



STRAIGHT SCOOP

Volume XV Number 10 October 2009

To promote the acquisition, restoration, safe operation, and display of historical aircraft and provide an educational venue for the community

The Round The World Saga of the "Pacific Clipper"

John A. Marshall



Engines: Four (4) 1,600 hp (1,192 kW) Wright R-2600 Twin Cyclone (1,192 kW), 14 cylinder, air-cooled, radial engines.

Wing Span: 152 ft. (46.33 m.) Length: 106 ft (32.31 m.) Max T.O. Weight: 84,000 lb. (38,102 kg.)

Max level speed: 199 mph (320 km/h) Cruising speed: 184 mph (296 km/h) Range: 5,200 miles (8369 km)

First flight: June 7, 1938 Ceiling: 19,600 feet

Accommodation: 10 crew, 74 passengers

For the rest of the story see pages 10 & 11

Additional pictures on page #7

www.pacificcoastairmuseum.org

The Pacific Coast Air Museum

Location: At the Charles M. Schulz-Sonoma County Airport, North of Santa Rosa, West of Highway 101, at 2230 Becker Blvd, off North Laughlin Road.

Hours: Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday. 10:00am—4:00pm.

“Climb Aboard”: A selected aircraft is available to “Climb Aboard” the third weekend of each month (weather permitting). Please visit our web site at www.pacificcoastairmuseum.org or call 707-575-7900 for details or further Information.

Member Meetings: Normally held on the third Wednesday of each month, 7:00pm, at the Sonoma County Office of Education, near the airport at the intersection of Airport and Skylane Boulevards. Interesting speakers are featured at each meeting.

“Straight Scoop”

The museum newsletter, “Straight Scoop” is published monthly and is available on line on the museum’s web site. Members are highly encouraged to submit articles for possible publication. The deadline is the 26th of the month prior to publication. All articles in the newsletter are covered by copyright. If you wish to submit articles or use any of the content, please contact:

Chris Tart, Editor
1064 Maple Drive
Windsor, Ca 95492
707-836-9226
sctartusaf@yahoo.com

Membership Renewals:

\$30 per year individual; \$45 per year for families. Send renewals to the museum at the address below.

Address Corrections:

Please send to:
Pacific Coast Air Museum
2230 Becker Boulevard
Santa Rosa, Ca 95403

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Garry Beverlin 707-576-0350
Jim Cook 707-575-6944
Don Doherty 707-576-8199
Paul Heck 707-538-2200
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Web Administrator

SNIPPETS OF WW II

By

Bill Carpentier, AKA CR Mudge

D-Day, the sixth of June 1944!! *Operation Overlord*, the Invasion of the European continent by allied forces that marked the beginning of the war in Europe (the ETA) and led to its end on VE Day, May 8, 1945.

What was the most logistically crucial product needed to supply and sustain those allied forces?

FUEL— FUEL—FUEL

On the day of the landing alone, 20,000 gas hungry land vehicles were put ashore at the five assault beaches with the original fuel supplied by sea going tankers. However, these tankers were exposed constantly to German U Boats, storms, and *Luftwaffe* air attacks and obviously couldn't be used as a permanent solution.

That solution was a very obscure and top secret activity code named *Operation Pluto* and quite simply consisted of laying 45 miles of 3 inch diameter fuel line under the English Channel. Preliminary experiments for this operation had been started as early as 1942.

These lines were laid by a fleet of radically converted merchant ships which spooled them out from various camouflaged British ports and laid them on the bottom of the channel. The average dept was 150 feet.

The first one was completed on August 12, 1944—only two short months after the initial landings—surfacing at Cherbourg, France and started pumping a phenomenal 1,500 gallons per hour.

Unfortunately, there were 21 lines running from different pumping stations in G.B. to storage tanks in Europe and delivering a total of one million gallons per day! They were laid all the way to the Rhine River in Germany during the ensuing 11 months of combat. At the end of the war in the ETO, over 750 million gallons had been pumped across the bottom of that famous and historic body of water.

