



# GOLDEN CONTRAILS

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

August, 2004



AGAINST THE ODDS... AIR MICRONESIA 1968

BY GARY WILSEY

## **CAPTAIN'S CORNER**

The 32<sup>nd</sup> annual Golden Eagles Convention will be held on September 22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Sahara Hotel. We are looking forward to the convention as the hotel has remodeled the individual rooms and has completely remodeled the Penthouse that we will be using as our hospitality room.

**PLEASE MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE:** The guarantee for the rooms and the room rate of \$ 49.95 plus tax will decrease beginning July 22<sup>nd</sup>. The Sahara Hotel toll-free number is 1-888-896-2121.

Charlie Starr will take your reservations for the banquet and remember there is a luncheon and meeting for the ladies as well.

Paul Grover has found a great Golf Course (Silverstone), which is only about 25 minutes from the hotel, so we will be able to stay at the same hotel for golf, which will be held on September 21<sup>st</sup>, & 22<sup>nd</sup>. Make your room reservations to the hotel and send your golf reservations to Paul.

### **SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:**

**GOLF- SILVERSTONE Sept. 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup>**

<b>HOSPITALITY ROOM OPENS FOR REGISTRATION AT</b>	<b>1pm SEPT 22<sup>rd</sup></b>
<b>ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING</b>	<b>10am SEPT 23<sup>rd</sup></b>
<b>LADIES AUXILIARY MEETING</b>	<b>10am SEPT 23<sup>rd</sup></b>
<b>LADIES LUNCHEON</b>	<b>12pm SEPT 23<sup>rd</sup></b>
<b>PRE-BANQUET COCKTAIL HOUR</b>	<b>6pm SEPT 23<sup>rd</sup></b>
<b>GOLDEN EAGLES BANQUET</b>	<b>7pm SEPT 23<sup>rd</sup></b>

Entertainment for the banquet will be announced at a later date.

Don Gentry and his gang have agreed to handle the raffle, so please buy those tickets and look for some great gifts.

Please visit our web site at [www.thegoldeneagles.org](http://www.thegoldeneagles.org)

**SEE Y'ALL AT THE SAHARA,**

  
**Ben McKenzie**



**Business Meeting Agenda**  
**Thursday, September 23, 2004**  
**10:00AM**

**Registration**

**Please sign in and check your dues status. In order to vote  
your dues must be current.**

**Call to Order .....Ben McKenzie**

**Reading of the 2003 minutes.....Butch Meier**

**Reports:**

**President.....Ben McKenzie**  
**President-elect.....Shaun Ryan**  
**Treasurer.....Charlie Starr**  
**Widow's Aid.....Gene Newman**  
**Golden Contrails.....Dick Grigsby**  
**RAPA.....Bob Hiemstra**  
**Travel.....K.D. Thompson**  
**Webmaster.....Bertie Bertrand**

**Old Business:**

**New Business:**

**Member Nomination & Voting**  
**Any other New Business**  
**Officer Nomination & Election:**  
**Treasurer**  
**2005 Golden Eagles Convention**

**Adjournment**

## **GOLDEN EAGLES LADIES AUXILIARY**

**Dear Ladies,**

**Get ready for a September Mardi Gras in Las Vegas! Yes, that is our theme and you are in for a lot of fun. Costumes are not required. In case you are interested, the decorating Cajun colors will be green, gold and purple. Cajun food would have been great but decided not to go that far. Instead, we will choose salmon or prime rib for the banquet.**

**Our rooms are located in the Tangiers Tower while the Hospitality room/Penthouse will be in the Tunis Tower. Both towers have been refurbished and look great.**

**This year the Penthouse will serve as a multi purpose facility. It will be the Hospitality Room throughout our convention. However, it will be closed to the membership from 10am-2pm on Thursday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> so the Ladies may have their meeting & luncheon. The men's meeting and the banquet will be held in the Sahara Ballroom.**

### **Ladies Schedule of Events**

#### **Thursday, September 23**

**10:00-11:30am -Ladies Auxiliary Meeting- Penthouse/Hospitality Room  
Tunis Tower**

**11:45am-1:00pm- Ladies Luncheon - Penthouse/Hospitality Room  
Tunis Tower**

**Volunteers will be needed to help in the hospitality room as well as for setting up the decorations for the banquet. There will be a sign up sheet at registration.**

**This has been an interesting 2 years having had to change our hotels in Houston & Las Vegas. I think the Sahara will be a great move for us. Transportation has been made simple for us with the new tram.**

**See you in September,**

*Chris*

**Chris McKenzie**

**Golden Eagles Convention  
September 22 & 23, 2004**

**Schedule of Events**

**Wednesday Sep. 22- Guest Arrival, hotel check in time  
is 3:00pm or based on availability.**

**Hospitality suite opens 1pm to 10pm (Penthouse)**

**Thursday Sep.23-**

**Hospitality suite, open 7:30am till 9:00am**

**Eagles Business meeting 10am – Sahara Ballroom**

**Ladies meeting 10am to 11:30am – Penthouse**

**Ladies Luncheon 11:45am – Penthouse**

**Hospitality suite (Penthouse) opens 2pm to 5pm**

**Pre banquet reception 6 to 7 – Sahara Ballroom  
Cash Bar**

**Eagles Banquet 7pm till 10pm – Sahara Ballroom**

**Hospitality suite open 10pm till... whenever?**

**Friday Sep. 24**

**Hospitality suite opens 7:30am to 9am**

**Coffee, juice and pastries**

**Guest checkout and departure, out time is 12:00 noon**



## RESERVE CAPTAIN'S CORNER

### 32nd Annual "Gathering of the Eagles"

Well, here it is almost 5 years since I retired and I'm on reserve again! Actually I'm just sitting here watching our Captain, Ben McKenzie getting things ready for the Golden Eagles Convention in Las Vegas this September. The way things are shaping up I don't have any worry about being called out as Ben and Chris have everything under control and it looks like another great get-together.

In the interim, Linda and I will be heading out with the RV for a two month trip to the West Coast with visits to Carmel, San Francisco, the northern California coast, Oregon and Washington. Anything to get out of Tucson in the summertime!

Back to the Convention – September 22nd and 23rd at the Sahara Hotel in Las Vegas. For the golfers in the group, the Paul Frothingham Grover III Invitational will be held at Silverstone Golf Club on the 21st and 22nd. Paul has always made this a fun event and even if you are not a serious golfer, consider attending. Everyone, regardless of handicap or cussing ability is welcome and last year we had a great turnout of wives. It is a fun event and should not be missed. To make things even better, the Grovers are hosting a cocktail party at their house following the first days mayhem.

As I mentioned, this is the 32 year that the Golden Eagles have been getting together for a couple of days of renewing friendships and telling lies. I was impressed with the number of new members that attended in Houston last year and hope to see more this year in Las Vegas. If every regular member could bring one new member what a great party it would be!

For details on the convention, go to our beautiful web site designed and administered by Birdie Bertrand at [www.thegoldeneagles.org](http://www.thegoldeneagles.org). You will find a complete schedule and registration forms for all events. Don't procrastinate as the cutoff for the reduced-rate hotel reservations is August 27th and for the golf tournament is September 7th.

I look forward to seeing all of you there.

Shaun Ryan

## **EDITORS' CORNER**

**FRONT COVER...** Color pictures of the SA16 and the DC6B provide a lead-in to Gary Wilsey's article defining the true story of the entry of Air Micronesia into what has become a history of the selfless accomplishment possible when a team of dedicated people put their energies and talents together, ignoring the odds against them.

