The Veil is Lifted
Richard Singley, APJ 1947

Fisherman’s Lake, Liberia
PAA Builds a Seaport in the Jungle

Fisherman’s Lake,
Liberia 1941-1946
Drawings from
PAA Employee Manual
Fisherman's Lake and the South Atlantic Mail Call

- **1942**: PAA Africa
- **1943**: Army (probably some mail)
- **1944**: PAA Commercial Southern Routes (very little mail dropped in Africa)
- **1945**: PAA Africa Orient "Cannonball"

- Route 6
- Route 6 Restart
- PAA Natal to FSH Shuttle
- Army
PAA Africa, Inc  
PAA Ferries, Inc  
Fisherman’s Lake Construction

Fisherman’s Lake, Liberia  
(Lake Piso)  
An Unlikely Operations Center
Benson Field

Flying Boat Piers

Benson Field

PAA Village
PAA Africa, Inc

Incorporated July 15, 1941
Goal: Build route from Gambia to Egypt and beyond
Improved British Air Routes in Africa that were
Built to one trip per week
Rebuilt to handle hundreds of Ferry Aircraft

PAA Ferries, Inc

Transport Bombers and Fighters to African
and European fronts
PAA Africa, Inc
Progress

Approximately 20 DC-3 Type Aircraft

November 21, 1941    Air route operating to Khartoum
January 25, 1942    Air route to Cairo
June 2, 1942    Air route to Tehran
Occasional trips to India and USSR

PAA Africa “Militarized” in October 1942.
PAA Africa, Inc
Details of routes in West Africa

- November 21, 1941 to Khartoum
- January 25, 1942 to Cairo
- April 23, 1942 to Cairo
- June 2, 1942 added Cairo-Iraq-Iran

- PAA-Africa routes operated by U.S. Army after November 1942.
Fisherman’s Lake History

