

INTERVIEW WITH STAN ZEDALIS (1) - 29TH JANUARY 1990

Stan Zedalis' address:-

719 Hope Landers Avenue

Side A.

(UNINTELLIGIBLE TO 045)

Q: Now you were a junior engineer in 1939. What does that mean?

A: A second.

Q: A second engineer?

A: Yeah.

Q: Can you remember who was on the crew of the Boeing 314. It was a big crew and some of them were duplicated because of taking rest breaks, weren't they.

A: As a matter of fact, there were thirteen members there, and to actually name the names, it would be possible, but I have all that information in a report, of which I have an extra copy and the names, and all the passengers that were on there.

Q: No, I didn't mean the names of the individuals, I meant, pilot, co-pilot, their positions.

A: Well, you had the pilot, the co-pilot, the navigator, a radio operator, the assistant radio operator, the engineer, the assistant engineer and then downstairs in the main cabin, you had the steward and an assistant steward. We didn't have any stewardesses at the time. I don't know how many we've got there but....

Q: That makes nine.

A: Then there were thirteen altogether, I know that for sure. I don't know how many stewards were there.

Q: Would there have been two stewards on duty at any one time?

A: I would say so.

Q: So maybe there were four stewards?

A: Yes, because the passengers were not the standard passengers; they were the high officials of the United States. It being the first flights. It wasn't a passenger flight, it was the first airmail flight. In fact this was the first one. What we did there, we had mail on there, and the mail was special mail. It was with the first stamps on it. And everywhere we went, we had to offload all that mail because there thousands of pieces of mail, it was just jammed full, and we had to offload it, and have it stamped. Each piece had to be stamped and ....(UNINTELLIGIBLE 156/8) and that took several days at each stop. And then after they were stamped we had to load it back on the craft again and up until we got to Southampton, Southampton was the last stop and they offloaded everything there.

Q: Did you just fly that one flight, Boeing 314.

A: No. I was on the first ones, and then I was on others after that. But what they did, they planted an extra engineer after that in view of the fact that we did not have anyone over there to maintain that aircraft. So I had to stay there - all in all, I was there for six months in Southampton. But I wasn't there six months at a time. In other words I'd come home for several schedules and then I would go back, up until we had a staff over there. After we had a staff over there, then the engineers were on the aircraft would just go back and forth. But on the first stop, Aicheson, he was the number one engineer, he went back and I stayed on, and then the schedules were I think, I don't think they were every week, I think they were every other week for a while. I stayed in Southampton, in a hotel there and the ...

Q: Do you remember the name of the hotel? It's a long time ago.

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A: Yes, it was a long time ago, but it was the most modern hotel we had, and I would have to, the service was handled through the English airlines, over in the hangers over there, almost right on the Isle of Wight, in other words, we'd go down at the harbour in Southampton and we'd get a boat over to the hangars. And the hangars were there and of course when the aircraft arrived, it being a boat naturally, it would land on the water and there was no means of having it ashore. So I had to service it with the help of anyone that was there until it was all done.

Q: When the passengers boarded at Southampton, did they also have to take, was it some distance from Southampton?

A: Well, I would say that from Southampton to the hangers, right there by the Isle of Wight, as a matter of fact I think you can see .....

Q: Yes, you can see the Isle of Wight.

A: Actually, the hangars were not on the Isle of Wight. At Southampton, the way that the land was, there was a neck heading out into the bay. But the speediest you'd get over there was actually on a boat. The reason that I mentioned the Isle of Wight, when there was no schedule, I went over there once. The Isle of Wight is a island all by itself and I think it's either an hour or an hour and a half from the main land. So we would service the aircraft and of course the passengers would embark right at the shore of Southampton and they would go over on a boat.

Q: I see, and then would the boat come alongside the plane, is that how it worked?

A: I think in the first schedule, yes, because we had no means of having it ashore. But afterwards, when we were operating into Southampton as a steady schedule, they could actually haul it ashore. And then when it was ashore any maintenance -and it was much easier to service the engines while it was ashore because when it was on the water we had to ... you

see, it had four engines that you could open the door as you can see in the manual, and then you had means of anchoring, and a means of standing on the engine. In other words I would go inside, and with one hand I would go hold onto the engine, and with the other I would work. And it would mean, at that time we had to change, it had 24 cylinders and we had to change spark plugs on each and every one. So instead of two hands, we had to do it with one hand.