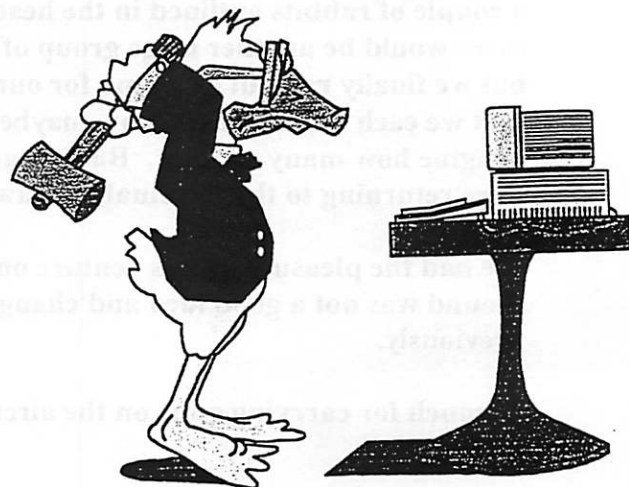
**AGAINST THE ODDS... AIR MICRONESIA 1968...** This article by Gary Wilsey is a result of the input of many people who were directly involved in the start-up of Air Micronesia. It is as nearly factual as it is possible to be, thanks to the response in text and pictures of those who were there. Your historian is grateful for this effort.

**WE CARRIED GUNS IN THOSE DAYS TOO...** "Casey" Cameron has once again provided us with a "blast from the past."

His next article will cause you to tickle your brain to recall all of the early terminal and airways facilities in use in the early days of air navigation. Watch for "Early Aviation Navigation -- US" in the next issue of Golden Contrails.

**JETS IMAGINE...** Dick Adams recalls early airline jet incidents from his days with Pan American. Those of us involved in Continental's introduction of the B707-124 may remember some of our own close calls.

**BACK COVER...** This shot of Ju-Ju rotating from the runway at Truk Island in 1971 just about says it all.



## **WE CARRIED GUNS IN THE COCKPIT IN THOSE DAYS TOO!**

**G. M. "Casey" Cameron**

At one time in the late 1950s, CO decided to terminate the Westbound DC-3 trip in GBD (Great Bend KS) instead of at HUT (Hutchinson KS). Since the late arrival of the trip and the early morning departure of the return trip did not permit the crew to "turn around", the inbound crew was destined to spend a long day and two nights in GBD.

GBD in those days (and probably these days also) had little to offer in the form of recreation or even shopping. The local movie house did not show movies every night and matinees were offered only on the week-ends. Even the library was limited in subject material and in variety. So it was left up the individual crew to find their own diversion.

One crew made the acquaintance of the Ranger in charge of the Cheyenne Bottoms Game Preserve which was located to the NNW of GBD. The crew often enjoyed trips on the Ranger's airboat, traveling through the edges of the preserve to observe the various species of migratory birds and other wildlife. This was a great experience and enjoyed by the crew who made friends with the Ranger. Unfortunately, not all the crews either knew about this or were not invited to participate so the diversion was limited to just a few.

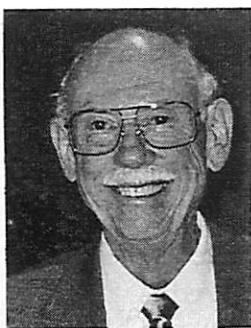
One evening on arriving at GBD, we were approached by the Airport Manager who suggested that we might enjoy a night time rabbit hunt on the airport. The airport was a "left over" WW II training base and was only used intermittently by the Navy as an auxiliary field. CO served the city with two trips each day in each direction. The triangle shaped field was farmed and was presently covered with a nice crop of alfalfa. This attracted the rabbits in great numbers and they were creating a problem for the Airport Manager. They burrowed into the ground along the sides of the runways and often cut the lines between the runway lights. The rabbits also attracted coyotes and foxes in great numbers and this also created a hazard for light aircraft landing at night.

The Airport Manager suggested that when we returned on our next trip that we bring our .22 Cal rifles with us and we could have a good time hunting these pesky rabbits. So, on the next trip, the Captain and I carried our rifles in the cockpit (in cases) and placed them behind the cockpit seats. No one questioned us about them or seemed to be concerned about us bringing them aboard (certainly not like today)!

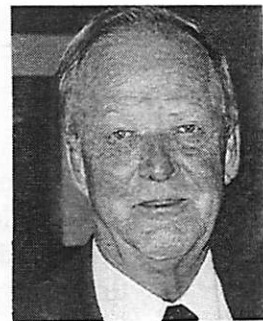
On arrival at GBD at the end of the day, the Airport Manager met us with his pickup and was ready to take us on our hunting trip. The Capt and I stood up in the back of the pickup with our rifles laid out over the cab. After crossing the N/S runway and entering the alfalfa field, we began to see numerous rabbits in the headlights of the pickup. In fact, there were so many that it was hard to determine which one to shoot. The Airport Manager would stop and each of us would shoot a couple of rabbits outlined in the headlights and then we would move on only a short distance and there would be another large group of rabbits. I have no idea how many rabbits we shot that night but we finally ran out of ammo for our rifles. Most boxes of .22 Cal shells held 50 and I am sure that we each had at least a box, maybe even two boxes and seldom did we miss a shot so one can just imagine how many we shot. But it made little or no dent in the overall rabbit population for as we were returning to the terminal, we saw just as many as during our initial sweep.

We had the pleasure of this venture only twice before the company decided that the GBD turn-around was not a good idea and changed the layover point back to HUT where it had been previously.

So much for carrying guns on the aircraft in "those" days!



## Against The Odds – Air Micronesia 1968



Micronesia since the fifteenth century has been under the control of first Spain who sold them to Imperial Germany in 1899, who then during World War I lost them to Japan. Guam, in the Marianas, was annexed by the United States at the end of World War I. At the end of World War II the islands passed to the United States under a mandate of the United Nations.

The U.S. Department of the Interior took over the administration of the islands in 1949. They set about the task of providing transportation service between the more important of the inhabited islands over a distance of almost 3000 miles from east to west.

In 1950 several air carriers were invited to participate in a survey and submit bids to provide air service in the Trust Territory of the Pacific as the islands had become known. Transocean Airlines won the contract setting up headquarters on Guam.

In July of 1951 Transocean began inter-island service with four Consolidated PB5Y-5-A amphibians modified to carry ten passengers plus cargo. The service was for the islanders and administrators as the Trust Territory was not yet open to tourists. Transocean operated the service for nine years until they went bankrupt in July of 1960.

Pan American Airways was asked to take over the air service and they allocated one very tired Douglas DC-4 and two Grumman SA-16 Albatross amphibians to serve Ponape from Truk. During the seven years under Pan Am the inter-island air service suffered tremendously. Maintenance breakdowns were commonplace and Pan Am considered they were on time if they operated that same day.

In the late 1960's the Department of the Interior invited proposals for improved service and received bids from Pan American, Northwest Orient, Hawaiian and Continental's newly formed airline, Air Micronesia. Pan American offered no upgrade in service from the DC-4. Northwest's proposal was with the turboprop Lockheed Electra. Hawaiian's aircraft did not have sufficient range.

In its petition for permanent certification, Continental made three pledges. First, it would fly jet aircraft, Boeing 727-100's as soon as airfields could be prepared to accept them. Second, to employ native Micronesians as an integral part of the work force. Third, to stimulate the island's economy by promoting tourism, building six resort hotels in the Trust Territory's six political divisions.

In November 1967 the CAB awarded Continental a five year contract to provide air service to and within the Trust Territory, also known as Micronesia. Air Micronesia would provide, with its jet service, the opportunity to travel from Honolulu to Saipan in one day. This improvement was unheard of at the time and nearly unbelievable. The -100QC model had a side loading cargo door. The interior had one or two pallets, a divider, and then seats aft. Navigation would be with Doppler using Loran A as a backup. The islands all had NDB's.

