, weather forecasting, and radio room.

Access to the second floor is by either the new elevator or the Terminal's original sweeping staircase. There, visitors may dine in The Cloud Room restaurant as they watch air traffic on Hobby Airport's active runways. An even better vantage point for serious aviation observers can be experienced on the expansive outside observation decks on either side of the Terminal. There will be no finer vantage point to view commercial airport operations anywhere in the United States.

The third floor will be dedicated to static educational exhibits that illustrate the role Houston and Texas has played in the development of aviation. The development of commercial aviation, the birth and growth of corporate aviation and men and women who have greatly contributed to our aviation history will be highlighted in these exhibits.

The fourth floor will be used for the Museum's administrative offices, volunteer and workshop rooms, and collections storage.

The top of the Terminal is the control tower cab, which was added to the building in the late 1940s. The 1940 Air Terminal Museum will recreate as accurately as possible a control tower of the period. In addition, Museum visitors will be treated to an incredible panoramic view of both Hobby Airport and all of the Houston area. Visitors will be able to listen to period radio transmissions between the tower and aircraft as well as the contemporary traffic occurring at that moment.

The 1940 Air Terminal Museum will be a physical and emotionally immersing experience that will go far beyond what people have experienced with any other aviation museum. It will literally challenge the senses of visitors when they walk through the door and step into the past. The sights and sounds of a busy air terminal of the mid twentieth century will bring a new appreciation of our aviation heritage that goes far beyond the conventional museum visitor experience.

For information regarding membership, volunteer opportunities and other information about the project, please visit our website at www.1940airterminal.org or contact us at 8601 Travelair, Houston, Texas 77061, or contact Drew Coats at 281/367-7732.

HELLO GOLDEN EAGLE GOLFERS:

For the 2002 Tournament, we will be returning to the Primm Valley Resort and Golf Club. Erica and her staff are very pleased that we will be returning. And remember, **LADIE'S ARE WELCOME** to be a part of the golf package. The format will be Scramble.



DATES: Oct. 7th. Hotel check-in
Oct. 8th. Golf tee-time 10AM
Oct. 9th. Golf tee-time 8AM

WHERE: Primm Valley at the Calif./Nevada State line: 40 minute drive from The Tropicana Hotel in Las Vegas. The golf course is 5 minutes drive Into Calif. Off the I-15 South. Take Yates Well Rd. turn off to the course.

HOTEL: Primm Valley Resort. Rooms can be single or double occupancy @ no Extra charge. No need to book your own reservation. I will handle that For you based on your response on the returned entry form.

COST: > single golfer \$265.00
> double golfer \$245.00

PACKAGE INCLUDES: > 2 days of golf on the Tom Fassio designed course
> range balls and carts
> 2 days hotel accommodations

R.S.V.P. DEADLINE: SEPTEMBER 23rd. Make checks payable to Paul F. Grover
REMEMBER!!!!!!!!!!!!!! SOFT SPIKES.....NO STEEL

MAIL TO: Paul F. Grover (702) 253-5236
5236 Island Chain Rd. pgroverluv2sail@aol.com
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_____ single golfer@ \$265.00
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Name _____
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_____ handicap (if known) _____ handicap (if known)
Name _____ / _____



K.D. THOMPSON/ "BUD" BATTLE REPORT

Greetings Members,

On Friday, March 15th, Bud Battle and I visited the Continental HQ in downtown Houston to obtain information that would be helpful to retirees regarding the new e-ticketing (read e-pass) which is now in effect. I am happy to report we were greeted by smiling, friendly people who enjoy their jobs and their company and were only too happy to help us. This was a complete 180 degrees difference from previous administrations that we had encountered.

The accompanying letter is mailed to all newly retired employees. You will note that they are moving to a new paperless (read e-ticket) environment and as of Jan. 1, 2002 have advised that they will be charging a \$10 service charge for any passes, which have to be written at the ticket counter, if you can find anyone who still knows how to do this.

To bring everyone up to speed and particularly those who may have been off the property and out of touch since around 1990 we would like to furnish the following information.

If you wish to use your benefits and desire to keep in touch with what is happening within the company you must accomplish (2) things:

- 1). You must check and be certain that you are in the Company's Computer Data Bank. The company changed their Computer Data Systems in late 80's and early 90's and if you were not on the property at that time there is a good possibility that you were left out and your old clock no. even reassigned. Debra Green of (Employee Info. Services) at (713) 324-2557 is in charge of this and there is a (Retiree Travel Authorization Form) which may have to be completed and returned. If you do have to fill out this form you will need to obtain a photocopy of your marriage license to include your spouse. You will need to accomplish this in order to log on to company web site, (coair.com), select "Employee Res." to check flt. schedules, check loads, book & receive your e-ticket authorization.**
- 2). You can request and get an (Retiree LD. Badge). Marlene Larson of Human Resources at (713) 324-2309 is in charge of this and there is another form, which must be completed and returned for this.**

Marlene Larson has graciously accepted to be the central liaison for both of these functions for the company so you may contact her and she will provide you with both forms and the necessary information.

In closing I might add that I finally got around to using the e-ticket around the first of the year and find it to be a breeze and a real blessing from having to go to some ticket counter and standing in line. Try it, you'll like it!

K. D. Thompson

P.S. Again, if there is anyone out there who would like to be on the mailing list for "THE CO TIMES" and "CO QUARTERLY" you can contact me at (winter 520 625-2646), (summer 360 892-0810) or email (kdkcthom@aol.com) with your info. and I will see to it that you are put on mailing list.

Continental Airlines



Dear Retiree:

Congratulations on your Retirement! We are very pleased to enclose your Continental Retiree Identification Badge. Continental is rapidly moving to a paperless environment. eTicket is now Continental's preferred method of ticketing for pass travel. The Employee Number located on the back of the badge is required when eTicketing your retiree-status pass travel privileges.

To eTicket your pass travel, simply select one of the following options...

Web Site

Log on to www.coair.com and enter your Employee Number along with your password. Select "employeeRES" from the Index on the left-hand side of the screen. Click on the "Check Flights" button in the upper left-hand corner and follow the steps to create your ePass.

- Your initial password is the last 4 digits of your social security number. The system will immediately prompt you to change your password. Please write down this new password for your future reference.