Q: Is this because it would be moving up and down?

A: And where I was standing it was so narrow that you couldn't hold on and you could end up in the water. So it was an awkward operation. And then the oil, we had to change the oil and it was a lousy job, because I had to make arrangements to have a boat under the engine, and then have a huge funnel and a hose as a means of having the oil emptied, and of course, it kind of depended on the bay and how the waves and sometimes that thing would go up and down, and sometimes it was so rough, that the barrel would upset.... it was a mess, and then afterwards we had means of getting it ashore and that was all right.

Q: But when the passengers came aboard, it would be back on the water, wouldn't it?

A: Ah, yes. Because there was no means of anchoring it, and to have them aboard, they would have to have had a high ladder and everything like that.

Q: So they would all come to..., there would be a clipper pier I suppose at Southampton, and they would all come to the pier and be taken out on the launch, or would the clipper come right up to the pier.

A: It would come right up to the pier.

Q: Now I know in some places, I think when they left Fort Washington, they had lunch at the air terminal before they got on board the plane. Did they do the same going back

from Southampton? Do you remember? Was it kind of a fancy pier with a restaurant, or was it just a regular pier?

A: Well, ordinarily they would eat before it was scheduled to take off and naturally they were informed that the schedule was a certain time, so before they arrived at the airport, they ate then, and then they went on board. And after it was airborne, they would schedule their meals just like they do on the aircraft now.

Q: Now, what was it like taking off in that plane?

A: Oh, there was no comparison to what to they do now. Now, first of all, nowadays the windows on the aircraft are so small that there isn't anything to see. But there, they were huge windows, and aft of it went on to the step, in other words, when he stepped on the gas, when the throttle advanced, it would come up on the step, its nose would go up and the step would be about the centre of the aircraft and you could see the waves. The same as the speeding boats; when a speeding boat hits the water about 50 miles an hour and the waves are going on the side. This would be the same thing. And then the first thing, it would just ... up into the air.

AFTER

Q: Was it noisy?

A: Yes, because it was a large aircraft and it was all metal, naturally and everything like that. But after it was in the air for a while, when we eased off on the power of the aircraft then it sounded like a brr, brr, brr. Then I had to synchronise the engines because the engines were on a circuitisation, you had one engine at a certain level, and the other engine, and so on and so forth. But then after they were synchronised you would hear the same sound all the way through, just like you hear them now.

Q: Was there a sensation of speed as you took off in this plane?

A: Yes. But the only speed was, the speed happened when it was

still taking off. But afterwards when it was in the air, except for the noise, the speed would be, once you were at a certain height, the same as you have it now.

Q: What was the engineer's job as you were taken on? What did you have to do?

A: Well, the skipper, pilot naturally was up there in the front and he handled the controls and although the instruments were up there, but the engineer had his own station in the back of aircraft. There were over a hundred instruments there and you just had to watch each and every instrument. They were for the range, temperature and so on, and the engines, I had to make sure they weren't overheating. The design of the engines, that you'd open up the vents, they would overheat fast, and the first thing you'd know, the engine would be completely out. I had to watch all of that up until we were airborne and settled on a standard operation.

Q: If something went wrong, did you do anything about it, or did you just inform the skipper?

A: I had to watch the instruments at all times and if anything went wrong I'd notify the skipper, and I would act on it if a certain pressure ..... (UNINTELLIGIBLE 503) and I'd inform the skipper and if it was going down and down, and of course if this were at a certain hour, the both of us would be there, and I'd say Aicheson would hop onto the table itself and I would go out to the engine that was involved. And the reason that I liked that airplane, more than the airplanes that we have here today, was you could go right inside the wings, right into the engine. You could stand up in the engine itself, and then you'd open up the engine and you could see the rear of all your lines and your accessories. If it's an oil leak or something like that, I'd call the engineer on duty and he would inform the skipper to put the engine off, and if it was something that I could repair at the time, an oil line or anything small,

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then that's what I'd actually do. I did that several times. We had in each cell phones. Because the noise itself, after all when I'm out there, there is no insulation at all and the noise was out of this world. And if I had to go back in through the wing to inform them what was what, something could actually happen in two places at one time. So we did have the experience, I had the experience several times where we had to stop an engine in flight and we'd float down, and the ocean was right underneath us, and we had the engines stop, but we were still operating and the only thing that they had to do was .....(UNINTELLIGIBLE 554-7) ... we had spare accessories like starters and lines of all kinds. To my knowledge we didn't have any that we hadn't repaired, or in other words that we could be started up over again. And I don't know any, in all of the years that they were operating that if an engine failed, they kept on going. I'd say today ..... (UNINTELLIGIBLE 572-575) and if we landed I suppose the boat could land all right, but we didn't actually have to.

