

Sarah Zaloumis
693 Contada Circle
Danville, CA 94526

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TALOO NEWSLETTER

January 2006

Co-Chairs

Sarah Purdy Zaloumis
Arue Szura

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Ramona Finlason

Membership

Janet Farmer
650-948-1274

Co-Editors

Arue Szura
Sarah Purdy Zaloumis
925-786-4444

Treasurer

Pat Kearns
650-949-0323

Board Members

Ed Dijeau
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Cindy Turner Tilton
Sarah Purdy Zaloumis

Mail Newsletter Input to:

Sarah Zaloumis
693 Contada Circle
Danville, CA 94526

Cell: 925-786-4444
E-mail:
szaloumis@comcast.net



Opposite Left: Cast as “the old pelican” Dan Roman, co-pilot of the hapless DC-4 in the movie, John Wayne strolls down the aisle of a real DC-4 in this promo ‘lobby card’ photo. With flashlight in hand, he’s on his way to inspect the tailcone area looking for the cause of a mysterious vibration that served as the harbinger of the near-disaster to come. While two separate cabin interiors (a right and a left half) were used to film the movie on a Paramount sound stage in Hollywood, promo stills such as this one were shot inside the real airplane. Note the actual ‘TOPAC’ flight information board on the cockpit door in the background.

Reserve This Date!!
Sat. Sept. 16, 2006
Taloo Reunion
2006

Reunion Rundown

By Arue Szura

The TALOA Alumni Association reunion in September was a smash hit for the 61 former TALOANS who attended! Several of the second generation did a superb job of organizing and making the reunion a memorable affair with Back Forty providing delicious food.

Ed Dijeau (George's son) purchased the drinks for the occasion and was an excellent bartender, friendly to all. For those who missed the event, the bar at the museum has been completely redone by one of the volunteers, Frank, and his wife and it is beautiful. A new refrigerator will soon be installed. You wouldn't know the place!

Ramona Finlason faithfully manned the front table, as always, and kept track of those attending. She greeted and issued name tags for everyone.

Joe Stachon's daughters, Janet Farmer and Pat Kearns, brought snacks, tablecloths, and in general kept everything organized and running smoothly. Pat brought a commercial Bingo game and everyone had fun playing with those new-fangled cards. Pat and Jane Bountis called out the numbers and prizes were won by the lucky winners. Next year's

prizes are already boxed and ready, so plan to attend the 2006 reunion and try your luck. Incidentally, the time when we played Bingo was the quietest it has EVER been at a reunion!

Even third generation helpers, such as Austin and Alex Kearns (Joe Stachon's grandsons), pitched in wherever the were needed. Also in attendance with the Stachon family were Tamsin Kearns, Bo Kearns, Kathy Stachon, Rick Stachon, Mark Kolar, and Zygmant Stachon.

Sarah Purdy Zaloumis (Paul's daughter) did a superb job as MC since Jeff Nelson was unable to attend. Everyone was happy to see Edith Nelson and daughter Holly Veale, but we missed you, Jeff, and hope to see you and your family at the 2006 get-together.

Also, visiting with the Purdy family were Derrick and Gina Castro, Wrick Timmons, Taylor and Joshua Castro, and Sally Hayward.

It was a time for visiting old friends and remembering all that the employees of Transocean Air Lines accomplished during those halcyon days of aviation.

Those Who Attended The Reunion

Margaret Alameda
Andre Bountis Berthet
Forest Berthet
Jane Bountis
Jean Bountis
Linda Bountis
Ken Boyd
Tanya Breinig
Derrick Castro
Gina Castro
Joshua Castro
Taylor Castro

Rico Cruze
Ed Dijeau
George Dijeau
Alex Farmer
Austin Farmer
Janet Stachon Farmer
Ramona Finlason
Derrel Gibbons
Bob Glattly
Harold Green
Judy Grohs
Oscar Grohs

Sally Hayward
Ed Heering (he wore his
TAL captain's uniform and
it still fits!)
Billie Joiner
Rosemary Baumgartner Jones
Bo Kearns
Pat Stachon Kearns
Tasmin Kearns
Barbara Kilian
Bob Kilian
Mark Kolar (Cont. On Pg. 3)

now defunct Glendale Air Terminal east of Burbank, California, where a special outdoor movie set was constructed to replicate the gates at SFO in those days. Careful observation of the whitewashed wooden set in the movie's closing moments reveals another large aircraft in the background immediately behind it, and covered walkways that actually lead nowhere.

