



*Missions for America
Semper vigilans
Semper volans!*

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21 December 2022

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"China Clipper calling Alameda. China Clipper calling Alameda. China Clipper calling.... ""

For the film trailer, Go to:

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0027445/>

JOINT MEETING

20 December, 2022

The Squadron held its annual holiday party pot-luck food and fun and games.

TRAINING

15 December, 2022

2d Lt Matthew Maddore flew a practice SAR sortie with Maj Scott Farley and finished his practical qualifications for the Mission Observer rating. Madore, the squadron's Aircraft Maintenance Officer is also qualified as a Mission Scanner, Airborne Photographer.



*(Photo Credit:
Maj Scott
Farley)*

Madore's new qualification will support the squadrons continued commitment to accomplish the standing missions of Ice Patrol, Long Island Sound patrol, and any search and rescue request or damage assessment requests

AEROSPACE HISTORY

December 21, 1988 – First flight of the Antonov An-225 Mriya. The Mriya first flew using the registration of the Soviet Union but when taken over by Ukraine after the dissolution of the Soviet Union carried a UR registration flying for Antonov Airlines

Its most famous early mission was as the carrier aircraft for *Buran*, the Soviet space shuttle.



(Credit: Vasily Koba)

The sole flying aircraft was destroyed by Russian Federation attacks on Homostel Airport in February of 2022. However, an unfinished example still exists and the Ukrainian government, as if they already have too much on their plate, are considering producing a second aircraft from the usable parts existing in the unfinished and partially destroyed original.



(Credit: Kyiv City.gov.ua)

Destroyed and Partially Finished AN-225 Aircraft

(Credit: Antonov Aircraft)



December 22, 1945 – First flight of the Beechcraft Model 35 Bonanza.



The stylish and expensive V-tailed aircraft became a favorite of affluent pilots. However, the Bonanza had some mild stability problems, specifically Dutch Roll, and it sometimes control exceeded the ability of the pilot. It became known as the “fork tailed doctor killer.” because of a rash of accidents but a detailed inspection of accident records reveal that this sobriquet may have been unjustified.

In 1960, Beech marketed the Model 33 Debonair, a conventional tail economy model and eight years later launched the Model 36, a conventional tail version of the Model 35. Some interesting versions included the T-34 Mentor, a military trainer, the twin engine TravelAir and the Fuji KM-2, a Japanese adaption of the T-34.



CAP Mentor.

Derelict Fujis stored in a yard in northwest Connecticut,



Perhaps the most unique of the modifications was the QU-22.



Note the bulged nose fairing needed to allow for installation of the heavy duty alternator required to run the electronics.

Designed as a drone used for electronic monitoring and signal relays during the Vietnam unpleasantness. The propeller used a reduction gearing system to reduce noise and give it semi-stealth characteristics as it flew night missions along the Ho Chi Minh Trail. However, equipment reliability issues meant that the missions were flown by a pilot.

December 23, 1953 – First flight of the Lockheed XFV. The tail-sitter design was conceived by the Navy as an aircraft which could be carried on shipboard platforms and used for convoy protection.



Salmon demonstrating the strained position needed to look down and back when landing vertically.

The very talented test pilot, Herman “Fish” Salmon wrung the aircraft out flying it on ungainly awkward landing gear. It did transit to vertical flight and hovered but a landing or take-off vertically was never made. The idea was abandoned because it could not match the performance of contemporary fighter aircraft and it could only safely be flown by highly talented pilots.

Christmas Eve Miracle

December 24, 1971 – A LANSÁ (Lineas Aereas Nacionales, S.A.) Lockheed L-188 Electra flying from Lima, Peru to Pucallpa is struck by lightning, catches fire and breaks apart in mid-air.



The Doomed Electra

Fraulein Koepke receiving assistance after rescue.



A German 17 year old, Juliane Koepke falls 10,000 feet into the rainforest still strapped to her seat. The impact with the ground broke her collarbone. Her survival is presumably attributed to a number of factors. She was strapped into a central seat which provided some protection and had high drag during the fall. Updrafts in the storm and falling through the rain forest canopy may have also contributed to her survival.