Q: What kind of thing could happen that might make that plane land unexpectedly, for example off the coast?

WINGS

A: Well, it could happen like what happened to the aircraft over this past weekend, out of gas. But we made sure we had enough fuel on the airplane all the time, because we still had enough on board so that even if we went over to England, or anywhere, if we had a fog or anything like that, we could still stay in the air and go to the next airport or the next area. In other words, we had about four or five hours of extra fuel on board. Of course, that's heading eastward. That's where you'd have your wings you had your tail wings. But although we never had it happen, I do know that from England headed into New York, the navigator had a big table and a map and station, and of course he knew the route and as we were going, he would indicate it and there was a point of no return, where he would have to inform the captain that we had enough fuel, or we don't have enough, and if we had

enough fuel to head for New York, fine, and he knew what the head winds are. But there were several times when he notified us that we did not have enough fuel to get to New York and there were many times, not many, but I don't know about other flights, other engineers, but on all the ones that I went, there were several times when we went into Bermuda. But if we didn't go in there, we wouldn't have made it to the States.

Q: Could it have happened that there would be a fuel leak for example, so that you would suddenly lose fuel, very quickly?

A: No, if you had a leak, you would notice it on your instruments, and besides I had on the engineer's station, I had the control valve for all of the tanks. In other words I could divert fuel from this tank to that tank and so on. And we had to do that all the time because it had to be on an even keel and we had the wing tanks, we had one wing tank in each wing, and then we had stabiliser tanks, the little stump wings, that was our supply, the main supply, we would always have them, before take-off they would be full. Also I would stabilise the aircraft.

Q: So that's four fuel tanks?

A: Yes.

Q: Suppose the engineer wanted to force the plane down suddenly, before it was scheduled to stop? Suppose the engineer is the bad guy of the story?

A: Well, yes he could. He could force the fuel from the stabiliser up to the wing tanks and then he could shuttle it out to upper ones topside.

Q: He could empty those upper tanks?

A: Yes, but to my knowledge, we had never had to do this, but of course, today, when they have to come into land, they have to do it, but mostly it's because they don't want all that excessive weight on the landing gear. Whereas the

hull, even with a full ship, you can land, because you have that entire hull and there isn't anything there to sheer off, so to my knowledge we didn't have to ever do that, in the Boeing..

Q: You never had to jettison fuel? But it could be done if the engineer was a bad guy and he wanted to bring the plane down, that would be a way to do it?

A: I suppose he could

Q: What was it like landing in the plane?

A: Well, it was just the same as taking off because it would land, at a high speed naturally, and he would come on in and skim right on over after he hits the water and then they had a certain speed when he always throttles back, and the ship just settled right back.

Side B.

Q: OK, this is a plan of the passenger deck shows what looks to me like a ladder,

A: ..... (UNINTELLIGIBLE 021 - 035)

Q: Here in the bow compartment, it shows a door into the first passenger compartment..

A: No, the only door is right here on the flight deck ..... (UNINTELLIGIBLE 043 - 049) a completely solid wall, and up in here is where you have the lines, all the miscellaneous items and also spares were in there too, naturally all of them were strapped in. And then right in the bow itself, I'm sure where you could stand right up in the nose itself and you had the skipper with the authorization start his engines and everything like that ..... (UNINTELLIGIBLE 074 - 085) ..... now here's the door at that's going in the aft part

Q: Now what's this a picture of? Is it a picture of it before it's furnished.

A: Before, yes, here's the structure of the airplane. Then along that you have the walls and everything like that.

Q: This is the aft hull?

