

YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS OUR FEBRUARY MEETING!

Chief Susan Ballard, who heads the Honolulu Police Department, is scheduled to be the speaker at our first general meeting of the year on February 26th. Please use the registration form on page 7 to sign up for the meeting. You may have noticed this newsletter is late. For personal reasons, there will be no January newsletter so do not let this opportunity pass to sign up for what will be an interesting meeting.



HONOLULU POLICE CHIEF TO SPEAK

Chief Susan Ballard became the Honolulu Police Department's 11th Chief of Police, and Honolulu's first female Chief of Police, on November 1, 2017. Chief Ballard joined the Honolulu Police Department in 1985 and has worked in a wide range of field and administrative assignments. As a commander, she led the District 5 and District 4 patrol districts, Finance Division, Training Division, Research and Development Section (currently Information Technology Division), Informational Resources Section (currently Community Affairs Division), and the Central Receiving Division.

Chief Ballard believes in the department's mission statement of *Serving and Protecting with Aloha*. She envisions the community and the HPD working together to make Oahu safe for its nearly one million residents and five times as many visitors. Her priorities include rebuilding public trust, preventing and solving crime, and recruiting quality employees. She is also committed to expanding police programs for the young and the elderly.

Born in Virginia and raised in North Carolina, Chief Ballard has a Master of Arts degree in health and physical education from Tennessee Technological University and a Bachelor of Science degree in health and physical education from Appalachian State University.

Oops! What happened to the January issue?: I hope this does not cause a problem in your filing system, but there will be no January issue. As a result of recent personal events, I have "too much on my plate"—as the saying goes. Anyway, you have probably already received a number of "Happy New Year" greetings so I am hoping you won't really mind if I am the first to wish you a "Happy Valentine's Day!" On the positive side, I am into my 21st year as your editor and January 2019 is the first missed month.

THE WORLD'S MOST EXPERIENCED AIRLINE

Pan Am certainly had a variety of experiences and some of them were lessons learned the hard way. Dave Knight, whose article about his Pan Am career appeared in the previous issue of this newsletter, submitted a second story which I did not have space for. It was about the arrival of the first 747 into Honolulu. It may bring memories of an "Oh, no!" moment during your own days with Pan Am which you might consider sharing. Dave's story:

The 747 was coming to Honolulu. We, in Passenger Service, had to be ready. We trained and practiced how we would handle this big bird. It would involve hundreds of passengers at one time arriving and hundreds of others leaving. Our task had been laid out before us. The gates had been modified with 4 boarding bridges, and we were all trained on moving these big beasts around. We studied how to open the doors. DOORS ARE ONLY TO BE OPENED FROM THE OUTSIDE.

We sat in the gate in anticipation of our first arrival, watching the runway to see this massive airplane land. And there it was, as graceful a thing as we had ever seen. It landed, then taxied to our gate; we were ready.

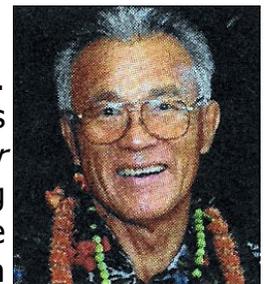
The aircraft was guided into position at the gate and all bridges were then skillfully positioned as we had practiced. We entered the bridge and walked to the aircraft, thinking over and over about the door opening instructions. The most important rule of all is that DOORS ARE TO BE OPENED ONLY FROM THE OUTSIDE. We walked through the left front bridge and just as we approached the door, it happened. The door flew open and there at our feet lay a massive slide. This was quickly followed by a hiss as the slide began to inflate. We found out just how fast we could run as the slide began to chase us out of the bridge. All of our training and preparation was, at that moment, for naught. We had been warned at every turn that if the door was opened from the inside, the slide would drop and inflate. Here we were, our first assignment with the 747 doors, and we were experiencing our worst nightmare, running out of the bridge, being chased by an inflating slide.

When the excitement died down, the flight crew at this door explained that a passenger sitting in a first class seat not far from the door, felt he could help. He left his seat, went to the door and rotated the handle before anyone could stop him. Immediately all hell broke loose. Procedures were followed at the other three doors and all went as planned, but we, at the forward left door, were left with a memory that sticks with us even today.

