

The TWA Museum Newsletter – March 2014



Letter from the Director – Pam Blaschum

Greetings to all in the wide world of TWA! The TWA Museum is nearing the end of its second full year of operation at 10 Richards Rd. I am hopeful 2014 will prove to be as exciting as 2013 was as we share some highlights.

New 501C3 Status: Through the hard work of former committee members Zana Allen and Karen Martin, we received our 501 C 3 status and our separation from Platte County Historical Society. Having official non-profit status is more than just in name. It's very exciting because this means that we can accept donations and apply for a wider range of grants to keep the legacy alive. The museum owes a debt of gratitude to all at Platte County for protecting our collection and especially Betty Soper, Dianne Pepper and Robert Eckert. We are thankful to all the volunteers who have participated this past year in sharing the workload, greeting visitors and assisting all on the Executive Committee to keep the Museum up and running smoothly. Nancy Sitzmann became our newest committee member and will be our events coordinator.

Archives: The museum obtained the original TWA training boards for the 707 and 727 aircraft from the Nicholas Beasley Museum in Marshall, Mo. and will become the focal point of our newest project, an educational center in the hangar. Carol Emert, our archivist, was instrumental in contacting an intern from UMKC to write an educational program for children of all ages. In addition we now have a computerized flight simulator enabling our visitors to "Fly" the Connie from the downtown airport. The simulator was built by Christopher Nold, a student at CMSU and has proven to be the highlight of the main gallery.

Events: In addition to our fall Up Up and Away fundraiser and reunion in October, the museum was open to several events in 2013.

Our First Anniversary Celebration: We celebrated our first year in April to great fanfare and friends from near and far. Our very special guests were Ruth Richter Holden and daughter and son in law, Susan and Bob Walsh.

The 4th Annual Up Up and Away Reunion: A luncheon and showing of the latest Flt. 800 Documentary by Kristina Borjesson and assisted by Tom Stalcup. No matter what you believe happened, it was a captivating film.

Hosting our Own: The Clipped Wings International Convention took place in Kansas City and they made a point to stop by for a tour. Great to have the crew in the house!

The Challenge Air Event: This is an amazing all day event for special needs children which includes activities, lunch and a 30 minute flight in a private airplane where the child actually gets to co-pilot the aircraft. We encourage you to volunteer as it's inspiring to see these kids having so much fun.

Honoring the Military: The World War II Glider Pilots group of 100 visited the Museum and had a grand tour of the entire building. Our volunteers lead Museum tours and assisted in an Honor Flight Fund Raiser at the hangar, a cause which helps send World War II veterans to Washington and other historic places to pay tribute to their friends and family.



Art Bra KC. The museum hangar was the setting for the 2013 Art Bra KC, a unique and fun auction event showcasing eclectic work-of-art bras modeled by breast cancer survivors to celebrate their triumph over cancer. A tribute to survivors' fighting spirit, Art Bra KC benefits The Patients in Need Fund at Missys' Boutique, an accredited appearance center at The University of Kansas Cancer Center's Richard and Annette Bloch Cancer Care Pavilion. The fund ensures access to Missys' services for eligible uninsured/underinsured individuals.

VML's Christmas Party. Our neighbors at VML, a local advertising and branding firm in KC held their holiday party at the museum. It was a great way to bring the holiday spirit to the museum.

As you can see, it proved to be a very busy year for all of us, committee members as well as volunteers. We look forward to another successful year at 10 Richards Road. *Warm regards, Pam*

This March 2014 issue includes:

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Let us know if you'd like to contribute a story to the next quarterly newsletter!

TWA Trivia Question: In what year was the DC-1 delivered to TWA by Douglas Aircraft?

(Send your answer by March 31 to twamuseum@gmail.com to be entered into win a prize from the Museum Gift Shop!)