1. First Inspection from Air: 11 July 1941

2. First Inspection on the ground: September 1941

3. First Flying Boat Landing: 7 October 1941
   Charter (aka SM) #4 Capetown Clipper.

4. First construction crew arrived: 24 December 1941
   First cargo ship arrived soon after, diverted from Bathurst.

5. Proving Flight MIA-FSH-LEO: 10-19 November 1941

6. Inaugural FAM 22 trip: 6-17 December 1941
   FSH landing 12 December 1941
Fisherman’s Lake History

U.S. Enters War December 7, 1941

7. First Cargo Shuttles- Natal to Lagos

8. FSH location ready for Military Shuttles: 15 June 1942
   Special Mission 34.


10. Commercial PAA shuttles start 28 October 1942
    Routes 10, 12 and 14 through 1946.
Route to Leopoldville

PAA Advertisement

December 1941

Colliers

November two-page ad

Saturday Evening Post
PAA “Commercial” Route to Africa
FAM 22

South Atlantic Service
Route 6 AKA FAM-22
to Leopoldville

Miami

San Juan

Trinidad

Belém

Bermuda

New York

Shediac

Botwood

Bathurst

Leopoldville

Lagos

Bolama

Dakar

Horta

Bolama

Trinidad

San Juan

Miami

Leopoldville

Natal

Fisherman’s Lake

South Atlantic Service Route 6 AKA FAM-22 to Leopoldville.
### Researched Records for Route 6 (FAM22)
**Trips NY to Leo and Return in 1941/1942**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trips</th>
<th>Leave NY</th>
<th>Leopoldville</th>
<th>Return NY</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td>6001/6002</td>
<td>6 Dec. 41</td>
<td>12 Dec. 41</td>
<td>16 Dec 41</td>
<td>Skip Bathurst</td>
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<td>Charter 6</td>
<td>20 Dec 41</td>
<td>25 Dec 41/6 Jan 42</td>
<td>9 Jan 42</td>
<td>To Calcutta</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charter 7</td>
<td>26 Dec 41</td>
<td>1 Jan 42/9 Jan 42</td>
<td>12 Jan 42</td>
<td>To Calcutta</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charter 8</td>
<td>30 Dec 41</td>
<td>2 Jan 42/15 Jan 42</td>
<td>18 Jan 42</td>
<td>To Calcutta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charter 10</td>
<td>15 Jan 42</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>8 Feb 41</td>
<td>To Calcutta N12</td>
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<td>6003/6004</td>
<td>18 Jan 42</td>
<td>23-24 Jan 42</td>
<td>30 Jan 42</td>
<td>Pacific 18606</td>
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<tr>
<td>6005/6006/</td>
<td>22 Feb 42</td>
<td>1 Mar 42/23 Mar 42</td>
<td>26 Mar 42</td>
<td>To Diego Garcia</td>
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<tr>
<td>6007/6008</td>
<td>12 Apr 42</td>
<td>16 Apr 42</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>1st Shuttle</td>
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<tr>
<td>6009/6010</td>
<td>5 May 42</td>
<td>14 May 42</td>
<td>24 May 42</td>
<td>2 shuttles</td>
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<td>6011/6012</td>
<td>28 May 42</td>
<td>6 June 42</td>
<td>9 June 42</td>
<td>No shuttles</td>
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<td>15 Jun 42</td>
<td>19 June 42</td>
<td>30 June 42</td>
<td>3 shuttles</td>
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<td>6015/6016</td>
<td>6 Jul 42</td>
<td>11 Jul 42</td>
<td>16 June 42</td>
<td>3 shuttles</td>
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<td>6017/6018</td>
<td>5 Aug 42</td>
<td>15 Aug 42</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>2 shuttles</td>
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<tr>
<td>6019-6020</td>
<td>30 Aug 42</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>16 Sept 42</td>
<td>2 shuttles</td>
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<tr>
<td>6021-6022</td>
<td>22 Sept 42</td>
<td>27 Sept 42</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>2 shuttles</td>
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<tr>
<td>6023-6024</td>
<td>17 Oct 42</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>3 Nov 42</td>
<td>2 shuttles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PAA FAM22 Mail
Hard to distinguish from Shuttle Mail

China to US
Miami March 26, 1942
Censor India
Dated for Trip 6006
How did Mail Get To/From Africa/Middle East/India?
Typical South Atlantic Routes 1942-1945

Very little mail dropped off at Fisherman’s Lake
PAA Boeing 314 Shuttles

Army C-47 and C-53 Feed Natal from Miami
PAA Africa, US Army, BOAC and Sabina Carry in Africa
PAA Boeing 314 Shuttle Mail
23 January 1942-18 May 1943
Hard to distinguish from Cannonball Mail

May 27, 1942 to India
Received July 8, 1942
Censor in Miami and India
Wrong dates for an FAM22 trip
Possible Shuttle
Shuttle Cargo
March 1942– April 1943
2,967,000 lbs Cargo
Shuttle Mail
March 1942– April 1943
425,000 lbs Mail

Shuttle Ordered Ended
May 18, 1943
Why Did the Shuttle End??
How did Mail get across the Atlantic??

The Boeing 314 was Obsolete
Land Based Aircraft Much Improved

PAA Africa Orient Cannonball

Start: 10 November 1942
Five aircraft trial flight.

By: February 1943
Seven planes each way Daily
Miami to Calcutta 3 1/2 days.

February 1943 to Summer 1944
7,100,000 lbs of Mail

Skymaster C-54
(aka Douglas DC-4)
Map of Basic “Cannonball” Routes.
Air Mail generally carried to Miami.
Not Cannonball?

Commercial PAA route
To New York

French Equitorial Africa December
Brazzaville December 27 1944
Censor New York
No backstamps

Mauritaine October 10, 1944
Censor French and New York
No backstamps
March 1943 to India
Censor in Miami and India
Possible Shuttle or Cannonball

Cannonball or Shuttle

April 1943 to US
Miami May 4, 1943
Possible Shuttle or Cannonball
1944 Two Happenings

1. Negotiations to Restart LEO Route
   China Clipper released but needed
   CAB issues
   Army and Navy Issues
   Post Office issues

2. Army Cancels Contractors.
A. PAA FAM 22 Original Plan

First Round December 1941-November 1942
Goal: Southern Route to Middle East
Fear that Germany would dominate North Africa
Original plan 2 trips per month
Route was Military supervised from Miami

B. PAA FAM 18 (aka FAM 22) Restart

Second Round September 1944-January 1945
Goal: Improve Mail route to southern Africa
Give PAA more influence once the war ended
Also fill in until new aircraft available
PAA and USPO wanted Civilian route
Military insisted to continue as a military route
PAA FAM 18 (aka FAM 22) Restart

China Clipper Available for Leopoldville Route
21 September 1944 to 8 January 1945
Very Limited Operations