Her parents operated an Amazon research station and she had experience in jungle survival. She walked for 10 days after the crash until she met some loggers who took her to a medical facility.

Christmas Day Miracle, 1981

December 25, 1981 – Lt. Thomas Tiller, an F-4 navigator-weapons operator, is fished from the Atlantic Ocean by the fishing boat *Odyssey*. Tiller had ejected from his aircraft seven days earlier 35 miles off of Cape Hatteras and had been adrift in a life raft. His only complaints were a salt water rash, thirst and hunger.



Wally Schirra practicing in a one-man life raft. Not quite a Carnival cruise ship. (Credit: NASA)

Christmas Day Disasters, 1946

December 25, 1946 – Chinese aviation “Black Christmas.” Three our airliners crash while trying to land at Shanghai’s Lungwha Airport. Rather than burning off, the usual morning fog thickened, ceiling was below 100 feet and visibility was 50 to 100 feet. Under the best of circumstances the grass and gravel airport was hard to find with only a single light at each end of the runway and a non-directional homing beacon.



By Courtesy of C. N. A. C.
The China National Aviation Corporation Airport at Lung-hwa, near Shanghai, photographed from the Air by Mr. Meri La Voy.

Lungwha, looking north across the Whangpoo River.

There was one “out” for the incoming flights. Kiangwan Airfield, 15 miles north of Lungwha was operated by the U.S. Navy and was equipped with the newly developed Ground Control Approach (GCA) radar system. GCA uses two radar beams to determine the height and alignment with the runway of an aircraft on final approach. The ground controllers radio this information to the pilot whom is able to adjust his flight path.

The first aircraft to crash was Central Air Transport (CAT) Flight 48, a C-47 captained by

Tommy Wing had a three man crew and seven passengers. Wing, Chinese, was a U.S. citizen who had been born in Chicago. Wing was directed to Kiangwan but had never used GCA and had to fly a missed approach. The C-47 struck the roof of a building in crashed. Three people on the ground were also killed.



Central Air Transport C-47 (Credit: Worthpoint)

Next Flight 140, a China National Aviation Corporation (CNAC) Curtiss C-46 Commando under the command of Captain James Greenwood, a experienced airline pilot had 30 souls on board. But intermittent problems with this radio made it impossible to contact the ground controllers so he returned to Lungwha.



*CNAC Commando
The insignia, called “The Chung” roughly translates as Middle Kingdom Space Machine Family.*

(Credit: Charles Klewin)

The beacon lights were not visible so ground crews poured gasoline along the sides of the runway and ignited them. Greenwood managed to set up his final approach correctly but has exhausted his fuel and he crash-landed, skidded 1,000 yards and flipped over. Rescue teams managed to save ten of the to aboard.

The third doomed airliner was a Central Air Transport (CAT) C-46, Flight 48, Captain Rolf

Preus commanding. Preus has a year's experience flying "The Hump, the air route over the Himalayan Mountains between India and China. Preus was the only pilot that night with GCA experience but his radio was not capable of transmitting on the VHF frequency needed to use it with GCA. He made several passes at the field but crashed into an area laced by canals and hit a small building.

It was now Capt. Francis Michiels turn. Michiels was a former military flight instructor was flying another CNAC Commando , Flight 147, with 30 passengers and crew. He had heard about GCA but had never used it. His radio was functional and the controllers talked him down to a safe landing with his passengers and crew.

Boxing Day Miracle December 6, 1946

Boxing Day, the day after Christmas, was once a holiday dedicated to charitable gifts to the poor. The name may have originated in the alms box used to collect donations. On December 26, 1946, the United Press updated the reports from the Black Christmas disasters. "When salvage crews lifted the wreckage of one of the planes they found 4-year-old Wong Didi fast asleep—the only uninjured survivor of the aerial accidents."