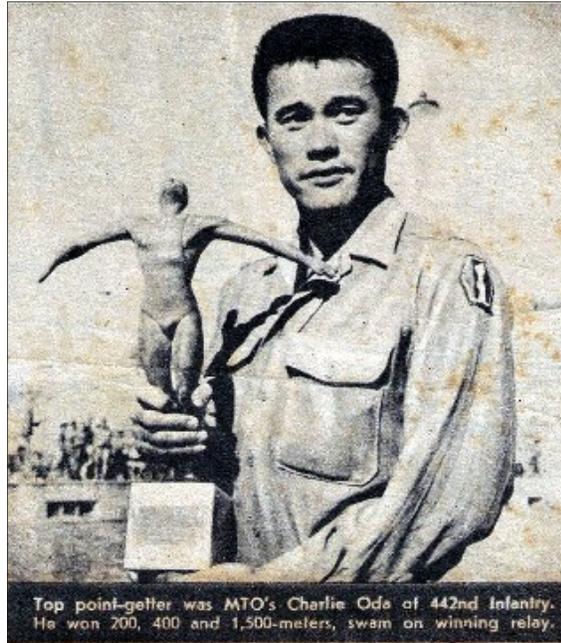
Dave would enjoy hearing from friends with whom he used to work. You can reach him at: DKnight@aol.com.

THE OFT UNKNOWN LIVES OF OUR FELLOW EMPLOYEES

In March of 2017, we reported the passing of **Charles Oda** at the age of 93. (Photo at right.) His obituary included comments on his amazing achievements as a world class swimmer. Owen Oshima noticed an announcement in the *Star Advertiser* sports section that Oda was being inducted into the Hawaii Swimming Hall of Fame posthumously. He recently contacted Oda's daughter on the mainland and she said she had made a quick trip over to attend the induction



dinner at the Hale Koa Hotel on September 8, 2018. Oda worked for Pan Am for 30 years, first in reservations and then in sales. During those years he kept up his swimming and continued coaching others. His daughter sent Owen the following photos of her father from newspaper clippings, and the medallion presented in September:



Charles Oda is a good example of an employee who had a life beyond his working hours. Often such accomplishments as Charles' are only known to those with whom he worked closely. If you know of someone, or if you yourself, had an interesting hobby outside your work hours, please consider sending me a note about it. I will be happy to contact you for the details. To me, such stories lend insight to what kind of employees worked for Pan Am.

PLEASE KOKUA!

At all general membership meetings, your reservation form with check should be **received** by Carol at least 5 days before the meeting. This is because a count is needed in advance of the meeting so the chef has ample time to order food and the room can be set up properly to prevent last minute confusion of having to add a table. You may think you are the only one signing in late, and one more person showing up at the last minute won't make a difference. However, you are usually not the only one and it usually does make a difference. Just let Carol know at 396-5225.

We are aware that circumstances change and you might suddenly find at the last minute you are available to attend. On the rare occasion that occurs, you can call Carol and tell her to expect you to pay at the door. We are charged for the count we give so if you no-show, please do not expect your check to be returned—UNLESS you give several days notice.

THE LATE TOM KEWIN

This past August I received news from the family of Tom Kewin, as did many other Pan Amers, that Tom had passed away in Mill Valley, CA, at the age of 96. Tom was a friendly and likeable Pan Am pilot with a long career. A short time later, I received a chain of messages between Gary

Meyers (an Ohana member of PAA) and Tom's family. It was a conversation forwarded to me by a mutual friend. With Gary's permission, I repeat the messages here:

Kewin family: We invite you to a Celebration of Life in Loving Memory of Tom. We are sending this invitation out to many. All are invited. We know that most of you are from out of town but just want you to have the opportunity to celebrate and perhaps see old friends. . . . Kindly respond in the next few days so that we can make arrangements for the number of guests...Sincerely, Kewin Family and Friends



Tom Kewin

Gary Meyers: I appreciate the invitation but am forced by circumstances to send my regrets. I never met Tom in person but we had VERY enjoyable message exchanges for several years, starting with an article I wrote for the Pan Am newsletter. I'm not a former Pan Amer but have deep respect for the Pan Am family, having retired from Northwest Airlines some years ago. What other employees from a former airline have stayed together for even a fortnight? Yet the Aloha Chapter is as strong today as it was years ago!

