Pan Am Clippers Conquer the Pacific - August 1933 to Dec. 1941

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1 - INTRODUCTION (To explain exhibit to all viewers)

This exhibit recounts Pan Am's struggles in 1930's & 40's to establish commercial air service across the Pacific. The survey flights to Midway & Wake in 1935 were followed **November 22-29, 1935** by the successful **First Scheduled Pacific Flight of *China Clipper* to Manila.** This success, however, was followed in **January 1938** by tragic explosion of ***Samoan Clipper*** and in **July 1938** by disappearance of ***Hawaii Clipper.***

Pan Am did not have replacement aircraft, so they were forced to **reduce Pacific service** from **robust TWO flights per week to chaotic ONE flight EVERY THREE WEEKS.** After this low point in early 1939, **two B-314's were delivered to the Pacific Division**. **These 314's allowed Pan Am to recover, and Pan Am went on to "Conquer the Pacific" & For U.S.: "Usher in Global Airmail Service".**

2 - VIEWING EXHIBIT

The BLUE WINGED GLOBE seen at top left of Title Page was Pan Am's logo from 1929 to1943.

(BLUE) = Original Research (49 items)

(GOLD) = 21 MOST Historic & Significant Covers

Every time I use a **GOLD** winged globe I explain to viewer in **Red Text** or **Red Headline** why cover deserves special attention. For example, **ELEVEN** covers exhibited are only known covers carried on their respective flights. Therefore, **ALL 11 have BLUE logo = Original Research** (49 items) + **GOLD** = **21 MOST Historic & Significant Covers.**

3 - ORIGINAL RESEARCH

I am probably the last aviation historian to learn Pan Am's Pacific history from the men who made that history. When I started collecting in 1974, I learned that Harry Canaday, who was junior flight officer on Pan Am's 1935 survey flights to Midway & Wake, lived near me in Miami. I called and we meet at his home where he showed me 25 to 30 survey flight covers with hand made cachets that I'd never seen before. He had addressed the covers to his family members and had his covers signed by crew members. I asked if I could buy a couple for my collection.

"Hell no!" he replied. "Nobody in my family gives a hoot about them, so I'm giving them ALL to you."

In return for his priceless covers, I promised him that **"someday I'll write a book about Pan Am's Pacific pioneers and tell the part he played in their success".**

In 2000, I published ***Pan Am's Pacific Pioneer's - The Rest of the Story.*** My 700 page book kept my promise to Harry Canaday **AND** to 25 to 30 other people to whom I had made a similar promise that **"if they shared with me flight covers saved from their father's time with Pan Am, I would include, in my book, the part their father's played in Pan Am's success in the Pacific.** Keeping this promise is how I obtained many of the unique and historic items in my Pan Am exhibit.

4 - FLIGHT RECORDS
When I started collecting, a comprehensive record of Pan Am's Pacific flights did not exist. In 1992, I visited Guam's main library and discovered the ***GUAM RECORDER,*** an obscure monthly magazine published by Navy for the few English speaking people on Guam. The ***RECORDER*** reported, in great detail, on **ALL** Pan Am flights passing through Guam from 1935 to WW2. I supplemented this information with interviews with Canaday and other former Pan Am flying boat captain's I had met. This allowed me to add details in my exhibit that had never before been known to flight cover collectors.

5 - FAM 14 & FAM 19
Several judges, unfamiliar with Pan Am Pacific flights, have commented that all **FAM 14 Orient Flights** should be discussed as a unit - separate from all **FAM 19 South Pacific flights**. That would be unworkable. Both **FAM 14 Orient Route & FAM 19 South Pacific Route** used the same aircraft, same flight crews and same routes for the first 3000 miles to Honolulu. **Only 10% of all Pan Am Pacific covers are FAM 19 covers**.

