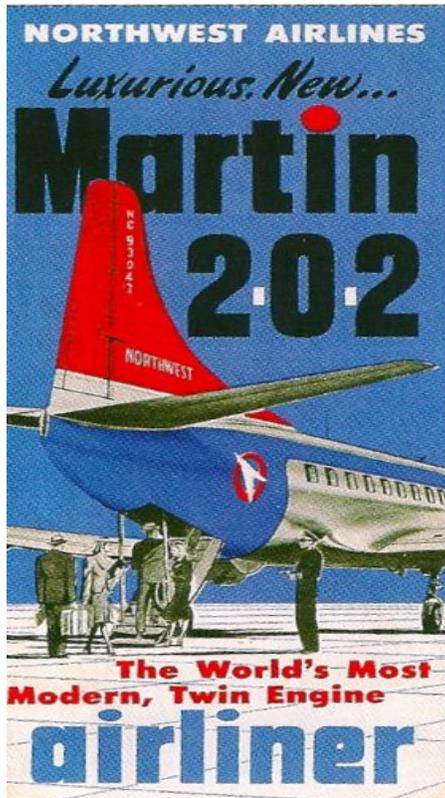




REFLECTIONS



Dedicated to preserving the history of a great airline and its people.
Northwest Airlines 1926-2010



A Dark Chapter in Northwest History The Martin 202

by Anne Billingsley Kerr

No postwar commercial airliner had been anticipated with greater excitement than the Martin 202. In the June 1947 issue of *Air Trails*, G.T. Willey, Martin's Vice-President of Manufacturing, stated, "In the Martin 202 we of the Glenn L. Martin Company feel we have designed and are building the commercial air transport of the postwar age. We don't consider the Martin 202 a 'forerunner' or prototype or the 'start' of a new trend. It is, in itself, the answer to the need of the world's airlines...."

Martin executives had reason to be confident. In the 1930s, Martin had designed and built the three M-130 *Clipper* flying boats used by Pan American Airways to inaugurate trans-Pacific airline service. During World War II, Martin designed and supplied the Allies with reliable aircraft: 5,200 B-26 Marauder bombers (precursor of the 202), nearly 1,400 PBM Mariner patrol bombers, and more than 1,500 A-30 Baltimore attack bombers. In addition, Martin manufactured, under license from Boeing, 536 B-29 Superfortress bombers (later developed into the B-377 Stratocruiser airliner).

Initially, the 202 design bore the name *Mercury*, which was dropped in 1944 when a Martin press release deemed it the Model 202. "2-0-2" and "Two-O-Two" were also used in marketing and promotion.

NORTHWEST ORDERS THE MARTIN 202 By the late 1940s, commercial airlines sought to replace their venerable fleets of DC-3s with faster and more versatile aircraft, such as the new Martin 202 and Convair 240 designs. Martin could deliver earlier than Convair, which influenced NWA's choice. At first, Northwest ordered 50 of the next generation of the 202, the Model 303, but agreed to lease 10 202s until the 303 became available. By late 1946, Martin had firm orders and options from about 12 airlines for 270 202s, not counting the 10 to be leased to NWA.

But by 1947, three factors changed everything: an economic downturn, problems with design changes to the 202 needed for certification by the Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA), and a disastrous (for Martin) purchase agreement loophole that allowed airline customers to cancel orders for any reason and to receive full deposit refunds without penalty. When airlines couldn't obtain financing *and* when Martin announced delivery delays, most airlines cancelled their orders, opting to retain their DC-3s and/or ordering Convair 240s for future delivery.

Ultimately, Northwest, with financing secured, converted its lease agreement with Martin to a purchase order for 25 aircraft; NWA was the *only* American launch customer. In all, Martin sold 31 202s: 25 to NWA, four to Linea Aerea Nacional

de Chile (LAN) and two to Lineo Aeropostal Venezolana (LAV).

A FLAWED DESIGN Trouble followed almost immediately. With any new aircraft, airlines typically encounter bugs and glitches, which they work out with the manufacturer. Usually, several airlines are involved. With the 202, Northwest was the only major customer, and bore almost all the brunt of the financial risk, operational problems, and associated bad publicity. By the autumn of 1947, dozens of incidents, many requiring redesign, had to be addressed. NWA officials would later state that the Martin 202 was in its "shakedown" stage for its entire 4 year, 28 million mile service life with the company.

Early in Northwest's operation of the 202, Martin received permission from NWA and Capt. Caz Falencykowski to "shadow" him on 202 flights, photographing him with the aircraft, in crew scheduling, and other activities. Martin planned to use these photos in promotional material touting the 202 as a marvel. "Then they started falling out of the sky," said Caz's son Don, currently a Southwest Airlines captain. "I have the never-used photos." (see photos, p.5)

In addition to numerous minor incidents, Northwest endured 13 major Martin 202 accidents involving severe aircraft damage, five of them resulting in total loss. Six occurred in 1950 alone. Causes included excessive (story continues on p.3)

President's Message

CHANGE



Bruce Kitt Photo: Joe Callaci

Change has come to the NWA History Centre. The loss of our corporate sponsor, Wings Financial Credit Union, coupled with the contractual expiration of our leases on Dec. 31, 2013, means the NWAHC has entered the world of rents and increased operating expenses—our own version of deregulation.

The lease for storage space the NWAHC rented on the 3rd floor of our building will not be renewed next year. This necessitates finding an off-site storage location to rent. The lease for the museum space *will* be renewed, but the NWAHC will have to pay rent for this space. While the rent is fair and reasonable by commercial standards, it represents a significant increase in the museum's operating costs. The NWAHC Board of Directors is looking at all ideas to reduce expenses. An immediate first step is that the museum's Gift Shop will begin to collect sales tax on all non-clothing purchases, beginning Jan. 1, 2014. In the past, we've collected sales tax on a hit-or-miss basis, with the NWAHC making up the difference as an annual payment to the state. As our sales have increased, so too has the gap between what little taxes we collected vs. what the sales dictated we actually owed. The pros and cons of charging a museum admission fee are also being discussed, and will be decided in the near future.