1940's Hangar Dance – To Benefit the Museum April 26, 2014, 10 Richards Road (Wheeler Airport)

5:30-7:00 Check in & Museum Tour

6:15 –6:45 Free Swing Dance Lesson

**7:00-10:00 Dance to the Music of the Moonlight Serenade
Orchestra**

\$25 per person before April 12th, \$30 per person after April 12th or at the door! Vintage WWII, other military uniforms and TWA uniforms welcomed or come as you are!

For tickets, please call 816-234-1011 or email twamuseum@gmail.com.

Tuesdays with Marie - A Tribute to Marie Trainer

TWA Museum Director and Curator 1985-2009 – by Pam Blaschum

I first met Marie in the summer of 2007 during the Silver Wings Convention in Kansas City. In 2009 I was contacted by Anita Ridpath to see if I was interested in working at the TWA Museum. Of course I accepted, I love my TWA! What great promise it held for me to keep in touch with my past and the career I so loved for 40+ years. At that time the Museum was located in the cafeteria at the KCI Expo Center. This was after several moves from the MCI Overhaul Base to the Credit Union on 112th St., KCAC--the Kansas City Administration Center and from there to the St. Louis Training Center. All these moves resulted in several items being placed in storage at Platte City. I can't even imagine the tedious process of hauling all the artifacts from St. Louis to one of several other destinations. Jim Mollencamp, Legal counsel for TWA, was successful in getting protection for the collection from the Platte County Historical Society. The museum then became a chapter of PCHS, thereby stopping Carl Ichan from taking whatever he wanted. The museum was no longer property of TWA. In 1996, TWA became the sponsor of the Smithsonian Institute's 150th Anniversary. The TWA collection traveled to 12 cities over a 2 year time period. What a fabulous collection the Museum had. During those 2 years Marie was there to set up and take down all the displays in the showcases.

Starting in the fall of 2009 several former flight attendants, Pat Brinkman, Pam Dennis, Betsy Martin, Joy DeCoursey, and I would travel to the Expo Center on Tuesdays to meet with Marie. We were later joined by Mary Ellen Miller, Linda Maloney, Karen Martin and Zana Allen. We started by taking inventory of all the items that were at Expo as well as other artifacts stored at the Platte County Resource Center. It seemed such a monumental task and then I realized that Marie had been doing this for 24 years, often with very little help. I often wondered at Marie's knowledge of every item that we started cataloging. Seems she had an encyclopedia housed in her brain. I remember one instance in particular. I called Marie to ask if she knew that Disney had released a DVD set of the original airing of the Mickey Mouse Club. In the first week there was a segment called "Do you want to be a TWA Hostess" and "Do you want to be a TWA Pilot". Without hesitation she remarked, "Oh yes, if you will look in "Wings of Pride", page X, paragraph X on the right side you will see it in print." Are you serious! How did she remember that? I do know that Marie and Mary Lou Finch had edited the Wings of Pride book several years ago but was still shocked at her incredible recollection.

Sadly for me, Marie and Leo moved to Seattle in the spring of 2010, but luckily she is only a phone call away. Throughout the years Marie has done her best to keep the museum's collection and history alive, therefore it is only fitting that we dedicate the main room as the "Marie and Leo Trainer Gallery".

Museum Visitors – Who Will Walk Through The Door?



Captain Luther Zimmerman, his wife Dolores and daughter Susan Foster recently paid a visit to the museum. Above is a photo with his family and below a kind note: *I flew for TWA from February 1956 to December 1990. I told my wife and daughter that we'll make a quick stop at the museum and be on our way. Thanks to you Karen, and Pam, the quick stop turned into several hours of the most enjoyable nostalgia about my flying career with TWA. It was also great to see a crew member Capt. Nelson Krueger with whom I had several flights when he was a check Flight Engineer. Thanks for the time and effort you and all ex TWA'ers put into the museum.*

Historic Profile - "Tommy" and the Jetstream

Captain D.W. "Tommy" Tomlinson, TWA Vice President of Engineering, Chief Research Pilot for Transcontinental and Western Air, Navy ace –by Ruth Richter-Holden



Before his prestigious presence with Transcontinental & Western Air, Tommy was known as an ace aviator in the Southwest. As Leader of the famous Navy "Sea Hawks" in the 1920s, Tommy awed audiences at California airshows doing 'what couldn't be done'. His progress in aviation mirrored the early history of TWA, with the Maddux merger he too merged to T&WA as assistant to Jack Frye and Paul Richter.