Continental Pass Line (CPL)

Call the CPL in Houston at 713-324-PASS or outside Houston at 1-877-324-PASS. This voice-activated system will prompt you for your Employee Number and your password.

- Your password is your birth date (mm/dd/yy).
Example, June 23, 1970 would be entered as 062370.

To check-in for your flight...

Go first to an eService Center (eTicket Machine) or to the Ticket Counter to obtain your stand-by boarding pass. You will be added to the stand-by list at that time. The stand-by boarding pass and a picture ID are needed to process through the security checkpoint.

To update Continental with your personal contact information...

Log on to www.coair.com and enter your Employee Number along with your password. Select "myCOAIR" from the Index on the left-hand side of the screen. Scroll down, click on the "Change of Address" icon and follow the steps to change your personal contact information. Please keep this information current so we can share new information with you as it becomes available.

For assistance and questions...

If you have questions regarding your retiree-status pass travel privileges or need assistance in setting up your eTicket bookings, please use the following contacts.

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| • Log-in and password assistance: | PC Support | coairhd@eds.com
888-435-7413 |
| • Pass Travel questions: | Employee Travel Center | etc@coair.com
713-324-5555 |
| • JA record updates: | Employee Information Services | eis@coair.com
713-324-5327 |



GOLDEN EAGLES TREASURER'S REPORT

11/09/01 – 3/9/02

Balance from 11/09/01	\$ 8,161.01
Income 11/09/01 - 3/09/02	
Dues	\$ 3,530.00
Postage donations	\$ 1,117.00
TIRPA donation	\$ 1,000.00
Other income	\$ 101.02
Total Income	\$ 5,748.02
Disbursements 11/09/01 - 3/09/02	
Winter Golden Contrails	\$ 3,412.50
Fall 2002 Convention Deposit	\$ 500.00
Fall Golf Deposit **	\$ 2,500.00
Bereavement Donations	\$ 75.00
Misc. payments	\$ 2.40
Total Disbursements	\$ 6,489.50
Asset - deposit for golf ** (+) to be returned by convention date	\$ 2,500.00
Balance 3/09/02	\$ 9,919.53

A special welcome to our new members

Thanks to some very generous postage fund donations from some very generous members, our balance continues to be healthy, though the costs of printing and mailing our fine *Golden Contrails Magazine* continue to rise. Perhaps it's time to give thought to a dues increase next year. To all who have donated to the postage fund - a big **THANK YOU!**

Remember, \$20 annual dues are payable by the first of each year. Please take a moment to look at the **red number** on your mailing label. If it's a number less than **2002**, you are **not** current in your dues. The costs of printing and mailing is such that you are subject to removal from the roster if you are in arrears. Please bring your status "current" by sending your check for \$20.00 per year. If your dues records are different from those shown in **RED** on your mailing label, please let me know so that I can correct them.

Please continue to send me any mailing address, phone or e-mail address corrections or additions.

Charlie Starr, Treasurer
4328 Sunset Beach Circle
Niceville, FL 32578-4820
phone 850 897-0898
e-mail cws1932@cox.net

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 Kahn, Karen
 La Rocque, John "Buzz"

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TEAR OUT THIS PAGE IF NEEDED

Please Note: The **RED number** on your mailing label denotes your dues status of record (i.e. "2002" means your dues are paid up through 2002). The letter "W" = widow; "H"= honorary; "L"= lifetime; and CT= Contrails Magazine only. If your **RED** number is less than 2002, than you are subject to removal from the mailing list. We sincerely do not wish to remove you from this list, however the high cost of printing and mailing makes this necessary. Please take a moment to make sure your dues are current.

**Please use this form to update any of your information
or when renewing your membership (\$20.00 per year)**

Please Print

Last Name _____, First Name _____ Middle Initial _____

Nick Name (if any) _____ Spouse's Name _____

Mailing Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____ Phone (_____) _____

E-Mail Address _____ Other Information _____

Mail to:

Charlie Starr, Treasurer/Membership

4328 Sunset Beach Circle

Niceville, FL 32578-4820

phone 850 897-0898

e mail: cws1932@cox.net

HOW THE OTHER HALF LIVES

Navy F18 Loses Canopy Over Afghanistan

Navy Fighter Pilot First Person Account



In case anyone asks, flying around in an F18 without a canopy is bad for the skin. Twenty thousand feet over Afghanistan in an open air McDonnell Douglas Cabriolet is just a bad, bad place. Air's real dry up there, causes the skin to dry out. That and the wind chill factor, of course.

0130 launch. Fifth and final planned tanker rendezvous. (25K MSL and, guessing, 280-285 knots.) Had 13.0 on board, but wanted to run my wingman back through because he only had 10.0 or so with an hour and a half to recovery. Sun was not up (0600), but it was bright enough. My goggles and goggle bracket were both stowed. Tanker had four receivers (including myself) immediately afterwards. I was the fifth guy to tank. The boom operator re-cycled the hose between me and number four of the oncoming Marine section.

The boom operator called "clear" before I tanked. Tanking appeared normal to me. Air was smooth. Hose cut loose and I pulled the power back and picked up the nose in order to try and "ride the wave." Refueling probe did not feel too much stress based on vibrations I felt in the cockpit. Hose separated about seven feet up from the basket.

KC10 take-up reel on the refueling hose didn't take up. After some wailing and flailing the KC10 and I disconnected but I still had part of it with me - the basket and seven feet of hose. The hose had a ten pound fitting on it that was quickly revealed when the wind stripped off the rubber sheath from the hose. Once revealed, it proceeded to beating the living shit out of my airplane. "This is gonna be bad, this is gonna be real bad," I thought. I was right. After twenty sufficiently violent whacks the canopy gave up the ghost. I had never thought about what a shattering canopy would sound like.

I figured since it's made of plastic it shouldn't sound like glass. Wrong! Sounded just like when you go flying through a plate glass window. Of course all the glass went out, vice in. Cockpit pressure went from eight grand to ambient in about a heartbeat. Don't know exactly where the KC10 went. Last I saw him he was turning for the southwest, spewing gas in the air and spewing words over the radio. "Bossman" had no time for little 'OLE me.

