

From the Chairman Ed Trippe...

In early November, I had the honor on behalf of the Pan Am Historical Foundation and the Trippe family to receive the 2023 Aviation Achievement Award from the San Francisco Aeronautical Society. The Aeronautical Society is the private fund-raising entity for the San Francisco Aviation Museum. The Museum holds an impressive collection of Pan Am memorabilia and has been an important partner with the PAHF. My acceptance speech recognized the importance of that partnership going forward. I also recognized John Hill, the former Curator of the Museum and a Director of PAHF. He was the inspiration behind the award and I remain greatly appreciative of John for this recognition.

My speech recalled the many contributions Pan Am made to aviation spanning its nearly seven decades of service. Most memorable were the successive generations of new aircraft from the earliest Fokker and Sikorsky airplanes, culminating with the Boeing 707 in 1958, and perhaps the greatest aircraft of our time, the 747 in 1970. I spoke of Pan Am's technological and humanitarian service to the country and to other nations it served. I told the audience about Pan Am's significant wartime service spanning its entire history. This service included both publicly recognized activities as well as clandestine missions, many to this day are still largely unknown.

Chairman *cont. p.2*

Pan Am Celebrates Centennial Anniversary in 2027 *Send Us Your Suggestions on How to Honor this Historic Event*

BY RUTH MARON

The date was October 19, 1927. Pan American Airways flew its first flight to carry the U.S. mail from Key West, Florida to Havana, Cuba. It was flown by Cy Caldwell whose plane, a single-engine Fairchild float plane, was chartered at the last moment after securing the contract from the U.S. Postal Department.



The days leading up to this historic event were fraught with intrigue and high finance maneuvers as several groups competed for this highly coveted contract. The stipulation was that the flight had to be completed by October 19. Working down to the wire, Juan Trippe, the 27-year-old airline executive, ultimately secured the contract. The plane took off from

Key West at 7:00 AM and landed in Havana sixty-two minutes later carrying seven sacks of mail with about thirty thousand letters.

The first regularly scheduled flight took place on October 28. It was the first flight to use the Fokker Tri-Motor. At the official inauguration of service, the plane was christened *Clipper General Machado*, in honor of the Cuban leader.



Top down: Clipper General Machado 1927; Yankee Clipper 1939; InterContinental Hotel, Belem 1949; Pan Am Building 1963; Clipper America 1970

In October 2027, we will celebrate the 100th Anniversary of Pan Am and honor its visionary founder, Juan T. Trippe.

This historic event marked the beginning of a long series of 'firsts' that would change the history of aviation and change the world. Pan Am was first across the Pacific with the historic flight of the China Clipper in 1935

Anniversary *cont. p.3*



Above: Ed Trippe at the podium;

L-R: John Martin, Aeronautical Society Chairman, Ed Trippe, John Hill, PAHF Director;

L-R: Karen Law-Hing, Ed Trippe, Terry Rice



JOSEPH DRISTE PHOTOGRAPHY

Internationally, Pan Am was in the forefront of a much prouder period in our country's history, the decades known as the "American Century" when American corporations dominated global commerce with technological innovation, creative design, and market presence. Pan Am's expanding chain of Inter-Continental Hotels and the Pan Am Building spanning Park Avenue in New York added to Pan Am's aura and prestige during these golden years.

So why did Pan Am fail? It had earned the support of many in the Executive and Congressional branches of Government, but that was not enough. Its failure can be largely attributed to a decidedly hostile Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) that systematically dismantled Pan Am's global franchise by awarding Pan Am's long held international routes to domestic carriers, opening gateway US cities to international carriers, and most importantly denying Pan Am domestic routes. How bizarre that Pan Am had no traffic rights on its Round-the-World route on the leg between SFO and NYC! I noted that Pan Am surely made serious management mistakes. Selling the Pacific Division was catastrophic, and buying additional 747s in the midst of a recession was

crazy. The acquisition of National Airlines, whose route structure and aircraft were incompatible, also contributed to Pan Am's demise.

And Lockerbie, the ultimate act of terrorism, was the final straw in an American corporate failure that should never have happened. Pan Am would cease operations two years later.

