



DAC - MDC - Boeing Retirees
of California

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Roundup

Ron Beeler - Editor

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FROM THE PRESIDENTS DESK

Hello to all DAC/MDC/Boeing of California Retirees and a Happy New Year 2014. I am very excited about our upcoming Retiree Luncheon on Tuesday, March 4. In addition to seeing past work friends and colleagues, we have a speaker I am especially looking forward to hearing. Mr. Geoffrey Thomas will be addressing our group and focusing on many great DAC and MDC aircraft. Geoff is a long time aviation writer and has a particular interest in Douglas and McDonnell-Douglas commercial aircraft history. I first met Geoff during development on the MDC MD-95/Boeing 717. He interviewed me several times and his interest and focus on all commercial aircraft, DAC/MDC in particular, impressed me. I look forward to a great talk. For more information on Geoffrey and his presentation see Bill Rickard's, our Program VP, article later in this issue of the ROUNDUP.

A really neat thing that happened at our last luncheon in October was a layout of past Douglas and MDC memorabilia that was offered for the taking. Gene Dubil and Billie Hendrixson both were cleaning up and organizing their accumulation of past work "stuff" and needed to dispose of excess items. Like all of us, we hate to just throw away something that might be meaningful to someone else. We set up a table and put out Gene and Billie's "give a ways". It seemed very successful as many walked away with a few treasures. So, we will have a table set at the front of the room to place any excess DAC/MDC/Boeing items you may have in the hopes they will find a new home. This will encourage me to start sorting through the many items I have and passing on any excess. I hope all of you will look in your "stash", and add to the table, and maybe find some things that would interest you.

Lastly, look at Jerry Callaghan's, our Special Events VP, article on the upcoming Field Trip and our plans for reviving our golf tournament in conjunction with the October Luncheon.

See you in March Jim Phillips - President

MARCH GUEST SPEAKER

Our luncheon speaker for March 2014 is **Geoffrey Thomas** and his topic is "Celebrating Excellence – The legends just keep on flying". He will look back at the great airplane designs and how Douglas aircraft have outlived virtually every competitor. He is a long time aviation writer, having written for Aviation Week, Air Transport World, Australian media and now Publisher of www.AirlineRatings.com. If you haven't done so yet, be sure to check the Airline Ratings website, before your next flight – it has a wealth of information on airline safety.



He has been writing about and commenting on aviation for 40 years and has been involved in the industry on a full time basis since 1996. In the past 10 year years Geoffrey has won 28 international and national awards. In 2009 he had the dual honor of being named the Royal Aeronautical Society Aerospace Journalist of the Year in Paris and also named Australasian Aviation Journalist of the Year by the National Aviation Press Club.

Geoffrey has fronted and written two aviation documentary series appeared in four aviation investigative documentaries and is a regular commentator on Australasian TV and radio and in print. Geoffrey has also co-written seven books, the latest being *The Plane Simple Truth* on aviation's true effect on the environment, which is now being updated for the industry. Geoffrey is a guest lecturer on human factors in aviation at the University of Southern California. Prior to a full time career in aviation journalism Geoffrey spent 25 years in commerce and banking plus two years working for an airline.

Bill Richard-

SPECIAL EVENTS FIELD TRIP

We have selected a visit to the USS IOWA together with a visit to the SS LANE VICTORY, both of which are located in the San Pedro Harbor for our Field Trip this year. Detailed planning is underway for a late June early July trip. The estimated cost should be between \$25 & \$30 per person, excluding lunch.

Since it is expected that this trip will generate a high level of interest and that the maximum bus capacity is 55 persons, an early expression-of-interest will be important. To that end, I'm starting an early sign-up list for those interested. You can contact me at jtcjmc@adelphia.net or by phone (562) 691-4527. E-mail preferred.

Final plans should be firmed up by late April/early May, at which time I will start contacting those on the expression-of-interest list in order of sign-up until we get a full bus load. Payment will be due following that process.

GOLF TOURNAMENT

As indicated in the December Roundup Newsletter, we have set a goal of **14 foursomes** for our **2014** golf tournament. Undaunted by last year's cancellation due to lack of interest, we are hopeful that we can rejuvenate this traditional retiree golf outing in 2014. This year's event will be held at Lakewood CC on Monday, October 6th, the day before our Fall Luncheon. The play format will again be "Team Best Ball" "scoring and fees will be about \$55 per person. Please feel free to encourage as many members and potential new members as possible to participate. Also, feel free to form your own foursomes with your personal friends.