Every single one of those gallons had been sucked up voraciously by an incredible number of miscellaneous types of machinery—from high speed combat aircraft to tanks, to land vehicles and to simple gasoline generators. This constant and the dependable supply was the Allies' trump card in victory.

Interestingly, there are still a few vestiges left of this fabulous operation today. A pump may be seen at Swansea, Wales, and another on the Isle of Wight.

A microscopic item, well hidden in the history books, is that on that historic day, the sixth of June, 1944, General Dwight Eisenhower's son, John, graduated from West Point.

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Executive Director's Update

The Walkway Project around our Air Park has been upgraded to provide a better walking surface for all our volunteers and visitors. Thanks to [John Rutigliano](#) for heading up yet another project for the museum, to [Guy Smith](#) for donating his time and equipment, to [Bohan and Canelis](#) for donating the material and to the following great group of folks who worked hard over a two day period to upgrade and finish the Air Park walkway:

Jerry Curry – Trail Gravel

Greg Thomas

Barney Hagen

Dave Watson – Photos

Jim Cook

Guy Smith – Equipment

Don Madson

Dave Pinsky

Bill Green

Bob Matreci

Ed Nelson—Hot Dog cook

John Henry—Assistant Hot Dog cook

Ed Rebook

Paul Derkos

Duane Coppock

Justin Masingale

Barbara Beedon

Rich Harkness

John Rutigliano

Airport Operating Area (AOA) Badges .. These badges are ONLY required if you require access to the airport ramps and operating areas. You DO NOT need one to work in the museum or in the museum aircraft display area. IF YOU HAVE A GATE CARD OR CLICKER, YOU NEED AN AOA BADGE! If you do not have an AOA badge by October 16th, your gate card or clicker will be de-activated and you will be charged a fee to get it re-activated. The museum must authorize you to have an AOA badge if your gate card was issued through the museum, or if the reason you need airport access is to work for the museum. If you have any questions, please contact Duane, Jim Cook or me. It's not a hard process. There is a \$15 fee that each person who desires an AOA badge must pay the airport (cash or check only) to cover the airport's processing charges. The Airport Manager's office hours to apply for and/or pick up a badge are Mondays and Thursdays, from 1:00pm to 4:00pm. You can also call 565-7243 to schedule an appointment for other than these days and times.

Continued.....

The museum, by the end of the year, is being required to erect a more visible boundary between the museum and the airport operating area in order to keep people in the museum area and out of the airport. We have reached agreement with the Airport Manager as to what the barrier will be. Be on the lookout for changes, and if in doubt, ask Duane, Mike, Phyllis or me. There are going to be changes and we'll do our best to keep everyone informed. For now, if you must drive through the gate after October 31st, you must have a gate card and an AOA badge. With the badge, you can escort up to four people, but you must keep them in sight at all times.

For our visitors to the museum (including tours and birthday parties), we are required to keep an eye on them and to ensure that they do not leave the museum area and/or go onto the airport. This is going to require constant vigilance by all our volunteers and hourly checks by Gift Shop volunteers on all days we are open. On days we are closed, no one should be on the museum grounds unless they have or can establish a valid reason for being there.

The airport is expecting us to maintain the security of the airport around the museum and we have assured them that we will do so. Our failure to do so could have undesirable consequences for the museum, so please help us out. But please don't get into confrontations or arguments with anyone .. Just remind people not to leave the museum boundaries and ask if you are unsure why someone is doing what they are doing. If you run into a situation that you cannot resolve, get Duane or me, or contact the Airport Operations staff.

Development Director (Fundraiser!) .. If you haven't already met [Barbara Beedon](#), the Pacific Coast Air Museum's new (and first) Development Director, please introduce yourself to her when you next see her at the museum .. She's at the museum a lot. Her job is to raise money for the museum's operations (not for the new museum .. that's coming downstream a bit). She'll be organizing an Annual Giving Campaign and a brand new Planned Giving Campaign. Barbara has a lot of experience in fund raising and the Board is to be commended for establishing the position and bringing Barbara on board. She's going to need some help, especially in the admin and follow up areas, so if you'd like to volunteer to help Barbara in museum fund raising, let me know and I'll put her in touch with you.