I had a great audience of aviation enthusiasts who were enthralled with the Pan Am story of its early pioneering days, its years as the world's preeminent international carrier, and its subsequent decline into bankruptcy.

I went on to describe the founding of PAHF, and our acquisition of Pan Am's archives and memorabilia. It was a story of commitment and dedication to saving the history of a great airline and ensuring its legacy is never forgotten. I described PAHF's ongoing relationship with other Pan Am organizations — Pan Am Museum Foundation, World Wings International, and Clipper Pioneers, as well as with many other institutions including the University of Miami's Richter Library that manages the Pan Am's archives, the Smithsonian, and the San Francisco Aviation Museum.

The Pan Am Historical Foundation is not a museum. Its mission has always

been to perpetuate the legacy of Pan Am and to ensure its archives and memorabilia are preserved for future generations. Our webmasters, Doug Miller and Mimi Caruthers, have created a highly acclaimed website — www.Panam.org. They recently inaugurated a "Digital Library" that will exhibit PAHF's expanding collection of visual and oral histories chronicling the story of Pan Am from its beginnings to the present. I also noted PAHF's significant financial backing of the documentary film, *"Across the Pacific"*, which continues to be shown on Amazon Prime and is available via DVD.

The theme of the Gala evening and the Museum's sponsored seminar the next afternoon was to celebrate Pan Am's film collection. The film collection was among the most important archives to come out of Pan Am's bankruptcy. Sadly, at the time the collection eluded the newly formed Historical Foundation. It was acquired by a former Pan Am senior executive, who fortunately shared our commitment to preserve Pan Am's legacy. Several years ago, PAHF had the opportunity to acquire the film library. Since that time, additional films have been added, as well as some unique home movies, including Betty Trippe's film of the

Philippine Clipper on its inaugural flight to HNL. Additionally, PAHF has added a collection of videotaped interviews with important individuals in our history.

Because PAHF is not a museum and lacks the facilities and staff to manage and maintain a major film library, we were drawn to the San Francisco Aviation Museum and the Aeronautical Society to take on and manage this important film collection. Additionally, the financial challenge to maintain and digitize the film collection is immense, and the storage costs in a climate-controlled environment are also significant. Accordingly, the San Francisco Aeronautical Society is a unique and appropriate partner to support Pan Am's Film Library going

forward. Most importantly, PAHF and its affiliated Pan Am partners, including the Pan Am Museum Foundation, will retain full access to the film library which we hope will be enhanced over time.

In addition to announcing our plan to donate the film library to the SFO Museum, I had the privilege to announce a PAHF matching grant donation of \$100,000 to support the film library. The Chairman of the Aeronautical Society, John Martin, indicated that the Aeronautical Society would match the PAHF contribution, a very healthy beginning to an important partnership!

We have already received pledges and donations to fund the PAHF

commitment, and are now seeking additional contributions from our membership and other Pan Am friends. Your support would be welcomed! Please send your contribution to Marie Lindell, Treasurer, Pan Am Historical Foundation, 534 East Hudson St, Long Beach, NY 11561. Thank you for your support!

It was an exceptional evening with many good memories. We look forward to finalizing the arrangements to complete the donation of the Pan Am film library to the SFO Museum, and to raising the necessary endowment for the preservation and management of this historic film collection for current and future generations. ✈

Anniversary *from p.1*

from Alameda, CA to Manila in the Philippines. The airline inaugurated the first transatlantic mail service in 1939 aboard the Dixie Clipper, followed shortly after by the first transatlantic passenger service on the Yankee Clipper. Pan Am was the first carrier to operate an around-the-world flight... and first to purchase and fly the Boeing 747. And that's just a small sampling of the pioneering 'firsts' in the airline's proud history.

Since its founding in 1927, Pan Am developed a route system that grew from its first short hop to Havana to a worldwide network that spanned the globe. Recognizing the need to provide first class accommodations for passengers and crews, Pan Am created the Intercontinental Hotels subsidiary in 1947 with its first hotel in Belem, Brazil. The celebrated luxury hotel chain expanded to include properties on all six continents. The airline also *propelled*

the development of new aircraft from the famous Flying Boats to the iconic Boeing 747.