Boxing Day Atrocity December 26, 1935

December 26, 1935 – Italy has invaded Ethiopia and General Rodolfo Graziani receives permission from Mussolini to used poison gas against the Abyssinian troops. Bombs loaded with mustard gas which causes skin blistering, internal lesions and death are used for the rest of the war.



Italian ordnance crew in protective hazmat suits loadint the C500-T bomb used to deliver the gas.

December 27 1982 – John Leonard ‘Jack’ Swigert Jr., American astronaut, Goes West. At the time of his death, he was a Republican Member-elect of the U.S. House of Representatives for Colorado's 6th District. Swigert was one of three astronauts aboard the ill-fated Apollo 13 moon mission in 1970.



Earlier in his career he was a test pilot for Pratt & Whitney and flew for the 103rd Fighter Wing, Connecticut Air National Guard and earned a a Master of Science in Aerospace Engineering for theHartford campus of the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and a Master of Business Administration form the University of Hartford.

December 28, 1945– First flight of the Edo XOSE-1.



EDO was founded by Earl Dodge Osborne in 1925 and is best know as a producer of producing pontoons for seaplanes and adapting them to different models. However, the also, like Martin-Baker, noted for ejection seats, also produced a small line of aircraft.

The XOSE-1 was a single engine float plane powered by a Ranger inverted air cooled engine developing 550 hp. The concept was for a multi-role aircraft capable of anti-submarine patrols, gunfire observation and search and rescue.

Two prototypes were constructed and eight production models, designated OSE-2 were delivered to the Navy. The war had ended, budgets were tight, the Navy had a surplus of floatplanes and the utility of the helicopter was being realized. The contracts were cancelled and none ever entered service.

December 30, 1934 - First flight of the Martin M-130 flying boat.



China Clipper on its beaching gear.
(Credit: San Diego Air & Space Museum.)

The M-130 was a financial disaster for Glenn Martin. Juan Trippe ordered only three for Pan American World Airways and they opened up the US-Asia trans-Pacific passenger and mail routes. But Trippe would not purchase more because of their cost of operation and turned to Boeing and their Model 314. However, the introduction of the M-130 started a love affair between the American public and long range flying boats.

The first M-130 launched was NC-14716, the *China Clipper*. This was followed by the *Hawaiian Clipper* and the *Philippine Clipper*. The *Hawaii Clipper* disappeared over the Pacific in 1938 and there are conspiracy theories attached to that loss.

The *Philippine Clipper* crashed in 1942, hitting a mountain in California while attempting to land in San Francisco Bay in bad weather. Among those killed was Admiral Robert English, Commander of US submarine forces in the Pacific and members of his staff. The *China Clipper* met its end in 1945 at Port of Spain, Trinidad during a *botched landing*.



A 1935 movie, *China Clipper*, a cinema à clef portrayal of the PanAm struggle to establish a trans-Pacific airline route had a number of genuine aviation persona involved.

The screenplay was written by Frank "Spig" Wead. Record setting naval aviator and a promoter of naval aviation through his books, screenplays. In 1957, John Wayne portrayed Wead in *John Ford's production of The Wings of Eagles*.



Wayne Morris was the actor who played the navigator of the *Clipper* in the film possibly based upon Fred Noonan, PanAm's Chief Navigator. Morris's pre-war work playing in films about aviation led to his joining the Naval Reserve and

earning the “Wings of God” in 1942. He became an Ace with seven victories and was awarded three Distinguished Service Crosses.



Morris and Noonan (Credits: USN and NASM)

Humphrey Bogart was cast as Hap Stuart, a character based upon self effacing Edward Musick, PanAm's most famous pilot.



Aviation cinematographer Paul Mantz filmed the flying sequences which included shots of the China Clipper herself.



December 31 – Sky Markers are used for the first time by the RAF. Pathfinder Force Mosquitoes equipped with Oboe, a target locating device utilizing two ground radars and an aircraft mounted transponder led eight No.8 Group Lancasters to Düsseldorf.



Lancs “bombing up” and Mossies on their way to target.