Being interested in history, living in Honolulu, and volunteering at the Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum (new name)*, I had many questions about the Clipper era as relating to Pearl Harbor. Tom answered those questions willingly and warmly. He expanded our knowledge of the early years greatly. [*Ed. note: the former name of the museum was the Pacific Aviation Museum.]

Tom was well liked and respected by the Pan Amers here who knew him. I deeply regret never having had the pleasure of his company. However, I enjoyed his "The Pan Am Journey" immensely. [Ed. note: Gary is referring to the book Tom wrote about his Pan Am career.] Tom's era was the Golden Era of commercial aviation. My condolences go out to Tom's wife and family members and friends both here and on the mainland.
Sincerely, with aloha, Gary Meyers

Kewin Family Member: Thank you for such a nice written response elaborating Tom's involvement with Pan Am history and how he was well-liked! As such, we will obviously miss you next Sunday! Phyllis and my brother Paul are copied should you want to connect in the future. . .

Gary's sense of Tom as indicated by these messages is very accurate. I did have the pleasure of knowing Tom. I first met Tom in 1963 soon after I completed stewardess training in SFO. A year and a half later, I became a purser. Part of a purser's job is to interact with the pilots in the cockpit. We pursers were briefed on the weather, the flight time, etc. We in turn passed on cabin information, e.g., final count, special needs passengers, etc., to the pilots. All of us had our list of favorites and I think Tom was on every purser's list.

Tom looked younger than his years and I remembered being surprised to learn he started with Pan Am in 1943, flying on the Clippers.

Until recently, I did not know that his first wife, the mother of his 3 sons, was the first stewardess to fly across the Pacific Ocean. She passed away in 1976. He was married to his second wife, Phyllis, for 37 years. She survives him.

Tom not only looked young, he acted young, keeping busy on one or another of his many hobbies right up to the end. He completed his contribution to the recently published book, HUNTING THE WIND, shortly before his death. (See following article.)

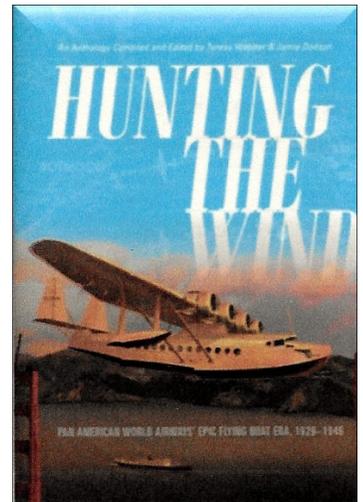
"HUNTING THE WIND"

The photo at right is one of many featured in the book, *Hunting the Wind*, edited and designed by Terry Webber and Jamie Dodson, with contributions by many others, one of whom was Tom Kewin, (Note previous article.) The book is about the Pan Am flying boats. Tom, who was hired in early 1943 to be a flight engineer on the Clippers, was a crewmember on the last flight of the legendary *China Clipper* into San Francisco. The crew is pictured at right and Tom is the tall fellow second from right. (Photo courtesy of the Pan Am Historical Foundation and reprinted in Chapter Five of *Hunting the Wind*.)



Tom's chapter, "Nuts and Bolts," provides a riveting account of what flying was like in the era of the Clippers. He explains the origin of the book's title, which was the methods they used to figure out the wind direction and velocity. He writes, "In a word, we were hunting the wind."

The book can be picked up and opened to any chapter as each chapter stands on its own. For example, chapter 6 recounts the story of the *Pacific Clipper*, Captain Robert Ford's December 1941 trip that continued on around the world from New Zealand to avoid interception by the enemy in World War II. It is a reprint of *The Long Way Home*, with permission from the author, Ed Dover. The chapter which follows, number 7, is Merry Athearn Barton's account of being rescued from Noumea by Captain Ford, and then being off-loaded, with her parents, in Gladstone, Australia, before the *Pacific Clipper* continued westbound. Merry, who is one of our Aloha Chapter members, was 5 years old at the time. Her father was the station manager—actually handling all Pan Am duties in Noumea. They eventually returned to the U.S., first by sailing from Sydney to Wellington, on a zigzag route to avoid detection. She writes, "The rest of our highly secretive six weeks at sea took us to Peru and up the west coast of South and Central America until we docked at San Pedro, CA." Merry said she did not realize until years later that she and her family were part of a Pan Am legend.



