

Pan American World Airways

A salute to momentous events to the Principality of Monaco since 1935:

"China Clipper" Crossing the Pacific November 22, 1935

"Dixie Clipper" Crossing the Atlantic June 29, 1939

Marriage of HSH Prince Rainier III of Monaco & Miss Grace Kelly, April 19, 1956

"Princess Grace of Monaco Jet Clipper" Inaugural New York – Nice April 28, 1985

Marriage of the Sovereign of Monaco, HSH Prince Albert II

and Miss Charlene Wittstok in Monaco, July 2 & 3, 2011

WELCOME TO PAN AM AND FRIENDS IN MONACO NOVEMBER 1-4, 2012



*Dixie Clipper completes first transatlantic flight
New York — Marseilles via Lisbon, Portugal
June 29, 1939 Boeing 314*

**Max Gurney, Officer of the Order of Saint Charles
Hon. Consul of Monaco, ret. La Jolla, California.**

CONQUERING THE ATLANTIC

by Don Cooper

The most direct route from New York to London is the great circle route that crosses Eastern Canada via Nova Scotia, Newfoundland out over the North Atlantic for 2000 miles then across the Irish Isles to Southampton. During the thirties, it would be a formidable task in the best of conditions for an aircraft to cross this route due to the hazards of stormy weather and icing that were prevalent with no intermediate landing sites in case of emergency. But the biggest hurdles were the governments controlling the airspace above these terminal points on both sides of the Atlantic. These entities couldn't be ignored and had to be dealt with individually. The shipping companies had long proven the route was profitable by the amount of trade that existed between the old and the new worlds. Juan Trippe, a visionary, saw the same commercial potential for Pan American if he could conquer the Atlantic by air.

In 1929, Pan American began to explore possibilities for North Atlantic routes. This was done in collaboration with Britain's Imperial Airways. The most promising route seemed to be via Bermuda and the Azores and in July 1930, both airlines obtained traffic rights between the U.S. and Bermuda but the Portuguese required continuation of the flight from the Azores to Lisbon before proceeding to London, which would add additional time and miles to the flight. Then in the summer of 1930 the French carrier Aeropostale received exclusive rights from Portugal on the Azores- Lisbon sector. These two issues quashed any further interest for Pan American to pursue the southern route. Three years later, the French lost their exclusive privilege due to non-use. It became very apparent to Trippe that any effort to cross the Atlantic would be unilateral.

Pan American developed an interest in the great circle route via eastern Canada early-on. Trippe's interest piqued when the possibilities of the route could be extended further north on across Greenland and Iceland. This would allow shorter flights across open waters. Charles Lindbergh advocated this route sector. In the summer of 1932 Pan American secured the services of the Arctic explorer Vilhjamur Stefannsson to provide information on Arctic conditions on the extended northern route portion. Trippe's interest intensified so much that Pan American sponsored several expeditions into the area with a view of accumulating more data for possible future operations. Trippe was always very thorough in his efforts of pioneering new air routes; he couldn't afford uncertainties or to make mistakes with large expenditures of money especially when it was stockholders' money.

In January 1935, Pan American had sufficient data on the transatlantic operations to warrant application to the U.S. Bureau of Commerce for certification for North Atlantic service between New York and Europe, either via the Canadian Maritime Provinces or the southern route through Bermuda and the Azores.

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Pan American established an Atlantic Division in spring of 1937, with the hope of starting New York – Bermuda service as soon as possible. Two S-42B aircraft, christened the Bermuda Clipper and Pan American Clipper respectively, were allocated to the new Atlantic division. The Pan American Clipper was retrofitted with extra fuel tanks, nineteen in total, so it could be used in survey flights. After completing four surveys and training flights from Port Washington to Bermuda, inaugural passenger service was established. Initially, with one flight a week and within two months, service was doubled. The first linkage in crossing the Atlantic had been created.

On June 25, 1937 the first survey flight for the northern route took-off from Port Washington to Shediac, New Brunswick. It was a 650 mile leg flown out and back without landing. Two days later on June 27, the aircraft took-off again for the second survey flight from Port Washington for Botwood, Newfoundland, by the way of Shediac. It was a 950 mile leg. The aircraft returned two days later. Then on July 3, the Pan American Clipper took-off again from Port Washington to Southampton, England with stops at; Shediac, Botwood; Foynes, Ireland; thence to Southampton, England. The total flight time was 22 hours and 39 minutes to cover the 3500 miles. This was the first crossing of the Atlantic by a commercial airplane. On July 28, the flight was repeated again without incidence.

On August 16, 1937 the Pan America Clipper departed Port Washington for Southampton via the southern route stopping at Bermuda, the Azores, Lisbon and Marseille and returned to Port Washington on September 3rd. Three round trip transatlantic flights had been completed without incidence and Trippe felt that Pan American was ready to start transatlantic service but had no aircraft to start the service.

In February 1936, Frank Gledhill, Pan Am's purchasing agent, sent a letter to aircraft manufacturers requesting them to submit designs for a "long range four engine marine aircraft" built around four engines of 1,000 to 1250 horsepower. Boeing wrote back, stating that due to lack of "money, facilities, and manpower, that they were unable." They were up to their neck in developing the B-17 and XB-15 bombers; therefore they could not meet the deadline date.