A: Now, here is the, you're looking to the back ..... (UNINTELLIGIBLE 112 - 124) it's a suite, the honeymoon suite and right there you have a door, and your door opens up into this complete hull. There isn't anything in there except control wires and everything like that, and on my tour of inspection which I had to make every hour, I went through the whole aircraft and go back and open that door and I would check, you would go back there and you could hear .... (UNINTELLIGIBLE 141 - 144).. because back there in the back is where your assembly is hooked, your fins, your elevator ..... (UNINTELLIGIBLE 152 - 156)..

Q: So did you have to through the honeymoon suite every hour?

A: No, with the honeymoon suite, it didn't last too long. Of course the aircraft came with that feature, a selling feature, and of course I was on several of these flights where I'd go back there. But we didn't go back there as often as we needed as there was no reason, no hitching operation, no fuel lines. All that was back there was just control wires that operated the elevator and the fins. In other words you wouldn't have to go over there for ages maybe. But it was the law of the airline, that you must make inspections.

Q: Now, would the people in the honeymoon suite know that there was door there, or was it concealed.

A: Concealed. In fact, it was an outline of a door, but it had a block on it and of course they had a settee went right across there so that didn't matter. Of course I don't know whether they have the actual honeymoon suite in here or not, but it was the size of nice little room. It had a bed, a sink, bathroom and it was all fixed up very nice and of course the stars would be in there, any one, but that was

an extra fare, extra cost.

Q: Now there's another thing on this plan that I want to ask you about on this plane. Right next to the ladies powder room, it shows another ladder. Do you remember that? It looks as if it would go up to the aft compartment?

A: .....(UNINTELLIGIBLE 238 - 242) .... you could go from the main cabin into the bow. The only means of going into the bow was where I showed you, from the upstairs, but there wasn't anything from down here that went up in there because first of all the bow started up on, you know how a bow is on a boat, and the floor was much lower here, so there was no reason for anybody to go from there up into the bow. There was nobody except for crew members.

Q: But this ladder is, it's at the star. This is the bow end. That's the board ladder that we were talking about. They've put another ladder in there?

A: No, no that's no ladder, that's a door, the step up.

Q: No, here, it's very small. Here's the ladies lavatory here, there's the door to the ladies lavatory, there's the door to the honeymoon suite, there's the step, now here it looks to me like a ladder. The same as that ladder.

A: There's no reason for a ladder there.

Q: If it were one, it would go up into the aft compartment.

A: But there on the upstairs, it was the skin itself.

Q: So there would be no reason?

A: No reason for going up there at all. No there was no ladder there. All that was here was a door and a step up and there's no ladder. The only ladder that I mentioned, there isn't any ladder at all on this first floor even to there. Now perhaps when this aircraft was built, they may have changed it, because I do know, when we accepted the aircraft, the engineers went up first, and they went over

and certain modifications were made and maybe they were moved at the time as they were not needed. I went out there with Aicheson to see it, to pick up the first aircraft we ever had. I went out to the factory at Seattle. We went on the aircraft. It was all ready, completed and everything and we had orders to go out there and pick it up and fly it back home. So we went there and we spent a couple of days checking all over to make sure that we were not strangers to it and then we took off, but it took off by a pilot belonging to the firm, because it was not Pan American's aircraft at the time. We took off and we landed in Oregon. There it was turned over to Pan American, something to do with the Sales Tax. And from that point on the pilot from the factory picked up the airplane and we went down to the basin in Alameda, Treasure Island. The World Fair was on the island at that time. So we landed there but of course there were certain mechanical items that we found out on the way down, we checked on our reports and we spent several days there and had these items repaired. It was a chore there because there they hauled it out of the water and they had it on shore, so we had all the items repaired and then we were two days on the island. We went on board again and we went down south to Ago. We landed there between, it was the United States Navy base, between large battle ships and they were anchored and we landed right between them. So we spent the night there, and then when we took off and we were airborne and the skipper told us that we had a long flight from there to Louisiana. That was the nearest large lake where we could land, so we went up to about 5,000 feet, that was the highest we could fly, because we didn't have any oxygen. And the reason they said don't move around because if you start moving around, you don't have any oxygen, you'll feel tired right away.

Q: Wasn't the plane pressurised?