Hunting the Wind is available at Amazon.com and at Schiffer Publishing. If you do not want to order it on line, you can call Schiffer Publishing and they will assist you in purchasing a copy. The phone number is 610-593-1777 and they are open 8:30 to 5:30 Monday through Friday, Eastern Standard Time. Hawaii residents, call early!

PILOT TRAINING ON THE FLYING BOATS

A few months ago, member **Mike Craighead**, who lives in Bangkok, sent me an article from the archives of "Aviation Week". It is dated May, 1942. The article, written by Henry W. Roberts, provides a glimpse of what pilots went through in learning to fly the Clippers. Following are the first few paragraphs from the article"

"Sound basic instrument flight training is absolutely essential to the successful operation of a scheduled airline," say PAA's operating veterans. This is made possible throughout the PAA System by use of the formula: High Standard + Good Instruction [with] Good Equipment + Actual Practice = Expert Instrument Ability.

This is the simple formula which gave PAA its unexcelled flying personnel, and the lowest accident rate among the world's airlines. Every PAA pilot is, in the true sense of the word, an expert. When, on December 7, war broke out in the Pacific, PAA's *California Clipper* [renamed the *Pacific Clipper*] was stranded in New Zealand. Its crew flew the ship to New York—via Australia, East Indies, India, across Africa, across the South Atlantic, and up to PAA's base at LaGuardia Field—under wartime conditions and in virtually total radio silence, in an uneventful "routine" operation. For a whole month the big flying boat was a self-sustaining unit, operating away from its bases, away from established air routes.

But such epic flights are, to PAA personnel, merely "routine". That flight was, perhaps, the most spectacular demonstration of the value of the company's formula.

In addition to instructing its own personnel in expert navigation of ocean-going aircraft, PAA is also training an undisclosed number of transoceanic ferry pilots. PAA instructors teach the ferry pilots—but who teaches the instructors?

Many years ago PAA's dynamic vice-president, A. A. Priester, felt that the special operating problems of his airline required special flight instruction. Without fanfare, at several of its far-flung bases, PAA's operations department set up flight instruction projects. In long test flights, under all sorts of operating conditions, actual or simulated, PAA's early pilots taught themselves. There was nobody then who could teach them. From the lessons they learned themselves there evolved a training procedure for making flying experts out of mere pilots.

The article went on to explain where various types of trainings took place and discussed the need for special marine equipment, adding that". . .complete details of these unique ships is not possible under present wartime conditions. . ." Interested readers may check out the Aviation Week archives on line for the full article.

PAN AM PEOPLE AND EVENTS

Pictured at right, enjoying a glass of Beaujolais, is member **Grace Nakata** on the far right. With her are Paula Kitses (left) and Leslie Hicks (center). Kitses and Hicks are SFO Pan Amers who were visiting Grace in her home city of Paris. . . . Member **Gene Vricella** and his wife, **Jill Ramsfield** have sold their Manoa Valley Home and moved to a condo in downtown Madison, Wisconsin, Jill's hometown. They both do freelance contract work which is centered around the east coast. Gene & Jill are regular "fixtures" at Pan Am



reunions and conventions. In fact they are planning on joining the PAHF tour to Morocco in late April. They send their best wishes to their PAA friends in Hawaii. . . Moana Goo sent a minor address change. Her post office box number is now PO Box 2488. . . . Stuart Archer writes that space is still available on the *Rhapsody of the Seas* for the Pan Am cruise departing Tampa on April 27, 2019 and arriving Barcelona 2 weeks later. For information call him at 305-238-0911 or send a message to him at stunjune@aol.com. To book a cabin you can call Carmen at 1-888-592-7245. . . . World Wings International is holding its annual convention in Stockholm, Sweden, October 19-22 this year. U.S. members returning home may want to take in the Pan Am Museum Foundation annual gala in New York afterwards as it is being held on October 27th. The site of the gala is the Cradle of Aviation Museum in New York.