The list goes on. During World War II, Pan Am played an important role detailed in the groundbreaking book, *'Pan Am at War — How the Airline Secretly Helped America Win the War'* by John Hill and Mark Cotta Vaz. Pan Am was also proud of its many humanitarian missions such as 'Operation Babylift' that began in 1975 during the Vietnam War.

In 1963, Pan American World Airways moved its NY headquarters from the Chrysler Building to the newly constructed 'Pan Am Building' with its bold Pan Am signage dominating the skyline from both north and south. Now known as the Met Life building, this famous skyscraper celebrated its 60th Anniversary in 2023.

As Pan Am gained notoriety — sometimes dubbed America's unofficial flag carrier — the airline also suffered

increased vulnerability with bomb scares and hijackings, culminating in the terrorist bombing of Flt 103 on December 21, 1988 in the sky over Lockerbie, Scotland. A day we will never forget.

We have had our victories and we have had our losses. How do we recognize the Centennial of a company and its people that literally wrote history?

We are asking you — the members and partners of the Pan Am Historical Foundation — for your suggestions on how to celebrate our 100th anniversary. We have created a special email account for you to send us your ideas for events and activities that are both local and global.

The commemorative year 2027 is right around the corner. Send your suggestions to:

PanAm100thAnniversary@gmail.com

UNLOCKING AN ARCHIVAL TREASURE: THE HAROLD BIXBY COLLECTION

New exhibit at SFO Museum chronicles life and career of Pan Am Icon in rare new collection of letters, photos and documents

BY RUTH MARON

Harold McMillan Bixby (1890-1965) was a midwestern businessman whose fascination with the emerging technology of aviation led to a career that encompassed many of the most important milestones in air travel in the 1920s and 30s. His career grew out of his lifelong friendship with Charles Lindbergh, helping to finance his transatlantic solo flight in 1927 aboard *The Spirit of St. Louis*. Lindbergh later introduced Bixby to Juan Trippe, Founder and CEO of Pan American Airways.

Much of Bixby's career was spent with Pan American from 1933 until his retirement in 1955. Hired by Juan Trippe, Bixby was based in Shanghai, China as a Special Representative to manage the airline's interests in Asia, particularly its partnership with China National Aviation Corporation (CNAC), a Pan Am subsidiary. He was involved in the opening of passenger and airmail flying boat service in Asia, and in preparations for the first transpacific flight of the China Clipper in 1935. After a series of postings, Bixby retired as a Pan Am Director and Vice President.

Unlocking an Archival Treasure: The Harold Bixby Collection is a new exhibit at the SFO Museum that spans the life and career of this pioneer in aviation. Bixby's family preserved a collection of 600 personal letters and documents, and 500 photographs. Since acquiring the collection in 2019, SFO Museum staff members have been working to research, preserve and catalog these rare and unique items.



Upper: Harold Bixby aboard CNAC Flying Boat in 1930s (Photo courtesy of Benjamin Barrett); Lower: Harold Bixby (left and behind) Charles Lindbergh in 1928 (Photo courtesy of SFO Museum collection)

Now for the first time, the Harold Bixby Collection will be on view in a pair of exhibitions that give visitors a behind-the-scenes look at how archival collections are preserved.

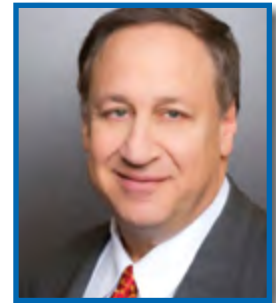
The Harold Bixby Collection is currently on view at the SFO Museum in the Aviation Museum and Library at San Francisco International Airport until September 7, 2025. The exhibit is located pre-security and there is no charge to visit the exhibition. ✈

For more information, visit:

www.sfomuseum.org



A message from
ADAM ARON
President,
Pan Am Historical Foundation



When I was named president of the Pan Am Historical Foundation in the spring of 2022, I articulated one of my major goals was to align the various Pan Am organizations based on our shared missions to preserve the legacy of Pan Am. In 2023, we took two important steps in beginning to fulfill on that objective.