> F-18 HORNET RESEARCH FIGHTER

This F-18 has been modified to test a new feature. Strakes, hinged structures on its nose, open to stabilize the jet as it dives at a steep angle of attack. They give the pilot better handling in an otherwise dangerous maneuver.

At first (before I put the top down) I thought I could make it home. "Okay, it's 650 away, I got 13.5... probably have to go pretty slow and kinda low. And that xxxing hunk of Sxxx on my nose can't be doing much for my gas mileage. This should warrant a ready deck. Yeah, one or two passes before they have to barricade me. And I ain't boltered yet, so... "Descended about three thousand feet and decelerated to about 260 by the time the canopy blew. Then the glass shattered. "Okay, Jacobabad it is."

Went down to about nineteen K and put out the speedbrake. Fitting was still beating up the jet while passing through 240 knots. At about 230 the beatings stopped and I started down, maintaining airspeed. Flight controls and engines appeared fine. Ball was a little out of center, but that was it. Didn't have to put JBAD on the nose... it was straight ahead!

Nav system told me it was 260 NM away. My body told me it was pretty damn cold up there. The KC10 remains were still trying to get at my head so I started descending and decelerating (opposing states, so I'm not sure I did either one that efficiently). Leveled off at twelve thousand. I stopped getting beat up; the fitting just hung in the slipstream by my canopy bow, at 230 knots.

"You know, if a guy really wanted to get shot at by a MANPAD he'd fly a profile a lot like what I'm doing now." Oh well. It's at time like this when you just make a decision and go with it. If you pull it off, then it was... "outstanding airmanship and in keeping with the highest tradition of the United States Naval Service." If you don't pull it off, you get bagged... well, maybe they'll name a safety award or the new Base Gym after you.

Managed to grab the piss bag that was flying around the cockpit and stuff it in my helmet bag. While stuffing other things away the in-flight Pac was ripped out of my hands. It went over the side in a flash. "Scotty's gonna hate that."

Inlet temperature read 3. Buffeting while hunkered down behind the glare shield wasn't that bad. My wingman was still with me through all this. Because of some late tankers and shuffling, he only had 10K in gas, so he definitely wasn't gonna make it back without tanking.

But because of how I had to sit in the cockpit to minimize the windblast I needed him to watch over me. I was pretty much hunkered down for the ride at this point. Seat lowered, visor down, cockpit heat up full and hunched over staring at one of the TV screens in the cockpit.

It's weird the thoughts that come to you during times like this. "You know, sitting this close to the screen is bad for my eyes." I could look right and left and see the Afghanistan and then the Pakistan scenery slowly drifting by. Too Slowly! On the descent the airplane's computer was displaying how long it would take me to get to

the divert given my decelerating airspeed. "Okay, 20 minutes. Not bad. I can do that no pro... oh, thirty minutes now. Okay, piece of cake... Forty? Sxxx." Settled out at forty-eight. In the end, I didn't really look outside much, just peeked over the dashboard every couple of minutes to make sure the velocity vector was on top of the upcoming ridgelines. This part of the world is not pretty, by the way. Once everyone realized the seriousness of the situation they started to talk to me. The AWACS switched me over to the E2 in charge of the south. They started relaying stuff I needed to tell the boat the parts the jet would need in order to make a flight back out again. The fact that my wingman was going to make the 0900 recovery vice the 0730, stuff like that. "The boat wants to know how badly the canopy is cracked." I couldn't believe that one. "It's not cracked, it's gone. I'm flying a convertible." Apparently that line made it through all the nets loud and clear.

As far as the cockpit was concerned there were two different and distinct regions. From my knees down I was toasty and warm. "This little piggy" was getting sweaty in fact. Then the chilly zone above that. The wind was swirling around pretty good and I was trying to grab all the paper and shove it into my helmet bag. Only lost one bit of classified stuff. After twenty minutes I started getting the shakes. I tried to stuff my whole body down by the rudder pedals with limited success. Kept my hands warm, though. Thank God for autopilot!

About this time my wingman came up and said, "Hey, can you reach out and grab that thing... pull it in?" I looked over at him (not that he could see me) with a look of shock. Stick my arm out into that wind, get my arm blasted back and thrashed on the glass shards sticking up everywhere? "Have you lost your mind?" "Oh yeah, guess it's kinda windy. Sorry." Like I said, it's strange the thoughts you have sometimes. My wingman and I talked about the airfield. Frequencies, layout, the fact that the locals like to shoot at planes landing there. You know, just normal airport talk. We talked about landing on a runway, something neither of us had done for three months. And we dumped fuel to lighten the load. We were each carrying two thousand pounds of unexpended ordnance, so the Air Force guys were going to love us. Lastly we dropped the landing gear in close formation and compared airspeed and AOA to make sure the KC10 hadn't damaged my AOA and airspeed probes as well. I had him land first because I thought the hose might drag on the ground and get rolled up on by the nose wheel. After that, who knew what would happen.

Dumped down to 3.0 each. Airspeed and AOA checks accomplished at 170 and 150 knots. Appeared fine. Approach was initiated from 5k AGL when the threshold was ten degrees down. Started to slow the descent at about five hundred feet. Landed on speed at the nine board (BRAG). Don't remember seeing a VASI or anything. Airfield diagram on approach plate doesn't show any landing aids.

The plane flew fine with all that junk on it. Just had to use the rudder pedals, which is kind of an emergency procedure for a Hornet pilot. When I slowed to on-

speed, I got the “sunroof effect” pretty bad. You know, when you’re zorching down the road and you open the sunroof, but leave all the other windows up? That vibration you get until you crack another window? Well, I got kind of an advanced case of that during my Space Shuttle descent to final.

We both rolled out fine. Well, maybe not *fine*. We had to use all ten thousand feet and both had smoking brakes. (Our brakes hadn’t been used in awhile. On the boat the wire brings you to a gentle stop without them, of course.) The emergency crews were waiting for us. And they were pointing and gawking as would be appropriate for a situation such as this. Couple of natives looked on in a disinterested manner.

