

Flying to San Juan

(Continued from page 22)

Pan American Airways advertising poster showing Alice Hoffman's route to San Juan in 1929 and featuring a Ford Trimotor aircraft in use at the time.—Image courtesy of panam.org



used to clean up after airsick passengers. Opening a window was the only way to escape the smell. By the late 1920s, Pan American Airways, which flew over water, required extensive first-aid and seamanship training for its steward trainees. It is noteworthy that Alice opted for a steamship on her return from Puerto Rico, the *SS Coamo*, docking in New York on December 2, 1929.

The purpose of Alice's trip was to visit her aunt, Eleanor Butler Alexander Roosevelt and Ted Roosevelt. Ted, son of President Teddy Roosevelt and father of children who as adults would develop Pine Knoll Shores, had been appointed governor of the U.S. territory of Puerto Rico on September 9, 1929. He and Eleanor were in residence at the governor's mansion, "La Fortaleza," built between 1533 and 1540 in Old San Juan after Spain had first colonized the island in 1493.

Ted was governor of Puerto Rico until 1932, at which time he was appointed Governor-General of the Philippines. That appointment necessitated another trip by Alice to visit the family in the Philippines in 1933. The Pan Am Clippers had not expanded to cross the Pacific at that time, so she took a steamship.

Pan American Airways was founded in 1927 as a scheduled airmail and passenger service operating between Key West, Florida, and Havana, Cuba. The following year, aircraft, landing rights, terminal facilities and personnel were acquired. Pan American moved operations from Key West to Miami to be more convenient for east coast passengers arriving by train. The move to Miami's 37th Street Airport was further enhanced when it was established as a U.S. Customs port of entry.

Miami to San Juan is 1,400 miles, a flight of less than three hours today. The article from *The Beaufort News* described about a two-day journey with an overnight in Santiago de Cuba. With only the most rudimentary of radio communication, if any, night flying in 1929 was highly risky and avoided.

Interestingly, Santiago de Cuba indirectly played a part in the future establishment of Pine Knoll Shores. Santiago de Cuba was the location of what was perhaps the most memorable battle of the Spanish-American war, the battle of San Juan Hill. Col. Theodore Roosevelt's organizational skills and leadership of the Rough Riders during that war brought him fame and celebrity, which contributed to his growing popularity among the masses. This popularity among the voting public supported his selection as a vice presidential candidate in 1900. The McKinley-Roosevelt ticket won handily, and when McKinley was assassinated in 1901, Roosevelt assumed the presidency. He was re-elected in 1904 and served until 1909. The legacy of his life and presidency added luster to the Roosevelt name for decades. This legacy served his family well and transferred to his grandchildren, who developed Pine Knoll Shores.

Soon after the U.S. victory on the battlefield of San Juan Hill and the surrender of Santiago de Cuba, the Spanish sued for peace, ending the 15-week war. The result was the 1898 Treaty of Paris in which Spain ceded ownership of Puerto Rico, Guam and the Philippine Islands to the United States. Given his father's history, it is not surprising that Ted Roosevelt, Jr. would become provincial governor of both.

It is also not surprising that Alice Hoffman never hesitated to call on the Roosevelt name to have her way with bureaucrats and politicians and that, adventurous by nature, she would risk a 1929 flight to Puerto Rico to visit the eldest son of the former president and her niece Eleanor.

Amazingly, however, that flight took place a little over two weeks after the stock market crash of October 29, 1929, the beginning of the depression, and not long before Alice Hoffman would make *The Beaufort News* in less light-hearted pieces concerning her countless legal problems, court judgments, and lawsuits with the county. Her financial woes would lead to the Roosevelt family's ownership of her Carteret County property.

Note: The *Beaufort News* issues from 1925 through 1944 are available on the Internet at newspapers.digitalnc.org, a free service of the North Carolina Digital Heritage Center of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

PKA News

By Amry Cox

In June, Pine Knoll Association (PKA) had the kickoff and first event of its year of 50th Anniversary celebrations. Salsa Saturday gave the right tempo to activities at Brock Basin and the picnic shelter. Folks who stopped by but were too shy to dance with the instructor could snack on chips and salsa. The weather was mild and the salsa was caliente. People boated by on the canal, walked by, rode by in golf carts or just worked on their vessels while the music and entertainment soared.

(Continued on page 24)



Pine Knoll Association members enjoyed Standup Paddleboard instruction during one of the HOA's 50th Anniversary activities.—Photos by Robert Cox