A: Yeah, but we were up so high, you may have it on, but you don't have oxygen at the same time. So if we'd had to land

there in between, I don't know where we would have landed as there's no, to my knowledge, there's no lakes or anything between there and where we actually landed. We landed in New Orleans, or the outskirts of New Orleans, there's a large lake there. We landed there, everything seemed to be OK and we were there for almost a whole week, open for inspection. Naturally the whole town was down there and we had to escort people in and out of the aircraft. From there on we went to Charleston. We landed there and were there for a while and from Charleston we went back to New York. So that one trip, when I left New York to go to the west coast, it was ... (UNINTELLIGIBLE 444) ... and we went on a DC3 and of course at that time, you know what kind of an aircraft that was, you would come over the Rocky mountains and there would be snow, in the winter, we said ,my God if we had to land here, they would never find us. Then on into Seattle, there it was raining, but not cold, it was warm and from there we went to California, and from there we went to the naval base. Down in New Orleans it was summer, Charleston we started to hit the cold weather and back to New York again in the winter time. So in one circle we made summer to winter and back to summer again. At that time the highest altitude in the ship we could fly without any oxygen. Then after a while they did because of the oxygen masks. But from that point on over the ocean back and forth we were always low. We went over 7,000 ft at the most. There were several times we were so low that the waves sprayed over the aircraft. Because there the skipper hunted for the means of the least resistance. He would hunt it up and down, so he would find out which would be the best.

..... INTERRUPTION .....

It's a shame that after the war they didn't hold on to any of the aircraft. If they'd held onto one we'd at least have one in the Smithsonian. Now the English did. In fact they had one supposed to be from Foynes. Well I was over there,

and they said there was going to a short boat going to land here and we waited for it and we heard it was in London and there were some problems and we waited there for two days and everyone else waited for it too, and finally it did not show up. And then we left, I spoke to Mr Hart, just the other day on the phone, and I asked him, what happened to that boat, did it ever land, he said no. The man wanted to sell it for one million dollars. So that's the end of it.

Q: But there aren't any 314's left anywhere around?

A: No. It's a shame because I know after the war, because during the war I was handed over to Uncle Sam, and we flew, we stripped the entire inside, took every piece of upholstery and everything off, and then we flew arms and ammunition to Africa for the war there. And after the war was over, as far as the Navy was concerned they no longer, they weren't interested any more. As far as they were concerned it was junk. And they were sold as junk. When I was boarded there at one time, I happened to see one in the back garage, I walked up and they were stripping it and everything else. And then later on in the newspapers, you undoubtedly heard about it yourself, somebody purchased one and had intentions of starting their own airline and they went over to London or Southampton and they loaded passengers and took off and apparently they ran out of gas. They were about 600 miles off the English coast when they had to land in the ocean and they landed all right.....

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INTERVIEW WITH STAN ZEDALIS (2) - 29TH JANUARY 1990

A: That's a short boat that went over to England. Now with that boat, it was owned by an American pilot. He retired, went down the Indies and started his own operation and he happened to buy a short boat. He actually had one and he was the husband of .....

A2: (female) You're thinking of Captain Blair

A: He was the husband of Maureen O'Hara. And something happened, where he either worked on the engine, or he changed the engine or something like that, and took it up on a hop. And on the hop something happened and he dove into the water and was killed. And of course the airline operation was handed over to her. She didn't know what to do with it. Somebody bought it and the person that bought it apparently still owns it. He's the one that was supposed to come over to Foynes. But apparently he didn't show up, or he was asking so much money for it.....

Q: Can you remember much of the places where the plane stopped? Shediac, Botwood, and Foynes?

A: Yes. The first flight was New York to Shediac, Shediac to Botwood and from there we were fogged in for almost a week because the weather was very bad.

Q: What was the air terminal like at Botwood? Was it elaborate, was it just one room, or many rooms?

A: It was just an old fishing village at the time. There wasn't hardly anything to it, of the actual town.

Q: The air terminal itself. Did the passengers get off and go into the terminal.