On December 1, 1967 the Air Micronesia survey team left for Micronesia. This team consisted of the following Continental personnel: John Bender, Barney Barnwell and Bill Roberson. Erik Lund from Boeing and Frank Der Yuen from Aloha and a Mobil Oil representative. At this point in time Jim Colburn was in charge of the overall operation. They leased a SA-16 from Pan American and landed at all the short unimproved runways to determine if it would be possible for Air Micronesia to start service. The B727 would serve Honolulu, Majuro, Kwajalein, Truk, Guam, Saipan and Okinawa. Johnston Island would be an operational stop if required. The DC-6B would serve Guam, Rota, Saipan, Yap and Koror. The two leased S-16s would continue to serve Ponape from Truk. The survey team arrived back in Los Angeles on December 24, 1967.

On January 17, 1968 Air Micronesia signed a five year contract with the government of the Trust Territory. Dominic P. Renda, senior vice president of Western Airlines was hired as Air Micronesia's first president based in Saipan. Carlton Skinner, former Governor of Guam, also played a big part in getting the airline started and is regarded as one of the "founding fathers".

In February of 1968 Don Leseberg and I arrived in Guam to spend some time with the Pam Am crews. We would ride on the DC-4 and SA-16 to find out what these island runways were really like. The Pan Am flight crews were very unhappy that Air Mike would be taking over. They had a very good deal flying out of Guam. The best they could do back in the big airline was second officer. Don and I both said they should be upset with headquarters in New York, not us.

In those days it took all day to go anywhere. We decided to ride the DC-4 to Truk. Don would get off and ride the SA-16 to Ponape and I would continue on the DC-4 from Truk to Kwajalein. I was riding the jump seat on the DC-4 going into Truk. There was a big rain shower over the island and we were holding outside the reef area in clear air. Finally the airport was clear and we started our approach. On our flyby both wind socks were pointed at each other. The runway was wet and we bounced around with airspeed variations, crossed the end, floated some and then touched down and jumped on the brakes and just kept going. We finally stopped at the end of the runway looking into the water.

We taxied back and crossed over into the ramp area. Nobody said a word. We all got out and walked back out to the runway. The Pan Am guys said this is the way this runway is at least half of the time. They said we would end up with the 727 in the water. The 727-100 was still fairly new and many people had no idea what it could do. I told the Pan Am guys the airplane would stop twice as fast as the DC-4 with no reverse props or good brakes.

The problem runways would be Truk, Majuro, Yap, Koror and Rota. They were mostly carved out of coral before or very early in World War II by the Japanese. Truk had been a fighter strip with the control tower on top of the cliff overlooking the runway. Wherever the Japanese could find enough area they scraped and leveled these strips through trees or whatever. One of the biggest problems was the growth of algae in the coral surface which when wet made the surface very slick. The maximum length of any of these runways was 5000 feet. Our 727-100 was the perfect airplane for this type of operation. We had installed -200 wheels, tires and brakes with nose wheel braking. We also had chine tires on the nose wheel to deflect runway

standing water away from the engine intakes. A Teflon coating was put on the underside of the airplane wing and flap area. The lower rotating beacon was also retractable to prevent breakage. The airplane had amazing stopping capability. We were also using approach and landing procedures that would ensure minimum airspeed touchdowns. All the island runways were coral except Yap which was red clay with crushed coral on top. None of these runways had lighting so you were restricted to a daylight operation.

It took six hours to get to Kwajalein on the DC-4. We spent the night there and then went to Majuro early the next morning and back up to Kwajalein and then headed for Guam. Don had gone to Ponape and back to Truk and then was heading back to Guam on the SA-16. We were grinding along on the DC-4 when we heard a MAYDAY on HF from the SA-16. They had shut down an engine and were trying to keep from ditching in the ocean. The C-130s were scrambled and met the airplane to escort it into Guam.

When I arrived back at the hotel Don was in the bar having a beer. He proceeded to tell me what happened. The Pan Am crew had a generator volt/amp meter that was reading zero. They were worried about a massive engine failure and possible fire. They shut the engine down and headed for the water. They were way over maximum gross weight and ended up 50 ft. off the water. Everyone thought they were going in the ocean. Don had everyone put on their life preservers. Previously they had been through this before and had ended up throwing everything overboard. On one trip the high commissioner of the Trust Territory and his wife were en route with their luggage and lost everything overboard. They were at 50 ft. for a very long time. On one engine it took hours to get to Guam. They were barely able to climb up to the airport elevation and land. As it turned out their only problem was a bad meter.

Bids were posted in January 1968 with a two year freeze. The 727 crews would be based in Honolulu and the DC-6B and SA-16 crews in Guam.

#### 727 Crews

Capt.	F/O	S/O
Gordie Nygren	John Jensen	Jim Conger
Joe Henry	Mil Harr	Carl Armani
Dick Hughes	Paul Eckel	Armand Eknayan
Dave Streit	Hal Simpson	Frank Hall

#### DC-6B Crews

Capt.	F/O	S/O
George Childers	Jim Rickner	Ed Brown
Tom Gullett	Harv Harvey	De Blum

#### SA-16 Crews

Capt	F/O	* Contract pilots not on the Continental seniority list.
Bud Bierman *	Newt Ball	
Dick Reagan *	Joe Ramsdale	

Flight training was conducted in the Los Angeles area at airports with shorter runways, ONT, SBA, for the 727 crews so that they could work on their short field technique. We wanted touchdowns as near to 1000 feet from the end of the runway as possible.

The original four Air Micronesia flight attendants came from the Continental seniority list. They were: Tiger Mathews, Pearl Kelly, Karen Berg, Elaine Williams. The six Micronesian flight attendants came from the six districts.

Air Micronesia aircraft maintenance was based in Guam, however in reality that maintenance might be performed anywhere and on occasion was. All airplanes had their own mechanic on board plus a flyaway kit of spare parts for that individual airplane. On the SA-16s the mechanics also did the AMCS duties. Here is a listing of the maintenance personnel:

Charlie Teague – Manager	Ted Tansey - Mechanic
Len Nickelson – Asst. Manager	Jerry Gray - Mechanic
John Foley – Avionics Supervisor	Leroy Penner - Mechanic
Dub Bedford – Maintenance Supervisor	Al Merkler - Mechanic
Ron Spinks – Maintenance Supervisor	Dick Stolp – Mechanic
Rex Tipton – Maintenance Supervisor	
A.B. Walters – Maintenance Supervisor	
Ernie Chambers – Maintenance Supervisor	

Mr. Renda recruited an all-volunteer team, with a verbal agreement for three years as station personnel. He needed this expertise to ensure that the airline would get off to a good start. All the station personnel except one went to Guam at the end of April. This group included the AMCS's who rode on the airplanes. Here is a listing of that group:

Phil Yates – General Manager	Bill Reed - AMCS
Frank Applequist – Manager System	Jerry Harrington – Mgr. Reservations
Ray Brown – AMCS	Marty Pray – Mgr. Sales, HNL
Bob Grimes – AMCS	Joe Levitt – Mgr. Accounting
Jim Slaght – AMCS	Doug Collins – Mgr. Personnel

The outlying station trainers started to arrive in April and continued for a period of time. Some of these trainers left in July when the outlying islands day to day operation was taken over by Micronesians. Inter-island radio communications were virtually non existent and were installed on most islands. Here is a listing of the trainer group:

Fred Topham – Majuro	Hollis Smith - Rota
Chuck Culp – Truk	Jon Schunight - Koror
Gordon Partlin – Saipan	Ray Sharp – Yap

Here is the roster of Continental Airlines station personnel in Honolulu that shored up the eastern terminus:

Jack Wagner – Mgr. Customer Service  
Steve Handy – Supervisor – Passenger Service  
Gene Hassing – Supervisor – Terminal Operations  
Ray Mori – Mgr. – Maintenance  
Dan Poepoe – Asst. Mgr. – Maintenance  
Jeff Busby – Maintenance Supervisor  
Judy Chun – Pilot Admin. & Payroll

Our DC-6B, aircraft 961, had been in service on the United Interchange between Seattle and Tulsa. Continental flew the portion from Denver through Wichita to Tulsa. Upon termination of the Interchange Agreement the airplane was placed in flyable storage. When the Air Mike contract was signed the airplane was flown to Santa Monica for installation of the upper cargo door, dual H.F. radios and an APN 9 Loran. After completion the airplane was ferried to the Continental hanger in Los Angeles by Don Leseberg, George Childers and De Blum for final loading and fueling. On arrival at the hanger, incorrect ground power was plugged into the airplane which caused the Instrument Transformers to fail. This caused an indefinite delay while trying to locate replacement parts. Continental maintenance was no longer familiar with the airplane which necessitated a call to Western Airlines maintenance to trouble shoot the problem. This caused a further delay and some labor problems with Western mechanics at the Continental hanger. After two days the repairs had been completed and Don Leseberg and crew left flying straight through to Guam with fuel stops in Honolulu and Wake, total time 14 hours. Later Capt. George Childers, F/O Jim Rickner and S/O De Blum flew the Guam-Yap-Koror proving run.

