



PLANE TALK

don bedwell

Naming Airplane After a Girl Is Old Hat to Aviation Firm

Name an airplane after a girl?

That's old hat to Chalk's International, possibly the oldest air carrier in the world.

Chalk's — just changing its name from Chalk's Flying Service — named its first airplane in 1935.

It is just embarking on a program to rename its planes again.

DEAN FRANKLIN, board chairman of the company whose amphibious aircraft have operated off Biscayne Bay for more than 50 years, says the first name tagged onto an airplane was "Dumbo the Flying Elephant."

That less-than-complimentary appellation was affixed to an ungainly Grumman Goose in the mid-1930s. The name was borrowed from a Walt Disney cartoon character that was popular even then.

The end of World War II brought two new names to the fleet — which then numbered two airplanes.

ONE AMPHIBIAN was named "Nancy" in honor of a relative of Arthur Burns ('Pappy') Chalk, the airline's patriarch.

The other was named "Sandy Point Gal," a young lady "whose further identification cannot be substantiated," according to Chalk's sources.

According to Chalk, the fleet then was named after Bahamian destinations.

The "Cat Cayer" transported passengers to and from a microscopic island which appears just south of Bimini on navigation charts. The "Bimini Gal" labored daily between Chalk's Watson Island base and Alice Town, Bimini.

CHALK'S flagship was



'Nancy' Was a Queen of the Chalk's Fleet in the 1940s ... flying service plans to rename its aircraft again

called "City of Miami — Cradle of the Flying Clippers," a designation that appears as unwieldy today as it must have then.

"Then," said Franklin, "in the mid-1960s we added some larger planes to the fleet. They carried such names as the 'Blue Marlin,' the 'Bimini Barracuda,' 'Flying Fish' and the 'Bimini Bonfish.'"

Now another change is in order.

"SINCE WE renamed the company — it's no longer Chalk's Flying Service, but Chalk's International — we're going to call our route the 'Buccaneer Route' and rename our seven Grumman Mallards and Gooses after pirates."

The list isn't complete yet but will include such names as those of Blackbeard, Gasparilla and Bluebeard.

Fly me, I'm Blackbeard? Hmm.

As an advertising slogan, it would never sell.

HOW DO YOU get a bicycle across the Atlantic?

You sure don't pedal it. And, if there is a dock strike, you don't ship it either.

National Airlines says it has flown in more than 600 10-speed English racing bicycles from London so far for Miami youngsters.

The bikelift illustrates the impact of the lingering dock strike on the airlines' cargo business, with Christmas imminent.

GENE GREENWELL, general manager of Raleigh Industries of America's Miami-based Southeast Division, said his firm decided to ship by air during the strike to meet the Christmas demand.

John Behrens, National's regional cargo sales manager, reported that the airline also is bringing in shoes and knitwear from Italy, via London. Small gift items being shipped from Europe include little wood products, such as rosewood salt cel-

lans from Copenhagen and leather bean bags from London.

In the other direction, National is flying miniature orange trees, or calamondins, to brighten London's Christmas as indoor ornamental plants. The same South Dade nursery is shipping potted miniature pineapple plants.

National is even transporting — perish the thought — thousands of Florida eels considered a delicacy in England and Europe.