The Board's first responsibility is to keep the museum and its collection intact and available to the public. This is the reason the NWAHC was created in 2002, and it's still our priority. Looking forward, the NWAHC Board sees the AirSpace Minnesota museum campus as the best permanent home for the NWAHC. Our challenge is to keep the NWAHC going—and growing—until AirSpace Minnesota opens its doors.

The first 10 years of the NWAHC were marked by growth and an increased awareness of the value and vision of the NWA History Centre. We are committed to growing that value and to bringing that vision to the public at large for the next 10 years. → Bruce

NWA History Centre Visitor Information

Open M-F 11am-5pm, Sa 9am-1pm
Closed Sundays and major holidays
Admission FREE (special events may incur a charge)

Advance reservations preferred for visits by groups of 8 or more.
Please call 952.698.4478

FREE parking Metro: LRT Blue Line American Boulevard



The NWA History Centre

Founder **Henry V. "Pete" Patzke**
(dec.)

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Continued from p.1

manifold pressure; two cases of the forward cargo door blowing off; left landing gear failing to extend; right prop not reversing after landing; failure of an hydraulic line; gear retraction during landing; right prop reversing in flight; structural failure of a wing; wing falling off after striking a flagpole, and the most alarming to pilots—loss of control for undetermined reasons. There were two serious 202 accidents with non-structural causes: one was due to inadequate snow removal from a runway, and one off-course flight hit a mountain.

After fatal crashes in Fountain City, Wisc., Almelund, Minn., Minneapolis, Butte, and Reardan, Wash., NWA was reeling. The last NW 202 crash, on Jan. 16, 1951, attributed to “undetermined reasons”, led to a revolt by both NWA pilots and passengers. *The New York Times* reported that Northwest pilots had notified the airline that they would *not* fly the Martin 202 after Jan. 17, the day after the final crash. However, members of the Airline Pilots Association International agreed to a two-month delay (see p. 13, REFLECTIONS digital edition).

Meanwhile, presidents and CEOs of almost every major corporation in the Twin Cities, including 3M, Honeywell, General Mills, Pillsbury and Coast-to-Coast Stores formally notified Northwest Airlines of their decision (in most cases) to prohibit employee business travel on the Martin 202 and/or Northwest Airlines, period. Finally, Northwest withdrew all 202s from service at midnight, March 17, 1951. Ultimately, all 20 remaining 202s were sold or leased to local service airlines Pioneer and California Central, and supplemental carrier Transocean Airlines. Northwest never operated the type again.

GLENN L. MARTIN, 1886-1955

Jack King, former test pilot for the Martin 202 program, recalled Glenn L. Martin: “Founder and president Glenn L. Martin was very much the final decision maker for the Mainliner (202) program. As a confirmed bachelor, he lived with his mother and loved to spend time at his Eastern Shore (Md.) home hunting ducks. Many people considered him to be somewhat eccentric, but he was well-respected for his successful background as one of the US's great aviation pioneers.”

Martin built his first airplane in 1909 with the help of his mother, Minta. Over

the course of his lifetime, his company built thousands more, and at the time of his death in December, 1955, at age 69, the Glenn L. Martin Company had received the primary Department of Defense contract to build and launch earth satellites.



Glenn Martin, ca. 1912. Note the newspapers stacked on the wing—Martin delivered newspapers as part of his promotional campaign to fund his first aircraft plant.



Martin and his mother, Minta, May 20, 1912.



Glenn and Minta Martin, 1944. That year, in commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the engineering program at the University of Maryland, Martin donated \$1.7 million to the university to fund courses and research in the aeronautical sciences. In 1945, he made another bequest, of \$800,000, to the university in honor of his mother.

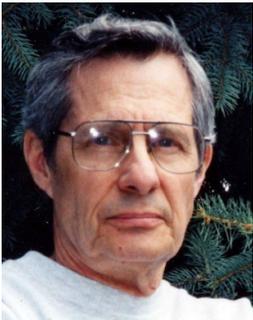
For 40 years, the company operated under the direct control of its founder.

Along the way, Glenn Martin developed an eye for talent; Martin employees William Boeing, Donald Douglas, Lawrence Bell and James S. McDonnell would eventually launch the companies that bear their names. In 1961, the Glenn L. Martin Company merged with the American-Marietta Corporation to form Martin Marietta, which then merged in 1995 with the Lockheed Corporation to become aerospace giant Lockheed Martin.

FROM A CHILD'S PERSPECTIVE

The Crash of NW 307, March 7, 1950

Noel Allard remembers: “During a blizzard, one of Northwest's new Martin 202 airliners, making an approach to Wold (MSP airport) from the south, struck a flagpole near the end of the North-South runway, pulled up and circled around for another approach (ed. note: this was the flagpole of the Fort Snelling National Cemetery, near MSP). It then shed a wingtip near the Washburn Tower, and the pilot lost control. The plane staggered around in circles for a minute or two until it crashed on Fremont and Minnehaha Parkway, only three blocks from 4841 Emerson (Allard's home). I told my folks, 'That plane that just went over didn't sound right, something is wrong.' In the next moment, there was a brilliant flash outside. We didn't know what to do for several minutes until the radio newscaster came on with a bulletin about ten minutes later: 'a plane has crashed in South Minneapolis'” Young Allard's father gave him permission to go outside near the crash site, where he could hear the emergency vehicle sirens but couldn't see through the heavy snow. “I stood for a long time and eventually returned home and had to get to bed, feeling a mixture of anguish for whatever victims there may have been, and curiosity as to what the first local aerial disaster was going to mean to me. The next morning's news brought the full impact of the tragedy, 15 killed, including two children in the house struck by the airplane. The biggest airplane disaster in Minnesota to that time. After school that day, of course I visited the scene. The mostly buried debris still smoldered. One house was totally gone, the homes on either side burned out, the streets littered with chunks of wreckage. I pocketed several pieces. The dead had been removed, by scoop shovels as I learned later,” *(continues on p.4)*



Noel Allard is an aviation historian, Chairman of the Minnesota Aviation Hall of Fame, and author of *Speed*, the biography of Charles W. Holman, and *Minnesota Aviation History, 1857-1945*.

