



**MAY 2008**

**APRIL MEETING -**



**Jack Freer** was well received by the EAA534 members fortunate enough to be at the April meeting. Jack attended New Mexico University and started flying in 1941. Two years later he began his commercial career with Pan Am. Among others, he piloted DC-3s, -4s, -6s, and -8s; the Boeing "7" series, -07, -27, and -47; Lockheed's Constellation; and Pan Am's flying boats; He loved the 727. (The editor hasn't spoken with anyone who has flown the "Seven-two" who doesn't claim that it's at the very top of

their "favorite" list. Ed.). Jack recounted some of the experiences of his years with Pan Am. He retired as a 747 Captain and has lived in many places around the world from Hong Kong to London.

**EAA534** Secretary John Weber was impressed by Jack's adherence to his principles by not flying with the one particular captain because of risk. After waiting three hours, the captain did things Jack's way even though Freer was second in command on the flight deck

Jack Freer has



*Douglas DC-3 NC33167 in Pan American Airways livery*

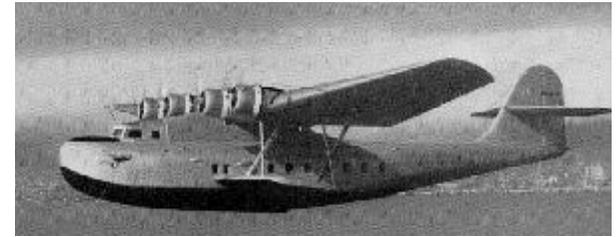
long been a member of **EAA534**. He built a Glassair III and flew it for more than ten years and has gladly assisted other **EAA534** builders on their projects.

Our thanks to Captain Jack Freer for his presentation, to Dale Cornelius and wife Jane generously provided refreshments, and also to Paul Adrien, Charlie Schnitzlein, Robert and Laura Vaughn, and John Weber for their contributions to this article. Pictures of some of the ships flown by "Cap'n Jack" are to be found nearby. Photos were found at

<http://Airliners.net/>.



**MAY**-- The 24th of this month is



*Pan Am Clipper- A Martin M-130 flying boat*



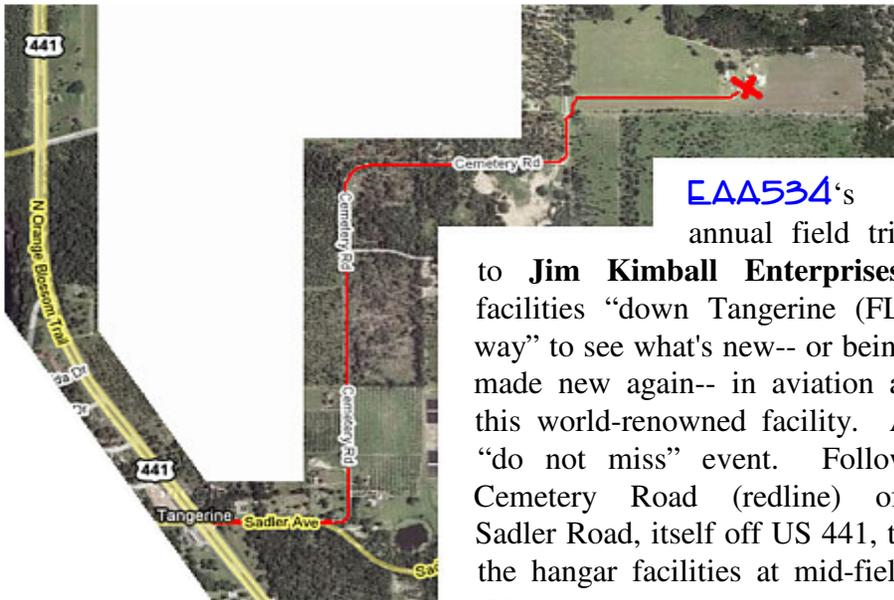
*Pan American Airways "Flying Clipper," a Boeing 314 flying boat.*



*What a way to retire, from the left seat of the majestic Boeing 747, Captain Jack Freer's last assignment.*



*A Pan American Airways Lockheed Constellation. The distinctive triple tail was designed to keep vertical stabilizer height within the height limits of existing hangars. The beautifully curvaceous shape of the fuselage, although hideously expensive to build-- the cross section is not constant-- was designed as a lifting body to reduce drag.*



EAA534's annual field trip to **Jim Kimball Enterprises'** facilities "down Tangerine (FL) way" to see what's new-- or being made new again-- in aviation at this world-renowned facility. A "do not miss" event. Follow Cemetery Road (redline) off Sadler Road, itself off US 441, to the hangar facilities at mid-field (X in accompanying map).

EAA534



THIS 'N THAT BY OL' 'WHAT'S HIS NAME' - SECOND RIDE! In the early 1950s I was a guest of neighbors, parents of a fellow teen, at their vacation home on Katama Bay on Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts. Rolf and I pedaled our bikes all over the twenty-three mile long island which lies between lower Cape Cod and Nantucket Island. Our favorite haunts were downtown Edgartown (girls) and the grass strip out near South Beach (airplanes).

