

# N83781

Each new aircraft arrival was an exciting event. It gave AAB an opportunity to offer more seats and grow its operations. It became a little tradition for each aircraft arriving into St. Croix, after its long flight from the states, to fly over the Blair residence on the hill overlooking Christiansted.

When Grumman Mallard N83781 arrived in December of 1978 it passed over the twin towers with Mrs. Blair (Maureen) and friends waving from the balcony. She would then rush down to the seaplane ramp to welcome the new arrival.

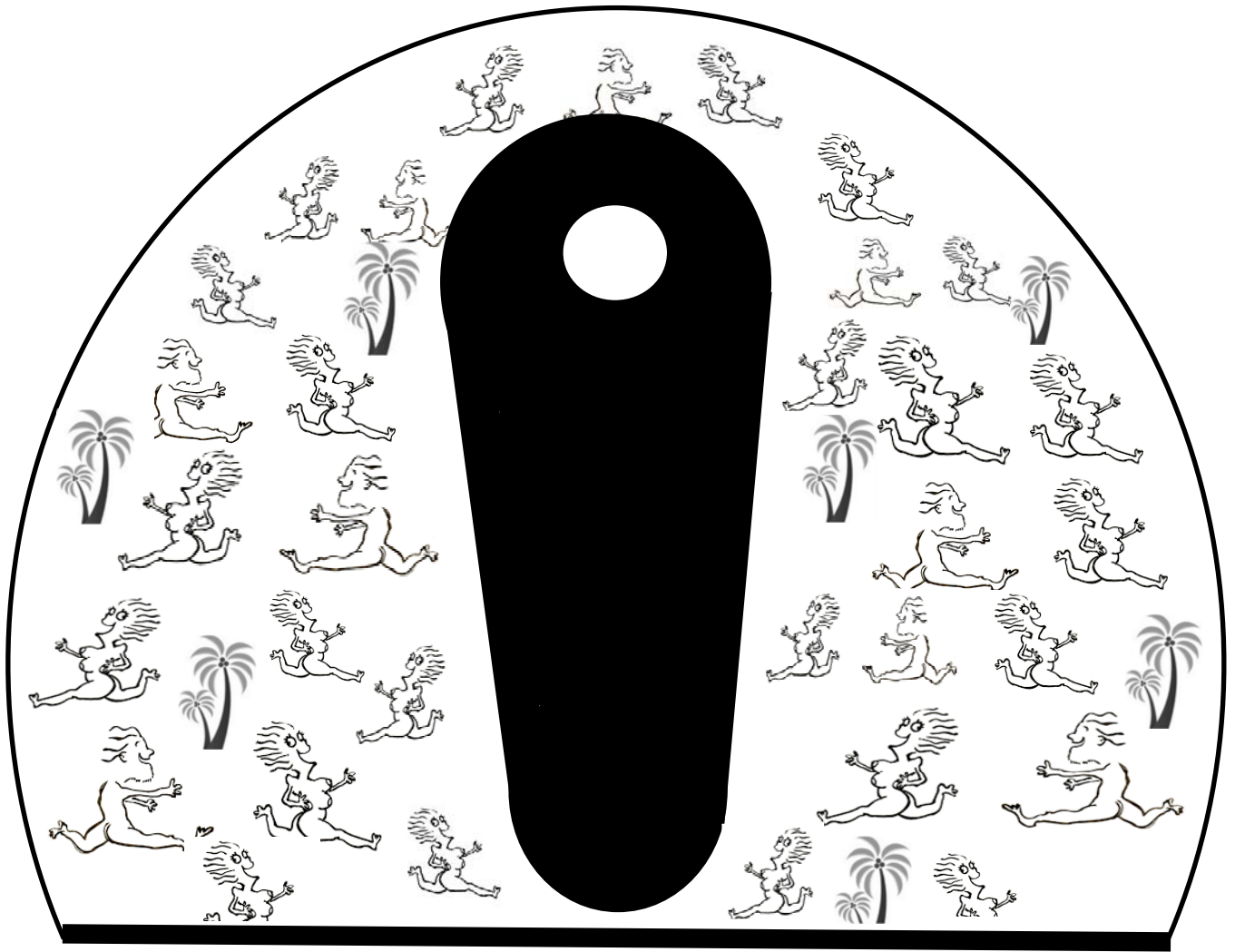
Mrs. Blair would always want to be the first to enter the cabin to welcome and inspect the latest arrival.

N83781 landed and came up the ramp and parked into position before Mrs. Blair arrived. I boarded the aircraft to talk to the ferry crew and ensure we were ready for Mrs. Blair. This was my first look at the aircraft and was a little surprised of the interior of this particular Mallard.



If I knew in advance that the interior looked the way it did, I could have made a change. There was no time now.

As I went back to the entry door Mrs. Blair was already boarding the aircraft.



Grumman Mallard arrives in St. Croix with a mural painted on the forward bulkhead along with window curtains on both sides of aircraft.



*\*A re-creation of mural and curtains but I must say it's pretty close to the interior that arrived that day.*



*I am not saying that Mrs. Blair was a prude but she had mentioned on a number of occasions of her displeasure with Hollywood and nudity in films. She would not do another movie until that stopped. It certainly didn't stop and she did return but I'm sure she told them what she thought.*

Well now I'm outside the aircraft and waiting for Mrs. Blair and her friends to exit and hear her first impressions.

She comes to the door and says “ **We are definitely charging more for the front seats**”.

After the initial fan fare Mrs. Blair came over to me and before she started to speak I told her that the curtains would be removed and the bulkhead would be painted immediately... She thanked me for our prompt attention.

It was only three months after the death of her husband but everyday she was Presidential.

*Tom Anusewicz*