We will need to have as many expressions-of-interest as possible by May and firm commitments by early August. We are starting an early sign-up list to encourage folks to look at their calendars and make plans to participate this year.

Please contact Jerry Callaghan at jtcjmc@adelphia.net OR Joel Benson at iamjoel002@verizon.net ASAP to sign up.

Jerry Callaghan

Back to the Future at Delta Air Lines

A 50-year era at Delta Air Lines came to an end on Jan 6 when the company retired the last of its DC-9 twinjets, but Delta will continue to operate Boeing 717 twinjets well into the future on many of the same routes served by the venerable DC-9s.

Wikipedia reports about 70 of the original 976 DC-9s delivered were still in service at the beginning of 2014, some 50 years after the program was launched with an order for the Series 10 version from Delta Air Lines on April 8, 1963. According to legend, Donald Douglas Sr. and Delta Chairman C.E. Woolman were sailing aboard Mr. Douglas' yacht that year when the subject of a new twinjet series came up. Woolman reportedly said, "Doug, if you build it we'll buy it," to which Douglas was said to have responded, "If you buy it we'll build it." They shook hands and the rest is history.



And what a history Delta has written with its fleet of Long Beach-designed twinjets since the first delivery in 1965! At one time Delta and Eastern Airlines were among the largest operators of DC-9s. Over the years, however, Eastern eventually ceased operation but Delta carried on through numerous mergers with other airlines in good times and bad operating the DC-9 on short-to-medium routes throughout the country. In an article carried by PR Newswire, Nat Pieper, Delta's vice president – Fleet Strategy, said, "The DC-9 has been a workhorse in our domestic fleet while providing a reliable customer experience. The aircraft's retirement paves the way for newer, more efficient aircraft."

Its last few DC-9s were Series 50s, the largest of the family prior to introduction of the MD-80 in 1980. On Jan 6 its last Series 50 was scheduled as Flight 2014 from Minneapolis/St. Paul to Atlanta at 4:20 p.m. (CST), making it the last scheduled commercial flight of the DC-9 by a major U.S. airline. Delta has operated

A DC-9 Milestone for the Ages

many different twinjets but the ruggedly dependable DC-9 and its successors have been among its mainstays, with the company returning to its basic design after flying both larger and smaller competitive twinjets. After bypassing earlier models the airline eventually also ordered the more advanced MD-88 model and most recently opted for Boeing 717s.

Financial guru The Motley Fool wrote that since 2008, Delta has removed or retired more than 350 aircraft from its fleet including 50-seat CRJ-200s; Saab 340s and DC-9s; while adding economically efficient, proven-technology aircraft such as the Boeing 777-200LR; two-class, 65 and 76-seat regional jets and variants of the 737 and 717, largely on a capacity-neutral basis.

The DC-9 retirement comes just months after Delta began taking delivery of its orders of 88 Boeing 717-200 aircraft from Southwest Airlines and 100 Boeing 737-900ER aircraft, which began entering service in October and November, respectively. Each aircraft features a First Class cabin and slim-line seats throughout Delta's Economy Comfort and Economy cabin along with Wi-Fi connectivity and in-seat power ports.



Although only 156 717s were ever delivered the few customers that did order the 717 new, including Southwest Airlines subsidiary

AirTran and Hawaiian Airlines, have praised its performance. AirTran, which was the 717's launch customer, found that the fuel savings and reliability exceeded its initial expectations. 717s are about 24% more fuel efficient than the DC-9s. While Delta's 717s may not be "new", on average they are more than 20 years younger than the DC-9s they are replacing. Delta is leasing the 717s at a very good price, and they will be much cheaper to operate than the aircraft they are replacing. This fleet could be a competitive advantage for Delta for years to come.

Besides fuel efficiency of its newer family members, the DC-9 also earned its way into airline execs' hearts with its ease of maintenance and durability. Current Boeing engineer Bob Takara offered this account of the first DC-9 to reach 100,000 flight cycles:



Back in the 1990s, travel magazine Conde Nast published an article titled "14,000,000 Miles and Counting" and it opened with "This jetliner has made more flights than any other in the world...." The airplane that it was referring to was a DC-9, originally delivered to Delta Air Lines and flying in Northwest Airline's (NWA) fleet at the time. The article featured all sorts of statistics about the airplane's longevity such as how it flew an equivalent distance of 566 times around the world or 59 times from the earth to the moon, the number of tires that were used (3216), and the amount of miles that it taxied (18,610; round-trip distance between Sydney, Australia, and Istanbul, Turkey, is 18,588 miles).