Of course I had to do a flight physical after all this. Had to make sure I wasn’t on drugs before I launched on my six-hour mission into Afghanistan. The facilities in Jacobabad ain’t all that bad. I’m here to tell you we are number one in tent technology. Our tents kick ass! They got AC and everything. Since it’s an Air Force base they got all the best entertainment. Drew Carey and Joan Jett had been there already. Shania Twain was supposedly coming too (broke my heart... if only I’d had better timing). And of course the Toga Party on Saturday. Can’t forget that!

The maintainers showed up about four hours after I did. After the appropriate amount of gawking they got to work and fixed it well enough for the RTB in under four hours. Nice job all around. By the end, the basket and hose were removed, the canopy had been replaced and the LEX repaired with 300 mile an hour tape. (“Americans. Can do easy.”)

The next morning I took off low and fast at sunrise. Low and fast was due to the local and the guns, of course... not because it was fun. I checked in and the E2 said, “It’s good to hear your voice again.” The RTB was uneventful right up to the end. A PTS shaft died and subsequently one of my hydraulic systems gave up the ghost when I dropped the gear. I got a couple of spurious flight control cautions but didn’t really give it much thought as I was working the landing. As I started the approach turn the nose started to wander and I got another caution tone.

I lost one aileron, one rudder and half a horizontal stab. I hit the reset button and I think everything cleared. Then I saw the Hydraulic Cautions come up. Hitting the reset button suddenly went from normal response to big mistake. When the aileron failed again I realized I sorta needed to get aboard the first time. “Man... first I miss Shania and now this. This is just not my week!” I got aboard because the Hornet is a fantastic jet. I got a fair grade for the pass because I’m not very smooth when I’m rattled.

I pretty much assumed I was in trouble throughout all this. A canopy has got to cost 70 or 80 grand. Depending on how much repairing the windscreen and the

airframe were... it could cost over 200 grand... which would mean a Class B mishap. Which would mean I was screwed. Again! Thinking all this and seeing the CO waiting for me when I landed made my heart sink. But that was not the reason he was there. The decision was made somewhere to make a big deal about this in a good way. Just like that... dirt bag to hero! Funny.

Turned over bodily fluids to VFA-147 Safety Officer. This isn't the first thing that's happened to me out here, you know. We're flying the sxxx out of these jets and it's starting to show. I had to come back from the box with an engine shut down a week or two before. I'm starting to feel like that Lt. who keeps getting hosed in "The Bridges at Toko Ri!" I got my letter in after all. I'm getting too short for this sxxx.

Oh well, statistically speaking, the rest of the cruise should be smooth sailing. What are the odds something like this will happen again?

2002 FALL FLING IN SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA

ARECA

It is exciting that Bea Weber Balestrieri, who has just retired after about forty years with Continental as a Flight Attendant, has volunteered to spearhead our Fall Fling in Scottsdale. Bea is looking forward to seeing many of her old friends there.

Bea will be putting an item in the Golden Tale telling you about interesting things to do in Scottsdale. Arizona retirees are solicited to assist Bea in making this the best of all flings. People will be needed for their ideas, for the registration desk, the hospitality room, etc.

Please contact Bea at

10417 East Cinnabar St., Scottsdale, AZ 85258
(480) 391-2844

The Fling will be held at the Ramada Valley Hotel in Scottsdale, AZ on Thursday, November 7, and Friday, November 8, 2002.

The Ramada is a very nice facility. The November dates are good in that the weather has cooled down. The rates are \$60 per night, and the local members in the Scottsdale area are impressed with the facility, the dates and the rate.



GONE WEST:

CHARLIE BECKER died January 30, 2002. **CHARLIE** was born on March 5, 1931, in Blue Island, Illinois. After serving as a pilot in the Korean War **CHARLIE** was hired by Continental Airlines, and later became Captain. When **CHARLIE** bought a ranch in Wise County, Texas, his good friend, **RUSS COONLEY** bought one in the same area.

At the funeral **RUSS COONLEY** stated, "When Charlie flew a checkride with the airline, he was the best. Whether he flew with old captains or young copilots, it was always a pleasure. Flight crew, crew schedulers, maintenance folk, fuelers and cleaners, all liked and respected him..... Charlie exemplified all the good in everything he did. It showed in his love for his family, his faith in God, and his farm and animals. Charlie faced his leukemia as he did the rest of his life; It might beat him but it would not take his dignity."

When **CHARLIE** learned his illness was terminal, he checked into the Hams Hospital in Fort Worth. There his doctors stopped all chemotherapy and transfusions, and gave him morphine to ease his pain. **CHARLIE** was respected and loved by his airline peers as well as by his many ranching and neighborhood friends. **CHARLIE** was a member of the Golden Eagles, and he will be sorely missed. He was also a member of the Christ Temple in Irving, Texas. Services were held at the First Baptist Church in Alvord, on February 2nd, with wife, **CORINNE**, two daughters, two sons, other family members, and many friends attending. (e-mails from **ROLAND BROWN**, **NORM MCGOWAN** and **KEN ALRICK**, plus an obituary from **RUSS COONLEY**)

GEORGE CHILDERS passed away on February 9, 2002. **GEORGE** was born in Miles City, Montana. After he served in

the Navy during World War II, **GEORGE** joined Continental on April 11, 1966. In 1968, **GEORGE** transferred to Guam and Air Mike, flying its DC-6. He married **Tiger Matthews**, a popular CO cabin attendant, in the DC-6, as it circled Guam! **GEORGE** died after a short illness. e-mail from **TED HERBERT**, **ROLAND BROWN**, **DICK GRIGSBY**, and **K.D. THOMPSON**.

ILLNESSES/SURGERY:

JACK DANIEL at age 85, has had additional health problems. After gall bladder surgery in August. **JACK**'s pain didn't stop, so he took a catscan with negative results. A stomach doctor completed an endoscopic examination and found hidden stones in **JACK**'s bowel duct. Eighteen days later (Dec. 07, 2001), **JACK** is enjoying life with **LO OUTTA** in Rancho Mirage. **JACK** mentioned that he sees **JIM** and **LOU HIGBY** in Rancho Mirage occasionally.

We have no recent news about **FRANK RHODES**. Any information would be appreciated.

READERS ARE INVITED TO SEND NOTES OF SYMPATHY, CONDOLENCE, ETC.