The 727 proving run left Honolulu on May 11, 1968. On board were two flight crews: Capt. Joe Henry, F/O Paul Eckel, S/O Jim Conger, Capt. Dave Streit, F/O Mil Harr, and S/O Frank Hall. Flight attendants: Tiger Mathews, Karen Berg, AMCS Ray Brown. Passengers: Red Stubben, Don Wilson, Ted Haueter, John Bender, Barney Barnwell, Bill Knowles and Bill Roberson. A representative from each department of the airline was also on board. Other passengers included were Tom Fydell and Frank Chenoweth from the FAA, Frank Der Yuen from Aloha Airlines, Erik Lund from Boeing and Wayne Parrish, Publisher of American Aviation Magazine.

The proving run would operate exactly the same as the regular scheduled flights through all the islands. We did not show a block time from Honolulu to Johnston Island because it was an operational stop only. The Honolulu-Majuro block time was 5:05, Majuro-Kwajalein was :45, Kwajalein-Truk 2:30, Truk-Guam 1:35, Guam-Saipan :30. Total distance approximately 4300 NM. Saipan to Okinawa was roundtrip once a week with a block time of 3:00.

Between the proving run and the inaugural flights there were still a few obstacles to overcome. When the DC-6B arrived in Guam from the mainland with no paper work U.S. Customs was very upset. The airplane would be based in Guam and they wanted some charges levied on the airplane. Without the proper paper work they were threatening arrest and prosecution. It took

about two weeks of smoothing over for the situation to improve. On the proving run out from Honolulu the base commander at Kwajalein said that would be the last time we landed there. There had been a lot of conversation on this subject and the word was that Mr. Six spoke with someone in Washington who solved this problem by replacing that base commander. There was also a territorial fight between the Los Angeles FAA office and the Honolulu FAA office. Our certificate was in Los Angeles, however, Honolulu wanted to have the certificate on Air Micronesia. Dick Adams and Tom Fydell from the Los Angeles FAA solved this problem.

On May 16, 1968 the 727 aircraft 475, Ju-Ju, left Saipan's Kobler Field enroute to Honolulu with a total of seven stops along the way. At all the uncontrolled fields, after radio contact, a flyby at 500 feet was required to check the runway for vehicles and people, since some of the runways were active roads. It was also necessary to check for the fire truck and the surface winds. First at Truk and then each of the other island airports nearly everyone was out to greet the airplane. The inaugural flight was completed smoothly and flawlessly.

There were two dog stories that were tied in with the operation. At Saipan's Kobler Field the ramp area was very small and when the first flight of the day arrived there was a small dog near the fence looking the worse for wear. As time went on the dog overcame his shyness. After all the passengers were off the crew would entice him up the aft air stairs to the galley for breakfast. As departure time neared the agent would call him off the airplane. As you might imagine, his name was "Airport" with his own SPN ID badge complete with payroll number and picture. The other dog was at Truk. He would meet the airplane and carry the mail bag to the terminal building. It was great for the tourist, lots of photographs. He was simply called the "Mail Dog".

At the end of 1968, after 230 days of flying, Air Micronesia had carried 45,772 revenue passengers and flown more than 3,000,000 revenue ton cargo miles with a schedule completion of 96.7 percent. Over 83 per cent of all passengers had been delivered within 15 minutes of their scheduled arrival time.

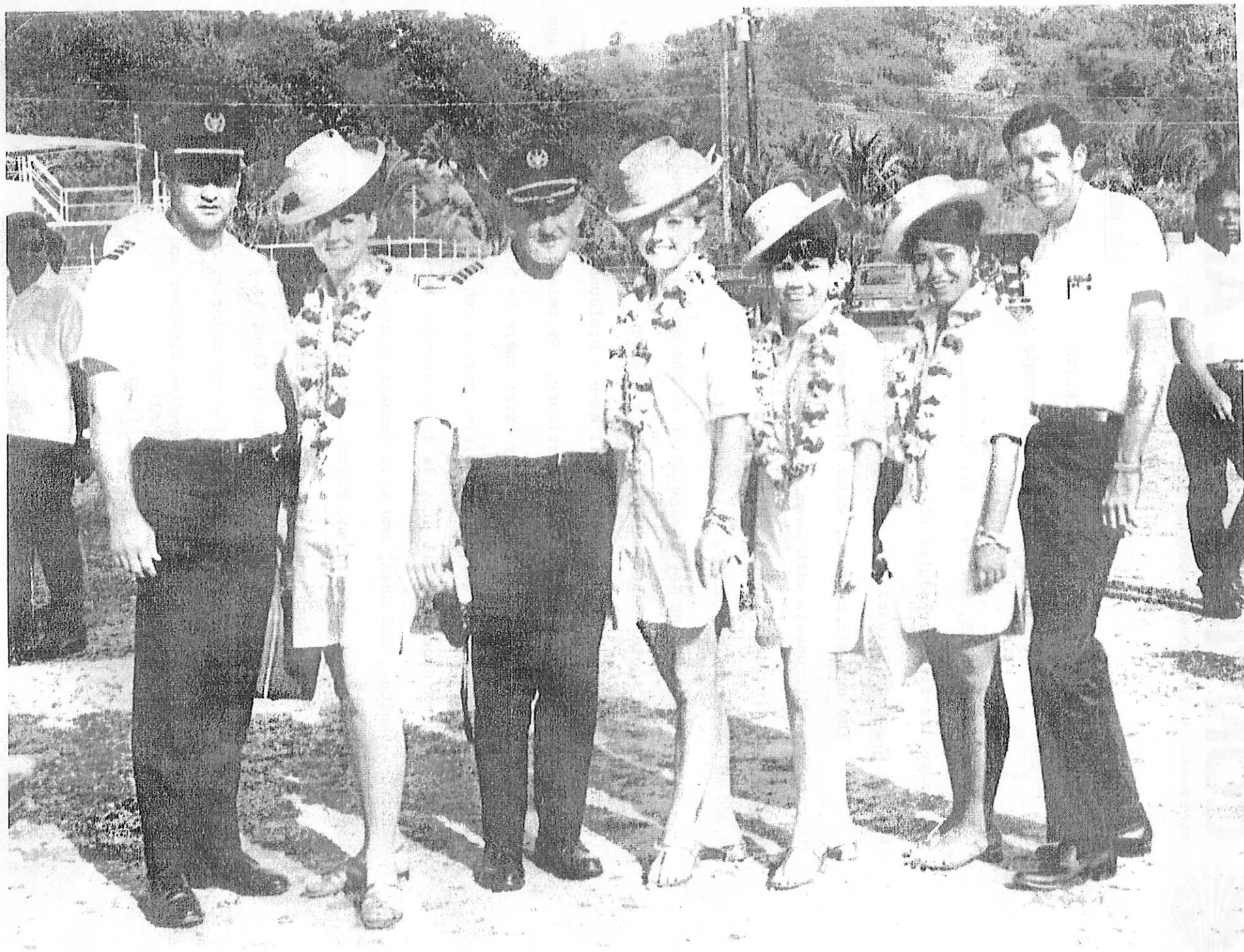
The Boeing 727-100QC, aircraft 475, was a workhorse. It served all the islands mentioned earlier month after month until aircraft 476 arrived in Guam on November 30, 1972. Ponape's new 6000 foot runway opened in 1970. The runways at Yap, Koror and Rota were upgraded and the 727 proving run was flown on December 2, 1972.

