



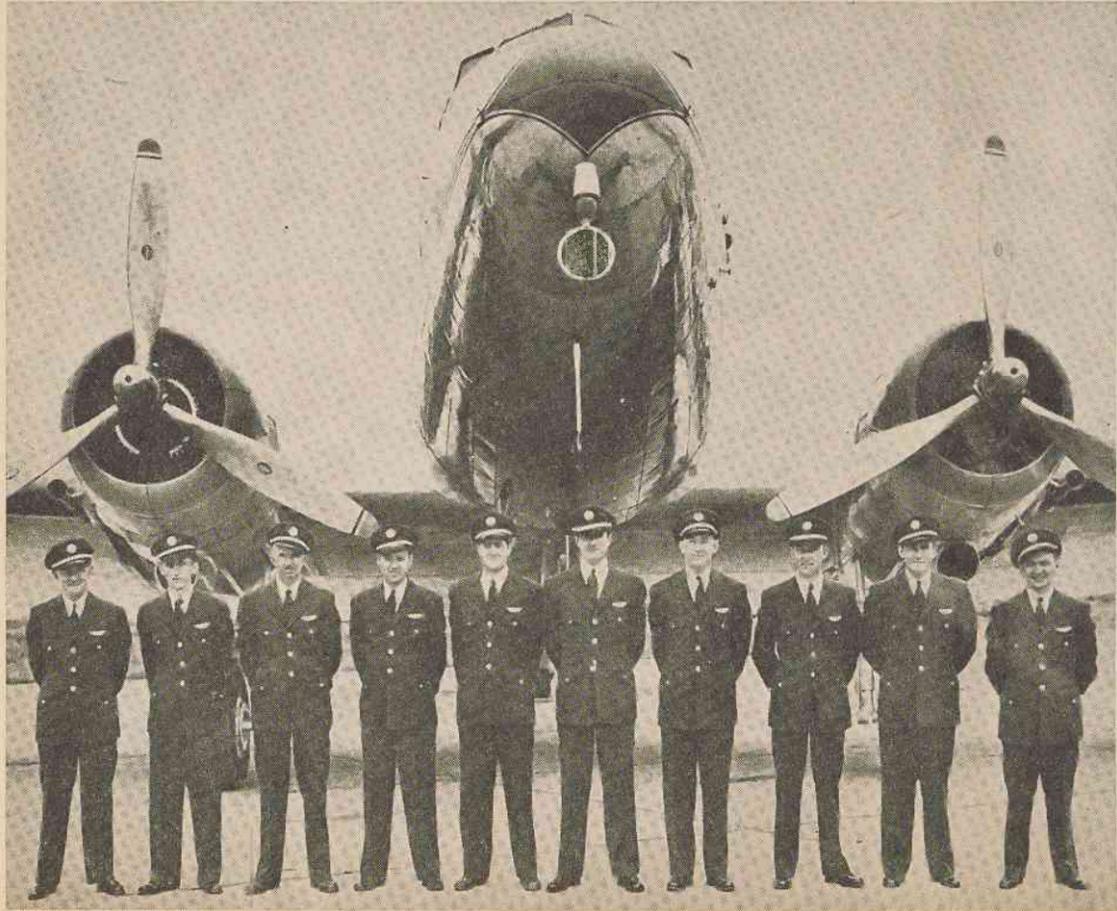
THE PIEDMONITOR

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APACE WITH THE PACEMAKER

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Piedmont Marks 15 Years of Progress



It was a proud day in the life of Piedmont Airlines. Its pilots had just received their snappy new uniforms, and the entire complement assembled for a photograph and popped to attention in front of a DC-3. From left to right they are: Ed D. Clement, Milt Browning, John "Pappy" Wilkes, R. A. Schulte, H. K. Saunders, Frank Nicholson, H. F. "Hoss" Dobbins, Leon Fox, Jack Tadlock, and Lee Cottrell. One of the amazing things about this group is that 15 years later every one of them is still with the company.

Beloved Matron Finally Retires

by Cleta Covington

To the modern eye she looks fat. She's dumpy, a little drab, and not at all chic by today's standards. Yet everyone loves her. She's been a highly-esteemed matron in every community she's served, and you can always depend on her to behave in a dignified, respectable, ladylike manner.

She goes by many names, from the "Workhorse" to the "Gooney Bird" to just plain "Three." She's actually a DC-3 — D for Douglas, C for Commercial — and one of the most durable and dependable aircraft ever built.

Piedmont Airlines is celebrating its fifteenth anniversary February 20 by giving the grand old lady her retirement papers. At one time the airline had as many as 21 DC-3's, but in recent years these have been replaced with F-27 prop-jet and Martin 404 Pacemakers, until there are now only two remaining Three's serving Piedmont. After that last flight February 20 these will serve no longer.

Tough Competition

While a great favorite for

many years, the venerable Three cannot keep up with the competition imposed by more modern, faster airplanes, with pressurized, air-conditioned passenger cabins and lower operating costs per mile. Then too, due to ear, heart or sinus trouble, many passengers cannot fly in other than pressurized aircraft, and the DC-3 was simply not designed to withstand the strain of pressurization. Piedmont Airlines realized this several years ago and has been phasing into its operations the luxurious F-27

T. H. Davis Elected ALTA Chairman

President T. H. Davis has been elected Chairman of the Association of Local Transport Airlines (ALTA) at the group's annual conference, held January 21 and 22, in Washington, D. C.