Although the entire project was very exciting for him to be involved in, the most memorable experience for Keating came during the filming of the simulated hair-raising emergency night landing on Runway 28 Right at San Francisco. The approach lights were turned up to the maximum brightness and Keating followed the localizer and glideslope in on his first approach. During the taxi back, director William Wellman talked to Keating on the radio reportedly saying, "Bill that was OK, but we need you lower." Keating took off again, circled around, and shot a second approach, this time below the glideslope. He recalls, "The lights were bright, causing the crew to squint." Again, Wellman reportedly said, "That was good, but could you do it a little lower." On the third approach, the DC-4 got too low as it descended over the approach lights, and wound up taking out some of the lights with its nose gear. Keating's wife, who was sitting

with the director, asked Wellman what he would have done if Bill had actually crashed. Wellman reportedly responded that he would have some great footage for the end of the movie!

The High and the Mighty provided us with a vivid and highly accurate look at commercial flying in the 1950s, giving the viewer insight into the fashion standards, attitudes, social customs, and level of technological development during that hallowed era before GPS navigation and metal detectors at airports became the norm. This was a time in history when airlines were still trying to convince the public that air travel was safe, and how easily we forget that airline crashes were far more common place back then. Photos of a demolished airliner's tail section jutting out above the rest of the smoking wreckage inevitably adorned the front page of the city paper more often than we'd like to remember.

With that very thought in mind, you can call it a coincidence or *deja vu*, but the actual Transocean DC-4 used in the making of the movie, after reporting an engine fire, crashed into the Pacific 700 miles west of San Francisco. All nine people on board lost their lives and the aircraft was never recovered. The year was 1964 - exactly ten years after the movie was released.



Joe Stachon shows his grandson, Alex Farmer, a thing or two.

“The High and the Mighty”

Excerpts from Airpower magazine January 2006



Left: Bill Keating, now 90 years old, was the captain with Transocean Air Lines who performed all of the actual DC-4 flying during the making of *The High and the Mighty*.

(Photo by Bob Shane)



Ernest K. Gann, a pilot and adventurer, believed that a writer should write about the things that he knew best and Gann certainly knew about flying! As mentioned, the book was in part based on his experiences while flying with Transocean Air Lines, and he not only authored the book, but also was a technical advisor during filming. When you add a director of the caliber of William Wellman, the stage is pretty well set for having a cinematic product that thankfully very closely follows the book. Gann wrote a total of nine novels which were subsequently made into movies.

Pilot Bill Keating, who did all of the actual DC-4 flying in the movie, attended the re-screening of *The High and the Mighty* at Paramount Theater, Paramount Studios in Hollywood, on July 12, 2005. Keating, now 90 years old, has enjoyed a most prolific career as an aviator, one that spans nearly 50 years and more than 30,000 hours of flying. After World War II, he became the director of flight operations for Transocean Air Lines where he met fellow transport pilot and legendary author Ernst K. Gann when he got

him a job as co-pilot for the airline. They flew together and became good friends, and it was while Gann was working at Transocean that he wrote his novel *The High and the Mighty*. Inspired by several incidents that had occurred during the airline's trans-Pacific operations, the storyline evolved into the tale of a routine airline flight suddenly and terrifyingly stricken with what appears to be a potentially catastrophic situation - a runaway prop and engine fire occurring at night halfway between Hawaii and the mainland.

The actual flying scenes were filmed during the third week of November in 1953 using a Douglas DC-4 borrowed from Transocean Air Lines and piloted by Keating. The DC-4 was painted in the fictitious colors of the Trans-Orient Pacific Airline Company (the resulting acronym TOPAC had the same number of letters as 'TALOA' on the real aircraft's tailfin), and filming was primarily done at both San Francisco and Oakland airports, with some ground scenes shot at Burbank. The ending scene showing all the passengers and crew deplaning in San Francisco was actually filmed at the old and

Those Who Attended The Reunion (continued)

Ed Landwehr
Gun Landwehr
Carolyn Bovat-Lundell
Tom Lundell
Norene McCarthy
Mary Beth McKinney
Erik Moberg
Edith Nelson
John Padilla
Gordon Palmquist

Martha Palmquist
Jerry Ponsi
Paul Purdy
Dusty Rhodes
George Rivers
Ed Robeson
Jeanette Robeson
Juanita Robeson
Bill Schedler
Joe Stachon

Kathy Stachon
Rick Stachon
Zygmant Stachon
Arue Szura
Erick Timmons
Holly Veale
Ron Winiker
Sarah Purdy Zaloumis



NOTICE TO FORMER TAL STEWARDESSES:

1. San Francisco Airport Museum would like to have a donation of a Transocean Air Lines stewardess uniform to complete their collection. Telephone Arue at 510-352-2405 if you know of one.
2. The Board of Directors would like to have a former TAL stewardess on the board. If you would like to volunteer, telephone Arue at the above telephone number. We meet just three times a year at lunch at Francesco's Restaurant to plan the Newsletter and the reunion, plus have a lot of fun.