On day as a line Captain returning from a West Coast flight to Kansas City, Tommy was summoned to Richter's office; a reprimand was coming... Paul sternly addressed him with; "Tommy, you will never fly the line again! We can't have our passengers passing out from lack of oxygen." Tomlinson replied; "But Paul, I gotta get those folks over the Sierras and the Rockies." Richter; "It's bad for business. It can never happen again" Tomlinson; "You mean I'm fired?" Richter; "Hell no, Tommy, come with me." Awaiting them on the tarmac was a shiny sporty 'supercharged' Northrop Gamma NX13758 and Richter's brief; "Take it as high as you can. Come back and tell us what you up there find."



Tommy and TWA researched the "Upper Atmosphere". Returning from 'on high' one day Tomlinson reported to the Meteorologists; "You wouldn't believe the winds I encountered at 35000 feet. They were 250 mile a hour." He had discovered what is known today as "the Jet Stream". Tomlinson's research and TWA's foresight and follow through gave to the future 'high altitude' flight. With Tommy's specs, Boeing built the 'Stratoliner' 307B and TWA became "The Over Weather Airline". With TWA's 'Stratoliner', the 1st first pressurized 4 engine aircraft... no more oxygen deprived 'passed-out' passengers. Though the government credits itself with the Jet Stream discovery...my truth is it was a feat of Captain Tommy Tomlinson!

More about Tommy at <http://www.TWASpirit.com>

Flight Crew: Oven Rack - by Carole Griffin

The following was sent to us from Carole Griffin, former TWA, AA F/A, regarding an incident on one of her flights in June 2010.

OK, as most of you know I am now working for Frontier Airlines. I've come along way but life is good ...Since Frontier was purchased by Republic Holdings along with Midwest Airlines they are attempting to save the cookie theme from Midwest. I mean who cannot fly on such a airline that has talking Bears and Rabbits certainly NOT ME !!! Anyway, yesterday as I was getting ready to change out one of the oven racks on a flight to LGA, I noticed the oven rack was bent and twisted and of course would not slide out of the oven just like in the olden days. I finally struggled enough to get it out without spilling the goods. As I brought it down, guess what was on the top of the rack ?? The letters TWA !!! I almost dropped the rack and the 159 cookies in it.

OMG! Well you should have seen my face as I contemplated how I was going to take the rack home after the flight ?? As the other Flight Attendant was attempting to assist me in my efforts, I told him not to touch it ...it was mine... and I could do this myselfI was a pro and he backed up as I think he realized he was now dealing with a mother Mountain Lion and her found cub ... GRRRR. I immediately started thinking if it would fit in my suitcase ? NO. ... could I just put it in a trash bag and carry it?, NO, like we used to carry all that crap from Cairo and Rome because we just needed more souvenirs from our traveling experiences to store in our basements and spare bedrooms. No ?? How could I explain this to TSA ?? I know they let crew members get away with bringing oversized items on the flights but really a OVEN RACK? Surely that would set off the meters and probably get me arrested, I would make the news no doubt, bad idea .

You should have seen the look on my flying partners faces as I was trying to justify how I would explain to catering the missing Oven Rack and not to mention to an Inflight Manager who might be just hanging around the halls ?.. Oh and I was sure the crew on my commuter Flight on either SWA or Midwest would understand even if it would not fit under the seat or in the overhead bins. Maybe I would have to gate check it as excess baggage or ask the Cockpit if I could store it up there??? I kept thinking of how proud all of you would be of me, why we could make it into a shrine and celebrate its existence. After all those years of throwing them around and ... the food smell contained in the metal and, oh, the dents, they just looked too familiar to me. I had to try to hitch this onto my wheels and proudly walk thru the terminals and beam with pride over my find. After all it's an Oven Rack with the letters TWA on it !!!