For a brief retrospective, see:

<http://minnesota.cbslocal.com/2011/03/01/long-forgotten-nwa-crash-in-mpls-stirs-memories/>

A SON REMEMBERS The Crash of a Check Flight Oct. 13, 1950

"That's why they brought me to Northwest", Donald Nyrop, former president of Northwest Airlines, told Mike Render Cagley in 2003, when Nyrop attended Capt. Ralph Render's funeral. Mike is the son of Ralph's brother Ray, an NWA captain who died in the Northwest Martin 202 crash on Oct. 13, 1950.

On that October day, Mike remembers looking out the window to see three black cars drive up to his Richfield home. He was only five years old, but he clearly remembers the unusual event. Officials from NWA had come to tell his mother that his father's plane had crashed and that Capt. Ray was dead. Earlier that day, Capt. Render reported for duty as check pilot for a check flight for pilot John Galt. The aircraft was NC93037, NWA's first Martin 202, delivered in August, 1947. Also onboard were four employees of the CAA. During the flight, the right propeller inexplicably reversed during a feathering drill, causing the plane to crash in Almelund, Minn. The aircraft was a total loss and all six onboard were killed. When Mike's Uncle Harold went to the El Paso, Ill. home of Ray and Ralph's father with the bad news, before he could say anything the senior Render asked, "which one?"

The Renders were (and are!) a multi-generational Northwest family. Ray and his brother Ralph learned to fly in Bloomington, Ill. in the late 1930s, and were both NWA first officers in 1942, checking out as captains in May 1943. Their sister, Mary Helen, became a Northwest stewardess in October, 1945. Ray and Ralph both married NWA stewardesses, Ray to Frances Macagno and Ralph to Mary Lenore Campbell. Ralph's

son Tom, a retired NW/DL captain, and his wife Jane, a retired Northwest flight attendant, had a daughter Alexis, also a flight attendant for NWA and now Delta. Mary Helen Render has two daughters, Rita and Renee, both flight attendants, for American and NW/DL respectively.

Photos courtesy Mike Render Cagley.



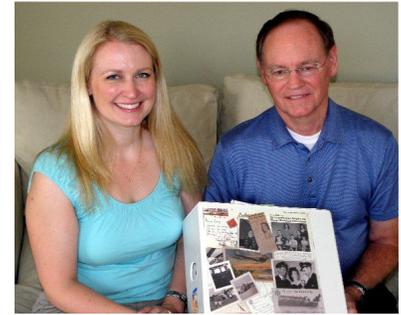
Capt. Ray Render.



Ray, Mary Helen and Ralph Render, in an NWA publicity photo, May 1946.



The Renders—two generations of Northwest employees, 1950. Children, L-R: Tom, Susan, Mike, Connie. Pilots, L-R: Ralph, Ray. Standing stewardesses, L-R: Mary, Frances.



Mike Render Cagley and daughter Karen Render Carver, with the family photo album and scrapbook.

POSTSCRIPT

It has been 62 years since Northwest pulled the last 20 Martin 202s from its fleet at midnight on that St. Patrick's Day in 1951. Northwest stated that it "could not risk having another 202 accident, which might well have ruined the company." This dark chapter in Northwest's history, nearly forgotten today, is an important part of its journey.

As for Martin, it introduced an improved version of the 202, the 404, which entered service in 1952 and was only moderately successful. Martin lost \$45 million on the 202/404 program, and would abandon the airliner business. →

Recommended reading:
Killion, Gary. *The Martinliners*. 1998, Airways International, Sandpoint, Id.

References: the archives of *The New York Times*, the NWA History Centre, the Minnesota History Center, and the Glenn L. Martin Maryland Air Museum. The author thanks Don Falencykowski, Mary Tanghe, Noel Allard, Jim Borden, Mike Render Cagley, Karen Carver, Mark Kaplan and David Galbraith for their generous assistance in the research for this article.

Anne Kerr adds: "For me, the silver linings of the drudgery of research are the gold nuggets that pop up when least expected, especially the friends and contacts one makes over time who can lead you to "pay dirt." Mary Tanghe, daughter of Caz Falencykowski, put me in touch with Mike Render Cagley, whose photos and memorabilia are a goldmine. Noel Allard alerted me to the ultimatum letters from ALPA and local businesses, which I then found at the MHC. When I read the ALPA letter, I got chills. I started flying for NWA five years later! So you see, research is *not* drudgery. It unveils many fascinating secrets." → ABK

A Martin 202 Photo Album



The Martin B-26 Marauder, on which the 202 design was based.



Above and below: photos taken by Martin photographers, of NWA 202 operations and Capt. Caz Falencyzkowski. Photos courtesy Don Falencyzkowski.



Martin promotion.



Glenn Martin on the cover of **TIME**.
May 29, 1939.

FLY...via MARTIN AIRLINERS



Martin promotion, one of a series of ads which ran in *TIME*, *Newsweek*, and *National Geographic*.



NWA-issued postcard. The aircraft shown, NC93051, was sold to Pioneer Airlines in 1952. NWAHC Archives.



NWA-issued postcard. The aircraft shown, N93050, crashed at MSP on March 7, 1950. NWAHC Archives



For further information on the loss of this aircraft:
<http://www.jsonline.com/news/wisconsin/32563159.html>

Left: Capt. Falencyzkowski, First Officer Tom North and his daughter Julie. The 202 is N93044, painted in an experimental yellow livery design suggested by Martin. This aircraft crashed near Winona, Minn., on Aug. 29, 1948, following structural failure of a wing, after only 1321 flight hours. Photo courtesy Don Falencyzkowski.

Right: A memorial historic marker dedicated on March 7, 2012, to those who lost their lives in the crash of NW 307, March 7, 1950. Located across from 1114 Minnehaha Pkwy., south Minneapolis. Photo courtesy Mark Kaplan, Minneapolis City Council.



Airline Collectibles in the Spotlight

The Airline Collectibles Show and Sale October 12, 2013

Report by Joe Callaci and Bob Johnson

Scale models, timetables, posters, books, shirts, hats, pins, DVDs—almost anything from an airline or with an airline logo on it—drew over 200 attendees to this year's NWAHC-sponsored Airline Collectible Show and Sale at the Best Western Plus Hotel in Bloomington, Minn. Featuring both local and out-of-state vendors and dealers, show-goers spent a fun day searching for items for their collections, connecting with friends and sharing stories about airlines and aviation, both from personal experience and from that of relatives and friends.