The start of Air Mike is truly remarkable in that in a span of six months it was up and running. This was only possible because of a dedicated, highly skilled, workforce of Continental Airline's employees. Everyone just made it happen, no matter what the obstacles might be. Truly amazing.

Special thanks to all who provided me with research information:  
Flight Operations: Barney Barnwell, Don Straight, Bud Battley, Don Leseberg.  
Maintenance Personnel: Don Leseberg, Chuck Celeski.  
Station Personnel: Ray Brown, Bob Grimes, Gene Hassing.

Very special thanks to Pearl Kelly and Don Leseberg who provided me with photographs and several old publications, such as The Golden Jet, and other articles. Dave Streit came through again with one of his previous articles on Air Mike. Thank you.

Gary Wilsey



Paul Eckel Tiger Mathews Dave Streit Pearl Kelly Arroys Boria Ray Brown



# CONTINENTAL AIRLINES

NEWS BUREAU / INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT / LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90009 / TELEPHONE (AREA CODE 213) 646-3886

FOR RELEASE MAY 14, 1968

## NEW MICRONESIA AIRLINE

### STARTS FLYING TOMORROW

LOS ANGELES, May 14 -- Air Micronesia, the world's newest airline, will make its first scheduled flight tomorrow (May 16 in the Western Pacific) between Guam and Saipan.

The new air carrier, which will connect the United States Trust Territory of Micronesia with Guam, Honolulu and Okinawa, will be operated by Continental Airlines. The Air Micronesia route network stretches more than 5,000 miles across the mid-Pacific.

In announcing the inauguration of the new airline, Dominic P. Renda, Air Micronesia's president and senior vice president-international for Continental, said, "Air Micronesia will have a profound economic and social effect on the islands of the Trust Territory. By telescoping the communication and transportation gaps that currently exist there we hope to prove a positive force in developing the island communities into a cohesive national entity."

Air Micronesia will provide daily service between Saipan, the Trust Territory capital, and Guam, and will connect Saipan twice a week with Koror, Yap, Truk, Ponape, Kwajalein and Majuro. Weekly flights will connect the islands with Okinawa to the West and Honolulu to the East.

The mainstay of the Air Micronesia fleet is a Continental Airlines Boeing 727C Golden Fan Jet, which will fly the majority of the passenger and cargo services. A Douglas DC-6AB four-engine airliner and two Grumman SA-16 flying boats make up the balance of the fleet.

## **JETS IMAGINE**

Today jet powered aircraft are the accepted standard for commercial airline travel. However in 1958 at the introduction of the U. S. commercial jet era with the Boeing 707 by Pan American, the jet was not a universally trusted vehicle. The British Comet jet program had been shut down when after a number of other problems plagued the service, a Comet blew up in mid air over the Mediterranean. Newspapers and magazines carried stories from "experts" proclaiming that among other dangers, the human body could not survive the jet's high speeds and altitudes. Training flights with the 707 suffered catastrophes which did not build public confidence. Anyway, it was only the rich jet set way to travel and would never become the way to fly for most people.

Picture then the following three incidents which occurred early in the Pan American operation of the 707 and imagine what might have happened if they had ended differently.

1. On climb out over Paris into an overcast, all four Pratt & Whitney JT3C-6 engines quit. Captain Sam Miller got them all restarted in time to recover and proceed on to London where the airplane was grounded. Just suppose that Captain Miller had not solved the problem in time. Sensational mysterious crash! Banner Headlines.

2. On a westbound flight over the North Atlantic at cruising altitude, Captain Waldo Lynch was socializing in the First Class lounge (perfectly legal and normal then) the airplane fell off on the right and entered a steep spiral dive. Captain Lynch on his hands and knees due to the mounting "g" forces, managed to crawl back into his seat in the cockpit and overpower the disoriented First Officer and pull the airplane out to level flight at six thousand feet and proceed to a safe landing. The forces involved bent the horizontal stabilizers. Suppose that the Captain had not gotten to the cockpit in time. Another mysterious loss! Banner Headlines.

3. National Airlines in a move to be the first domestic airline to operate jets had a lease arrangement with Pan American to take over the Pan Am jet arriving from Europe and operate it on a round trip New York to Miami and return in time for the airplane to be ready for the Pan Am evening departure to Europe. One day the arriving airplane had a cracked windshield and was out of service all day. National then substituted its back up DC-6 for its Miami flight. The DC-6 blew up in mid-air over the New Jersey coast, and the suicide passenger plummeted to earth landing on the beach still strapped in his seat, with clear evidence that the bomb had been in his briefcase beneath his seat. Tragedy, but no mystery. However if the jet had taken its assigned flight that day, its route would have been further out to sea, and the cause of its loss would have been harder to determine. So, a third mystery jet loss! Banner Headlines. Congressional hearings?

Just imagine what might have happened to the new jet era. We are fortunate that it did not.

  
Dick Adams

# GOLDEN EAGLES TREASURER'S REPORT ↔ 3/11/04 – 6/30/04

## From Your Treasurer - *Charlie Starr*

Balance from 3/11/04	\$ 18,428.51
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Income 3/11/04 - 6/30/04

Dues Received	\$ 1,375.00
Postage fund donations	338.50
Banquet Meal Deposits	1,183.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME THIS PERIOD</b>	<b>\$ 2,896.50</b>

Disbursements this period

Contrails printing & postage	\$ 2,794.52
Convention advertising & postage	468.70
<b>TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS THIS PERIOD</b>	<b>\$ 3,269.22</b>

<b>BALANCE 6/30/04</b>	<b>\$ 18,055.59</b>
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### WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Bruce, Keith	Caldwell, Jim
Heidinger, Eddie	Houser, John
Kosh, Tom	Laney, Tom
Quinn, Randy	Tedder, Wayne
Watson, Ron	

### Help Land a NEW MEMBER

Each of you probably have at least one friend who should be an Eagle member. Why not talk to this friend and urge them to join us. You'll be doing them and the Association a favor. An application blank is included in this mailing

Let me once again begin this Treasurer's Report by thanking each and every member who responded to the reminders that 2004 dues were past due. I know that it's very easy let this slip by, and to become delinquent. With the ever increasing costs of printing and mailing the Golden Contrails magazine, it's become necessary to strictly adhere to the by-laws and discontinue mailing the magazine to those who are more than a year delinquent. So .... how can you tell your dues status? It's easy! Just look at the address label on the envelope that contained this edition of the Contrails. Your dues status is printed in RED, after your name. A RED 2004 means that you are paid through the end of this year, 2004. A RED 2003 (or earlier) means that you were only paid through the end of that year and therefore are delinquent, and owe dues. We've continued sending you the magazine as a courtesy, but you need to bring your dues current to continue to receive future issues. Of course, if you see some RED letters on your label, such as HON, Lifetime, or W, these mean that you are an honorary, lifetime or widow of a deceased member and no dues are required. Simple, isn't it; so why not look and see if you're current and, if not, fill out the dues renewal form and send in you check?