As I gazed into the cabin in a state of shock and pride I realized all these people were just waiting for their Damn cookies and did not care about my find and about my planning and plotting out loud of how I would take the Oven Rack home with me. It was a lonely joy and my flying partner was running out of patience and we were starting to descend, so to the surprise of everyone I just got on the end of the cart and we served our prideful cookies. Every passenger on the plane said they tasted better than ever before and I know it was because they were baked in the good old TWA OVEN RACK.

As we landed I decided I had to give up on my decision to keep the rack for myself and it would be better used and remembered by many more passengers as we bake those DAMN cookies in it for all future flights. I kissed it goodbye and when catering came on to take it off I asked them to be gentle with it. It was a collector's item, it had served its Airline and its TWA Flight Attendants well. We cooked many a great steak, burned many a bad egg in it, even melted Ice buckets to the likes you would not believe. Heated up shoes while it was freezing as we boarded ...It's been all over the World and back-- Paris, Rome, Madrid, Athens, Berlin; you name it, it's probably been there, and its served First Class, Business Class and Coach Class passengers alike ... perhaps even the POPE !!!

As the caterer stood there with his mouth open, I shoved the last remaining cookie in it ...and his eyes grew wide with excitement. He gently took the Oven Rack put it in the empty cart and said, "Oh My God," this is the BEST warmed cooked I've ever had.

I have not given up on taking the Oven Rack, and I can guarantee each and every one of you it is being used for the purposes intended and will carry on our beloved TWA name every time it cooks up something yummy from the planes. It's being watched over and loved by us who may get a chance to cook something in it and remember the passion we all felt when we served something cooked just right from one of our many Oven Racks. Hugs and Cheers. Carole



Museum Gift Shop

If you haven't stopped by the gift store lately, you are in for a surprise. We are constantly updating our merchandise -- from t-shirts and hats to playing cards, posters and coasters. We even offer customized items on special order.

Stop by or give us a call if you are looking for a TWA memento for a great Mother's Day, Father's Day or birthday present. For more information, call us at 816-234-1011.

Volunteer Thanks

The TWA Museum is more than a building and objects on display; it is made up of dedicated volunteers who are committed to making sure the doors stay open by giving of their time and talents on a consistent bases. From the beginning our museum has been blessed in regard to our volunteers who love the history of TWA and its place in the field of commercial aviation. Their enthusiasm and knowledge give our many visitors a special treat each and every time they visit the museum.

We thank each and every one of our volunteers. Thank you! Thank you!

Check out our [Volunteer Profile](#) in each issue.

TWA Preserved In Art – Thanks to Richard Rees

– by Karen Holden Young

On behalf of the TWA Museum I would like to personally thank Richard Rees for his most generous support to the TWA Museum. We first met Richard Rees at the Museum's one-year celebration in May 2013. We quickly got to know him and what kind of friend he would become to the Museum. Richard Rees and the TWA Museum became joined at the hip, fast friends. He began a quest to find rare TWA memorabilia that was for sale and buy them for the Museum, as a donation. Richard consulted with the TWA Museum director Pam Blaschum and me, on a monthly basis to tell us what he what treasures he had found to add to the Museum's archives.

Just some of the exciting things donated by Richard Rees were, these three rare original David Klein posters, London, Paris and Africa see: below. These posters are wonderful pieces of TWA history by David Klein. They now hang in The TWA Museum main gallery for all the visitors to admire. Richard Rees has donated a lot more than these three posters, for instance we also now have three swim metals from a TWA sponsored swim competitions from the 70's. Thank You Richard Rees for your support in preserving the history of TWA.