THIS'N THAT:

In the last issue this columnist mentioned that **BUD BATTLE** would have some information on e-ticket procedures. **K.D. THOMPSON** and **BUD** have worked together to put that information in this issue... Also it is Captain **DAVE FURULI**, instead of **ROBERT**!

Last Convention notes

DAVE FURULI should have flown his last Boeing 777 trip about November 22, 2001.

MAT BOMIS gave a very humorous two

minute talk including mention of AMOUS CANN's parachute jump and KEN MORGAN's jokes!

REX and ANNETTE BUCHANAN average two or three ElderHostel educational offerings per year.

HANK and ELLEN SCHNIEDER spent the previous six months traveling with a 5th wheeler.

ED and ALICE GORMAN live a half year in Scottsdale and a half year in Cape Cod.

ERNIE ISLAVA had been very sick, but at Convention time, he was much better.

K.D. THOMPSON advised that CASEY's parents are having health problems, so they are moving to the Fort Worth area to be nearby to help....

MIRIAM TAYLOR wanted everyone to know that the Denver ARECA Fall Fling had not been canceled. (Acct. 09/11/2001)

--- end of Last Convention notes---

CLIFF PLEGGENKUHLE (PLEGGIE) was honored with a cover page picture and article in the December issue of the "OX5

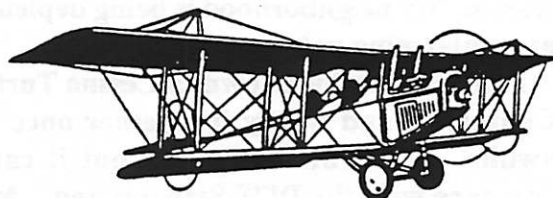


N E W S . " CLIFF's aviation career began in 1931 in Glendale, California where he was enrolled in a Master Mechanics course on airplanes and engines.

CLIFF was hired as a mechanic by TWA, then later by Continental, where he became a copilot and then Captain, and he finished his career flying Boeing 707-320's on Military

Charters to Viet-Nam.

CLIFF has been a very active member of the "OX5 Aviation Pioneers", making it easy for this Editor to become a Member (one who has flown an aircraft powered by an OX5 engine, prior to approximately 1945), and helping all his family, and our other Editor become Historian Members, (applicants need only be interested in the OX5 Aviation Pioneers). Because of his OX5 activities, CLIFF was elected National OX5 President in 1997, and now is serving as California Governor for a second time.



Jan. 3, 2002: Dear Dick (Grigsby), Thank you for the Golden Contrails. I enjoyed reading about everyone and I thought the pictures were good. It was fun seeing you after all this time, even if we do have grey hair (ha). Have a happy New Year and thanks again for the Contrails. LaRue Johnson Pierce...(LaRue is the mother of Pam Hart Cole, daughter of Bill Hart)

e-mail to Dick Grigsby 01/18/2002:

I wanted you to get the first copy of my BIO—here it is:

At the age of fourteen I started flying for fun.

Then I flew for fun and Country.

Then I flew for fun and money.

Now I have completed the circle and I fly for fun.

Boy Howdy!, didn't I have fun?

That about sums it up. I think this BIO fits a lot of people we know. How are you doing? I have an opportunity to fly a Staggerwing, and I thought you might give me some tips; like don't ground loop. Ann and I, and all the family are doing well. Time moves so fast these days, even here on the ranch where nothing is in a hurry. A lot of my old friends are going West at an alarming rate. Thanks for your hard work on the Golden Eagle. We appreciate you.

John and Ann Campbell.

Dear John....yes, I guess that about "sums it up." I know what you mean about losing friends. My neighborhood is being depleted at an alarming rate.

I have a friend who owns a Cessna Turbo Centurion, and we fly it together once in awhile. It's a nice airplane, but it can't compare with the DI7S Staggerwing. My only advice is....pay attention to what the seat of your pants is telling you and....don't ground loop! Regards to you...LOVE to Ann!
Dick 01/16/2002

From Roland Brown



As many of you know, Santa came early for me this year! Judy Pendergraft and I were married on Dec. 8th. A beautiful ceremony was held in a n o l d Southern style home, now an

Austin restaurant, and we and were united by a member of the family, Reverend Eric

Klimpel of Bay City, Texas.

Instead of groomsmen and bridesmaids, the wedding attendants were our children and grandchildren. Judy and I together now have a total of nine children and fourteen grandchildren!



During the reception, Santa made a surprise visit with presents for our grandchildren who were there! There was singing, dancing, drinking and eating, and it was really a special time as the family affair took on a holiday flavor. It was wonderful to be surrounded by our families and many friends on such a special occasion.

As time goes by, we're busily working on "happily ever after"! Roland Brown

JOHN BENDER celebrated his 95th birthday with 27 other members at a Quiet Birdmen Meeting on March 11th. Although JOHN came in a wheelchair, pushed by his good friend BILL CHILDRESS, he was very happy to see all his QB friends and he thoroughly enjoyed hie salmon dinner!

MAINTENANCE ON MAC 707's

By Dick Dahse

My primary station was Danang, but I spent time in the other stations, including Okinawa, Honolulu, Bangkok, Travis, Phillippines, Cam-Ran Bay, and McCord. Some maintenance stories that I recall follow:

On arrival into Danang, I noted a bad hydraulic leak. Captain said it was okay,

as he would crank the gear down at Okinawa.. I made a temporary repair with speed tape(no hydraulic lines available), and that airplane flew for a long time before it had a complete repair.

At Danang again — a 30 caliber bullet caused a leak in a fuel tank. A PAA mechanic went into tank and put in a plug patch, which was temporary. About 5 trips later the plug patch was still in — good job, huh?

One of the 707's had pilot complaints of stiff controls for a long time, so a mechanic in Okinawa was going to rerig the flight control system on a turnaround. I squashed that, or the airplane would have been there a week. Finally, LAX Maintenance did fix it!

At McCord Air Force Base a 707 had a Doppler problem. I found the trouble was the antenna. No moving parts, but the antenna wouldn't switch from No. 1 to No.2. Made temporary repair, and the 707 flew safely to HNL, where a spare antenna was available.

Bill Boyd never did appreciate that the crews made the MAC operation what it was. At SAT an engine dragged on landing, and it was necessary to ferry it out, but getting the thrust reverser positioned so that a ferry kit could be installed was a major problem. Using 4 x 4's, come-ons, and whatever, and after many hours of work, we succeeded in getting the job done so that the airplane could be ferried to LAX.