ALTA is an organization composed of the presidents of the nation's regional airlines. Last year Mr. Davis served as Vice Chairman of the Association.

Elected to the Vice Chairman's post this year is Keith Kahle, President of Central Airlines.

Directors were also chosen at the ALTA meeting, and include the following airline presidents: Lewis W. Dymond, Frontier Airlines; Joseph H. FitzGerald, Ozark Airlines; John H. Connelly, Pacific Airlines; and Nick Bez, West Coast Airlines.

For Alaska, directors are: S. B. Simmons, Alaska Coastal-Ellis Airlines; and Sigurd Wien, Wien Alaska Airlines. The director for Hawaii is Dr. Hung Wo Ching of Aloha Airlines.

prop-jets and the 40-passenger Martin 404's.

The DC-3 has been with Piedmont since the airline's beginning in 1948. The first schedule for the local service airline was flown with three of the aircraft. Two of these were purchased from Colonial Airlines, a New York based airline serving New England which has since merged with Eastern Airlines.

Not Popular

The third, number 8820, was leased from another local airline. This one, however, wasn't a very popular airplane with the passengers, since the only space provided for cargo was in two large wooden boxes facing the door. The first thing a passenger saw on entering was what appeared to be a long, dark, coffin container. After only a few months, this particular Three was sent back to the lessor.

Two years later, however, Piedmont bought 8820, which had in the interim been modified and the "coffin" taken out. In 1958 the airplane was sold to a Canadian coal company which used it to work on the DEW Line, and at last report 8820 was still a working citizen of Canada.

Two Left

As was mentioned earlier, only two DC-3's — numbers 40V and 56V — are left with Piedmont Airlines. Number 40V has been with Piedmont since March, 1949, and is the airplane scheduled to fly the final DC-3 run for the airline.

When it is retired, 40V's "given name," the Great Smokies Pacemaker, will be handed on to

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DC-3 Flies Last Run On Anniversary

February 20 is an important day in the life of Piedmont Airlines.

It is the day the company celebrates 15 years of increasingly successful operations, and it is the day when its grand old workhorse, the DC-3, is at last completely retired from scheduled flight service.

In the past few months, only one DC-3 roundtrip had been left on the schedule — east-bound Flight 2 and west-bound Flight 5. After February 20 the trip will be made by a Martin 404 Pacemaker.

A "sentimental journey" has been planned by company officials and DC-3 fans who hate to see the old lady go.

Last Flight

President T. H. Davis will board the last flight at 9:35 a.m. in Columbus. Piloting the Three along the route will be Capt. Leon Fox and Capt. Harold Dobbins, who as pilot and co-pilot flew the first Piedmont trip from Wilmington to Cincinnati 15 years ago, and W. G. McGee, now General Sales Manager, who was Chief Purser on the first flight.

Other Piedmont officials who pioneered in the development of the airline around the faithful DC-3 will board the flight at the various stops.

A very special passenger for the trip will be W. D. Turner, an oil company official now living in St. Louis, who was the first passenger to board Piedmont's inaugural flight February 20, 1948.

Into Barn

The DC-3, after turning around at New Bern at 4 p.m. for west-bound Flight 5, will proceed through all the scheduled stops as far as Winston-Salem, where it will be "run into the barn" for the last time. Its more modern successor, the 404 Pacemaker, will then complete the trip back to Columbus via the routine intermediate stops.

The Three, perhaps the most famous and highly-respected aircraft ever built, was the backbone of Piedmont's fleet until 1958 when the company started a modernization program with eight F-27 prop-jets.

Then in December, 1961, the company announced the purchase of 17 Martin 404's and since that time has been gradually phasing the DC-3's out of the fleet. The Three to be used February 20 will, along with one other remaining, be turned over to their purchaser March 1.

A steady and dependable worker, the DC-3 helped Piedmont to grow from an airline carrying 39,370 passengers its first year of operation to a total of 721,683 passengers for 1962.

Final Route

The final trip will depart from Columbus and go to New Bern, with intermediate stops at Parkersburg-Marietta, Charleston, Beckley, Roanoke, Greensboro-High Point, Raleigh-Durham, and Kinston, with a turnaround at New Bern. It is expected that the last DC-3 flight will receive heavy press and television coverage.



Piedmont has come a long way in the 15 years since that first scheduled flight February 20, 1948. Here President T. H. Davis welcomes W. D. Turner, Piedmont's first paying passenger, as Purser J. B. Simpson stands ready to begin the flight. Turner, an oil company executive, has returned to Piedmont several times to help celebrate various anniversaries. Now living in St. Louis, he is expected to board a portion of the last DC-3 flight as a very special passenger.

Deepest sympathy is extended the family and friends of Joe N. "Jo-Jo" Harris, who died of a heart attack January 28.

A Cleaner at INT-M, he had been with the company since 1951. He is survived by his two daughters and his sister.