Of course, even though computers don't make mistakes, this old guy that enters your data does occasionally make some - well, maybe more than just some. So, if your information is not correct, just let me know and I'll make the corrections. This goes for those of you that move or change e-mail addresses. The post office will only forward mail for a limited time, and e-mail is never forwarded; so - it's important to send me any changes or corrections. Please send all dues payments, postage fund contributions, address or phone changes and e-mail changes to:

Golden Eagles

C/O Charlie Starr, Treasurer

4328 Sunset Beach Circle

Niceville, FL 32578-4820

OR →

phone: 850-897-0898

E-mail cws1932@cox.net

### **GONE WEST:**

**JACK DANIEL** died May 29, 2004. JACK was a very active member of the Golden Eagles, and he was instrumental in finding who to contact in applying for the \$10,000.00 Life Insurance that Continental paid for all pilots who retired before October, 1983.

JACK's Obituary follows: **JOHN W. (JACK) DANIEL**, age 88, of Rancho Mirage, California, died peacefully on May 29, 2004, surrounded by his family. Jack was born March 20, 1916, to John W. and Sebye Mae Daniel in Fort Worth, Texas. He attended the University of Texas at Austin and Texas Wesleyan College. On August 29, 1939, he married Ann C. Brown and, after her death, married Mary LoOuita Thorpe on April 4, 1999, in Fallbrook, California.

He served as a naval aviator in World War II in the Pacific Theater of Operations



in Alaska and the Aleutian Islands. After leaving military service, he was employed by Continental Airlines as a pilot on domestic and international flights for 30 years, retiring as a captain.

Jack served as President of Continental Airlines Federal Credit Union, and Chairman of the International Pilots Union. He was a Master Mason.

He is survived by his wife, Mary LoOuita, Rancho Mirage; his son and daughter-in-law, John and Carole Daniel, Houston, Texas; his daughter and son-in-law Patricia and Dr. Marlon Padilla, Dallas, Texas; two grandchildren, Charles P. Daniel, Redwood City, California, and Paige Padilla, Dallas, Texas; and his sister, Mrs. Olin Thomas, Fort Worth, Texas. A celebration of Jack's life was held in Fallbrook on May 31, 2004, among his family and friends.

**JOHN K. HUBERT** died after a long illness, on May 31, 2004. **JOHN HUBERT** (misspelled **HUBER** in the *ILLNESS* section of the April Issue) had a long siege with a malignant brain tumor, and his serious condition has been described in earlier issues in this column by **DENNY CLEVELAND**. Since last July his **JOHN's** wife, **JEANNE** has rented a hospital bed, and was with him twenty four hours a day, seven days a week, taking complete care of him, even though he seemed unaware of anything! Let us hope that now **JOHN** is happy in heaven, free of all pain and suffering.

**DENNY CLEVELAND** sent this Obituary: After a long, gallant battle with brain cancer, retired Continental Captain John K. Hubert peacefully departed the fix this past Memorial Day, 2004. A loving husband, devoted father and as good a friend one can have, John is survived by the following: His wife Antonia (Jeanne) and daughter Joycelyn of SEA, sons James of HNL, Johnny of SEA, adopted son TJ of GUM and step-son Rene-

mar of MNL. He is further survived by his brother and sister Jim and Lynne of SEA; three grandchildren, John (presently with

Jeanne Hubert:

Sorry, the Post Office lost  
our original master copy  
with John's picture.

The Editors

the USMC in Iraq), Sean and Sarai and several nieces and nephews. John's beloved Mother Evelyn also survives him and still lives in SEA.

John was born 05 December 1937, in Altus, Oklahoma. The family later moved to SEA where he finished high school and attended college. As a United States Air Force Officer, John flew the KB-50 tanker and C-141. In Viet Nam, he flew the EC-47 ( a "spook airplane"). He joined Continental Airlines in 1968, transferring to Guam Base of Air Micronesia in 1972. (He also flew the MNL based DHL contract). He stayed there until his retirement with his last months flying as Second Officer on the DC-10.

To this day, I have yet to talk with anyone who has flown with him that didn't say they enjoyed their trips! I have witnessed these sentiments personally while flying as ACM numerous times. For example, a First Officer would ask if it's OK

if he does this or that, and John would calmly say, it's up to you, it's your airplane. During the "difficult" times of the early 80's John put his career on the line when he signed off Second Officers in a manner which the FAA wouldn't have approved - but bodies were needed and the planes kept flying. The list of personal qualities goes on and on with this quiet and friendly man. He will be missed. I feel privileged in having had him as my very best friend for more than 20 years and deeply mourn his passing.

At his request JOHN's ashes were interred in the VFW Cemetery on the former Clark AFB, Angeles City, Philippines, the latter part of June.

Respectfully submitted,

Denny Cleveland

NICHOLAS (ED) HALLIDAY passed away on March 22, 2004. (Late report) His obituary (sent by his wife, Barbara) follows:

ED was born in New York City on September 1, 1936. He moved to West Palm Beach in 1944. He graduated from Palm Beach High School in 1954, and attended Palm Beach Junior College and Georgia Tech University. ED became a navy pilot in 1961, and was a Vietnam veteran. He continued his career in the Naval Reserve.

He raised his children in Texas. He retired as a Captain in 1996, but continued to train other pilots and ended his career with Continental Airlines with more than 30 years of service. ED enjoyed his retirement in West Palm Beach with his family and friends

ED is survived by his wife, Barbara, his son, Nicholas (Nick) Edward Halliday, Jr., and his wife, Teresa; his daughters, Lori Halliday, Joy Dery and her husband, Ron; his children's mother Diana Halliday, Barbara's daughter, Kim Schultz, and her husband, Bernie; his grandchildren, Daniel, Trevor, Alexa, Alleah and Nicholas III.

Barbara added a note saying that ED was so looking forward to the trip to Las Vegas (the Golden Eagle Convention).

**GARY W. FERGUSON** died December 7, 2001. (Very late report) GARY's edited obituary follows:

GARY loved to fly. More than anyone I have ever met - he loved to fly. I know he was not the first who loved this thing of leaving the safety of solid ground, but in my world I've never met

Bonnie Ferguson:

Sorry, the Post Office lost  
our original master copy  
with Gary's picture.

The Editors

anyone quite like him. I think he should have been born a bird or maybe he was part bird! He loved it. He flew in Vietnam from aircraft carriers, which has been proven to be one of the most stressful acts ever recorded. He went to Iran and helped the Shah of Iran train their pilots to fly. As I mentioned he flew for Continental for over 30 years, but instead of looking forward to retiring, he lobbied against the law of mandatory retirement for commercial pilots (over) 60 years (of age).

But GARY's greatest love of all was not flying, as many of you may think. His greatest love was his family. GARY was a devoted man. He was devoted to Tess, Brian, Derek, Briana;—all of his

cousins, other family members and friends, but most of all he was devoted to his wife and best friend, BONNIE.

That was GARY FERGUSON. A man who loved to fly more than anyone I've ever met, an employee who was dedicated to his employer and friends, but most of all a deeply devoted husband, relative, friend.

Billy Perkins

**SCOTT B. WILKES** died June 23, 2004. A summarized obituary follows:

SCOTT attended Fresno State and the University of Arizona, and followed his long time dream of flying by enlisting in the U.S. Navy as a flight cadet.

SCOTT made two tours of Vietnam, flying more than 150 sorties over enemy territory in 1964-1968. He excelled as a pilot and was awarded air medals and the Distinguished Flying Cross.

After more than 5 years in the Navy, SCOTT joined Continental Airlines, and flew for them for 15 years. He married, brought up his sons, then fell for the charms of Australia while flying there frequently.

In 1983 he moved to Sydney, closed two restaurants for lack of business because of poor economic conditions at that time, but was successful, buying, remodeling, and selling homes of historical importance. After a second divorce he moved to Cairns and enjoyed the warm climate, the cost of living and the Yacht Club.

SCOTTY was found sitting at his computer, probably trying to email us that he wasn't feeling well. He leaves behind his two sons, Scott and Matthew; his brother, Jeff; and two cousins, Mikell Wrightson, and Lynn Sperry.