Finally, I want to, once again, thank everyone who has helped with the Air Show, Hot Dog Thursdays, Shrimp Feed, in the Gift Shop, on both Gift Shop re-models, the Air Park pathway, our great exhibits, tours, birthday parties, Boy Scout and Summer Camp Programs, in the Admin Office and the many other things we could not do without the wonderful corps of volunteers we have. I'm proud to work alongside all of you.

Smooth landings,
Dave

GUEST SPEAKER FOR OCTOBER

Our honored speaker will be WWII Veteran, Lt. Col. Raymond Kelly (USAF Ret) who will share his experiences as a crew member flying B-29's with the 505th Group of the 20th Air Force off Tinian Island. He has over 5000 hours flight time and flew 35 missions over Japan. His numerous decorations include the Distinguished Flying Cross, 3 Air Medals and Asiatic Campaign Medal with 3 battle stars. His missions include the only USAAF Group to fly mining missions for the US Navy.

Lt. Col. Kelly was born in San Francisco to an early pioneer family. He graduated from St. Ignatius High School (also attended by his father and grandfather), as well as Santa Clara University (also attended by his father). He entered active duty in May 1943 and retired in 1971 while serving with the 22nd Air Force at Travis AFB. Lt. Col. Kelly's two sons are graduates of the US Air Force Academy and both are now retired US Air Force officers as well.

JUMPSTART—H**Memo for History Buffs**

We are ready to ask for help from those of you who are interested in helping "jumpstart" PCAM'S aviation history program!

If you'd like to help organize our archives and/or library, engage in aviation history research, write articles for *Straight Scoop*, or do some electronic programming and transfer, please come on board.

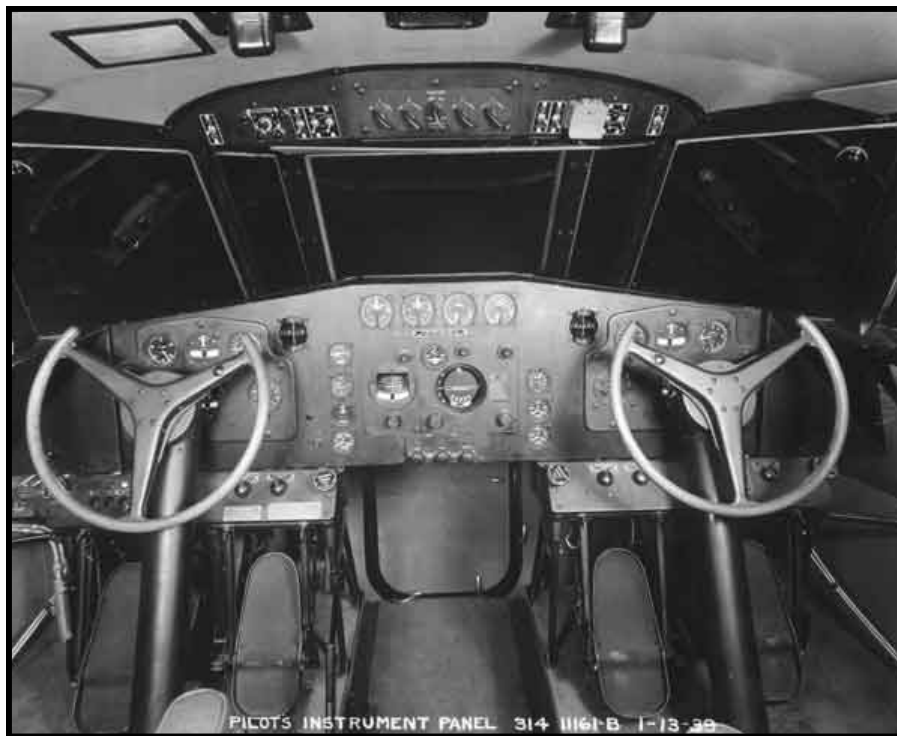
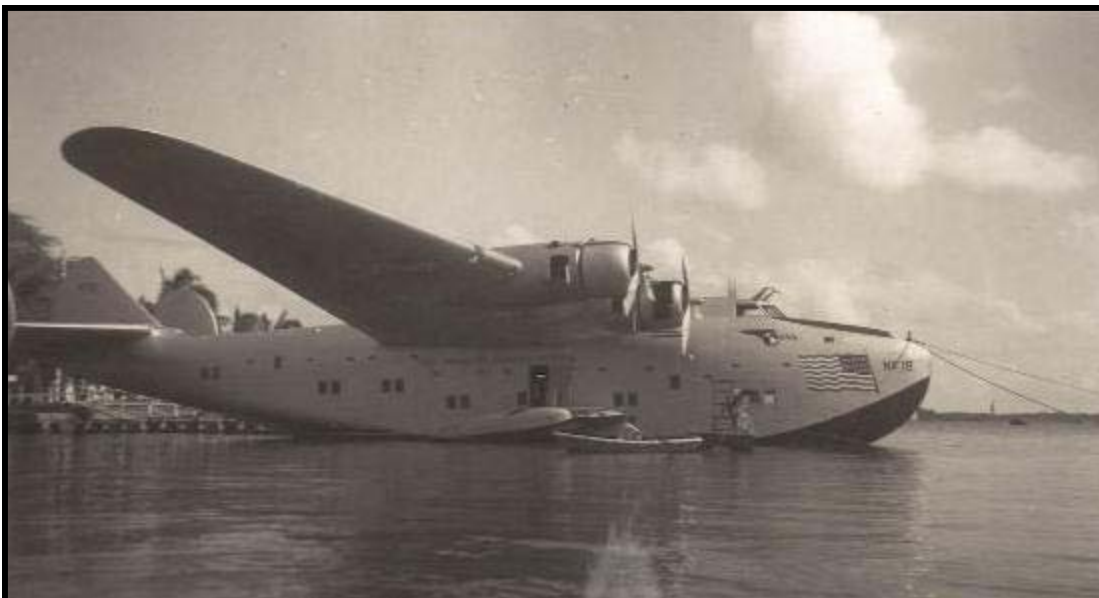
We have just opened up a fabulous resource with the Community Media Center and the possibilities for working with high tech electronic equipment are exciting.