Our PAHF provided funding to Clipper Pioneers, so it could continue its important membership communications program to so many of Pan Am's former pilots and flight engineers. That funding will be ongoing throughout 2024 as well.

And Linda Freire, Chair of the Pan Am Museum Foundation, announced in November that PAHF Chairman Ed Trippe has been named Honorary Chairman of the museum foundation. In turn, we announced that Linda Freire is joining the Board of Directors of the Pan Am Historical Foundation as well. These moves are harbingers of our two organizations becoming much closer in the months and years ahead.

The coming together of those who cherish the memory of the world's most experienced airline is in itself a wonderful thing. Speaking of the entire Pan Am community, on behalf of the Pan Am Historical Foundation, I hope that all of you who are fond of Pan Am have been enjoying a joyous Holiday season. And importantly too, may you have a Happy New Year in 2024! ✈

PAN AM FILM COLLECTION:

Empowering a New Perspective on History

BY DOUG MILLER

“...these wonderful windows onto history mark the Pan Am Film Collection as a carefully curated, unparalleled resource which will serve to keep Pan American as a vibrant and living thread in American and airline history”

On November 2nd, our Chairman Ed Trippe was honored with a special award and recognition at a Gala hosted by the San Francisco Aeronautical Society. Ed was honored for his years of advancing the legacy of Pan Am. You can read more about this event in Ed’s message in this issue.

He was also bearing some important tidings of his own...

The Pan Am Historical Foundation has initiated steps toward the donation of the PAHF Moving Image Archive to the SFO Museum.

It’s a library collected over decades, consisting of film, videotape, and digital video files now under the auspices of the PAHF. These hundreds of hours of collected travelogues, training films, ads, personal films, promotional films, interviews, and other unique visual treasures represent a great store of historical material. Their long-term well-being represents a responsibility that demands the sort of sustainable institutional infrastructure and focus uniquely available at the SFO Museum. Beyond that, partnering with the SFO Museum will mean that the PAHF will have access to the material on into the future, while the collection is maintained and even expanded through the arrangement.

The collection has been growing over recent years, even as the original Pan Am-generated film collection has been quietly archived awaiting more active development.



Even before the last Pan Am flight landed, there had been efforts afoot to identify and secure historic moving images from the airline’s past, by various individuals, including Kathleen Clair, one of the founders of the PAHF, who was an inveterate researcher. Other researchers, in the process of developing a documentary about Pan Am, learned of several valuable collections in the 1990s and kept up the search. Thor Johnson, former VP/ Cargo, was able to successfully secure the Pan Am Collection during the airline’s bankruptcy, and the collection was transferred to the PAHF in 2021.

All of these precursor efforts served to make the current plan for the film collection all the more dynamic and exciting. The materials have been safely stored for many years, and throughout that time, the library of Pan Am moving images has been growing via several paths.

The Foundation conducted interviews with various people who had personal perspectives that otherwise would have

been lost. People like John Berger, Robert Blake, Pete Goutiere, and Moon Chin were all captured in professional videotaping sessions.

The PAHF collection now also holds more than a few donated and acquired items. These range from personal home movies to company-made productions. Of particular note are the invaluable reels of film donated by Ed Trippe on behalf of the Trippe family.

Some of the personal collections are so large that their preservation and digitization has been supported by grants from the National Film Preservation Foundation (NFPF), notably those of Ernest “Allie” Allison — early CNAC pilot, and that of Royal Leonard, another CNAC pilot who was in China during WWII. We’ve received three grants to date, and future NFPF proposals are in the works.