Keith Green

KEN ALRICK forwarded an e-mail in tribute to SCOTTY WILKES from TED RUTHERFORD with excerpts as follows:

It is with deep sadness that I received the

news of Scotty Wilkes passing in Cairns. He would occasionally call at all hours and we would visit on the phone. Scotty and I went to high school together at East Bakersfield High. It was with great pleasure when Andy Camarata called me and asked if I knew a "Scotty Wilkes". Andy had just interviewed Scotty and told me he was coming to work with Continental.

We had trips together while Scotty was based in LAX..... I used to stay with Scotty whenever I had Sydney layovers.

I will really miss his calls and e-mails! Scotty was a Class Individual !

Sincerely Ted Rutherford

Sunshine after rain,  
Dewdrops on a rose,  
A baby sleeping sweetly  
in a crib,  
a bird drinking from a fountain,  
a mind focused on God.

Such is the peace I feel  
deep within my being now as  
I close my eyes and think about  
Jesus Christ.

(From Westlake Lutheran Church News,  
Jan. 2002

#### **ILLNESSES/SURGERY**

KEN ALRICK relayed this e-mail from B. J. BELLERUE dated March 28, 2004:

Dear Friends and Golden Eagles:

First, I want to thank you for all the cards, phone calls, and well wishes you have sent to Ken. - It really has boosted his spirits tremendously.

Ken is healing from the kidney surgery as the doctor expected - slow but

very good. He (Ken) would like to have more energy - but that will come with time and rest, and proper exercise.

The challenge for Ken is the stroke. All the evaluations for Therapy have been done, Physical, Occupational, and Speech. The only one he needs is Occupational Therapy for his left arm hand, and fingers. He goes to Therapy 3 times a week, and is showing good progress. He is having trouble with his finger strength (gripping and pinching, etc.) His handwriting is slowly coming back and that is very encouraging to him. He practices every day at home to exercise his hand, arm and fingers. He is a fighter and will beat this!! Next week we will start our walks together in the morning, short ones to begin with. I told him he wasn't ready for the 100 yard dash yet.

Thanks again for all your prayers, love, and caring. Love to all,  
Nurse B. J.

KEN also relayed this e-mail, dated April 23 2004: RUBE CAGE reports that MAX JACOBY had heart surgery in Houston on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. JACOBY's home address is: P.O. Box 1037, Houston, TX 77871.

Very recent e-mail from KEN ALRICK, dated July 5, 2004:

During the morning of June 22<sup>nd</sup> DENNY CLEVELAND seemed to have suffered a stroke and I had him admitted to the PIH hospital here in Angeles City. He remains in ICU at this time. He has difficulty talking, has some left-side paralysis and is generally unresponsive.

I have an appointment with his case doctor this morning (June 24) and hopefully can get further info. The first brain scan failed to show bleeding or a blood clot. They took a 2<sup>nd</sup> scan and I should learn of the results this morning.

DENNY was here to attend the burial of Captain JOHN HUBERT on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

I will send another update soon as I get further news.

**Jim Hubbard**

***Editor's Note:***

*An e-mail from Jim, dated June 24th stated that a second brain-scan confirmed that DENNY did suffer a stroke.....*

*And an e-mail from Jim on July 5<sup>th</sup> advised that since DENNY was stricken with a stroke, BERRY STRAUTMAN (one of JOHN's long time friends) read DENNY's eulogy at the Clark cemetery on June 23rd.*

The last e-mail from Jim Hubbard, dated July 6<sup>th</sup>, follows:

DENNY continues to do well. In my last update they were having some problems weaning his system off the oxygen tube. Since then there has been considerable improvement. For the last 24 hours they have ceased pumping oxygen directly to the lungs, and he has been tolerating it well. They are close to removing the vent tube completely. He is still breathing oxygen but it is by normal self breathing now.

Not much new to report as far as the paralysis goes but they are happy with the progress he has made. He has fairly good feeling in both the arm and leg but it is going to take some time yet before we see much movement. Monica (Denny's daughter) says that on occasion she has seen some foot movement.

I have been passing on all the good wishes and prayers from everyone. He listens intently, remembers who you are, and sometimes waves his hand that he understands. I can tell it makes him happy.

**Jim**

From the ARECA GOLDEN TALE: LARRY BISHOP reported that GORDON SMITH fell, broke his hip, and had hip surgery. His mailing address is his wife's

residence: 9830 Belmont #125,  
Bellflower, CA 90706.

From La Verne Thornberry: BOB RAWLS is doing well except his problem with allergies, which seems to be an ailment with many of us.

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

**THIS'N THAT:**

KEN ALRICK sent the following e-mail that was addressed to BEN MCKENZIE, dated April 4, 2004:

Mr. McKenzie, I saw your name and email in the website for the Golden Eagles. I work for an entity that is developing and planning construction of a small airport in outer Houston. We are looking for a spokesperson to work on behalf of the airport to help build positive relationships with the community, local government and other stockholders. The ideal spokesperson to help build positive relationships with community, local government and other stakeholders. The ideal spokesperson should be familiar with aviation issues (the reason, why we are focusing on a pilot or retired pilot) and be willing to represent the airport's point of view with all stakeholders, including groups opposed to airport development.

Some of the activities that the spokesperson will be involved in include communicating with community one-on-one or at public meetings providing relevant briefings to local government and other stakeholders, responding to media inquiries, and collaborating with airport owner and public affairs firm on issues management and key messages. Ideal type of arrangement is on a contract basis with scope of time commitment to be determined

after initial consultation.

Do you know of any members of the Golden Eagles that would be interested in this type of work? Are there any entities that you think may be additional sources to help me find this type of person? Any assistance will be greatly appreciated.

Thanks for your time.

Ignacio Gonzalez  
VOLLMER PUBLIC RELATIONS  
808 Travis, Suite 501  
Houston, TX 77002  
713-970-2140  
Fax. 713-970-2140  
ignacio@vollmerpr.com

KEN ALRICK received this e-mail, dated Feb. 21, 2004: Hi Ken,

Do (you) have any idea which way I was going--- to heaven or hell? I guess I will have to wait a while to find out, because so far I am still alive and kicking.

I do appreciate your keeping us up to date on so many of the good old Continental family. I left CAL after the strike was over. I had 2 businesses, 4 small airlines, and got on with UAL in '89. I retired from UAL Nov. 2, 2002, and started working for Netjets, flying Citation Ultras around for the rich folks. Nothing beats the old CAL. Take care.... Guy Casey

KEN ALRICK received this e-mail, dated March 29, 2004:  
Ken:  
Would appreciate it if you could put this out to the "Golden Eagles".

We're making a little "life style" change, effective Apr. 1<sup>st</sup>. Our permanent address will be:

100 Wild Turkey Lane  
Georgetown, TX 78628  
Phone (512) 868-557

Everything else stays the same--i.e. Same e-mail [meyners@thegateway.com](mailto:meyners@thegateway.com)

Keeping the "Lake house" that for the last few years has been our permanent home.  
204 Riverside Drive  
Kingsland, TX 78639-4020  
ph# (325) 388-3948 5

We (us) just plan on living in both of them. They are about 65 miles apart. The Georgetown house is much closer to Children and Grandchildren, and we want to take advantage of that. It's also just much closer to everything, (other than lake related activities,) so maybe we can knock-off driving so far every time we want to do something. Cell phones will always find us

Lee's (830) 798-6604

Pam's (830) 798-5898

The "Welcome Mat" is always out at our house.

Thanks,

Lee and Pam Meyners

Your Editors went fishing again this year: Fishing in the Rogue River, near Merced, DICK caught (and released) several 15 inch trout and one steelhead (larger trout that swim in the ocean). Fishing with wife, KATIE, and other family members on Lake Ida, near Alexandria, MN, GENE's group caught four 2-3 pound small mouth bass, and almost 100 blue-gill sunfish! The bass were released, but the sunfish were delicious!