Please call Duane at the museum number (575-7900) and let him know.

YOU WILL BE CONTACTED

WANTED:

Anyone who is interested in assisting the newsletter editor when he is unable to publish any editions due to illness, travel etc. Please contact Chris Tart at sctartusaf@yahoo.com for further information.



Announcement Concerning the 2009 Board Election

Each year 3 directors are elected to serve 23-year terms. This year the terms of directors Doherty, Nation and Rengstorf will expire. Elections for these directorships will be completed during the next two months.

Our bylaws require that candidates for the Board of Directors be General Members at the time of nomination. After nomination, the Nomination Committee will determine whether candidates are qualified to serve. (Incumbent directors are presumed to be qualified and their candidacy is not evaluated by the Nomination Committee.)

In making its determination, the committee considers at least the following.

1. Is the candidate a General Member?
2. How long have they been a member?
3. Why do they want to serve as a director?
4. How do they see the position of director?
5. Have they ever served as an officer or director of any non-profit organization?
6. Are they presently serving as an officer or director of any non-profit organization?
7. If so, how long have they served and what office do they hold?
8. What is their present or former employment?
9. Will they be able to regularly attend board meetings?
10. Will they be able to regularly attend member meetings?
11. Will they be able to commit at least a few hours per month to Museum business outside of meetings?
12. Will they be able to assist at the air show?
13. Do they have ready access to email?
14. What qualities do they possess that will make them an asset as a director?
15. Does the candidate appear to be someone who will be able to get along in a group of 8 other strong personalities?
16. personalities?
17. Is the candidate willing to assume responsibility for a major project or division of the Museum?

To be elected, a candidate for director must be nominated. This includes incumbent directors. Nominations may be made in one of three ways:

1. You may nominate yourself
2. You may nominate another
3. The nomination committee may nominate one or more candidates.

Continued.....

