

# TWA SKYLINER

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## Connie Readied for Air Museum



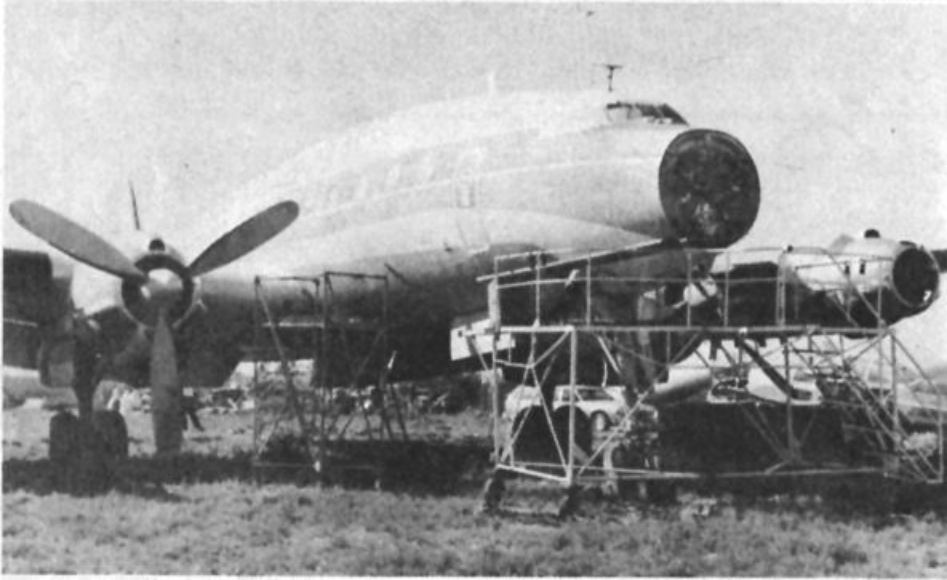
TWA volunteers proudly display "their" nearly finished 049 Constellation at the Pima Air Museum in Tucson, where the group has spent many weekends restoring the historic aircraft. Pictured (from left) are Stu Blain, lead stores clerk; Gene Shaw, mechanic; Dan McGrogran, flight analyst, and retired mechanic Jim Jones. Others in the work crew not pictured were Carl Langston, supervisor-component maintenance; mechanic John Merchant; senior engineer Milo Raub; ramp serviceman Dave Hockmuth of Tucson, and Larry Hilliard, director-public affairs. The air museum, located adjacent to the Davis Monthan Air Force Base near Tucson, has nearly 100 military and civilian aircraft on display. TWA's "Star of Switzerland" will soon be the star of the show.

## Tucson Museum Receives Restored TWA Connie



George Shott, director of the Pima Air Museum at Tucson, Arizona, addresses crowd at ceremonies in which TWA volunteers presented to the museum the restored TWA "Constellation," "Star of Switzerland." April 14, 1980 - *Story on Page 8.*

# 'Star of Switzerland' Shining Brightly Again



Friends of the "Star of Switzerland" had their work cut out for them before restoration began. After over 7,000 hours of volunteer labor, "Star of Switzerland" was formally dedicated to the Pima Air Museum. Restoration coordinator Dan McGrogan introduced the volunteers. From left are: Stew Blain, Carl Langston,



Gene Shaw, Jim Jones, Milo Raub, John Morrison, John Merchant and Vern Davy (in white coveralls, all from MCI); RSM Dave Hochmuth, Tucson; cargo service agent Cy Tuhy, TUS, and former flight attendant Jane Bomar Miller. The aircraft, famed for its graceful, dolphin-like shape, is 36 years old.

*With great affection, we, the undersigned volunteer restoration crew of TWA veterans, dedicate our work to the*

**PIMA AIR MUSEUM**

*The love, pride, and frustration we feel for the "Connie" will remain here always*

So reads a plaque on the nose gear of Lockheed Constellation 049, the "Star of Switzerland," that flew TWA's routes in the late 1940s and '50s.

In fact, this particular Connie was the

10th aircraft off the Lockheed assembly line in 1944. It is believed to be the oldest surviving example of what was once considered the world's premier airliner.

The prized antique now rests in the Pima Air Museum in Tucson, Arizona, and was recently dedicated following a two-year restoration process involving over 7,000 hours of volunteer time from the tech services team in Kansas City — who restored the Northrop Alpha now hanging in the National Air & Space Museum in Washington — and from employees and their families in Tucson.

It all began when Tucson freight agent Cy Tuhy discovered that Connie N90831, sitting forlornly in the back of the Pima Museum in the tattered colors of McCulloch — the chain saw people — was actually TWA's "Star of Switzerland." Writing to Robin Wilson, then vice president-technical services, he sought volunteer backing to undertake the restoration process.

