

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

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INTRODUCTION

For “**International Competition**”, this **5 frame** traditional exhibit recounts Pan Am’s Pacific Routes from 1st survey flight of **August 1933 through December 31, 1941**.

FLIGHT RECORDS & ORIGINAL RESEARCH

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**. This obscure magazine was published by the Navy for the few English speaking people on Guam. It documented Pan Am’s Pacific flights from the survey flights of 1935 to November 1941. They reported previously unknown details of flight crews and aircraft. They also included information on delays related to weather or mechanical issues. **This unique contemporaneous record is the most accurate and complete account of Pan Am’s Pacific flights that exists.** The library sent me all Pan Am related articles from 1935 through November 1941 and I in turn sent a copy to our APS Research Library. This **ORIGINAL RESEARCH** allowed me to complete the most accurate and detailed record of **Pan Am’s pre-war** flights. The details in my descriptions are largely the result of information found only in the **GUAM RECORDER**. I supplemented the **RECORDER** information with my interviews of approximately 25 former Pan Am employees from the flying boat era. In 2000, due to the knowledge I had acquired in 25+ years of collecting Pan Am Pacific flight covers, I published my 700 page book: *Pan Am’s Pacific Pioneers - The Rest of the Story*.

VIEWING EXHIBIT

The **BLUE WINGED GLOBE** at the top left of title page was Pan Am’s logo from 1929 to 1943. To assist viewers in determining what is Original Research and which covers are the **MOST** significant or rare I use the same small Pan Am winged globe logo in Blue for Research and in Gold for Rarity.



BLUE logo = **ORIGINAL RESEARCH** = 35 in exhibit



GOLD logo = **MOST** Significant covers = 21

Every time I use a **GOLD** winged logo next to the cover I also explain to the viewer in **Red Text** or **Red Headlines** exactly why that cover deserves the special attention of a **Gold** Pan Am logo.

For example, **ELEVEN** covers in my exhibit are the only known covers carried on their respective flights. Therefore, **all 11** have **BLUE** logo (for original research) & a **GOLD** logo (for rarity) & **red text or headline** to explain) why that cover is **MOST** significant.

FAM 14 & FAM 19

Several judges, unfamiliar with the history of 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 (on 30 Pages)** = 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 11 Pages)**

The **21 MOST** important, historic, significant or RARE covers in the exhibit will **always** have a **BLUE** logo for **Research** & a **GOLD** logo for **Rarity & Red Text or Red Headlines** explaining why the cover is considered a **MOST SIGNIFICANT COVER**.

Three RECENT ACQUISITIONS

The **four most famous and/or significant** Clipper flights were:

- 1 - First Flight of the *China Clipper* - Nov. 22, 1935** (examples very easy to find)
- 2 - The *Anzac Clipper's* "Diverted Flight to Hilo" - Acquired Nov. 2022. - *Anzac Clipper* diverted to Hilo when Pearl Harbor was attacked. See: Fm 10 pg 6. Only 3 registered covers exist from *Anzac Clipper's* diverted flight and two of them never reached their "Intended Destination". Clearly the BEST of the 3 is the one in this exhibit that reached its **Intended Destination of Iraq**. It is in very good condition with 7 backstamps, it was featured in the **PACIFIC 97** handbook article *The Last Flight Out*. This *Anzac Clipper* cover is recognized as the **2nd most significant Pan Am Pacific cover**. It's 2nd only to the "**Around the World**" *Pacific Clipper* "**Escape Flight**". This "**Diverted Anzac Clipper**" cover has **never before been exhibited**.**
- 3 - The *Pacific Clipper* "Around the World" "Escape Flight" cover: Acquired Feb. 2023.** To escape the Japanese, Pan Am ordered *Pacific Clipper* Capt. Robert Ford to fly from Auckland N.Z. - West to NYC. See: Fm 10 pg 7 - This cover is recognized as the **single most significant cover of the Flying Boat Era**.

For over 25 years philatelic researcher and writer Ken Lawrence has done an in-depth survey of all *Pacific Clipper* last-flight covers. The FAM 19 So. Pacific route carried only 10% of Pan Am's Pacific mail. Therefore, it is not surprising that no registered *Pacific Clipper* last flight covers have been found. Only 10 have been found from this last pre-war flight of the *Pacific Clipper*. Lawrence also reports that 8 of the 10 found only went to N.Z. or Australia. The last flight *Pacific Clipper* cover exhibited is the most significant because it is: **ONLY one of 10 found to be backstamped in NYC** proving it went completely "**Around the World**".

This unique *Pacific Clipper* last flight cover has never before been exhibited.