The nominations may be in the form of a written nomination, on a form provided by the Museum, or verbally at the November 18th general meeting.

If you intend to run for election or intend to nominate someone else, please be sure to do so no later than the end of the time provided at the November meeting. If you intend to nominate someone else, please discuss it with them first as they must be willing to explicitly accept the nomination, either in writing or verbally at the November meeting.

All candidates will be given an opportunity to make a brief verbal campaign statement during the November meeting.

After the time provided for nominations has passed, the Nomination Committee will complete its evaluation of all candidates who have accepted nomination. Those candidates who are deemed qualified will be so notified and included on the ballot.

Each candidate appearing on the ballot will be given the opportunity to submit a written statement to be included with the ballot.

1. You must submit your statement no later than Monday, November 23, 2009.
2. All statements must be submitted electronically, via email, to the following address:
admin@pacificcoastairmuseum.org.
3. Statements may not exceed 100 words, including your name. For any statement exceeding 100 words, only the first 100 words will be printed. You may use any legible style of font, not greater than size
4. 12. Other than adjustment for font size and the 100-word restriction, your statement will be printed as submitted.

If you are considering being a candidate, you are urged to prepare this statement now as it will be of help in making your verbal statement at the November meeting.

If you have any questions concerning the nomination or election process, please call Executive Director [Dave Pinsky](#) or Administrative Assistant [Duane Coppock](#) at 707-575-7900.

Continued from page #1

December 7, 1941 The first blush of dawn tinged the eastern sky and sent its rosy fingers creeping onto the flight deck of the huge triple-tailed flying boat as she cruised high above the South Pacific. Six days out of her home port of San Francisco, the Boeing 314 was part of Pan American Airways' growing new service that linked the far corners of the Pacific Ocean. With veteran Captain Robert Ford in command, the Pacific Clipper, carrying 12 passengers and a crew of ten was just a few hours from landing in the harbor at Auckland, New Zealand.

The calm serenity of the flight deck early on this spring morning was suddenly shattered by the crackling of the radio. Radio Operator John Poindexter clamped the headset to his ears as he deciphered the coded message. His eyes widened as he quickly wrote the characters on the pad in front of him. Pearl Harbor had been attacked by Japanese war planes and had suffered heavy losses; the United States was at war. The stunned crew looked at each other as the implications of the message began to dawn. They realized that their route back to California was irrevocably cut, and there was no going back. Ford ordered radio silence, and then posted lookouts in the navigator's blister; two hours later, the Pacific Clipper touched down smoothly on the waters of Auckland harbor. Their odyssey was just beginning.

The crew haunted the overwhelmed communications room at the US Embassy in Auckland every day for a week waiting for a message from Pan Am Headquarters in New York. Finally, they received word— they were to try and make it back to the United States the long way: around the world Westbound. For Ford and his crew, it was a daunting assignment. Facing a journey of over 30,000 miles, over oceans and lands that none of them had ever seen; they would have to do all their own planning and servicing, scrounging whatever supplies and equipment they needed; all this in the face of an erupting World War in which political alliances and loyalties in many parts of the world were uncertain at best. Their first assignment was to return to Noumea, back the way they had come over a week earlier. They were to pick up the Pan American station personnel there and then deliver them to safety in Australia. Late on the evening of December 16th, the blacked out flying boat lifted off from Auckland harbor and headed Northwest through the night toward Noume. They maintained radio silence, landing in the harbor just as the sun was coming up. Ford went ashore and sought out the Pan Am station manager. "Round up all your people," he said. "I want them all at the dock in an hour. They can have one small bag apiece".

The crew set to work fueling the airplane, and exactly two hours later, fully fueled and carrying a barrel of engine oil, the clipper took off and pointed her nose South toward Australia.