**BIRDIE BERTRAND** sent this e-mail to **DICK GRIGSBY**, dated April 02, 2004:

The latest is up on the web. I would like you help me check all the new hyperlinks and tell me if you can open them. They work fine for me and Dll but sometimes they get screwed up for whatever reason. Fuxxing electrons....some things never change.

Birdie

**DICK's** reply: Birdie....Great Job! I drew up the page on the golf reservation sans any text....and it took me a few whacks to get the text of Hiemstra's article, but my machine certainly isn't the greatest! Thanks so much....loved your comment about Dave.

Dick

**KEN ALRICK's** follow up e-mail, dated April 9, 2004 stated: From my view, Birdie has done a great job, and I am happy to pass this on.

Ken

**BIRDIE's** reply: Dear All:

Dell – who hosts our web site has sold it to a company called Pure Host. The term for selling is “migrated” in the world of web sites, etc

As an aside.....all our bills are paid so when I get through, the site should be back up. Ken you might think about passing it on to the troops... Birdie

Between the two of them they are having trouble with “migration” for God knows what ever digital electronic reason.....probably too complicated an explanation even for the likes of Werner Von Braun.

At any rate there are two hour telephone holds just to talk to Pure Host.

Apparently **BIM RICHARDS** and

**CHARLIE STARR** relayed the following e-mail to **DICK GRIGSBY**, (from Peter M. Anderson, son of Peter S. Anderson) dated 04-22:

Hi Guys,

I just received the April 2004 “Golden Contrails”. It has been a long time. I am not sure the last time my dad has seen one. Looking forward to reading it to him. His name is mentioned several times, he will be proud that he is remembered. He has some great experiences I would like to share with the “Golden Trails”. How do I go about it? Also need to change his address so I will be able to read it to him in the future. I would like to use my e-mail address for him so others that remember him can get in touch with us. Also, can we contribute to the postage fund? Should this go to Charlie Starr in Niceville, FL?

Hope this finds you all in good health with clear skies ahead!

Thank You!

Peter M. Anderson (son)

for Capt. Peter S. Anderson.

New address: 2812 Sierra Canyon Way,  
Hacienda Heights, CA 91745.  
(626) 336-1681.

**DICK GRIGSBY's** e-mail answer, dated May 5<sup>th</sup> follows:

Dear Peter,

Please send anecdotes, quips, stories regarding Captain Peter S. Anderson to me as e-mail attachments. We will be pleased to publish them. Send personal data changes and contributions to Charlie Starr.

Your father's name appears in my

log books fairly often during the early 1940's, since I flew as his co-pilot in DC-3's, mostly between Denver and Tulsa. One entry indicates that he, acting as check pilot, conducted a periodic flight (proficiency) check on me early on. In the early 1960's I was his supervisor as Director of Flying, or System Chief Pilot.

From the Golden Eagles Book I am reminded that Pete is now 94 years of age. Please give him my congratulations and best wishes.

Most sincerely,  
Richard S. Grigsby,  
Co-editor, Golden Contrails

K. D. THOMPSON sent this e-mail, dated April 20, 2004:                      Hi All,

We are back in Pacific N.W. for summer and house building. Our address and phone no. for next 6 to 7 mos. is:

1401 S. W. 8<sup>th</sup> Ave.,  
Battle Ground, Washington, 98604.  
(360) 687-1484.

e-mail and cell phone remain the same.

K. D. & Casey.

Your Associate Editor has other stories of "Memorable Flights" with earlier dates, but in consideration of JACK DANIELS' recent death, we are printing it in this issue.

### **A FLIGHT TO REMEMBER**

By Jack Daniel

May 2, 2004

One of my most memorable flights was from Cheyenne, Wyoming to Dallas, Texas on December 5, 1950. It was during the Korean War and the airlines were flying military charters all over the United states. We flew DC3's without cabin attendants, just the pilot and co-pilot and a plane load of soldiers. My

co-pilot was Bill Witthorne. After an overnight in Cheyenne we were to ferry empty to Amarillo. The fuel load and flight plan were based on landing there.

We left Cheyenne just prior to a cold front, which stretched from the northwest to half-way across the country, but shouldn't interfere with our flight.

Over Pueblo we were advised the front had picked up speed, and Amarillo was a bit shaky, but should still be OK for our arrival. It wasn't!

Prior to our arrival, the temperature had dropped 30 degrees, with blowing sand and snow, and strong gusty winds. It was below landing limits. While talking to the tower operator he jokingly said he thought he saw a car blow by but Bill and I were in no mood to join the laughter as we requested clearance to Lubbock.

By this time the approaching front was clearly visible to the north, with a solid dark blue wall as high as you could see.

Lubbock was a repeat of Amarillo without the snow, and we added power and headed for Abilene, eyeing the fuel gauges warily.

Abilene's visibility was good, but strong winds had blown a few light aircraft, which were not tied down, across the field, and with other debris, blocked part of the only usable runway.

We didn't have enough fuel to wait around, and headed for Mineral Wells. Half way there, we were in radio contact with the dispatcher in Dallas, and he said to forget Mineral Wells. The short east-west runway had excess crosswinds. Also the station was closed due

to weather. No passengers and a phone call from the manager's wife advising him that his chicken coop had blown over and his chickens were blowing away. He left to rescue his chickens which was just as well, because we couldn't land anyway.

Fort Worth was next if we could make it. The fuel gauges were bouncing off empty. Bill remarked that if we made it in one piece he definitely would be looking for employment of a different nature.

I told him to look for a long gravel road as I thought that would be safer to deadstick land onto, than into some rough field. In 1950 there wasn't too much traffic so I thought it would be safer on a road.

Fort Worth held, and we requested emergency equipment to stand by. We landed in strong, gusty winds, with no problems, but I'm sure—out of gas. The wings could have fallen off, and we wouldn't have cared because we were so happy to be safely on the ground.

We refueled, and proceeded VFR into Dallas. Our total flight time was six hours and thirty minutes.

By the way, Bill never sought employment of a different nature, and that happened fifty-four years ago!

—end—

## **MEMORABLE FLIGHTS**

By Norm Meyer

Two of my flights for Continental were memorable because of being at opposite ends of the duration scale. The longest lasted twelve hours and forty five minutes, the shortest took less than two minutes.

The lengthy one was a MAC flight, an empty cargo ferry from Clark Field in the Philippines to LAX with only a deadheading cabin crew aboard. Being so light, we could of course climb rapidly to high flight levels and

cruise with very low fuel consumption, making such a long flight possible. Our flight time was extended by our having to hold in thunderstorms north of LAX and then to do a midnight back course over ocean approach (black as the inside of a goat) to land to the east at LAX.

My shortest hop ever was also an empty cargo ferry. It was an Army Cargo flight in a C-47 during WW II. We had unloaded freight at Lowry Field in Denver and needed to ferry over to Municipal, or was it already Stapleton? The north south runways at both airports nearly lined up with each other, and were only a mile or two apart, so we got clearance to land before taking off! The flight, without even retracting the gear, lasted only a minute or two.

—end—

Editor's Note: NORM MEYER is a member of the United Flying Octogenarians who number just over 200. To join you must have passed a valid medical exam and a biennial flight review. You must also have flown solo on or after your eightieth birthday in any powered flying machine that can be legally flown. The address is P O Box 1114, Montgomery AL, 36111-0114

## **LAVERNE THORNBERRY NOTES**

From The Golden Tale

I am grateful to HARRY WATSON who called.....we did have a good phone visit...He told me about flying with RIP, my late husband, and LEON GREEN. HARRY's wife passed away and after 8 lonely years he met DONNA. They were married (ten years ago), and at age 81, HARRY began a new business venture, drilling oil and gas wells in Montana and Wyoming.