This is true because FAM 14 lasted 72 months (Nov. 1935 to Dec. 1941) & FAM 19 lasted only 16 months (July 1940 to Dec. 1941). Furthermore, flights to Manila & Hong Kong (**FAM 14**) were scheduled **two a week** and flights to Auckland (**FAM 19**) only **one flight every two weeks**. **To visually separate FAM 14** from **FAM 19 covers**, I have put a **3 to 7 inch BAR at the top of every page**. If the bar is **SOLID BLUE =** every cover on that exhibit page is **FAM 14 - Orient Route**. If the bar is **not SOLID BLUE but WHITE/HOLLOW = every cover on page is FAM 19 South Pacific Route (on 18 Pages)**

6 - MOST UNIQUE &/OR HISTORIC FLIGHT COVERS
(In short hand - in order of appearance in exhibit)

1. S-38 Survey HK to Manila 2. Hawaii Survey (Canaday) 3. FDR Super Cover 4. Midway Commercial Survey 5. FAM14 6. 1st Passenger (Dr. Kenler) 7. Air Express 8. Air Express Wrapper 9. Zeppelin/Clipper Combinations 10. -11. -12. Kingman Reef/Am. Samoa/N.Z. 13. Lost *Samoan* 14. Lost *Hawaii* 15. 2 Boeing

314's 16. FAM19 17. WWII Closed 18. Highest Franked 19. Wake Escape 20. *Anzac* Diverted 21. Around World 22. Held 5 yrs. 23. Missing in Action

7 - CONCLUSION

Eleven exhibited covers are **Unique -** the only known mail from their respective flights. The **Unique** historic WW2 covers in **Frame 10** have not been exhibited before. This exhibit is more complete than any prior exhibit of Pan Am's Pacific **Flying Boat Era covers.**

References:

Please Note: I've written 3 **books** and an article in APS Journal on exact subject matter of Pan Am Pacific Flights in this exhibit.

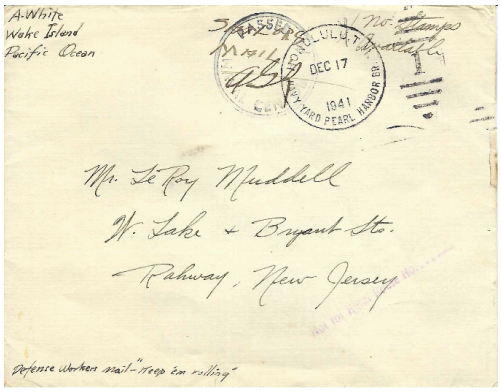
1. Jon Krupnick, ***Pan Am's Pacific Pioneers* - 1997** - 300 pgs.
2. Jon Krupnick, ***Pan Am's Pacific Pioneers - The Rest of the Story*** - **2000** - 700 pgs.
3. Jon Krupnick, ***Pan Am's FINAL FLIGHT* - 2021** - 120 pgs.
4. Jon Krupnick, ***Pan Am's 1st Pacific Survey Flight*** (Manila to HK - Aug. 1933), *American Philatelic Society* - **June 2003** pgs. 522 to 526

***Guam Recorder* -** published by US Navy - **April 1935 to Nov. 1941** - I discovered this obscure contemporaneous journal when I visited Guam's main library in 1992.

6 Historic & Unique Covers in Frame 5

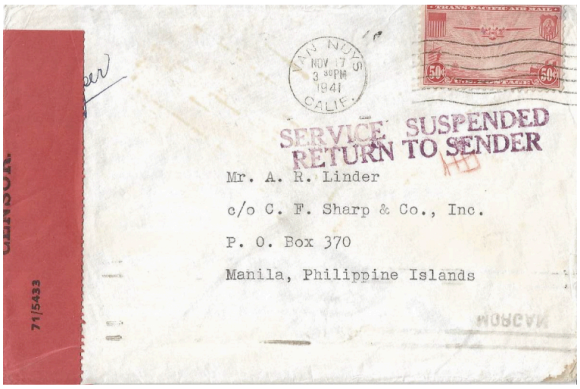
Fm5/P4 - *China Clipper*
"Highest Franked Clipper"