As usual, the HC Gift Shop staffed a table, offering a full range of exclusive Northwest and Republic-branded items.

There were special guests too: **Terry Love**, author of the recent book *The Republic Airlines Story* (see REFLECTIONS, Spring 2013) and **Kevin McGregor** (whose new book *Flight of Gold* is reviewed in this issue), sold and autographed their books to buyers eager to meet the writers in-person.

A cocktail hour and employee reunion party organized by Bill Watters followed the show's close. Featured speakers were retired Captains **Ken Warras** and **Bill Rataczak**, with surprise speaker **Beth Burt**, a retired flight attendant. Warras and Burt were crewmembers on NW714, hijacked to Cuba, and Rataczak was First Officer on NW305, the infamous Dan "D.B." Cooper hijacking.

As always, net proceeds from the show and sale go to support the activities of the NWAHC. If you missed the fun, don't feel bad. Plan to attend next year, when the show will be even bigger and better! → JC RJ

Upcoming Airline Collectible Shows for 2014

Jan. 18: Los Angeles Airliner Expo 2014, Embassy Suites LAX

Mar. 8: San Francisco Airline Collectible Show, Best Western Plus Grosvenor Hotel SFO

July 8-12: **Airliners International 2014**, The World's Largest Airline Collectible Show and Convention, LAX Sheraton Gateway

Sept. 27: San Francisco Airline Collectible Show, Best Western Plus Grosvenor Hotel SFO.

For complete information: wahsonline.com

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The Trading Floor in the Best Western Hotel Ballroom.



L-R: Darlene Lemke, Betty Buresh, Bev Carlson and Elaine Herne staff the Show Admission Desk.



Carol Hall, Flo Dreyer and Gail Diercks at the Registrar's Table, accepting names for the mailing list and distributing NWAHC brochures and promo items.



L: Vince Rodriguez loads the paper cartridge for the credit card reader.



R: Bruce Kitt examines first-day Air Mail covers and vintage books.

Airline collectibles attract people from all walks of life: Dr. Ryan Murphy, Asst. Professor of History at Earlham College, Indiana, and Andrew Hamp, MD, a Minneapolis specialist in Internal Medicine and Geriatric Medicine, check out the items on offer at Don Swanson's sales table.

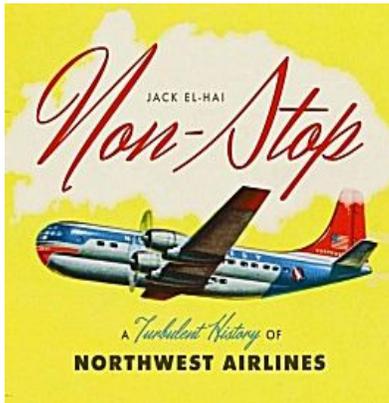


L: Capt. Ken Warras

R: Capt. Bill Rataczak



Photos: Joe Callaci and Robert DuBert



World Launch for Non-Stop

Report by Joe Callaci

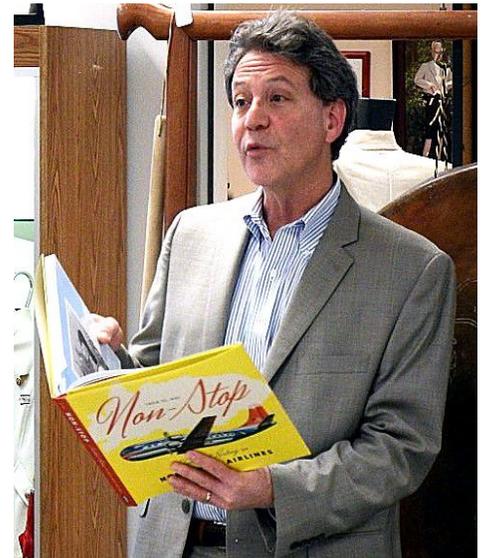
It was standing-room-only for the debut of *Non-Stop: A Turbulent History of Northwest Airlines*, by Jack El-Hai, in a reading and book signing on Nov. 2, 2013 at the NWAHC.

Over 100 attendees were on hand to see and hear author El-Hai, who presented a slideshow of seldom seen historic photos, followed by a Q&A session and book-signing (see book review, p.8).

A prolific and widely-published author, Jack El-Hai is on the faculty of Augsburg College in

Minneapolis, where he is a Creative Writing Non-Fiction Mentor in the Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing degree program.

Due to the high interest and demand for the book, El-Hai made a second appearance and book signing two weeks later at the HC. If you missed these exciting events, *Non-Stop* is available for purchase at the HC Gift Shop. Better yet—become a member and we will keep you posted on any upcoming related events! → JC

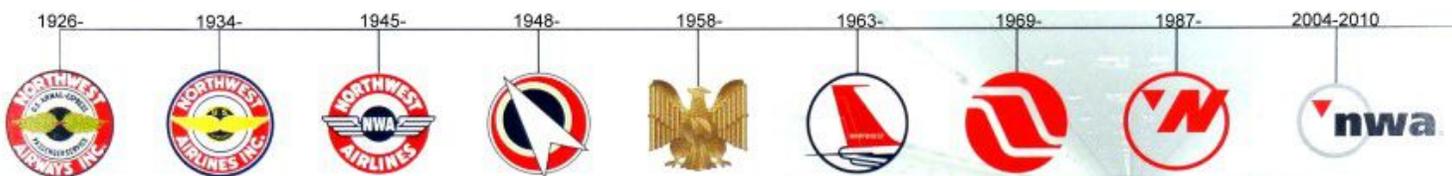


Above R: Jack El-Hai

L: Part of the capacity crowd which attended the Nov. 2 event.

R: El-Hai presents a signed copy to REFLECTIONS reporter Anne Kerr.

Photos: Joe Callaci



History Brief—Whatever happened to “Northwest Orient”? Insight from Bryan Moon.