Wellwood Beall, a young engineer, hired by Boeing Aircraft Co. in 1931 to instruct engineering in Oakland, came up with a design utilizing the wing of the XB-15 experimental bomber married to a boat haul underneath. Beall showed his design to his superiors and they felt it had promise. Boeing wrote Gledhill asking if Pan Am could extend their deadline. Gledhill agreed and Boeing put a design team together to produce some plans. The design was accepted and a contract for six Boeing 314s was given to Boeing with option for six more aircraft.

The Boeing 314 was delayed in delivery due to directional control or lack of: a single rudder wasn't enough, so two were added, still that wasn't enough, and a third rudder was added, which corrected the situation and as a result it added an esthetic quality to the aircraft design. The first two Boeing 314s produced were delivered to Pan American on January 27, 1939. They were immediately put into service on the Pacific runs. The

remaining four aircraft of the original order were assigned to the Atlantic Division. The fifth model produced was christened the Dixie Clipper and delivered in April 1939.

With new aircraft arriving, Trippe grew anxious to start Atlantic service but the British were balking. Imperial Airways, like all other European airlines, was government sponsored but in the case of the British, they were controlled by Parliamentary bureaucrats, who wanted everything British: airplanes and crews. Britain had no comparable equipment to compete against Pan American and therefore was resisting launching service.

The first Boeing 314 delivered to the Atlantic Division was on February 4 and was christened the Yankee Clipper by Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt. On May 20, 1939 the Yankee Clipper, loaded with 1804 pounds of mail with no passengers, took-off from Port Washington bound for Lisbon and Marseille. This was the first commercial airplane flight to cross the Atlantic. The flight to Lisbon, with a stop in the Azores, took twenty-six hours and fifty-four minutes and covered 3650 miles. After spending the night in Lisbon, the flight continued on to Marseille the next day. Three weeks later, the first passengers, a group of nonpaying journalists, were flown on the same route.

Then on June 24, another group of twenty invited guests escorted by Juan Trippe were to fly to Southampton via the northern route in the Yankee Clipper; with scheduled stops at Shediac, New Brunswick; Botwood, Newfoundland; and Foynes, Ireland. Fog delayed them at Shediac and they arrived in Southampton three days late.

On June 28, 1939, the Dixie Clipper, with sixteen men and six women, including Betty Trippe, departed Port Washington for Marseille via the Azores and Lisbon, arriving on the 29th. Mrs. Trippe was to later meet Juan in Paris. This gave the Dixie Clipper the distinction of being the first airplane to carry revenue passengers across the Atlantic.

That weekly 1939 flight from New York to Marseille is flown daily today on several hundred transatlantic flights. Even though the romantic charm of the era is gone, it is a far safer venture than it was making water landings in that era. Today's traveller cannot imagine that it was just seventy-five years ago that Pan Am inaugurated this pioneering venture, thanks to Juan Trippe's innovative vision and the people of Pan American who made Atlantic air travel routine.



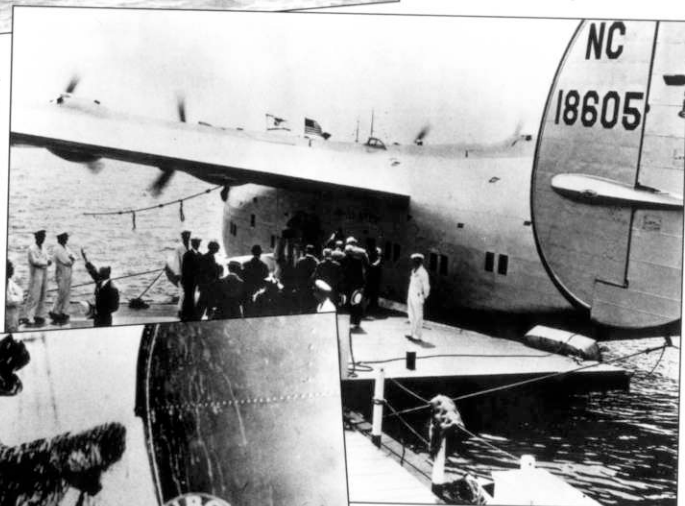
CONQUERING THE ATLANTIC -IN PICTURES

The Brazilian Clipper S-42 at Dinner Key, Miami. The Sikorsky-42 was used to conduct Transatlantic survey flights while the Boeing -314 was being built.



Flying boat captains shown in 1937 before a Sikorsky S-42. Captain Harold Gray, later to become Pan Am's CEO upon Juan Trippe's retirement in 1968, is at the left.

The inaugural flight of the Dixie Clipper boarding passengers at Port Washington, NY on June 28, 1939. There were 22 passengers and 11 crew members aboard.



First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt christens the Yankee Clipper at US Naval Station Anacostia outside of Washington, D.C. on March 03, 1939.



The Dixie Clipper carried the serial number NX 18605; its sister-ship, the Yankee Clipper, was NX 18603.

The state-of-the-art flight deck on the B-314 was spacious for its 9 operating crew members.



Pan Am built the Marine Air Terminal as its base at New York's La Guardia Airport. Juan Trippe inaugurated the Terminal on March 31, 1940 before thousands of well-wishers and a national radio audience.

The Dixie Clipper arrives in Marseille after the first crossing on June 30, 1939 after stops in Horta, the Azores and an overnight in Lisbon.