1. USPO limits Mail to Liberia and Belgian Congo.
2. CAB: No Passengers until December, only Natal-FSH-Natal
3. CAB: Lagos not allowed.
4. Commercial but not publicized.
5. No announcements, news, or First Flights

China Clipper
Martin M130
### China Clipper Travel Through Fisherman’s Lake
**September 1944 through December 1944**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trip</th>
<th>Eastbound To Leopoldville</th>
<th>At Leopoldville Bold estimated</th>
<th>Westbound From Leopoldville</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>25 Sept. 1944</td>
<td><strong>27 Sept. 1944</strong></td>
<td>30 Sept. 1944</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>14 Oct. 1944</td>
<td><strong>15 Sept. 1944</strong></td>
<td>17 Oct. 1944</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>30 Oct. 1944</td>
<td><strong>1 Oct. 1944</strong></td>
<td>3 Nov. 1944</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>13 Nov. 1944</td>
<td><strong>15 Nov. 1944</strong></td>
<td>17 Nov 1944</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>28 Nov. 1944</td>
<td><strong>29 Nov. 1944</strong></td>
<td>1 Dec. 1944</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>12 Dec. 1944</td>
<td><strong>14 Dec 1944</strong></td>
<td>16 Dec 1944</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>29 Dec. 1944</td>
<td><strong>30 Dec 1944</strong></td>
<td>1 Jan 1945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>8 Jan 1945</td>
<td><strong>Trinidad Crash</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Army Cancels Transport Contracts

1. Spring 1944 ATC takes back Aircraft
   By Summer’s end PAA has 5 C-54s
2. By Autumn last Cannonball flight
3. Ends Contracts with
   American, TWA and Eastern
4. ATC operates African routes through 1946
Army carried Mail

October 1944 to US
Miami Nov 3 and 6, 1944
Army Route (former Cannonball Routes)
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
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<tr>
<td>Port Lyaouey</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Reg. Letter</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leopoldville</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tack Magnnies</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lelela</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Reg. Letter</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mbwenyeh</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Reg. Letter</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Takoradi</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Reg. Letter</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maritum</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Reg. Letter</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caplaham</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Syst. Vett</td>
<td>412</td>
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<td>Alghera</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Maison Blanche</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Rc. Letter</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyons</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Rc. Letter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lebes</td>
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<td>70</td>
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<tr>
<td>Techaran</td>
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<td>Rc. Letter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moscow</td>
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<td>Rc. Letter</td>
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<td>Rc. Letter</td>
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<td>Embian</td>
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<td>Laiduguri</td>
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<td>Rc. Letter</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>Medan</td>
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<td>Reg. Letter</td>
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<td>Laiduguri</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Reg. Letter</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>Istanbul</td>
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<tr>
<td>Johannesburg</td>
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<td>Reg. Letter</td>
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<td>Beirut</td>
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<td>Reg. Letter</td>
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<td>Cairo</td>
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<td>47</td>
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<td>Reg. Letter</td>
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<td>Abadan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jitte</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tahran</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tehran</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furing Amny</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Metal Plates</td>
<td>31</td>
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<td>Fishermans Lake</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Film</td>
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<td>Running</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sec. Letter</td>
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<td>Gunga</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tube Turner</td>
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<td>Chabu</td>
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<td>Spring (usd)</td>
<td>102</td>
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<td>Chuangking</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Gun Parts</td>
<td>558</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Filter Kit</td>
<td>318</td>
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## Services Comparisons

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Mail Carried</th>
<th>Service Areas</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PAA Commercial Routes</td>
<td>7,500,000 Lbs</td>
<td>Europe, Americas</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 1939-December 1945</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Natal FSH Shuttle</td>
<td>425,000 Lbs</td>
<td>Africa, Middle East</td>
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<td>January 1942-May 1943</td>
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<td>India, China</td>
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<td>PAA Africa Orient</td>
<td>7,100,000 Lbs</td>
<td>Africa, Middle East</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 1942-September 1944</td>
<td></td>
<td>India, China</td>
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</table>
Fisherman's Lake and the South Atlantic Mail Call

1942
PAA Africa

1943
Army (probably some mail)

1944
PAA Commercial Southern Routes (very little mail dropped in Africa)

1945
Route 6 Restart

Route 6
PAA Natal to FSH Shuttle

PAA Africa Orient "Cannonball" Army