4 - Philippine Clipper - "Escape" flight from Wake: Acquired February 2024 -

The **Philippine Clipper** had just taken off from Wake for Guam when Wake was attacked. They returned to Wake to evacuate 35 Pan Am employees. When on Wake's lagoon Zeros attacked and 23 bullets hit Clipper. All mail and unnecessary items were removed and the damaged and overloaded Clipper was somehow able to take off and ultimately reach Honolulu. The cover was carried as a favor for carpenter building Wake's defense base. Cover said "No Stamps Available" - because bombs dropped on hotel destroyed where civilians purchased stamps so notation was made **after** attack and before Clipper departed. Cover Canceled in Honolulu **Dec. 17, 1941 - This is date all those evacuated from Wake boarded ship to take them to San Francisco. All mail they had was turned over to be censored and cover was also canceled. This piece has never before been exhibited. See: Fm10 pg5**

CONCLUSION

ELEVEN of the key Pan Am flight covers exhibited are the only known mail from their respective flights. **Therefore, by definition** this exhibit is the most complete of any prior exhibit of Pan Am Pacific flight covers.

No exhibit before has had the BEST registered **Anzac Clipper "Diverted to Hilo"** cover, & BEST **Pacific Clipper "Around the World"** cover & the **ONLY Wake "Escape"** cover in an exhibit. **In this exhibit they ARE NEXT to each other in last Frame.** Most exhibits tend to get weaker at the end. The **5th Frame** of this exhibit is filled with examples of classic & unique & historic Pan Am Pacific flight covers.

Pls - NOTE: - To make covers more visually prominent on page - and based on a comment from a judge, I tried removing the DARK BLUE BARS (signifying FAM 14 covers) at top of 30 of the 40 exhibit pages, but I FOUND removing DARK BLUE BARS made flow of exhibit much more difficult for a viewer to follow.

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 5 frame exhibit - PA

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
5. **Collectors Club of NY - Nov. 18, 2020** Virtual talk to over 300 See: www.PanAmClippers.com or website of Collectors Club of NY.

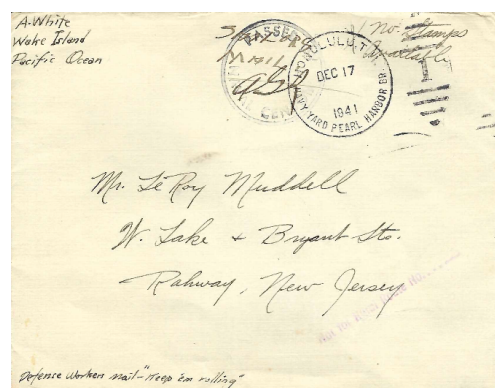
Guam Recorder - published by US Navy - **April 1935 to Nov. 1941** - I discovered this obscure contemporaneous journal when I visited Guam's main library in 1992.

6 Historic & Unique Covers in Frame 5

Fm5/P4 - *China Clipper* “Highest Franked Clipper”



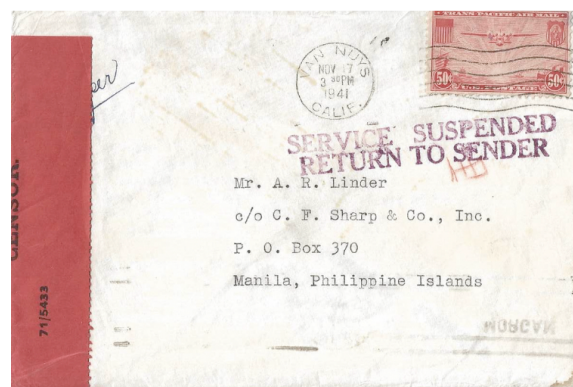
Fm5/P5 - *Philippine Clipper* “Escape from Wake”



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 — For U.S., Trans-Pacific airmail established connections to Asia, the Middle East, Europe and Africa. It was:

The Beginning of Global Airmail Service

GUIDE TO EXHIBIT

 = 35 **Original Research**

 = 21 **MOST Significant items**

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

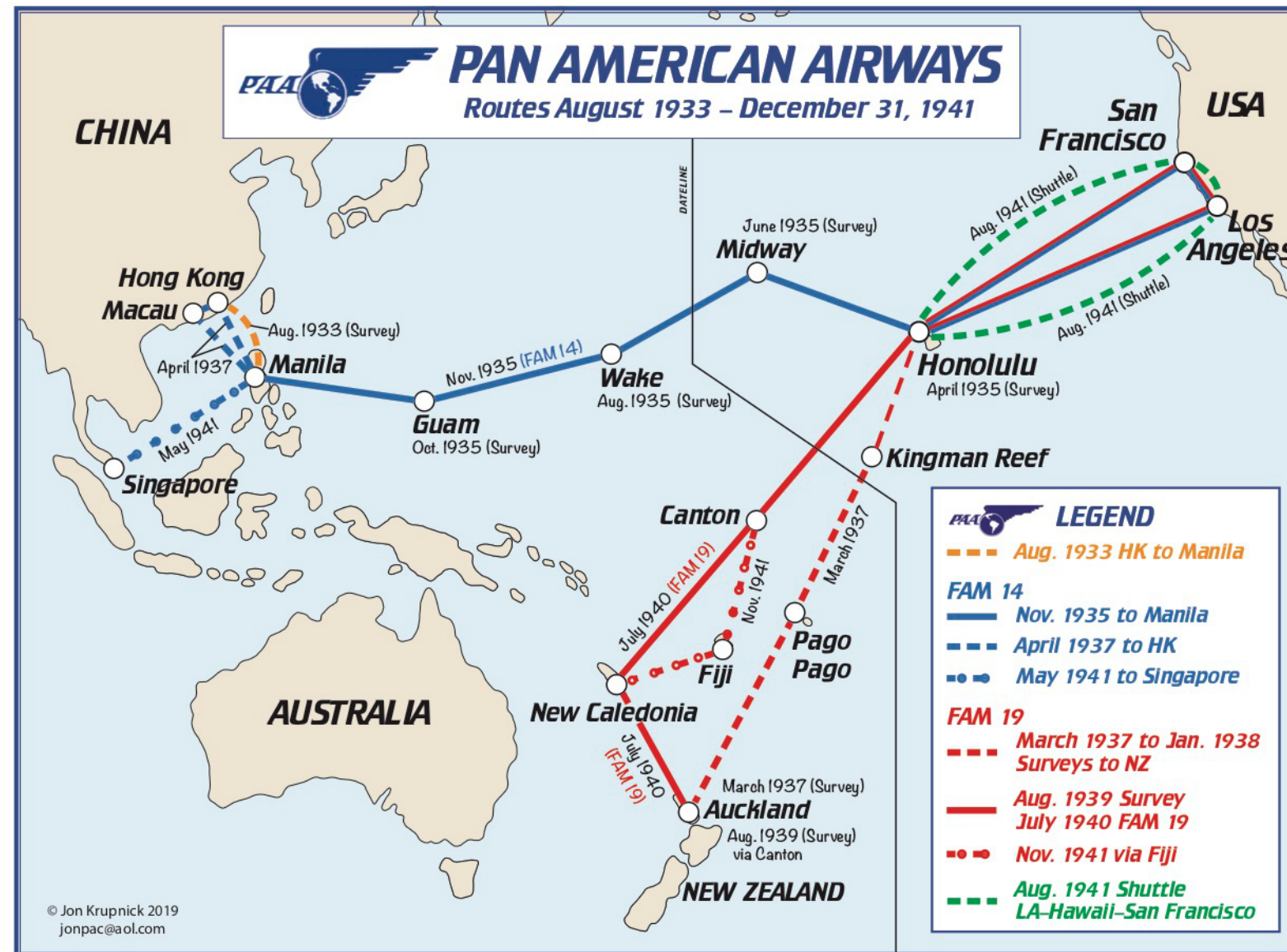
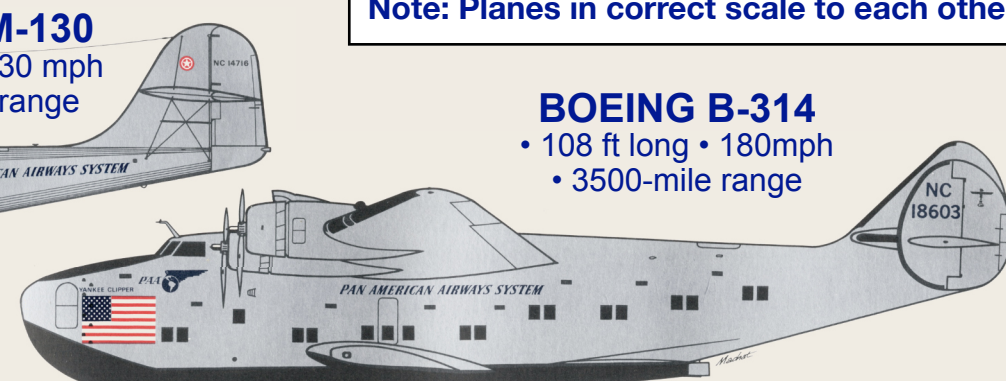


Exhibit Plan

Based on Route Development

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



Note: Planes in correct scale to each other

SIKORSKY S-42

• 69 ft long • 150 mph
• 2400-mile range (w/ added tanks)