While offloading a freighter in Danang, we had a rocket attack. The Captain was standing nearby talking, and I shouted "to the Bunker!" He just stood there, so I grabbed him and we got to the Bunker. Some fuel tanks blew up, but none of the aircraft were damaged!

Usually we were in our tents, when a rocket attack occurred, and we all carried

as much beer as we could as we rushed to the Bunkers.

In Okinawa we had a typhoon where we spent a couple of days in the Koza Palace Hotel—but that doesn't top the experience of the guys on Wake Island!

Going into Saigon, I was on the jump seat and when looking left, I could see a PAA B707 at same altitude, so I tapped the Capt on the shoulder, and pointed, and he immediately dived, and PAA went over us a little too close for comfort! After our near miss, there was no word or explanation from the Tower!

On one of my trips back to the States, I had the good fortune to fly with a crew that let me sit up front most of the way and work the Doppler and Loran. I learned more about navigation on that trip than I learned in all of the ground schools that I ever attended.

a crew came into Bangkok with a load of troops, and then was scheduled to ferry back to Okinawa. The Capt elected to flight plan the shortest route over Laos, and, since he would arrive in Okinawa early, he decided to take the crew to downtown Bangkok. Our Station Representative came to the aircraft, ready to dispatch the flight, and found no crew. He called Bill Boyd, and the phone lines were burning for hours! But the aircraft still arrived early in Okinawa....

Bill Boyd visited the stations on a frequent basis. He came to Danang to let me know how he wanted my vacation to work. I was going back to the States to get married, but Bill's interpretation of my allowed time off was greatly different from the CAL Handbook and Rules. I refused his schedule and he blew up. We were in the Officers Club and all the military heard the whole thing. I got the correct time off (in accord with the CAL Handbook), and Bill Boyd was not happy. He thought he

was the ruler of all people involved in the MAC Program. Well, he was close, but the Flight Crews and some of us wouldn't put up with it!

Last but not least were the layovers. Lots of boat trips in Okinawa, and hotel parties, where a lot of us met with our spouses!

—end of Dick Dahse on MAC—

e-mail to Ed Gorman (copy to R.Grigsby)

Mr. Gorman, Greetings, I am Bob Wampler's eldest son. I was surfing the net and found the Golden Eagles website and was pleased to see some pictures of the aircraft that my father flew and I grew up in.....Bob is alive and well, still living in Payson, Arizona. He still has a steady eye and busts 20-25 trap targets per squading weekly. His birthday is April 9 @82. It is getting harder and harder to get him to "come down off the mountain." and I wanted to get him to attend the convention in Las Vegas this year. Even I would enjoy attending as I have not seen the pilots that my father flew with for about 30 years. (I am 45 now).

I work as a domestic and international yacht and commercial vessel delivery captain, and supplement my time as a Learjet contract pilot. I live in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. Bob forwards to me the Contrails magazines which I read with great interest. Regards,

John G. Wampler, Continental Brat.

Bob's phone is 520-474-0762.

—end of Wampler e-mail—

e-mail (edited) from Ken Alrick

Grounded at 60:Government discriminates
against pilots. by Patti Ellis

The long-dreaded hour had finally come

and the sky over George Bush Intercontinental Airport draped itself down dark and eerie, like an unwanted shroud. Searching the eastern horizon we caught our first glimpse of that magnificent DC-10 as it made its final approach. The airplane landed like a feather floating to the ground, its flawless meeting of wheel to concrete, the telling touch of the man at the helm.

That kind of artistry comes only after a lifetime spent bringing thousands of airplanes safely back down to Earth. As my husband and I watched from the roof of the parking garage, the fleeting moments that had just passed before us stood as a sobering reminder that time stops for no man—especially a man who happens to be an airline pilot by profession. And now we had seen the end come.....

As the plane taxied toward its gate two fire trucks lined up to give the perfunctory salute of a water archway under which the aircraft would pass. It all looked so grand, except I kept wondering if those firemen knew the significance of what they were witnessing.....Would they — or anyone else in the blasted airport that evening — ever be forced to comply with such a draconian date of finality? Yet this is precisely the unfair and unlawful treatment our government imposes on every commercial airline pilot the moment they reach 60 years of age. Uncle Sam lays down the law. In spite of excellent health, a razor sharp mind and a flawless flying career, the moment you turn 60, your job is gone.

What other profession can you think of — that is given a government-mandated retirement deadline based solely on age? In a day in time when one can barely tune into the media without hearing volumes about "discrimination," this is discrimination in its most blatant form.....you and I dare not disregard individual merit, but our government

maintains every right to do so.....It is an injustice beyond comprehension....

The airplane was now parked, its brakes set and the fire trucks long gone. The passengers had filed out one by one, all disappearing into the flow of the bustling airport. As is the custom among airline pilots, many had gathered there to greet their friend as he left his plane – and his life as captain – for the very last time. Suddenly , we all knew what we had come to witness, to be a part of, was about to occur. We strained to look down the jet way and for the tiniest piece of a moment time seemed to just hang there like the catch of a breath. And then there he stood.

With one hand lightly holding the hand of his wife and the other grasping firmly his worn and weathered flight bag, he walked up that jetway like a man walking the plank. He didn't want this to be his last flight. He didn't want to see all of us there, our arms and our love extended toward him. He wanted this flight to be like all the others. Get the people safely to their destination, do a little paper work, then head for the employee parking lot and home. That's all. No big deal. Same thing he'd been doing for 35 years. And, next week, he would do it all over again.

After all, why shouldn't a man work and be productive for as long as God, not the government, gives him the ability?

Ellis is a published author and lecturer. Her husband, Walter Ellis, has flown for Continental Airlines for 36 years.

Editor's Note: a very well written description of how we all felt when we flew our last flight many years ago!

Editor's Additional Note: Check the last issue of "Golden Contrails" for item telling of a possible change in " age 60 law" by Congress.

-end of e-mail to Ken Alrick–

From Norm Meyer

THE GOOD OLD DAYS (note date)

September 17, 1945

BRANIFF AIRWAYS, INC.