Ed Dijeu and George Dijeu
at our newly redecorated bar.



IN MEMORIAM

Wally Chapin Ruth LeMoine Hageman Vi Marshman

Bill Glenn Dan McCarthy Al Morjig



IN MEMORY OF WALLY CHAPIN

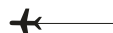
By Joe Stachon

Wally Chapin, a Transocean legend and a good friend, passed away September 5, 2005. He and I were based in Tokyo and Anchorage at the same time and frequently visited one another during those years. Wally sometimes visited me in Tokyo on his motorcycle. I always marveled at his skill and courage in braving Tokyo traffic on a motorcycle.

beautiful biplane which we all saw at one of our reunions in Oakland. I call him our "Machine Shop Michaelangelo."

Chiseko Chapin sent me a copy of the obituary which was run in the Anchorage newspaper. It included much information about our friend that I didn't know and I'm sure other Taloans would like to know so I am forwarding it to Arue to put in the Newsletter.

(See page 5)



A NOTE OF REMEMBRANCE AND THANKS

The TALOA News received a gracious letter from Fred Gash's son which was read at the reunion in September. In the letter his son recalled Fred's fondness for the people of Transocean Air Lines and of the airline itself, along with his own childhood memories at the

Shannon, Ireland base. We regret that unfortunately the letter has since been apparently lost in the mail but hopefully will be returned in time for printing in the next newsletter.



Letter From Ed Heering

Arue:

Thanks a bundle for the info about Robert Maguire. I looked in my pilot's log book and found Bob listed as my F/O on a DC-4 when we picked up 98 Jewish people at Bagdad and flew them to Liyda Airport in the new Israel.

That's about 760 years ago, Arue. We must be getting old. Other pilots were there, like A. Mefford and new co-pilot Harry Clark, both have died. Perhaps you would like to see some of the videos that I took of those fellows in Israel. It's History!



Aviation Heritage of Alameda and Oakland

The first flight of an aircraft in the West occurred in Oakland in 1853 and some of the earliest airfields in the West were established in Alameda and Oakland beginning in 1910. Many famous aviation pilots and personalities received training at these fields including the first Chinese aviator Fong Yue, Stanley Hiller Sr. and Jr., Waldon B. Cooke, Silas Christofferson, Louise Thaden, Bob-Six "Pat" Patterson, Amelia Earhart, and Peter Ueberoth. Oakland Airport was the departure point for all the early flights across the Pacific, beginning in 1927, by Hegenberger and Maitland, Smith and Bronte, the Dole Racers, and Kingsford Smith and crew. The airport was dedicated in 1927 by Charles Lindbergh. It quickly became the premier airport on the West Coast and innovator of major advances in aviation. It became the major terminal for transcontinental and West Coast commercial passenger and airmail service. United Airlines got its start at Oakland and continues to be a major participant. Boeing School of Aeronautics, Taloa Academy, and today Sierra Academy along with many other training schools at Oakland, have been major contributors to the training of many thousands of aviation workers from all over the world. Oakland also became the largest Naval Reserve Air Base in the country and served the Navy for 33 years. Marine and Army air reserve units also operated here from the early and mid thirties through the Korean War. During WWII Oakland became the major aviation marshaling point for all military aircraft and flights to and from the Pacific. After the War it became headquarters

for the three largest airlines in the world; Transocean headed by Orvis Nelson, World headed by Ed Daly, and Transamerica headed by Kirk Kerkerlian. Currently Oakland is the 10th busiest airport in the world and a major air cargo center.