A: Well, there were. I don't think there was any terminal at the time, because I didn't see any. The actual passengers that were on, they apparently stayed in homes because by the time we off-loaded all that mail and took it to the so called Post Office, there must have been thousands of mail and each one had a different stamp, like I have on my scroll

there, and after they were stamped, they went back. And then afterwards, it took off, and when we landed in Foynes, the Shannon River, we would spend the night there. I don't know where the other members of the crew went, or the passengers, but we were on the airplane last thing, we had to service it, so we didn't get off until everyone was off the aircraft and I know that Aicheson and I and some other members of the crew, we stayed in a little home there with a thatched roof. All homes were thatched. The next morning, and everyone showed up, and they anchored and went up to the aircraft and then we went to Southampton. And when we landed at Southampton, I think a lot of passengers stayed in Southampton, they went right on ahead to Hamble ...

Q: By train I imagine?

A: I don't know, they went on down there but we stayed at Southampton and got the airplane prepared and all set to go. I think we were in Southampton a week or so. And I went back with the aircraft, and after we got back, I was off for some time, in the meantime they had other schedules. From that point on it was a scheduled operation.

Q: Now you said that when we looked at this plan, you said that those berths were not installed. So where did you sleep?

A: I was just going to show you; in fact we, I've seen some of the berths made up here. The state rooms.

Q: So the crew would use the state rooms?

A: Yes, we used the forward state rooms.

Q: That one, forward at the galley.

A: Now right here, was a stair way going up, and this was a state room, you had two sinks right here, two sinks here and three sinks here. When the berths were made up you could have an upper berth. I think I've seen one in there.

Q: So there would be six berths in that forward cabin, so that

would be enough. You wouldn't need that many.

A: You wouldn't need that many at one time.

..... INTERRUPTION .....

There were seven berths in there, rooms or compartments and each one had six berths up and six berths down. Here's a ladder, the reason you've seen that is it's a ladder for them to get in and out of the upper berth. It's up against the wall. Here's the berth. This is the lower and this is the upper berth. Of course at bedtime all this was knocked down. The main lobby as you go into the airplane, here's the opening to go into the wings. So on your inspection tour.... Here's the fuel. In other words you've got six tanks.

Q: There were six tanks?

A: That's because your stump wings were separate. In other words, it was not one used tank. They were separate. You had two tanks downstairs in the stump wings and upstairs, one on each wing.

Q: Is that a doorway there next to the engineer's station.

A: Yes it was a doorway leading into the wing. At the time all this was stripped. Here's the valve. Right here is the wall, as far as the passenger compartment, it stops right here, under the pilot and co-pilot. He's got this ladder to head upstairs, up and through that door there. Now there's a ladder right up to the bow. And in the bow itself, right on the nose of the bow, you had an inspection, so when you stand on that platform, you are exposed to the outside. It was our job, in view of the fact that it was impossible for the Captain to see back so it was up to the engineer to stay up in the bow, and when the boat was anchored into the water, it was anchored by lines. In other words you had an anchor line way back with a big line attached to the bow underneath to whatever tanker was in the

bay. And then you had other lines anchored from there on your pier.

A Ø: So it was the engineer's job because the engineer had to give the captain authorization to start, but he also, but there was a man way back there, where the line was attached, he was there in a boat, and when the captain was all set to start, in the meantime the lines were off at the pier. Now you have to start these engines in a certain way, because if it was the wrong one, you would move right into the dock. So you have to start the one going away from the dock. I had an experience once. We were in Botwood or Shediac, I don't know which and we were all set to go. Everybody was on board, and I went up on into the bow and the man on the tail line was back where he was supposed to be. The skipper was Mr Harold Ray. He was Captain. He would hand me the signal to start. And then we would start, the inboard engine first from the...., no not there, we would have to start the outboard engines first so he had the authorization to start and I got way back there and I handed the man on the boat the authorization to cut the line. But the line is hooked up to some kind of a gadget where you just happen to pull it and it should break itself loose and somehow it got stuck, and he was trying, trying to get the thing loose and in the meantime, Captain Bray was trying to find out why I didn't give him the OK. So I said this here, you know. In the meantime that line was stretched from the buoy underneath the engine to where it was hooked onto the bow. And I said no, no, no, so I could see he was getting annoyed why I didn't OK his signal. So in the meantime I started to wave to the guy back there and he had a ..., what do you call a big sword like,

Q: A machete?

