

PAN ? PAN ? PAN?

By Rupert T. Raschke, Aircraft Commander, 421st AREFS
Yokota, AB, Japan 1960-1963

In the spring of 1962, our aircrew was assigned to fly an in-flight refueling training mission with an F-100 Squadron to Itazuki AFB, Kyushu, Japan. Unfortunately, I can only recall the names of my co-pilot, Lt. Wilkerson, and my engineer, M/Sgt. Sidney Gash. Weather was briefed to be 12 miles visibility and variable overcast at take off time from Yokota. This was great weather for the industrial city of Fukuoka. We arrived at the Fukuoka VOR rendezvous point, 300 deg. Radial 40 miles out altitude 12,000 feet about 1300 hours, as I recall, with the navigator assuring our position. We were a little early in establishing orbit and flying in thick IFR conditions.

Co-pilot established contact with the first group of fighters that were assembled in the clear at a higher altitude and relayed that we would have to get clearance for a higher block and asked them what would be the best altitude above 12,000. The fighters replied that 20,000 looked good, so we asked for and received the block clearance to climb. Recip's to climb power and jets to 98% and we departed 12,000 maintaining our race-track pattern off of the VOR. Out of 16,000 feet, still IFR, in a hard right turn to the outbound leg a thunderous metallic snap followed immediately by metallic crunch reverberated through the aircraft. The KB was already in a 40-degree right turn and immediately rolled over further right, my primary attitude gyro tumbled, airspeed increased, and the altitude indicator began to unwind. I idled the jets and pulled all four engines back to the idle stop but had no indication of the aircraft atti-

tude. Passing through 10,000 feet we felt positive G's on our butt's so figured the aircraft must be at least almost level and the needle ball verified the feeling so I continued the descent straight ahead to 7000 feet where we broke into the clear. We were on the inbound heading to Fukuoka VOR.

During the uncontrolled portion of the descent, the right reel operator reported that number 2 jet had snapped off the wing, jet cowling had separated and that either the cowling or a part of the jet had impacted the horizontal stabilizer, ripped holes in the rudder assembly, and fuel was streaming from what was left of the pylon under the wing.

I contacted the fighters and told them we had an emergency and were landing at Itazuki. I instructed Lt. Wilkinson to go to guard channel and declare an emergency and request immediate radar vectors to the active runway. The next thing I hear in my headset is the co-pilot shouting "PAN, PAN, PAN" followed articulately the proper landing, fuel dumping and emergency information. The great old bird handled just fine with four 4360's turning and except for never being able to fully shut off the leaking pylon the landing was uneventful.

That evening at the stag bar Lt. Wilkinson received a refresher course on the critical difference between the meaning of May Day, May Day, May Day and Pan, Pan, Pan. In resurrecting the sequence of events after the departure of the #2 jet engine, the incident investigator came to the conclusion that the aircraft had actually performed a descending half roll to the right reversing it's direction in the process of recovery. Hell, we already knew that! We could have also told him that Boeing built one heck of an aircraft. It was Hayes that screwed up when they hung jets on the wings and put rubber bags in the bomb bays.

Across The Pacific with Lindbergh's Aircraft

By Tom Grey (421, 431)

For EXPO '70 in Osaka, Japan, a group of American corporations sponsored a pavilion in which Charles Lindbergh's red-winged "Sirius" was displayed. My crew from the 459th Military Airlift Wing (Reserve) at Andrews AFB, Maryland was given the task of transporting this aircraft to Osaka in a C-124 Globemaster. The Lockheed Sirius was a single-engine float-plane that Lindbergh and his wife Anne Morrow flew in 1931 from Long Island, New York to Nanking, China. Their flight took 48 days and they stopped various places en route, including the State of Maine, Hudson Bay, Canada, Point Barrow and Nome, Alaska, the coastal islands of Siberia and Osaka. They pioneered what became known as the Arctic Great Circle Route."

Anne Morrow Lindbergh, who served as radio operator and navigator, recounted their adventures during this flight in her book North to the Orient. Powered by a 600 horsepower Pratt and Whitney Cyclone engine and built to Lindbergh's specifications, the Sirius was one of a kind. Prior to EXPO '70, it was, and is today, on display at the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C.

At the time of the EXPO, the Globemaster was the only air transport capable of carrying the Sirius without extensive dis-



mantling. Nevertheless, with pontoons, wing, propeller, and vertical and horizontal tail assemblies removed, our crew needed one and a half days to load it to our satisfaction. The wing assembly, palletized on its leading edge, gave us our biggest problem. We had to construct a special ramp to ease it through the cargo doors of the C-124.

Our flight in February from Andrews to Osaka, via Hawaii and Wake Island, took six days. It was uneventful except for an engine change on Wake. Charles Lindbergh was scheduled to meet us in Osaka, but he was delayed in Honolulu. Consequently, we missed the opportunity of meeting him. In Osaka, however, we did meet the elderly Japanese man who had met Lindbergh who had met Lindbergh in that city in 1931. Indeed, Lindbergh had taken him for a ride in the Sirius. When he saw the Sirius again, he broke into tears.

We had arrived in Osaka three weeks before EXPO opened. One of its directors gave us a private tour. We were the only spectators. It was wonderful. After EXPO closed its doors in September, my crew and I returned to Osaka and brought the Sirius back to Washington. This was a mission that I will never forget.