Alameda has had at least 7 airfields and held its first air show in 1910. San Francisco Bay Airdrome on Alameda became the busiest airport on the West Coast during the thirties. In 1935 Pan American Airways made Alameda its Pacific Headquarters and started its historic and romantic "Clipper" flying boat service to and from Hawaii and the Orient. In 1940 Alameda Naval Air Station was commissioned and became a major air station and aircraft carrier homeport serving our military throughout the Pacific. Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz and "Jimmy" Doolittle both played significant roles in aviation at Alameda and Oakland. Doolittle departed Alameda April 1, 1942 on the aircraft carrier USS Hornet and led his B-25s to bomb Japan and give a major boost to American morale in the fight against the Japanese. Nimitz initiated pilot training for UC Berkeley ROTC cadets at Oakland airport in the mid twenties and Nimitz Field at Alameda NAS was named in his honor. The then largest airplanes in the world, the famous Martin "Mars" flying boats, operated out of Alameda NAS in the forties and fifties. The Naval Air Station became the biggest in the world during the Vietnam War. Thousands of aviation workers were trained at Alameda over the years.



(Continued from page 7)

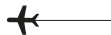
“We were at risk of being shot by the enemy camps below,” she told reporters, “When they arrived in Israel, they kissed the ground.”

Rabbi Marvin Hier, dean and founder of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, presented Maguire’s son with a humanitarian award, and emphasized the bravery and the dangers Maguire faced to help rescue Jews from the Middle East just as Israel was forming.

“Amazingly, Maguire and his planes completed this operation of 380 flights with not a single life lost, not a single plane crashed,” Hier said.

Capt. Robert Francis Maguire, Jr. was born in Portland, Ore. On Jan. 7, 1911 and started flying at an early age. He enlisted in the Army Air Corps the day after Pearl Harbor and when the war ended became a pilot for Alaska Airlines.

When the airline won a contract to fly Jewish



Beloved Pilot was honored for saving up to 50,000 Jews.



Restored DC-4 flew into Santa Monica and visited VNY) to honor Robert Maguire.

refugees from around the world to the new state of Israel, Maguire became the chief pilot for “Operation Magic Carpet” - and was responsible for delivering the Jews of Yemen back to Israel. When the airline had to withdraw within a few months from the operation, Maguire started his own airline, Near East Air Transport.

He continued to transport his human cargo without incident. He was honored with the Simon Wiesenthal Center’s Medal of Valor for his efforts by Rabbi Marvin Hier in 2004.

A missing man formation of P-51s flew past during the ceremony as “Amazing Grace” was performed on the bagpipes. It was a touching scene on behalf of the Irish Catholic pilot who dedicated so much time and energy to ensuring the lives of a group of people of disparate faith.

And as a final note, Maguire’s father, Robert Francis Sr., was a judge at the Nuremberg war crimes trials in the late 1940s.

Wally Chapin Obituary

Wallace Hadley Chapin, recently of Scottsdale, Arizona, passed away September 5, 2005 at the age of 86.

Memorial Services were held on September 8th at the family’s residence.

Wallace was born in San Francisco but moved to San Jose at an early age where he attended San Jose High School. While a teenager, he developed an interest in flying which was to be a driving passion for the rest of his life. Along with a lifelong friend, Glenn Kelly, he purchased a glider in the mid 30s hitched the glider to his dad’s car and went aloft in the area which is now Foster City. He continued this interest in aviation at San Jose State and was a member of the Flying Club there, flying out of Reed’s Hill View Airport in the late 30s.

While at San Jose State, he joined the Navy Reserve and was active in this until the outbreak of WWII. Because he had prior flying experience, he was quickly and willingly utilized as a flying instructor during the war. This included providing Night Evasive Tactics training to fighter pilots in the USMC squadron commanded by Maj. Pappy Boyington in the Solomon Islands in 1943.

With the end of the war, Wally continued his passion by flying for a number of commercial airlines, namely Transocean Air Lines and then for Japan Airlines from which he retired.

After another couple of years of flying into the wilds of Alaska and pilgrimages to the middle east, Wally settled in Anchorage where he worked on and completed his lifelong dream of building an aerobatic biplane. Originally designed by a U.S. Navy Aeronautical engineer for World Class Aerobatic Competition in 1960, designated as a PJ-260 Senior Aero Sport, Wally’s highly modified beautiful 290 HP biplane N321WC took 27 years of meticulous construction to complete. It will continue to be flown by his children and grandchildren for many years to come.

Wally lived in California, Tokyo, and his favorite place, Anchorage for 25 years. He is survived by his wife of 38 years, Chiseko, and his children Beth Meckfessel, Randy Chapin, Claudia Vongrey, Paul Chapin, Jodine Sorensen, Robin Kucera, Chimmi Chapin and Sandy Kukla. He has 15 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren.