I also knew that a number of DC-9s had surpassed 90,000 flights, according to company records, and I wondered if any would reach 100,000. Should a DC-9 reach 100,000 flight cycles, it would be a first for a jet transport (and perhaps a first for any airplane at the time) and be worthy of an article in Douglas Service magazine (similar to the present AERO magazine) and in *Airliners* magazine, to which I was subscribing.

On February 25, 1993 (the 28th anniversary of the DC-9's first flight), I asked NWA project engineer Ed Walton about the daily utilization of their DC-9s (hours

and flight cycles) and their estimate of when their DC-9 would exceed 100,000 flights. He replied that their first DC-9 to reach this landmark would have been a Series 10 aircraft in 1996 but there was a plan to retire their Series 10 fleet in 1994. Nonetheless, a couple of their DC-9 Series 10s caught my attention.

DC-9-14, line number 53, was the 10th DC-9 delivered to Delta, on September 24, 1966. Northwest purchased fuselage 53 on August 1st, 1986. In July 1994, I projected on a quad pad that the 100,000th flight of Ship 53 will occur around October 10, 1995. Our field service representative in Atlanta, Larry Pietrowski, started tracking Ship 53. As of December 16, 1994, it had accrued 98,386 flights.

Larry kept me informed of the journeys of Ship 53: April 23, 1995 – hit 99,000 flights; July 24, 1995 – 99,644 flights; September 14, 1995 – 99,909 flights. With 91 flights to go, and assuming six flights a day, Larry and I guessed that the magic number of 100,000 will be reached in 15 days – September 29th, 1995. September 18, 1995 – 99,933! September 22, 1995 – 99,959!

In anticipation of the occasion, Larry had sent me a photo of this aircraft. He learned that The Flight will occur on the final leg of the day on September 27, 1995, from Minneapolis to Cedar Rapids, Iowa. He flew to Minneapolis, introduced himself to the flight crew, and told them of the special flight that was about to occur. Thus, DC-9 Fuselage Number 53 quietly claimed this milestone in aviation history.

The next day, Larry would write the following in a TELEX to Long Beach:

On a cool clear night in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, NW Captain Peter Reusbech gently, uneventfully, landed fuselage 53. The flight, NW number 1277 MSP-CID, landed with 40 passengers and a crew of five on runway 009 at 10:07 PM. The completion of this flight marked the 100,000 cycle on the aircraft.

With 100,000 cycles and 73,189.26 flight hours this aircraft is a testament to the original design and manufacturing at Douglas. Proper maintenance by airline engineering and mechanics also permitted this aircraft to achieve this milestone. Just an afterthought, after a seven hour rest the aircraft took to the skies, turning over the odometer, on the second 100,000 cycles. Long live the DC-9! (P.S.: Ship 53 retired in

July 1998 with 105,468 flight cycles. The DC-9 in the Conde Nast article is believed to have made the first scheduled DC-9 flight, and it retired in September 1991 with 94,057 flight cycles.)

Elayne Bendel

From Barbara's Membership Desk.....

On January 15, letters requesting payment of your 2014 membership dues were sent to all members. Excluded from this mailing were new members who joined the association late in 2013 and active members who pre-paid their 2014 dues. As always, it will be appreciated if you pay your dues in a timely manner so our publishing and postage expenses for the Roundup will be covered. Please send your \$10.00 check in the self-addressed envelope to DAC-MDC-Boeing Retirees, P.O. Box 5482, Fullerton, CA 92838.

Barbara Callaghan

New Members;

Bill Lazell,
B. J. Tammillo

2013 Deceased;

See Enclosed Card for our friends who passed away in 2013.

Note from the Editor;

We need a volunteer, willing to take over management and maintenance of our Web Site. John Hennessey will be happy to help you become familiar with the existing site, but recommends perhaps, creating a new web site using today's more modern aids to design. Anyone interested, please call John at (714) 846-6423. I am still gathering e-mail addresses, please send them to me at; Ron@RonBeeler.com.

Ron Beeler