It's often assumed that dropping the word “Orient” from the company's marketing name was a consequence of the merger with Republic Airlines and the subsequent huge expansion of Northwest's route system. However, there was more to it than that, as VP-Advertising Bryan Moon pointed out in the August 25, 1986 issue of *Passages*, the Northwest Airlines employee newsletter:

“In Europe, the word 'Orient' has all the wrong connotations. It means 'Middle East, cut-priced carrier,' and people identify the Orient with all kinds of countries, including Egypt. And in Europe, we're trying to sell the USA, primarily, and the word 'Orient' doesn't help identify the fact that we're an American carrier. The old name also backfires in the Orient, where people don't like to be referred to as 'Orientals'. They think of themselves as 'Asians'. And in the USA, the reference to the Orient doesn't help us sell Florida or California or Alaska or Detroit. In fact, it is quite diversionary from our major system—US domestic routes—not to mention Mexico, Canada, and the Cayman Islands. So, for all these reasons, the word 'Orient' is either diversionary or it's misunderstood or it doesn't identify the primary geographical area that we serve, namely the United States.”

In this prescient example of cultural awareness, Moon and the company were ahead of the curve in recognizing that “Orient” and “Oriental” were potentially offensive labels for people of Asian descent, with echos of colonial imperialism. In 1991, the University of Pennsylvania renamed its Oriental Studies Department the Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies. In 2002, the legislature of the State of Washington enacted legislation prohibiting the use of the word “oriental” in state and local official communication and documents. Gov. David Paterson of the State of New York signed similar legislation in 2009. →



Photo: NWAHC Archives

**FLIGHT
OF GOLD**
Two Pilots' True
Adventure
Discovering
Alaska's
Legendary Gold
Wreck

Kevin A. McGregor. 2013. In-Depth Editions, Holland, Mich. 336 pages, Illustrated. \$19.95

Reviewed by Bruce Kitt (note: this review contains no potential plot spoilers)

In the annals of American commercial aviation disasters, there may not be another accident to rival the crash of NWA flight 4442 on March 12, 1948.

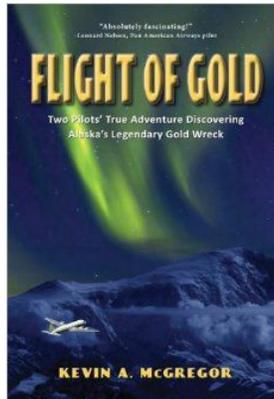
At 8:12 p.m., NW 4442 departed Elmen-dorf Field, Edmonton, Alta., Canada. Approximately one hour later, NC95422, a Northwest DC-4, a charter flight from Shanghai, China to New York, with a crew of 6 and 24 merchant sailors, slammed into a vertical rock wall on Mt. Sanford, Alaska. Numerous residents of Glennallen, Alaska, witnessed the nighttime fireball. The crash time was noted and crash site closely approximated. The next morning, CAA and USAF search aircraft verified the impact site, spotted wreckage, but sadly saw no survivors.

NW 4442 may rate as the only US airliner that crashed on land where, within hours, it was determined that no one survived *and* that no effort would be made to recover passenger or crew remains, cargo, or wreckage. Crash debris had fallen into a glacier, and the remote site was deemed too dangerous and impossible to reach. Rumors that had flown eastward with the flight about a mysterious cargo of gold circulated around Glennallen even as the search began.

Kevin McGregor has written an engrossing account of the herculean effort that he and fellow pilot Marc Millican made to verify the wreckage on Mt. Sanford. National Park Service records showed two wrecks, and the mysterious removal of official crash records at the USAF Historical Research Agency hinted at a deliberate coverup, prompting McGregor and Millican's investigation.

McGregor takes the reader into a well-balanced and crafted account of the ill-fated charter flight, recreating the threads that linked NWA, NC95422, the 24 sailors of the Overseas Tankship Corporation, China, Mt. Sanford, and the cargo. He reconstructs the biographies of the 30 men onboard NW 4442, giving them second lives. Photos, interviews of eye-witnesses, discoveries of the the families of the dead men, harrowing exploratory flights onto the glacier, and bureaucratic battles—McGregor skillfully shifts story angles so that the reader is carried along and pages fly. *Flight of Gold* is an interesting look back at the early days of trans-Pacific and Alaskan flying. → BK

Bruce Kitt is a retired aircraft mechanic, a member of the NWAHC since 2004, and President of the Board of Directors since 2007.



NON-STOP A Turbulent History of Northwest Airlines

Jack El-Hai. 2013. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis and London. 328 pages, illustrated. \$39.95

Reviewed by Bob Johnson

This new book about Northwest Airlines is a highly-researched, extremely readable, start-to-finish adventure through Northwest's colorful 84-year rock-and-roll history.

It is much more than a recitation of airplanes, routes and executives—it tells the *whole* story. As El-Hai states succinctly in his preface: “At different times in its history, Northwest led its peers in daredevilry, effective war production, safety, weather forecasting, profitability, technology prescience, international relations and smart efficiency. At other times it sank to new depths in labor acrimony, hazardous operations, debt accumulation, parsimony, cynicism and bad luck.” As an example, El-Hai cites the Northwest pilot who received the Medal of Honor from President Franklin D. Roosevelt while an executive was sentenced to ten days in jail in Washington, D.C., for contempt of the United States Senate—at about the same time!

The author covers it all: the negatives including the tragic crashes and labor strife, and the many positives. He deals with the airline's executives efficiently. But the book, essentially, is really about the efforts of the multitude of talented people who dedicated their working lives to building Northwest into one of the world's great international airlines.

The book is replete with a wide assortment of interesting and dramatic photographs and illustrations, garnered from a variety of sources. The few factual glitches do not detract noticeably from the book's overall excellence. → RJ

Jack El-Hai is a Creative Writing Nonfiction Mentor in the Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing program at Augsburg College in Minneapolis, Minn. He is the author of numerous books and articles in the fields of medicine, science and history.

Bob Johnson is a graduate of the University of Minnesota School of Journalism. He was a steward for Northwest Airlines, served on the staffs of the NWA Public Relations and Publicity departments, and was editor of the *Northwest Orient Airlines News*. He has been variously a reporter, editor and publicist for the *St. Paul Dispatch-Pioneer Press*, the *Honolulu Advertiser*, KSTP-TV, the 3M Corporation, and the Central Intelligence Agency. Since its inception, Robert L. Johnson has served on the Board of Directors of the NWA History Centre.