Love Field, Dallas, Texas

**INFORMATION CONCERNING THE
POSITION OF AIR HOSTESS
QUALIFICATIONS.**

Only applicants meeting all the requirements will be considered.

- 1. Two years of accredited college work (60 semester hrs. – transcript required upon employment) - Better than average intelligence..**
- 2. Single (never married).**
- 3. 21-26 years of age at time of employment**
- 4. 5'3" - 5'5" height, with proportionate weight (125 lbs. Maximum)**
- 5. Perfect physical condition, well-proportioned, no disfigurements.**
- 6. Satisfactory vision; the wearing of glasses while on duty is not permitted.**
- 7. Must be tactful, gracious and resourceful, have poise, present a well-groomed, attractive appearance, be emotionally stable; have a friendly interest in people and warmth of approach.**
- 8. Unquestionable family background.. ...and an irreproachable character.**
- 9. Business experience desirable, preferably involving public contact work, or other experience indicating ability to deal with people.**

Rate of Pay

Beginning pay.....	\$125 per month.
After 6 months.....	140 per month.
After 1 year.....	150 per month
After 2 years.....	155 per month
After 3 years.....	160 per month
After 4 years.....	165 per month
After 5 years.....	170 per month

*** * * * ***

—end of Norm Meyer's Notes—

**From La Verne Thornberry
Golden Tale, December, 2001:**

Congratulations to NEE NEE & BILL EATON, who celebrated their 60th Wedding Anniversary on October 1st. NEE NEE is doing well after severe back surgery, although progress is slow. Since their anniversary celebration she had a fall, her arm was broken, and she is very bruised, especially her face.

PEGGY & NORM MCGOWAN ATTENDED THE CARM outing in Pennsylvania, and enjoyed it tremendously. PEGGY had surgery, which she had postponed, when they returned home. She is doing well, but was not able to attend the Fall Fling or the Eagles Meeting. NORM was in Houston to fly in the Air Show and had some good visits with other CO pilots who were also flying in the show.

ROSE & RUSS HURLBUTT had an excellent time at the ARECA meeting, followed by a fast trip to Calgary to deliver their daughter's car. The drive was beautiful through the countryside—but there was a whole lot of scenery on that 53-hour ride returning home.

Golden Tale, January 2002:

LEM BELL had surgery for a shoulder separation. He had one of those freak accidents—falling from the last 2-3 steps on the stairway. Our wish for him is a speedy and complete recovery.

ALICE POWERS did not retire from bringing the ladies favors for our banquet tables. ALICE, we appreciate your thoughtfulness in remembering us with these lovely gifts. Sure wish I could grow fingernails as pretty as the polish.

Golden Tale, February, 2002:

With the entertainment we have had in

the country, the Christmas luncheon, fish fries at BEN WILLIAMS' beautiful lake home, and the barbeques HENRI ROGERS has at the rustic Fishing and Hunting Club, we may not have any more city parties!

LEON GREEN made a change. After many years of an annual ritual, he did not join his friends on the lease. Instead of sitting in a deer blind, he sat his granddaughter Ella. Ella's nanny went on vacation, her parents went out of the country, so her grandparents (who else could best spoil her?) went to "play" with one-year old+ Ella. When the game was over, Gramma and Grampa went home to bed.

Golden Tale, March, 2002:

RUSS HURLBUTT had a nice phone visit with BOB BULLOCK recently. CARRIE & BOB have the same address as reported a few months ago: 1105 Linfield Ct., Mesquite, 75151; phone 972-613-4320

MARILYN WALKER curtailed some of her activities during several months of illnesses. She has returned to her volunteer work at Frontier of Flights Museum. Needless to say, everyone was delighted to have her back on the job.

LEM BELL's therapy has been downgraded to two days a week. His shoulder is mending more slowly than he likes, but it is improving. Can you believe it that LEM's doctor says age is a factor in the healing process??? Of course, we know it is not LEM's age!

Letter, March 6, 2002:

NEE NEE & BILL EATON's grandson lives nearby and came over and tilled BILL's garden so BILL will soon begin the planting for their spring and summer garden. They are so smart and lucky to have a garden with BILL being able to work in it. Won't those fresh veggies be

great during the summer months? NEE NEE always manages to get some in the freezer for the colder months. They are both doing well, except NEE NEE's back continues to bother her since she fell. She will see her doctor soon and hopefully he will be able to do some new treatment and/or therapy, which will give her much relief.

RUSS HURLBUTT & DICK DAHSE visited the Santa Rosa, N.M. Air Museum recently. They were pleasantly surprised to see "CAPTAIN MONT D. ROPER's" name below the window of a DC-3. RUSS & DICK learned that MAXINE & MONT had been volunteers at the Museum for many years, and the Staff voted that this would be a worthy tribute to the memory of MONT, after he passed away.

RUSS & DICK enjoyed the trip immensely, but somewhere along the way, DICK picked up the flu bug, and had a bout with it. He is doing better and expects to be over it soon. Upon arriving home RUSS has a call that his 90-year old mother had been hospitalized with a heart condition. So away he flew to Upstate N.Y. to spend time with her. She is now home and doing much better, but does have a very bad cough which interferes with her rest.

As a personal note, La Verne mentioned her appreciation for "all the work put into the Golden Contrails. It is great to have it at intervals, besides being good to hear from the folks. It is interesting and beautiful."

—end of Thornberry Notes—

THE AERIAL "MILKRUN"

By G.M "Casey" Cameron
(With help from Merrill Moore).

The term "milkrun" probably originated with the railroads when the "local" stopped

at every little town and often had as its total traffic, a bag of mail and several cans of milk (cream) from each of these stops and maybe even a passenger or two. Though the airlines didn't carry cream cans to market, we did make the numerous stops to drop off and pick up the small bag of mail and perhaps even one or two passengers, maybe even a little freight. Thus we dubbed these routes as "milkruns".