Another very significant stream of moving imagery has been sourced through third party archival sources. To date, these include the National Air and Space Museum, the US National Archives and Records Administration, and others. This material comes to us as high resolution digital video files, as the source archives retain the original material. Nonetheless, the archival footage is extremely valuable and ours to use. Among this growing collection we have, for example: Juan Trippe speaking on camera at the Museum of Modern Art in 1943; R&R flight

The Pan Am Museum Foundation Celebrates a Memorable Weekend: *Festivities Include the 60th Anniversary of the Pan Am Building and the Passage to India Gala*

BY LINDA FREIRE
CHAIR, PAN AM MUSEUM FOUNDATION

CELEBRATING 60TH ANNIVERSARY

The Pan Am Museum Foundation paid tribute to Pan Am and its heroes during its Gala weekend on October 13th and 14th. On Friday, October 13th, 120 people gathered in the Vanderbilt Suite in the Pan Am Building to celebrate the 60th anniversary of its opening in 1963. The name on the top of the building may be different today, but to Pan Amers everywhere, the skyscraper located at 200 Park Ave. will forever be the Pan Am Building.



L – R: Ed Trippe, Linda Freire, Dan Colussy



L – R: Carol Mazurek, Wendy Knecht, Linda Freire (center), Patti Boyce Lassogna in front of the sculpture “Flight” honoring Pan Am in the renovated lobby.

Joining us for the celebration were three speakers who enjoyed a special connection to the building: Dan Colussy, former President of Pan Am; Robyn Roth-Moise, daughter of the

building’s architect Emery Roth; and Justin Rivers, Editor of the online magazine, *Untapped New York*.

The real star of the night was of course, the building itself. Today, the building looked shiny and new following a recently completed interior renovation. A centerpiece in the lobby was the beautiful artwork called “Flight” dedicated to Pan Am and its founder, Juan Trippe.

GALA CELEBRATION

The following night, the Museum hosted its seventh Clipper Gala — *Passage to India*, honoring the crew of Pan Am Flight 73 that was hijacked in Karachi in 1986. Attending the tribute were members of the Pan Am crew including Capt. William Kwanka and flight attendant Madhvi Bahuguna, along with a passenger from the flight, Jay Grantier. Board member Wendy Knecht delivered a heartfelt tribute to all on board and to the two Pan Am employees, Neerja Bhanot and Mejeeres Kharas, who were killed during the siege.

The evening’s Keynote Speaker was Fred Burton, a former police officer and special agent for the Diplomatic Security Service of the U.S. State Department. Mr. Burton was also the agent in charge of the investigation into the hijacking of Pan Am Flight 73 and the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103.

Hector Adler, Pan Am’s Vice President In-Flight Services gave an impactful speech on the last days of Pan Am when he was working on the 46th executive floor.



Special performance by the Surati Dance team.



Legendary Pan Amer Max Gurney, age 102, on the dance floor at the gala. Max joined Pan Am in 1944.

Gala guests were treated to a special performance from the Surati for the Performing Arts performing several Indian themed dances and two scenes from their Broadway musical, *Ramaavan*. The evening ended with dancing and an emotional tribute to Pan Am.

The Museum Foundation has exciting plans in the works for 2024, including a Gala on October 5 celebrating the 60th Anniversary of Pan Am flying The Beatles to New York to appear on the Ed Sullivan Show. Check out the website for the Pan Am Museum Foundation at www.ThePanAmMuseum.org for information on this exciting event. ➔

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Film *from p. 5*

activity in Vietnam; Pan Am's Lisbon ticket office during WWII; and scenes of the 1934 Army Air Corps mass flight led by then-Lt. Col. Hap Arnold, seen at Pan Am's Fairbanks Alaska base.

All of these wonderful windows onto history mark the Pan Am Film Collection as a carefully curated, unparalleled resource which will serve to keep Pan American as a vibrant and living thread in American and airline history.

In particular, we plan to make substantive and continuing use of the material for Clipper Hall, our new online digital exhibition space that will be continually updated in the coming months and years.

You can begin enjoying the Pan Am Film Library right now at Clipper Hall. Go to



<https://exhibits.panam.digital> and see the Pan Am FilmFest — Fall 2023, featuring “Pan Am Presents the World.” The Film Fest was shown at the Aeronautical Society event on November 3rd as part of the SFO Movie Night screenings at SFO Museum. And we’ve added something special, never seen in public. Go online to check it out, and remember, there will be more to come! ✈