Fm5/P5 - *Philippine Clipper*
"Escape from Wake"



Fm5/P6 - *Anzac Clipper*
"Diverted to Hilo"

Fm5/P7 - *Pacific Clipper*
"Around the World"



Fm5/P8 - *Hong Kong II*
"Confiscated Mail"

Fm5/8 - Wake Island
"Missing in Action"

Pan Am Clippers Conquer the Pacific

Development and Operations of Pan Am's Trans-Pacific Airmail Routes, August 1933 to December 31, 1941

SCOPE & ORGANIZATION — The evolution of Pan Am's Trans-Pacific airmail routes — from 1930s survey flights to December 31, 1941.

TREATMENT — Flight histories track major changes in service. Exemplary covers show various origins, destinations, rates, usages with commercial emphasis.

IMPORTANCE — **Trans-Pacific airmail established connections to Europe, Middle East, Asia & Africa. For U.S., it was:**

The Beginning of Global Airmail Service

GUIDE TO EXHIBIT

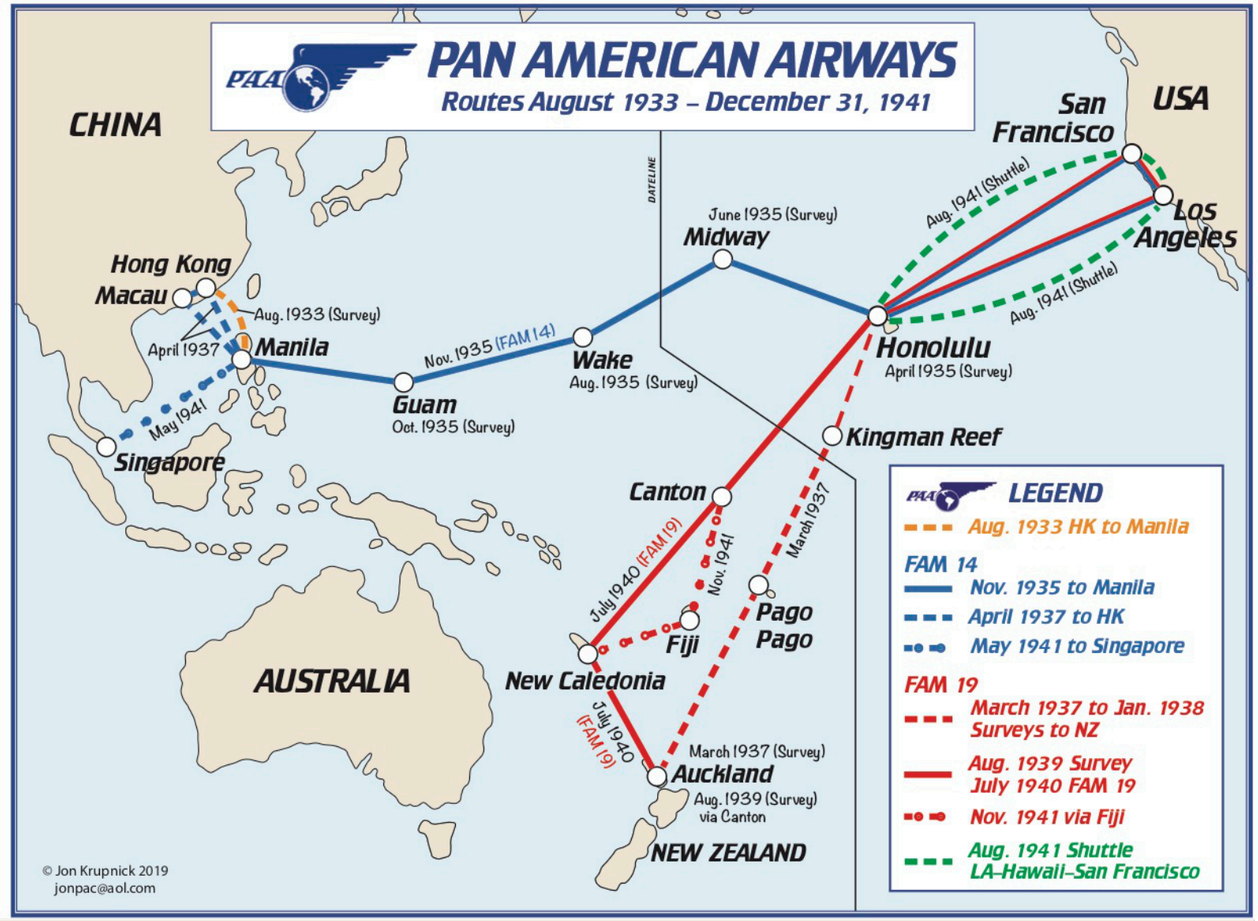
= *Original Research*

= 21 *MOST* Historic & Significant Covers

FAM = Foreign Airmail Contract