NON-STOP, A Turbulent History of Northwest Airlines is available for purchase from the NWAHC Gift Shop.

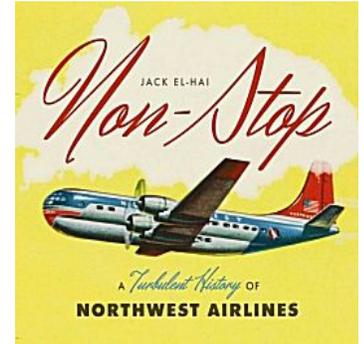




Photo: NWAHC Archives

RES TALES: Working the Phones in Reservations

Of all the jobs at an airline, the Reservations Agent staffing the phone bank has one of the toughest. Seated at a desk and staring at a computer screen all day, the agent must be engaging and polite to the customer while under pressure from the supervisor (often listening in on the calls) to “make the sale” as quickly as possible.

In the last decade especially, the internet has changed everything—customers usually do their own bookings, on an airline website directly or through a third-party like Expedia or Kayak. They can see *all* the options for themselves. But in the pre-internet days, it fell to the “res” agent to explain everything to a confused and often clueless general public. Added complications were the “crank” callers who had no intention of making a reservation—pranksters, tipsters with bomb threats, or the lonely person who just wanted to talk with another human being.

Below are brief transcript excerpts from actual calls handled by Reservations Agents at Northwest Airlines. Some are taken from the Sept. 1, 1989 issue of *Passages*, the employee newsletter. Others come from the recollections of **Kay Ferrell** and **Gary Stewart**, who worked in the Minneapolis and Livonia, Mich. res centers respectively. **R:** res agent **C:** caller

R: Northwest Airlines Reservations, may I help you?

C: Do you have flights to White Plains (N.Y.)?

R: Yes, we have flights to White Plains.

C: What color are the planes?

R: Northwest Airlines Reservations, how may I help you?

C: I've already got a reservation. I want to change my seat. I need an aisle seat so my hair won't get messed up (by the wind).

R: Northwest Airlines Reservations, Sue speaking. May I help you? (while making the reservation, Sue entered the passenger information in the PNR [passenger name record], then proceeded to the FOP [form of payment] entry):

R: Please spell the name as it appears on your credit card.

C: V-I-S-A.

C: When you say I have to stay over a Saturday night, do you mean sleep on the plane?

R: Northwest Airlines Reservations, this is Gary. May I help you?

C: (caller is a man. There is yelling in the background, a woman screaming). I can't take it anymore! I'm leaving her ass! (his wife). Can you get me out of here?!?!

C: I would like to make a reservation for my honeymoon. That's a roundtrip for two.

C: Now when you say 8:10 p.m., do you mean at night?

R: Northwest Reservations, Lou speaking. May I help you?

C: (calling to reconfirm his reservation, is very rude and crabby)

R: Sir, have you had your coffee this morning?

C: No, but thank you, that would help my morning.

R: That fare is a seven-day advance purchase fare.

C: But I only want to stay three days!

R: Where would you like to leave from?

C: I want to leave from right there at the airport.

C: You've lost our luggage and my wife is furious! Our marriage is in dire jeopardy, the next step is divorce. We need our bags now!

Other problems for the res agents included the balky Polaris computer system, which sometimes crashed, forcing agents to revert to using the OAG (Official Airline Guide). And supervisors, under pressure from management, might require agents to handle a minimum of 15 calls per hour. Some agents would faint from the stress. Imagine dealing with this caller in 4 minutes:

R: Northwest Airlines Reservations, how may I help you?

C: What time does Northwest go?

R: Go where, ma'am? **C:** To Germany.

R: From where, ma'am? **C:** From L.A.

R: To Frankfurt? **C:** Yes, to Amsterdam.

R: From L.A. To Frankfurt, or Amsterdam? **C:** To Germany

R: OK, from L.A. To Frankfurt, right? **C:** Yes, Amsterdam.

R: But Amsterdam is in Holland, ma'am.

C: Who said anything about Holland?

Then there was the recurring problem of the Full Moon, which brought out the “wackos”:

R: Northwest Reservations, this is Gary speaking. May I help you?

C: What color underwear are you wearing?

Some callers were malicious; in the aftermath of the 1987 crash of an MD-80 on takeoff from DTW:

R: Northwest Airlines, this is Gary. How may I help you?

C: How much does it cost to fly from Detroit to MiddleBelt Rd.?

And this: **C:** Can you please tell the pilot to set the flaps.

And then there were the non-revs! Before full computerization, employees listed for flights through Res, but only after 5 p.m.

R: Northwest Airlines Reservations, Kay speaking. May I help you?

C: (tries to list for flight before 5 p.m.)

R: But sir, the rule is to call after 5.

C: This goddamn Northwest Airlines, your rules are total #@%\$&!

R: Well, if you hate it so much sir, why don't you just quit?

C: That's just what I'm gonna do! (slam, hangs up).

Thank you for calling Northwest Airlines. Have a nice day!

News, Stories, and Announcements



Photo: Dirk Jan Kraan

The NWAHC welcomes **Vince Rodriguez** to membership on the HC Board of Directors. For a profile of Vince's NWA career and current activities, see REFLECTIONS, Spring 2012.

Congratulations to **Jonah Robles** and **Dom Grima** (see REFLECTIONS, Fall 2013), who have realized their goals and begun careers in the airline industry. Dom was hired by Delta as a Ramp Operator in DTW, and Jonah joined Great Lakes Airlines in MSP, Customer Service/Ramp. We at the NWAHC wish them long and happy airline careers.

A reminder that the **COOPER** exhibit at the Washington State History Museum in Tacoma closes on Jan. 5 (see REFLECTIONS, Fall 2013).

The staff of *Clear and Sixty* ask all Republic retirees and friends to mark their calendars for Sunday, Mar. 2, 2014, for the **Republic Airlines Reunion Brunch**, in Venice, Fla. Please contact **Barb Ike** for more information: 517-414-8267

Just in time for the holiday season, the NWAHC Gift Shop now offers **gift certificates**.