With Mr. Wilson's endorsement and guidance, the volunteer crew was assembled, again headed by Alpha project coordinator Dan McGrogan. Now, two

years later, it stands in its original TWA markings shining brightly in the Arizona sun.

Museum director George Shott calls the Connie "one of the main attractions of the museum. It's a breed which is now virtually extinct in the aviation world."

All TWAers are welcome to view an important part of TWA history by visiting the museum in Tucson, located south of the city near Davis-Monthan Air Force Base. It's open daily 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. during the week, and 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on weekends and holidays.

—Larry Hilliard



No sign of the Connie's past history was visible before restoration work began two years ago.



"Star of Switzerland" was returned to its original TWA markings by corps of dedicated volunteers.



Former Connie hostess Jane Bomar Miller wore her original uniform to the dedication ceremonies. She is with her husband, retired Capt. John M. Miller.



Mid-1940's Connie delivery crew (from left): James Combs, hostess Pat Bigson, Capt. Bob Buck, hostess Jane Bomar (see photo at left), Paul Frederickson, John Collings.

**1970** 49-46-10/C-69-5-LO USAAF 42-94549 28 Apr 45. USAAF history: Acceptance 30 Jun 45, dely Burbank 28 Jul 45 & kept at factory. Lsd TWA at Washington Natl 4 Aug 45, in use on Washington-San Francisco flights. To La Guardia 6 Jan 46, Burbank 30 Apr 46 (but in storage there by Mar 46, TT: 279 hrs), War Assets Administration 23 Jun 47, but parked for disposal by 24 Feb 47. Sold to Hughes Tool Co and modified by LAC for TWA as Model 049-46-25 (Feb 48 Contract). Deld to TWA at Burbank by Howard Hughes as NC90831 'Star of Switzerland' FN 517 1 Oct 48 (TT: 286 hrs), flown to Kansas City same day and in svce 7 Oct 48 as standard 1st Class 51-seater. Later N90831. Tfd to Transcontinental & Western Air 1 Feb 49, and to Trans World Airlines Inc 29 May 50. Last 1st-Class svce 24 Apr 53, and to LAS Burbank for Coach Class conversion 25 Apr 53. Re-entered svce 29 May 53. Damaged at Ontario, CA 12 Nov 53 en route Washington, DC-San Francisco, CA. Repaired. Damaged at St. Louis, MO, 19 Dec 57, when a ground loop occurred while the aircraft was making a left turn off a wet runway on to taxiway, causing right main undercarriage to collapse. En route Los Angeles - New York. Repaired. Damaged at Las Vegas, NV, 30 Mar 61, when left main undercarriage retracted while aircraft was parked on the ramp, settling onto one wing and stabilizer tip. Sold to Las Vegas Hacienda Inc in damaged condition 13 Apr 61 (TT: 37,905 hrs). Repaired, using port wing of N9409H (c/n 2074) and named 'Desert Queen'. Officially tfd to Hacienda 21 Jul 61. Lsd World Wide Airlines 13 Jul 62, Consolidated Airlines mid-63 and Standard Airways mid-63. Ret to Las Vegas Hacienda Inc 1964. Lsd to Dellair by Apr 64, and to Trans World Insurance Brokers 1 Dec 64. Stored at Long Beach, CA, by Jan 65, with Dellair markings removed. Ret to Las Vegas Hacienda Inc 23 Jul 65. Painted up in Air Belize Intl markings late 65, but never op by them. Sold to McCulloch Properties Inc 1 Dec 65 (FAA files give 18 Nov 65), t/a Lake Havasu City. Sold to Allied Aircraft Sales Inc 15 May 70. Sold to Harlow L Jones t/a Southwestern Skyways Inc 5 Jun 70. Flown from Lake Havasu City, AZ, to Tucson Intl, AZ 23 Jun 70 (TT: 41,908 hrs). Traded by Harlow L Jones to USAF Museum in exchange for HU-16B Albatross 51-7178 at Pima County Museum, AZ, in Sep 70. Flown from Tucson Intl to Davis Monthan AFB, AZ, 5 Feb 71 for Pima County Museum and ownership tfd to US Air Force Museum 6 Apr 71. Stored in open at Pima County. Canx from USCAR as "retired" 10 Jul 72. Restoration work began in 1977, by volunteer TWA personnel. Aircraft restored in full Trans World Airline markings as N90831 'Star of Switzerland' FN 517, with silver cabin roof. Handed over officially by TWA restorers, who had devoted over 7,000 man hours to the work, on 16 Feb 80. Oldest Constellation and only C-69 extant.