2006 Roster

The TALOA Alumni Association plans to print a new roster of members in early 2006. If you have had a change of address, telephone number, or e-mail address please let Janet Farmer know at 650-948-1274.



THE HIGH AND THE MIGHTY HOLLYWOOD PREMIER

By Arue Szura

Thanks to Western Aerospace Museum trustee Steve Hill, several former TALOANS received invitations to the July 12, 2005, World Premiere of the newly restored and remastered film, "The High and the Mighty" at Paramount Studios in Hollywood.

The invitations featured an airbourne Transocean Air Lines DC-4 (with the TOPAC identity for the movie) and a "boarding pass, passenger ticket, and baggage check."

Bill and Billie Keating were shown star treatment by Paramount as special guests of the studios. As most of you know, Bill piloted one of Transocean's DC-4s in the movie. Edith Nelson arrived at the premier looking terrific in a black velvet dress, accompanied by son Jeff and his family, and her daughter Holly Veale.

I was fortunate enough to receive an invitation for two to the Hollywood affair and asked a young friend, Dyette Tereau, who is like a daughter to me and lives in the Los Angeles area, to join me in what turned out to be a fabulous evening.

And what a Hollywood affair it was! It was a beautiful afternoon, the weather could not have been more perfect, and the red carpet was out where lines of photographers and television news reporters interviewed and photographed everyone as they arrived. I figured this was just for celebrities so we skirted the area by walking on the lawn until a security guard stopped us and asked: "Why are you girls walking out here? You're supposed to walk down the red carpet!" We didn't know what to do once we got there, whether to smile and wave to the cameras or what. Finally, we decided we'd just smile and keep walking, ducking behind Bill Keating, who was being interviewed by a television reporter.

Servers wearing uniforms of the era of the movie moved among the guests with trays of sumptuous appetizers at the cocktail reception where a bar was set up for drinks. We met up with the Nelsons and hobnobbed with at least one Hollywood director until we were suddenly startled by a huge noise. It was the USC Marching Band playing as they marched, single file, dressed in their red and gold uniforms with helmets and feathered plumes. When they reached the crowd they formed a semi-circle and continued to play several songs before leading us inside the Paramount Theatre for the conclusion of their performance, which received a standing ovation.

Once inside the theatre we discovered that each seat held the gift of a small "suitcase" with "travel stickers" advertising "The High and the Mighty." Inside the box were two John Wayne tee shirts, a leather luggage tag, DVDs of two of the Duke's other movies, and a replica of "The Hollywood Reporter" dated Thursday, May 27, 1954, addressed to John Wayne at his Hollywood home. "The Hollywood Reporter" cost ten cents a copy in 1954.

Edith Nelson attended the original premiere of "The High and the Mighty." She had been seated next to Ernest K. Gann, the author of "The High and the Mighty" who was also a captain for the Transocean Air Lines when he wrote the book, so it was fitting that she was invited to attend the July 2005 premiere as well.

Never in my wildest dreams did I ever expect to be at this type of Hollywood event, walking with the Stars down the red carpet for a premiere and my fifteen seconds of fame!

Thank You Olga Peiffer!

With heartfelt thanks we acknowledge the donation of the complete uniform of Captain Edward Peiffer by his wife, Olga Peiffer, to the Transocean Air Lines exhibit at the Western Aerospace Museum.



Bob Glattly and Sarah Purdy Zaloumis enjoy the reunion and share a smile.

The 'Irish Moses' Robert Maguire Honored

From Page A30 Pacific Flyer August 2005

Well over 100 well-wishers were on hand at the Santa Monica, Calif. Airport July 20 to honor an American pilot known as "the Irish Moses."

Parked on the ramp was a Douglas DC-4 dubbed the "Spirit of Freedom," the same type of airplane Maguire used to save the lives of some 40,000-50,000 Yemenite Jews from persecution and danger after WWII, by secretly flying them to Israel through completely hostile territories.

The operation lasted from 1948 until 1951.

Maguire, who died in June in his Northridge home at the age of 94, "was a unique

character, very innovative," said his son Robert Maguire III. "He had a lot of guts."

A replica of the DC-4R-5D airplane called Spirit of Freedom that Maguire flew on his first missions performed a fly-by and then landed as part of the afternoon celebration of Maguire's life.

Lynn Lehrman Weiner was a 22-year-old foreign correspondent for the Journal American when she met Maguire in Israel. A source told her about Operation Magic Carpet and Maguire invited her aboard his plane to get the exclusive story taking more than 120 Jews out of Yemen that cold night in 1949.

(Continued on page 8)