(Credit: Imperial War Museum)



The RAF had been using various forms of pyrotechnics to mark target locations but all were ground based and useless during ten-tenths cloud cover. Sky Markers were parachute flares which were either red dripping green stars or green dripping red stars. The weakness of the system is that the Sky Markers even when accurately placed drifted with the wind resulting in inaccurate bomb placement.

January 1, 1922 – The first airline uniforms are introduced by Instone Air Lines. Instone was one of the first British airlines and operated from 1919 to 1924 when it was absorbed into Imperial Airways.



Instone Crew, officials and de Havilland DH-18s

The decision to merge was forced by the British government in an attempt to develop a single financially strong airline. Handley Page Air Transport, Daimler Airways and British Marine Navigation Company were also part of the amalgamation.

January 2, 1891 – Birth of Didier Daurat, a little know pioneer who arguably taught airlines how to run on time, a lesson now forgotten.



(Credit: musée Guillaumet de Bouy)

Daurat was a World War I aviator who was credited with locating one of the “Paris Guns,” the long range gun used to shell Paris.



Daurat with a Breguet, possibly a Model XIV.

When World War One ended, he joined the Latécoère's airline company which later became Aéropostale where he was a pilot and later operations director. He established a reputation as a “tough as nails” boss with no tolerance for failure. He demanded reliable and punctual service on the mail routes.

During his time with Aéropostale, the line expanded in Europe, opened up routes into Africa, flew the first commercial flights over the South Atlantic and established commercial service in on the west coast of South America into Chile.



Some of his pilots included aviation luminaries Jean Mermoz, Henri Guillaumet and Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. Saint-Exupéry immortalized him in the novel Night Flight as the South American station chief, Rivière, a man completely dedicated to the mission.



Saint-Exupéry, Mermoz, and Guillaumet

The following passages from *Night Flight* about Rivière, elucidates the character of Daurat and the loneliness of command. Fabien, a young and newly married pilot flying the mail north from Patagonia is killed penetrating a storm.. When the news of the loss of Fabien and the mail reaches the operations room, Rivière muses:

Victory, defeat – the words were meaningless...Tonight's defeat conveyed perhaps a lesson which would speed the coming of a final victory. The work in progress was all that matters.... Rivière went back to his work and, as he passed, the clerks quailed under this stern eyes; Rivière the Great, Rivière the Conquerer, bearing his heavy load of victor.

Daurat meet with some unfair treatment. Aéropostale was involved in a financial scandal involving misuse of funds. The French government created Air France and merged Aéropostale and four other companies into the new national carrier. Tinged by the scandal, Rivière was dismissed but founded Air Bleu, a domestic airmail carrier which was militarized at the start of WWII. When the war ended, he launched a night domestic air mail service and then ironically, assumed the post of Air France Operations Chief at Orly Airport. When he Went West in 1969, he was honored by being buried at Toulouse-Montaudran Airport, the former base of Aéropostale.

January 3, 1964 – A Broken Arrow incident, the USAF code word for an unexpected event involving nuclear weapons that result in the accidental launching, firing, detonating, theft, or loss of the weapon.

A B-52D loses its vertical stabilizer when it encounters extreme turbulence and crashed on Savage Mountain in Maryland.



(Credit: National Nuclear Security Administration)

The Stratofortress is carrying two Mark 53 nuclear bombs. Three of the five crew are killed and the bombs are recovered after a two day search.

January 4, 1964 – For the first time, a pope, Paul VI, uses an aircraft for an official visit. It is also the first time a pope have traveled outside of Europe. A chartered Alitalia DC-8 takes the Pope the Amman, Jordan.



(Credit: AFPL)

In 2021, ITA, Italia Trasporto Aereo, ITA Airways, became the chosen company for outbound trips after Alitalia went out of business.. Pope John Paul II started a new tradition by using the national carrier of the visited nation for the return trip to Rome. The call sign for the Pope's aircraft is *Volo Papale* followed by a serial number. The press call it “Shepherd One” and they have a right to do this since the media pay for the flights in return for transport for the staffs aboard *Volo Papale*.