Reminder: all past issues of this newsletter from 2003 (**History Matters** and REFLECTIONS) can be found in the News section of the HC website: nwahistory.org

In Memoriam

Joe Kimm Leaves Us, at 102

August 11, 1911—September 19, 2013

by Bob Johnson

Perhaps the oldest retired airline pilot in the nation died last September 19—Northwest Captain Joe Kimm, of Redmond, Washington. He was one month past his 102nd birthday.

Joe's career began early in the history of commercial aviation, on July 1, 1929, when he was hired by Northwest to serve as a steward on the then-new Ford Trimotors. "I did everything, took tickets, boarded passengers, handled baggage, had responsibility for the mail, cleaned up the cabin. And the pilot took all the bows", Joe joked recently. "I figured I had the wrong job."

He stepped up to co-pilot and flew as Captain for the first time in 1933. His 42-year Northwest career saw him pilot his final Boeing 707 flight on August 17, 1971.

Joe generally was credited with developing the device then known colloquially as the "burp bag", using paper bags he got from a grocery store. "I'd whip one open when a passenger was ready to let go. You could usually tell because they'd get pink behind the ears", Joe recently recalled. "I'd give it to him take it back and head for the door. If it broke, I used a squeegee to clean it up."

With Capt. Hugh Rueschenberg, Joe piloted Northwest's January, 1933 Trimotor Western Transcontinental Survey Flight from the Twin Cities to Bismarck, N.D, and on to Seattle, which proved the feasibility of airline passenger service across the vast Pacific Northwest. Amelia Earhart was onboard as a passenger as far as Spokane. "She was a class act," Joe once told the NWA History Centre. "Pleasant, friendly, laid back. The various inconveniences of the flight didn't bother her at all."

Joe reprised the 1933 flight as "co-pilot" with Senior Captain "Deke" DeLong on NWA's coast-to-coast Trimotor flight in October, 1956, marking Northwest's 30th Anniversary (see REFLECTIONS, Fall 2013 for a brief summary of this event).

Joe was an early voice in the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA), for which he was justifiably proud. Captain Joe Kimm was inducted into the Minnesota Aviation Hall of Fame in 2012. → RJ



Photo courtesy Contrails.

For a detailed look at Capt. Kimm's remarkable career, see this comprehensive article, "Quiet Bird Man", from the ALPA website: https://cf.alpa.org/internet/alp/2002/May-June_2002/may-june2002p24.html

His obituary as it appeared in the *Seattle Times*:

<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/seattletimes/obituary.aspx?pid=167163938>

Anne Kerr's Photo Essay Tribute: <http://blog.ladyskywriter.com/>

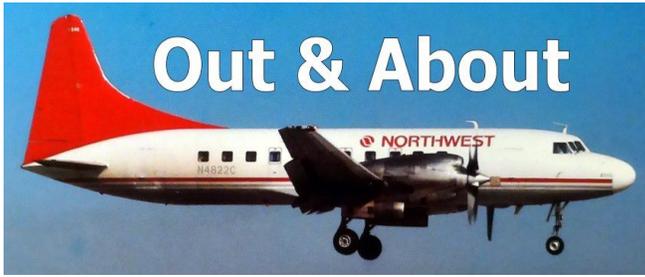


Photo: NWAHC Archives

Out & About

Visiting the National Air and Space Museums, both of them!

Yes, the NASM, the largest of the 19 museums of the Smithsonian Institution, has two locations: the NASM in Washington, D.C., and the Udvar-Hazy Center in Chantilly, Va. Between the two, they draw over 8 million visitors per year--311 million since opening in 1976--making them the most popular museum complex in the United States. They differ in content and presentation, and each can be visited on an easy day-trip from many Delta cities (not both in one day, however!).

The NASM in Washington, D.C.

Independence Ave. at 6th St. SW, Washington, DC 20560

Open every day except December 25, 10:00 a.m.- 5:30 p.m.

FREE admission. Info: 202.633.2214 <http://airandspace.si.edu/>

Closest airport: DCA Ground Transport: Metrorail Yellow Line to L'Enfant Plaza. \$2.20 peak/ \$1.80 off-peak



With its vast array of commercial, military and general aviation aircraft, spacecraft and interactive exhibits, the NASM appeals to all members of the family. Of special interest to NWA employees and retirees is B-747-151 N601US. Retired in 1999, Northwest donated the forward fuselage section to the NASM in 2006. Visitors enter the upper deck and cockpit areas from an upper level catwalk. The



Visitors line up to enter NWA ship 6601.
Photo: Robert DuBert

America By Air permanent exhibition, which occupies an entire gallery wing, contains several intact airliners, crew uniforms, photos and

memorabilia displays devoted to the history of the airline industry.

Other airliners on display include an American Ford 5-AT Trimotor, United B-247D, Eastern DC-3, TWA Northrop Alpha, and a section of an American DC-7. IMAX theatres, flight simulators, well-stocked gift shops and an onsite food court cater to all visitor interests and needs.

Right: NWAHC board member Vince Rodriguez beneath ship 6601, which towers over the displays in the *America By Air* exhibit.

Photo courtesy Vince Rodriguez



The NASM Udvar-Hazy Center in Chantilly, Va.

14390 Air and Space Museum Parkway, Chantilly VA 20151

Open every day except December 25, 10:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

FREE admission. Info: 703.572.4118 <http://airandspace.si.edu/>

Closest airport: IAD Ground transport: VRTA bus no. 83, "Dulles 2 Dulles", \$1.00



The Udvar-Hazy Center is located on the perimeter of Dulles Airport, 33 miles from the Washington NASM. Containing 179 commercial, military and general aviation aircraft, and spacecraft including the space shuttle *Discovery*, Udvar-Hazy is for the serious visitor who wants to closely study and photograph aircraft, without the crowds and hubbub of the Washington facility. Airliners on display here include a Western Air Express Douglas M-2, the Lufthansa Ju-52 *Otto Lillienthal*, the Pan Am B-307 Stratoliner *Clipper Flying Cloud*, the Boeing 367-80 "Dash 80" 707-prototype, an Air France Concorde, and a Huff-Daland Duster, Delta Airlines' first aircraft. Warbird fans will want to pay homage to B-29 *Enola Gay*, and can view rare types like the Dornier Do 335A *Pfeil*-- the NASM collection of WW2 Luftwaffe aircraft is the largest in the world. Have a question? The incredibly knowledgeable docents are sure to know the answer! An IMAX theatre, flight simulator, gift shop and onsite McDonalds will keep you busy, happy and fed until closing time.