Steve Gentle, *Katama Airpark's* owner/Fixed-Base Operator, ran a charter service to Boston and New York as well as a flying school and a Piper dealership. His fleet included a big radial-engine Cessna "195," a new twin-engine Piper "Aztec," a Piper "Tri-Pacer," a "Cub," and a Republic "Seabee" amphibian.

One day when we were at the field, "Steve" decided to take the Seabee out and we were invited to occupy the rear seat. He took off and circled over Chappaquiddick Island to the outer harbor at Edgartown, several miles to the northeast. He set the big four-seater down and taxied through the inner harbor between Edgartown and Chappaquiddick. Once through the narrows, Steve powered up the big Franklin engine and after about a mile-- we were at "gross" weight-- we were airborne and circled back to land at the field. Ride number two, land to sea to land.



*The sport car of airliners, Boeing's 727, in Pan Am's colors*

Same cast, same field, 1958. Steve invites us up for a ride in the Tri-Pacer, tail number N9013D (still on the FAA register!). Revelation! This little guy had the third wheel out front and appeared to fly more as if one were driving it because of the lack of the view-of-the-sky attitude when on the ground. Further, after a little pattering around the east end of the Vineyard, when he lined up for the landing he reached down between the seats and pulled on the "emergency brake" and we came down at an alarming rate right toward the end of the runway, rounding out just in time to roll the wheels on the well-worn sod. This little ship had flaps to arrest speed and add lift! The wonders of modern aircraft!

Steve one time mentioned that when running charters to New York, if he were flying the Aztec twin, he would head directly there, right down South Beach, past Gay Head, the west end of the island, and directly across Block Island, Rhode Island, to Montauk Point, the east end of Long Island. However, he said that when flying the single-engine Cessna 195, he would head northwest to the mainland, then west down along the shoreline until he crossed from Niantic, Connecticut, to Orient Point on Long Island where the Sound was at its narrowest. The big Jacobs radial engine was a marvel of reliability, but Steve said that with only one engine he preferred not to push

his luck out over sixty miles of open water with only the airport at Block Island as an emergency landing spot. Ten miles of water between the mainland and Orient Point was enough for him in the 1950s. Smart man.

A couple of years later I was out there and Steve asked me if I'd like to buy his J-3 Cub. The fabric on the wings had failed to pass muster and the fuselage was sitting forlornly in a corner of a hangar with its stripped wings hanging on the wall. There was an brand new engine with only sixty-five hours on it. The remainder of the plane had passed annual inspection. Three hundred dollars for the whole she-bang if I moved it out of the hangar.

Having just spent thirteen hundred dollars for a new car, not having a pilot license, having no place to move it to, the fall semester quickly coming up, and... well, I had to pass on that deal. My leg is continually cramping up from trying to boot myself in the rear for all these ensuing years.

## THE BOOKSHELF

Katama Airpark; the Gentles, Steve Senior and Junior; Tri-Pacer N9013D; and many areas of the northeast familiar to anyone who has flown there were also well known to Percy Knauth and he ably portrayed them in his book, *WIND ON MY WINGS*. Good read, still available on Amazon.com.

*DAYS OF INFAMY* by Newt Gingrich & Wm. R. Forstchen. A "what if" novel set 7 through 10 December 1941. A good, hard-to-put-down read. wjs

*LAKE* magazine, May, 2008. "The Miracle Plane" is about the restoration of a Globe Swift by Dr. Mike Whitt and his father, Jim Whitt. Dr. Whitt is a dentist at The Villages and the Swift is based at Leesburg Muni.



*A Pan Am's porky-looking Boeing 707. Boeing people belittled the "ugly" upswept tail and down-sloped nose of the DC-8 but it was capable of accepting a thirty foot stretch while the 707 would drag its tail on rotation if stretched. 1011 built.*



*One of sixteen svelte and stylish Pan American Douglas DC-8s. Stretched "Super 70" series, with up to 269 seats, was the largest airliner in service until the lunch of B-747. Because of poor planning and marketing, only 566 were built.*

## ITEMS FOR SALE

**GPS- Lowrance 2000** Brand new. Never used but "played with" once. With original packaging. \$700. Also, a late **1800s Doctor's Buggy**. Restored. Contact Don Kosmin @ 352.326.5204

**Hangars** For Sale and For Rent at the Florida Flying Gator's Airpark. More information about our Airpark location can be found at this link: <http://www.flyinggators.com/news/hangars/hangars.htm>

**EAA53A**

## **CAP/EAA BLDG., LEESBURG, MUN. AIRPORT**

8507 Airport Blvd., Leesburg, FL

**MEETS- 9 A..M. 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday each month**

**President- Robert Vaughn 343.4168**

**Vice President- David Pierce 407.469.0014**

**Treasurer- Bill Howard 735.6347**

**Secretary- John Weber 787.5879**

**Telephone Chair- Charlie Schnitzlein**

**Membership Chair- Bill Condermann**

**Program Chair- Paul Adrien 483.4642**

**Flight Advisor- Paul Adrien 483.4642**

**Technical Counselor- Paul Adrien 483.4642**

**Newsletter Editor- Bill Schulz 787.9526**

**EAA53A**