FAM 14 Routes — **Solid Blue Bar = Every cover on page is FAM 14 Orient Route**

FAM 19 Routes — **Hollow White Bar = Every cover on page is FAM 19 So. Pacific Route**



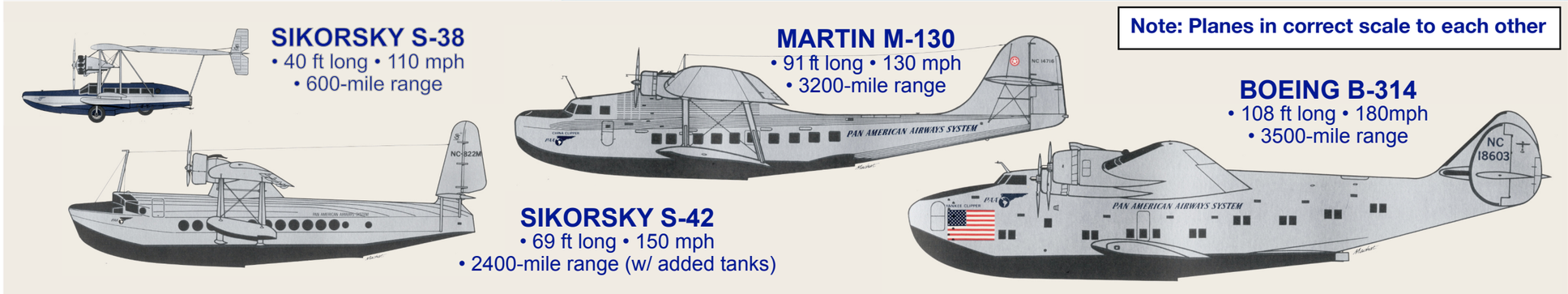


Exhibit Plan

Based on Route Development

1. **Aug 1933** — First Pacific Survey Flight
2. **April - Oct 1935** — Orient Route Survey Flights
3. **Nov 1935 - July 1936** — FAM 14 Inaugural Flights; International Air Express
4. **July 1936 - April 1937** — FAM 14 Weekly Service; 1st South Pacific Survey
5. **April - Dec 1937** — Shuttle to Hong Kong
6. **Dec 1937 - Aug 1938** — Hong Kong Terminal; 2nd & 3rd NZ Survey Flights
7. **Aug 1938 - Feb 1939** — FAM 14 Flights Curtailed
8. **Feb 1939 - June 1940** — FAM 14 Weekly Resume; NZ Survey via Canton Is.
9. **June 1940 - May 1941** — War Closes Mediterranean; FAM 19 So. Pacific Service
10. **May - Oct 1941** — FAM 14 to Singapore; FAM 19 Biweekly
11. **Oct - Nov 1941** — FAM 14 Singapore Terminal; FAM 19 via Fiji Islands
12. **Nov - Dec 1941** — War Curtails Service