In the early part of 1953, I returned from military duty in Korea and was immediately hired as a First Officer with Continental Air Lines at Denver. Our trip bids were based on seniority so being on the bottom of the "list", I was not awarded the choicest of runs in fact, I only flew a trip when



someone was ill or on vacation. Continental was considered a "Feeder" Airline and was subsidized to be able to serve all of the small communities on our routes. My first trips with the airline were to Kansas City from Denver, not the direct route but through all of the small towns enroute — a true "milkrun". Continental also had some non-stop routes that were being served with Convair 240s, 340s and DC-6s but these routes and equipment were beyond my reach as a new First Officer. The "milkruns" were flown with the faithful old DC-3, fondly called the "goony bird". These routes had been previously

served by the Lockheed Vegas, 10s and Lodestars.

In the early 1950s, Trip 66 departed Denver for Kansas City early in the morning and our first stop was Colorado Springs. Usually, we had a good load of passengers, mail and freight on this "leg" of the flight as there was no direct service to Colorado Springs in those days from cities other than Denver. From Colorado Springs, we went to Pueblo, Colorado, a mere 13 minutes or so flight. This segment was also rather productive but it was after departing Pueblo that we became the true "milkrun". Our next stop was la Junta, Colorado where we would make our 3 minute stop to pick up the mail, drop off and take on a passenger or two and proceed on to the next stop. (We left one engine running at these 3 minute stops) The flight from Pueblo to La Junta was scheduled for about 25 minutes enroute.

Next, we went to Garden City, Kansas and that "leg" was scheduled for about 27 minutes enroute. We constantly strived to fly each segment under scheduled time by efficient planning, not by the use of extra power from the engines. We felt that if we could save at least one minute from schedule on each "leg" that would help to make the flight profitable. There were times when the weather required an Instrument Approach rather than a Visual Approach and this took longer to accomplish. Even here we tried to keep the time down as much as possible, all the while practicing safe flying procedures.

Our next stop was Dodge City, Kansas and then on to Great Bend, Kansas. The Great Bend Segment was the longest segment of the day, scheduled for 32 minutes! After Great Bend, we stopped at Hutchinson, which was a fuel stop of 10 minutes (at one time the fuel stop at Salina was only 5 minutes)! But the time allowed

at these fuel stops gave us a chance to deplane and go into the terminal to pick up the sandwich that we had ordered ahead on company radio, for we had no crew meals in those days.

Flights along this route were especially uncomfortable in the heat of the Kansas summer, for the old DC-3 had no Air Conditioning. Ventilated air from outside was all that we could hope for and on the ground, (even for the three minutes) the cabin and the cockpit became like an oven. Our solution for this was to open the cockpit windows during take off and climb. The cockpit windows were located in a negative pressure area and vented the hot air out of the cabin when open. Once we reached our cruising altitude (usually no more than 1,000 to 2,000 feet above the terrain), the air would cool slightly, to the relief of the passengers and the crew. What we were not aware of at the time, was the fact that the tip speed of the propellers at take off with the cockpit windows open created a high frequency sound that caused considerable loss of hearing among the crews in later years. Retired "milkrun" pilots say "huh?" a lot!

So it was off to Salina, Manhattan, Topeka, and finally Kansas City, all with the 20 minute or less segments and the 3 minute stops. Traffic generally picked up from these cities and by the time we arrived in Kansas City we often had a full load of passengers again (which was 21).

Needless to say, cabin service on these flights was limited. We served no hot meals, and even the snacks we served were limited to small sandwiches, a piece of fruit and perhaps a cookie or two. Drinks were dispensed from 2 gallon thermos jugs that carried coffee, water or lemonade in the summer. Several hours into the flight, cold water became tepid, the hot coffee became luke warm, and the lemonade (when we had

it) lost its chill. Flight attendants (they were called Hostesses in those days) had to be a rugged lot for the turbulent ride at low altitude made for a not too comfortable flight. Even serving the limited snacks was a challenge at times, and then there was occasionally the sick passenger to care for – not a pleasant task! We had one Hostess who could remember every passenger's name even when she had a full load of 21! She said goodbye to each passenger by name at the end of his or her trip. Try that today with the more than 250 passengers on each flight!

Our flight time over this route from Denver to Kansas City was slightly less than 6 hours but the elapsed time was nearer 8 hours, so by the time that we reached Kansas City (The old downtown airport) we were quite ready for an overnight rest. We would finish up our flight log, write up any items that needed attention by the ground crews and then off to the hotel. At the hotel we would change to "civvies" and go out for dinner (often at the Cock & Bull Room) and then to bed, for the next day would be the same trip, only in the opposite direction.

Some of the Captains that flew on the DEN – MKC "Milkrun" during the early part of the 19 50s were George Miller, John Snyder, Zeke Bullock, Ev Ferris, Mark Shellenberg, Harry Kirchner, Bob Wampler, Chuck Stehling, John Fannin, Tom Frazier, Bob Wenholtz and Hal Wrightson. Some of the First Officers were Bob Hiemstra, Don Straight, Bill Graunke, Red Stubben, Dick Hughes, Max Green, A.A. Rippey, Irv Hood, Ken Tiegs, Tommy Thompson, Bob Croft, Paul Barnes & Ross

Shupe. Hostesses that flew this route on a regular basis were Jeanie McMillan, Julie Borgman, "Bertie" Bertram, Jolene Woods, Margie Horn, Mary Foster, Jean Collins, Ellen Twieg, Lorrie Woltemath, Rita Bluechle, Esther Miller, and "Stormy" Stromeyer. I am sure there were other crew members who flew this "Milkrun" down the Arkansas Valley during that time and I apologize for not remembering their names. They were all true professionals and should be remembered for their contribution to the great reputation of Continental Air Lines in those days.

Continental had other "Milkruns" during that period, namely the route from DEN to ELP with ALL the intermediate stops, a route from DEN to SAT with numerous stops and ELP – MKC route along "Tornado Alley", all flown with the reliable DC-3s. Though these routes were not generally profitable and had to be subsidized, they offered the communities that they served, a great convenience.

Compare the "milkrun" flight of yesterday to the International Flights of today where the crew might make only one take off and one landing on a 3,000 mile or more flight and fly in an air conditioned environment! I am sure that we would not like to go back to those "good old days" but we did enjoy our work and were proud of our safety record and our professionalism.

(This is the second version of this Article, this version being written for the "Golden Eagles". The first version was written and published in "The Fence Post", an area magazine for Western Nebraska, Eastern Wyoming, and Eastern Colorado).