Right: The only remaining intact Boeing B-307, *Clipper Flying Cloud*. Derived from the B-17 Flying Fortress, Stratoliners were operated by Pan Am and TWA and saw active service during WW2.



Right: Air France Concorde F-BVFA. Behind are the B-307, the Ju-52, and the Dash 80. Closely-parked aircraft are packed into the immense hangars, filling every square foot of the floors and hanging from the ceilings.



Photos: Robert DuBert

REFLECTIONS Digital Edition Exclusive Photos

Scenes from the Nov. 2, 2013 Reading and Book Signing by *Non Stop* author Jack El-Hai



L: An overflow crowd.

R: Bruce Kitt's opening remarks.

Photos: Joe Callaci



L: Lineup for the book signing.

Photo: Joe Callaci

R: Shirley Huskins, wife of Bill Huskins (dec.), VP-Orient Operations and Marianne Blomquist, Secretary to Donald Nyrop.

Photo: Karen Schmit



The NWAHC is on **facebook!** Enter "NWA History Centre" in the Search Box, check us out, add your entries and comments, and don't forget to "Like" us.

facebook Search for people, places and things Robert DuBert Find Friends

Cover Photo

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The Letter from ALPA to NWA in the aftermath of multiple crashes of the Martin 202

With this letter, and letters from major corporations based in Minneapolis-St. Paul, Northwest had to consider what it would be like to lose both pilots and passengers because of Martin 202 problems. Note that the airline retired the 202 fleet at the precise time the pilots said they would no longer fly it--midnight, March 17, 1951. ABK

SECTION V - EXHIBIT 19

Page 1 of 1

"TECHNOLOGY WITH SAFETY"

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A. B. #1.

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Box 215
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Minneapolis 17, MINN.

AIR LINE PILOTS ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL

3148 WEST SIXTY-THIRD STREET

CHICAGO 29

TELEPHONE
GROVEHILL 6-2700

6270-217

1 March 1951

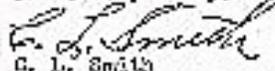
Mr. Greil Hunter, President
Northwest Airlines, Inc.
1868 University Avenue
Saint Paul 4, Minnesota

Dear Mr. Hunter:

As per our agreement dated January 17, 1951, we wish to reaffirm the pilots' position relative to this agreement. The following is the unanimous decision of the IWA Master Executive Council, representing all the pilots of both Councils #1 and #51.

1. No Martin aircraft will be flown out of any pilot base or turnaround station originating after 12 o'clock midnight CST of March 17, 1951, by any pilot in the employ of Northwest Airlines.
2. Any Martin aircraft enroute at 12 o'clock midnight CST of March 17, 1951, will proceed only to the termination point of the flight for which the flight crew was originally scheduled.
3. No ferrying or flying of any other nature will be undertaken by any of the above mentioned pilots after 12 o'clock midnight CST of March 17, 1951, except as outlined in paragraphs 1 and 2.
4. Northwest Airlines' management will be advised in sufficient time of the unalterable position of the entire pilot group in this matter, to allow arrangements suitable to them for final termination of flights using Martin equipment.

Yours very truly,



C. L. Smith
Master Executive Council, IWA

/s/

cc: F. C. Judd
D. S. Cox
J. R. Wain, #51
D. L. Betincke

This address was broadcast by commentator Paul Harvey on WENR-TV, Channel 7 in Chicago, in response to the multiple crashes of Martin 202s in the fleet of Northwest Airlines.

RADIO REPORTS, INC.
220 E. 42nd St.
New York 17, N.Y.

Special for GLENN L. MARTIN COMPANY
.....

January 16, 1951

Paul Harvey at 11:00 p.m. over WENR-TV (Chicago)

THE SCREEN SHOWED MR. HARVEY STANDING IN THE STUDIO

"Well, perhaps by now you know another Northwest airliner has crashed in the midst of a snow blanketed field near Reardon, in the northeast corner of the state of Washington. And all 10 aboard are dead! I have bent over backward, I think, to be fair to the aircraft industry and to the various ships which are flown by our commercial airlines.

I don't like this talk about jinx airplanes. I heard some of that sort of thing in the Army and I didn't like it there, and I've never learned to like it since, but there comes a time, a certain point past which patience is head-in-the-sand stupidity.

The Martin 202 has become a bad risk. I have documentary evidence from airline operators and from aircraft manufacturers that always in the past I have tried desperately to be fair. You can't crash quietly, but I tried to point up a magnificent safety record as well as these other factors which periodically writes us black headlines for the industry.

Northwest had 25, a fleet of 25 Martin 202's. I don't know what they call them now. They've changed the name or something, but it's the same Martin. They had 25. They have 20 left. Five of them have crashed, killing 90 persons, four of them within the past year. Now, I know how much of an investment Northwest Airlines has in this particular ship. They have a lot of other airplanes, too, but they have 20 of these remaining and that represents a lot of money. I don't say — I don't say junk them, but I do think it is time now to ground them. And not for a period of a few days.

Last November the 202 was grounded for, I think, it was nine ~~day~~ weeks while the CAA conducted an investigation. They came out after that period of examination and stated that it was an air-worthy craft; there was nothing structurally deficient about it.

This time I respectfully recommend that they ground them — all of them — not for a period of nine weeks but indefinitely and that they put skilled A and E's and test pilots aboard these things and fly them and fly them and fly them and crash one in flight under stress, if necessary, until we find out what the bugs are. And don't come back in nine weeks and say there ~~xxxxxx~~ aren't any bugs.

When they started out with 25 and five of them had killed 90 persons in a little over one year, the batting average for the Martin 202 is not sufficient, so should not any longer be permitted to fly in the big leagues."

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