2019 Schedule

- January 22—Board Meeting Only
- **February 26**—General Member Meeting
- March 26—Board Meeting Only
- **April 23**—General Member Meeting
- May 28—Board Meeting Only
- **June 25**—General Member Meeting
- July 23—Board Meeting Only
- **August 27**—General Member Meeting
- September 24—Board Meeting Only
- **October 22**—Annual Meeting
- November 26—Board Meeting Only
- **December Annual Gala**—TBA



*Have a nice Valentine's Day!
See you at Waialae CC
On February 26th!*

Luncheon Meeting Reservation

Next Meeting—February 26, 2019

Waialae Country Club
4997 Kahala Avenue

11:00 Social hour, 11:30 Lunch

\$30.00 per person (Includes tip and parking)

Please try to make your reservation by February 21st.*

*Speaker:
Chief Ballard*

*Speaker:
Chief Ballard*

Member Name _____ \$30.00

Guest Name _____ \$30.00

Total _____

Make check payable to PAA and send to:
Carol Suyderhoud, 7503 Maka'a Street, Honolulu, HI 96825-3127

*If you think your check may not arrive by Feb. 21st, please notify Carol at 396-5225 or contact her by e-mail at: carolws@hawaii.rr.com.

NOTE: If you received this newsletter electronically and would like to attend the meeting, print this page or enclose a note with your check, stating what and who the check is for.

PAA Hawaii Aloha Chapter Officers

| | | | |
|------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| Darlene Carver Laster | President & Chapter Chair | Darleelas@aol.com | 394-8981 |
| Ed Gencarelli | Vice President | edgen76@gmail.com | 254-4576 |
| John Medlock | Treasurer/Membership | johnmiii@earthlink.net | 664-0586 |
| Marie Jahnsen | Secretary | marie.jahnsen@gmail.com | 832-752-4982 |
| Al Chun | Annual Gala Coordinator | alhwchun@gmail.com | 395-0525 |
| Owen Oshima | Annual Gala Co-Chair | owenoshima007@aol.com | 741-6936 |
| Carol Weiss-Suyderhoud | Meetings Coordinator/Speaker Chair | carolws@hawaii.rr.com | 396-5225 |
| Diane VanderZanden | Editor, <i>Aloha Clipper</i> | alohadvz@gmail.com | 396-5293 |
| Ellen Shikuma | Director | EllenNOW@aol.com | 734-5725 |
| Clare Takayama | Director | TakaHale@aol.com | 247-2004 |
| Mae Takahashi | Director | takten@hawaii.rr.com | 218-7773 |

(Note: area code for all phone numbers is 808 unless otherwise specified.)

Newsletter Items:

If you have any news item that would be of interest, please call Diane VanderZanden at 396-5293 or send mail to 500 Lunalilo Home Road, #26-D, Honolulu, HI 96825-1734 or by e-mail: alohadvz@gmail.com.

Members, we encourage you to print this page and give the application below to your Pan Am friends who are not members. If you are a former employee and not a member of the Aloha Chapter of the Pan Am Association, we encourage you to complete and submit the application below and help keep our association healthy. Thank you.

PAN AM ASSOCIATION—ALOHA CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please check all applicable boxes and complete all applicable lines.

- Renewal New Member
- Retiree—Pan Am retiree who received lump sum pension or is receiving PBGC checks.
- Associate—All other former Pan Am employees
- Ohana—Surviving spouse, child or relative of above; sponsored person with close connection to Pan Am (subject to BOD approval).

PRINT CLEARLY PLEASE

Date: _____

Name: _____ **Spouse:** _____
Last First

Address: _____
Street Apt # City State ZIP code

Home Phone: _____ **Cell phone:** _____ **E-mail:** _____

Would you like to receive the newsletter by e-mail, which is in color? Yes _____ No _____

Retiree/Associate: Dept: _____ **PAA Service:** _____ **Receiving Pension?** _____
of years worked Yes or No

Ohana: Pls. state category & PAA sponsor (See above): _____

The association directory is published every two years and is distributed to **MEMBERS ONLY.**

- Do you wish to be listed in the directory? Yes No
 May we publish your phone number/E-mail address? Yes No

- Annual Membership: \$ 30 US Residents \$ 35 Overseas residents
- Lifetime Membership: \$150 US Residents \$175 Overseas residents

Please make check payable to **PAA** (Pan Am Association) and send with this application to:

John Medlock, 411 Kaelepu Drive, APT F, Kailua, HI 96734-3309