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Swissair Celebrates Trans-Atlantic Flight

By JANE L. LEVERE

Celebrating 50 years of trans-Atlantic service, Swissair brought a vintage DC-4 aircraft to Kennedy International Airport yesterday. The plane carried 34 passengers who had left Switzerland on Friday and flown a total of 25 hours, stopping in Shannon, Ireland, and Gander, Newfoundland.

The flight went far more smoothly than Swissair's maiden North Atlantic voyage, on a DC-4 that left Geneva on May 2, 1947, and also stopped twice for refueling. That flight had to land in Washington because of fog at La Guardia Airport. Passengers then traveled by train to New York City.

Dr. Hannes Goetz, Swissair's chairman, said he hoped the anniversary flight would have a "certain P.R. effect, and demonstrate the role Swissair plays as a medium-sized airline in the global airline business."

Swissair is operating two commemorative trans-Atlantic DC-4 programs now and in June, boarding westbound passengers in Switzerland and eastbound passengers in New York, all of whom will return home by 747 or MD-11, the planes Swissair usually flies across the Atlantic. Travelers pay from $7,540 to $9,960 to participate. Prices include a hotel in Gander and in Shannon, and several days in New York or Switzerland, depending on the direction of travel, plus meals and sightseeing.

Officials said there are still seats available on the three remaining flights, one that leaves Saturday for Switzerland and two in June.

Swissair said the DC-4 used for the celebration, painted in the airline's 1947 color scheme, has been flown continuously for 50 years. It is usually operated by South African Airways on safari flights.

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