It was late afternoon when the dark green smudge of the Queensland coast appeared in the windscreen, and Ford began a gentle descent for landing in the harbor at Gladstone. After offloading their bewildered passengers, the crew set about seeing to their primary responsibility, the Pacific Clipper. Captain Ford recounted "I was wondering how we were going to pay for everything we were going to need on this trip. We had money enough for a trip to Auckland and back to San Francisco, but this was a different story. In Gladstone, a young man who was a banker came up to me and out of the blue said, "How are you fixed for money?" "Well, we're broke" I said. He said, "I'll probably be shot for this", but he went down to his bank on a Saturday morning, opened the vault and handed me five hundred American dollars. Since Rod Brown, our Navigator was the only one with a lock box and key, we put him in charge of the money. That \$500 financed the rest of the trip all the way to New York.

Ford planned to take off and head straight Northwest across the Queensland desert for Darwin, and then fly across the Timor Sea to the Dutch Indies (now Indonesia), hoping that Java and Sumatra remained in friendly hands. The next day, as they droned into the tropical morning, the coastal jungle gradually gave way to great arid stretches of grassland and sand dunes. Spinnfex and gum trees covered the landscape to the horizon. During the entire flight to Darwin, the crew didn't see a river big enough to set down the big flying boat should anything go wrong. Any emergency would force them to belly land the airplane onto the desert and their flight would be over.

They approached the harbor at Darwin late in the afternoon. Massive thunderheads stretched across the horizon and continuous flashes of lightning lit up the cockpit. The Northernmost city in Australia, Darwin was closest to the conflict that was spreading Southward like a brush fire. A rough frontier town in the most remote and primitive of the Australian territories, it was like something out of a wild west movie. After they landed, the Pacific Clipper crew was offered a place to shower and change; much to their amusement their "locker room" turned out to be an Australian Army brothel.

Ford and his crew set about fueling the airplane. It was a lengthy and tiresome job. The fuel was stored in five gallon "Jerry" cans and each one had to be hauled up over the wing and emptied into the tanks. It was midnight before they finished. They managed a few hours of fitful sleep before take off, but Ford was anxious to be under way. News of the progress of the Japanese forces was sketchy at best. They were fairly certain that most of the Dutch East Indies was still in friendly hands but they could not dally.

Early the next morning, they took off for Surabaya, fourteen hundred miles to the West across the Timor Sea. The sun rose as they droned on across the flat Turquoise Sea, and soon they raised the eastern islands of the great archipelago of east Java. Crude thatch-roofed huts dotted the beaches, and the islands were carpeted with a lush green jungle of the tropics.

Surabaya lay at the closed end of a large bay in the Bali Sea. The second largest city on the island of Java, it was guarded by a British Garrison and a squadron of Bristol Beaufort fighters. As the Pacific Clipper approached the city, a single fighter rose to meet them; moments later it was joined by several more. The recognition signals that Ford had received in Australia proved to be inaccurate and the big Boeing was a sight unfamiliar to the British pilots. The crew tensed as the fighters drew closer. Because of a quirk in the radio systems, they could hear the British pilots but the pilots could not hear the clipper. There was much discussion among them as to whether the flying boat should be shot down or allowed to land. At last they heard the British controller grant permission for them to land and then add, "If they do anything suspicious, shoot them out of the sky!" With great relief, Ford began a very careful approach.

As they neared the harbor, Ford could see that it was filled with warships, so he set the clipper down in the smooth water just outside the harbor entrance. "We turned around to head back, there was a launch that had come out to meet us but instead of giving us a tow or a line, they stayed off about a mile and kept waving us on. Finally, when we got further into the harbor they came closer. It turned out that we had landed right in the middle of a minefield and they weren't about to come near us until they saw we were through it."

The remainder of this story will be in the November issue of the Straight Scoop.



October 17th & 18th
Climb Aboard the
IL-14 "Crate" and
DC-6 Cockpit

REMEMBER THESE DATES

- October 7th @ 8:30 am Board of Directors Meeting at the Museum
- October 13th @ 12:00 pm Executive Director's Staff Meeting at the Museum
- October 17th @ 11:00 am New Member Orientation
- October 21st @ 6:00pm Air Show Debriefing at SCOE
- October 21st @ 7:00 pm Monthly Membership Meeting at SCOE

PACIFIC COAST AIR MUSEUM
2230 Becker Blvd.
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