A: A machete. So I said, use the machete and cut that line, so he did that and he cut the line and as he did the line fell down from underneath the engine and then I gave the

Captain the OK to start. Well, we started that and the Captain moved the aircraft, oh probably dock, and then we started all the other engines and so forth. We went out into the bay, taxied out and I shut the hatch door on the bow and I went inside and I knew I was running ahead. So After the aircraft was airborne, he had handed the airplane to the pilot and he went downstairs to have his snack, and I went down too. And the way he looked, and he's an ex-army pilot and he had his coffee and I had mine, and he called me and he said "Zedalis!" and I said "Yes, Sir", so I walked over to him and he looked at me and he said "Ain't you obey my orders to start the engines?" and I was frightened at first, but I got a little bit peeved you know, I says "Captain, If I'd have given you the order to start that engine, you'd 've started that engine with that rope underneath that propeller, it would have sheered that propeller off and we'd 've been stranded here for about two months before we could have got another engine up from the states. I said "What about your passengers? How would they've got back?". He looked at me and he says "Zedalis that was well done. But obey my orders." I said "Yes, Sir." In other words the old army, you know, you got to obey regardless of what. But I remember that quite well, because years later I would meet him, and then when we had our 25th anniversary into Foynes, so I was, he sent me a wire, indicating that he was, all of us were invited to go to Foynes for a celebration. And I was to meet him and his wife at the airport and of course I got there and I was paged and I went up to meet him and his wife, and we had a chat and things like that, and I says "Captain, are you still angry at me?". He laughed at me, and said "Now, now, I know what you're going to say" And then we talked and from that point on, every time we would see each other we would talk. It was something to remember, and I knew if he'd 've discharged that engine with that rope on there, it would have sprung ,... and we'd been stranded there because they had no spare engines there. And not even that, if they

had spare engines, I don't how you would have changed. I mean on the water, how would you have got it off.

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The actual thing I enjoyed on that first flight, because it was heading up North see, and we hardly had any night at all. And I'd seen the lights, the Arctic lights, what do you call it.

Q: The Aurora Borealis

A: The most beautiful thing. I could see the sky you know....

Q: When did you see that?

A: On this here, on the schedule opened. Because we were up north so far, that I could look down, I could see icebergs. Icebergs in the water and everything like that. And the lights were....

A2. (female) Didn't you say that sometimes there would be storms and the waves.....

A: I know I said it. At times we would fly and the waves were so high that the waves would splash over the aircraft. Several times as we were going we would meet steamers. Of course our radio operator would contact them on board the liner and they'd have all the people on board the steamer, and we'd come down as low as we could possibly could and they'd wave .....

A2: (Female) I guess in Foynes, they said the people, that was the treat when the boat was coming. One gentleman would go around on his horse and notify the people.

A: They had no other means of communication. It was just like in way back .....the vehicles .....(UNINTELLIGIBLE 606) you got to understand that he worked for the airline up until he retired. Somehow or another he didn't quite get job, but he worked.

A2: (Female) ....(UNINTELLIGIBLE 608/9) the museum at Foynes.

A: We were there this past summer. You should go.

A2: (Female) ...Then if you would contact Ms O'Hara she has all Captain Blair's information apparently.

A: I think she's caught up in that too. I don't know to what specific extent. But I know she is.

A2: (Female) You know what is too bad, to think in Fort Washington, that Mike started, they have nothing here. And Foynes has been made beautiful.

A: All they have, this is where the flight started from, the old hangar where it was, it's there, but it was a scrap dump and everything like that. On the pier they have a plaque, bronze I think, but it's neglected. And I do know that a while back here the BBC was interested in that too. They wrote me and they came over and sent a whole staff over here. They took pictures and what they were doing were starting a, they were going to have a segment of where the whole thing was, from one station to the other station and so on and so forth. And what they told me is that the shots that they took here, that after it's all ready, they'd send a segment over to the airport. But when they got done, in fact they had so many places that they didn't have time. So they had to scrap a lot of these researches.

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The scroll .... (UNINTELLIGIBLE ...667/669) the names of the members are on the left here and all of the passengers are on the right and Mr ... wanted, the trip was on there too, and it was his birthday at the time and that's the reason that he made us put all of the names on paper and he had the scroll made and every member of the crew received one of them and then, not only that, but later on we received a letter from the Whitehouse that myself and my wife was to attend a reception. But by the time I got it, I was over in England, so naturally they had it, but.....

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