



GRAMPAW PETTIBONE

Memo from Gramps

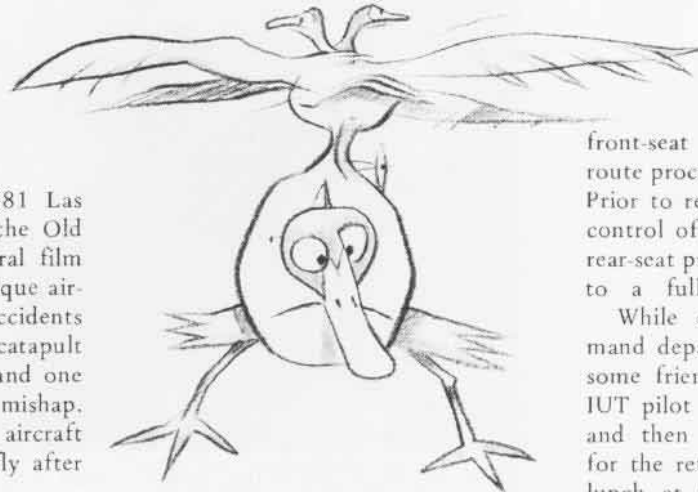
During the September 1981 Las Vegas Tailhook Convention, the Old Sage of Safety reviewed several film sequences and histories of unique aircraft takeoff and landing accidents which included two A-6 catapult shots, one A-7 ramp strike, and one F-14 bolter-settle off-angle mishap. In these four accidents the aircraft recovered and continued to fly after the crew ejected.

It has been brought to the attention of Old Fossil Face that some of the editorial comments made during the film dialogue erroneously left some members of the audience with the impression that the crews of the aircraft were faulted for premature ejection. For those who formed that impression, the following comments are offered.

It was not the intent to imply criticism for premature ejections. The incidents cited above were selected for the unique and somewhat humorous behavior of the maverick aircraft following ejection. In the A-7 incident, the unpiloted aircraft remained airborne for an additional 32 minutes following the night ramp strike ejection. In the A-6 mishap, the aircraft recovered, climbed straight ahead, and then made a turn back toward the ship while descending gradually on a head-on collision course with the ship, crashing only two-to-three hundred feet ahead.

In one incident, the crew was cited for improper coordination, but not premature ejection.

In cases such as these, usually the crew of the aircraft involved can most accurately assess the urgency to eject. In all four cases cited, no one could have predicted that the aircraft would



recover. Therefore, it would appear that assessments of premature ejections were out of order.

The 1961 poster depicting a flaming F8U *Crusader* going off the angle deck with the comments, "Know when to go — Then GO," was good advice then, and still applies. It has snatched many aviators from the clutches of the Grim Reaper.

In far too many mishaps, aircrews (usually experienced) have delayed ejections in fatal attempts to recover the aircraft. The loss of a valuable, expensive aircraft is one matter, but in no case do recovery efforts justify the loss of the aircrew.

Pedigree Passenger with Papers

Two second-tour pilots filed a stop-over flight plan to a Midwest air base as part of a TA-4J instructor under training (IUT) syllabus. The pilot-in-command, playing the role of a student, occupied the front seat. The IUT pilot was to be the flight instructor who would observe and debrief some common student errors, practice a bit of instrument training en route, and execute a landing at destination from the rear cockpit.

En route, the IUT critiqued the

front-seat pilot takeoff, climbout, en route procedures, and basic airmanship. Prior to reaching destination, he took control of the aircraft and executed a rear-seat precision instrument approach to a full-stop landing as briefed.

While on deck, the pilot-in-command departed the air station to visit some friends in a nearby town. The IUT pilot supervised aircraft servicing and then reviewed the weather data for the return flight. After a leisurely lunch at the base operations' snack bar, the IUT pilot returned to the flight line where he met the pilot-in-command who was making ready for the return flight.

The brief for this leg remained the same with one exception: the IUT pilot was to share the back seat with another passenger, a small 10-week-old pedigreed puppy that the pilot-in-command had obtained during his off-base visit. He assured the IUT that the puppy would pose no problem because he was so small.

During engine turnup and taxi, the terrified puppy snuggled close to his back-seat partner. Once airborne, the puppy calmed down. However, as the flight passed through FL220 the IUT noticed that the puppy became drowsy from what he suspected to be a possible lack of oxygen. He released the oxygen mask and lowered it to the puppy's face in an attempt to revive him. It was then the IUT detected a most distinctive odor and realized that his partner with papers had not bothered to use them. Each time the puppy appeared drowsy, the IUT shared his oxygen and was able to control the drowsiness. However, he was unable, as was the pup, to effect any control over the frequent calls of nature by the pressurized pup.

Upon landing and exiting the air-

craft, the embarrassed and nauseated IUT was relieved that the flight was over. The front seat pilot was highly amused. The frightened pedigreed passenger also was highly relieved, but not amused. The flight line personnel were neither relieved nor amused.



Grampaw Pettibone says,

Holy horrified hound dogs! What an airborne outhouse this turned out to be. Old Gramps knows full well that these two lads are not the first "pet peddlers" to have what seemed like a small matter backfire on them. And I doubt that they will be the last. However, for the benefit of any future would-be aerial Clyde

Beatty, let's look at some of the lessons to be learned from this mess.

In the first place, cockpits are designed for one passenger per seat, regardless of occupant's rank, pedigree or sex.

Secondly, this is a good example, of why "it's not nice to fool Mother Nature." It's true that a dog may be

man's best friend, but it's only true on good old *terra firma*, and the more *firma*, the less terrier! The only air-*dales* allowed in Navy aircraft are the two-legged variety. Beagles aren't legal.

Thirdly, and most important, is the fact that you, as part of the flight crew share in the responsibility and

*get with it!
We are not
a Flying
Circus!
We are
PROS!*



accountability for the safe and proper conduct of the flight. Don't allow yourself to be placed in a position to be left holding the bag when things turn to worms. Speak up and say no when needed.

And, as a final note, Old MacDonald advises, "It not only isn't nice, it ain't legal to fool around with Mother Nature, or Mother Goose for that matter. So, you aluminum cowboys, keep the livestock in the barnyard and out of the aircraft! No turkeys allowed."