Ground Crew – Jet Engine Overhaul – by Ann Noland

Ann, payroll #6393, worked at the TWA overhaul base in Kansas City for 35 years and for 28 years worked in engine overhaul in production scheduling.

A commercial jet engine works on a very simple principle:

- suck - takes in air from the front of the engine
- squeeze - compresses the air
- bang - fuel mixes with air
- blow - exhaust blows out the back

To keep the engine running smoothly every 3,000 to 5,000 hours it is necessary to bring the engine to an overhaul facility for a complete teardown. It is completely torn down until all that is lying around is nuts, bolts and screws. This is done by mechanics.

The individual parts are inspected and either sent out for repair or if non repairable scrapped and new parts ordered. This is done by inspectors, repair shop mechanics and purchasing agents. After parts are returned to the line the engine is reassembled by mechanics and taken to the final line where it is run up and the final inspection is done by supervisors and

inspectors. It is then signed off and returned to service. The total process can take anywhere from 3 weeks to 6 weeks.

Archives & Education – by Carol Emert

Archives: For a number of years the TWA Museum has acquired an amazing assortment of TWA objects into the collection. We realized that there was a great need to organize and catalog objects so that we have a better account of what is in the collection. As with any history museum, it is important to document the history of objects so that future generations will know the History of TWA in the field of commercial aviation. When other museums, organizations, and individual persons inquire about the objects in the collection, we want to be able to provide answers to their questions. The TWA Museum expanded its storage spaces last summer. At that time we began transferring many boxes of objects from one overcrowded storage room to our expanded spaces with the goal of separating and counting objects so that we have a complete inventory. We are currently working through this process, and once it is done, we will begin the next slow and detailed phase of cataloging objects and placing the information, along with the conditions, locations, and photographs, into a museum database.

Education Center: When the TWA Museum expanded last summer we acquired a large room in the hangar that we plan to develop as an Education Center. Our goals are to create a place where our Museum can offer classes, lectures, summer camps for kids, and hands-on educational experiences for visitors to the center. Currently we have 10 TWA training panels from the Jack Frye International Training Center, and a DC-9 Trainer which was used to familiarize TWA pilots in the Center. On the opposite wall is the trainer's panel for the instructor's use. To better plan our future education experiences we hope to recruit retired TWA pilots and flight attendants to give tours and conduct special events. To do this we are looking for a retired TWA employee who has a teaching background to organize the education experiences. Next summer we may have a UMKC history Intern who will assist with this exciting endeavor. If you feel that you have the desire and experience to volunteer part time in the TWA Education Center please call the TWA Museum at 816-234-1011 to speak with Carol Emert or Pam Blaschum.



Volunteer Profile: Marcia and Larry Lillge

Marcia and Larry joined the TWA Museum in May 2012, and continue to be very active volunteers. Larry enjoys being a very enthusiastic tour guide in the museum, and Marcia greets visitors and checks them in with a big welcome smile at the front entrance. Marcia and Larry were married in 2010, and their home is in Kansas City North. Marcia was a print buyer in the TWA purchasing department in Building #1 for 12 years before retiring in 2001. She greatly misses working with many friends in the TWA family at the Overhaul Base administrative office. Larry had a 28 year career as a field sales manager with Lipton before taking an early retirement package in 1991. He was a frequent flier on business on many airlines, and accumulated a million passenger miles flying on TWA. His first flight was on a DC-3. Larry began a second career in 1991 with a local travel agency as sales/administrative manager. He began studying the cruise industry and achieved the rank of Certified Cruise Counselor. Larry continues to be a home-based cruise agent with 22 years experience, and has enjoyed taking 49 cruises so far. Larry was also a volunteer tour guide at the Airline History Museum for 10 years before joining the TWA Museum in 2012. He is also an active volunteer KCI Airport Ambassador with almost 2000 hours of volunteer service at KCI since 2004.