Edition 1/2007



WACA welcomes all Interliners to the AGA in Capetown



And the Commemoration of its 40th Anniversary



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WORLD AIRLINES CLUBS ASSOCIATION

WACA WORLD NEWS

Edition 1/2007

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President's Message



My Dear Interliners,

This year marks the 40th Anniversary of our association. We wish to pay tribute to the founder members that had this bright idea of creating this platform to bring airline employees of the world together irrespective of their rank, race or creed. The mutual understanding of the people within the association has been nourished in its diversity whilst bringing unity among the people forming part of it.

Whoever has been part of it in a way or the other

must be proud of the association for developing the network of friendship throughout the 40 years without any barrier whilst contributing to the betterment of the industry at large.

Today the Airline Industry is one of the main drivers of the various national economies of the world. Though there might not be a right indicator to justify my statement, yet WACA throughout the 40 years of existence and with the tenacity and dedication of our interliners, has moved thousands of interliners around the globe as true Ambassadors whilst promoting Interlining, Tourism in all its form and after all the Airline Companies that each and every one belongs to.

This year the Africa/Indian Ocean Islands/ Middle East Region under the most capable leadership of its Regional Vice President, Mr. Yousef is inviting you all to join his team to celebrate the 40 years of existence together in South Africa, Cape Town City which is not only one of the world's most beautiful locations, but it is also soaked with immense historical significance.

The more so, that this AGA will also mark a milestone in the history of our association where we are bringing interliners from different part of the world to contribute to the UN Millennium Development Goal of combating the HIV/AIDS as part of our Social Responsibility project mainly the infected children of South Africa.

I am welcoming you on behalf of all my fellow Executive Committee Members, on this auspicious occasion of Celebrations to share your happiness to the neediest as well.

Maga Ramasamy President

Editorial



Dear Interliners,

Several months have past since our last issue of WACA World News and now the latest issue 01/07 is ready for your reading enjoyment.

Unfortunately I'm still missing reports and photos of some of the interesting tours organized by different clubs in the past few months but hopefully some of you will send them to me for the next issue. For example, I believe that everybody would like to know how the Cambodia Tour -organized for the first time this year - was enjoyed by those attending.

RVP Europe, Peter Gilardoni informed me about a very interesting suggestion from the European Region. The clubs had asked him to have

some reports made in the local language of some clubs, as not all members have a good working knowledge of English. This addition would help to make the WWN even more attractive to this target group. I think that this is a good idea and so I would like to invite anyone who is interested to submit articles or notes in other languages such as German, Spanish, Portuguese, etc. Arabic or Asian languages are also welcome, however they would have to be in Latin characters. Following up on this suggestion, you will find for the first time in this edition, several articles in German. Please let me know your opinion about this new feature.

We are now only 3 months away from our AGA in Capetown, South Africa organized by the AIM-Region and the commemoration of WACA's 40th Anniversary. The Organizational Committee has been very busy carefully preparing all details for this very special event in the history of our Association. We hope that a major number of Interliners will find their way to Capetown and join us in our big Interline party. Several pre- and post Tours have been offered to make the stay in South Africa a very special vacation for all of our members.

As we always do at our AGA, we will not forget those who are not so fortunate and who need our support. Therefore, we will include Charity Activities in our program at the AGA. President Maga Ramasamy and RVP AIM Yousef Yousef are in close contact with the main charitable associations in South Africa and will select the most appropriate one. You will be informed by our Headquarters and on the website <u>www.waca.org</u> about the decision taken and how you can support this activity.

In case of any doubt or if you have questions about any WACA events you may contact also the WACA representative from your club.

Hope to meet all of you in Capetown!

Yours in Interlining, Rosemarie Mamede Vice President Public Relations

Commemoration in Montreal



There was a gathering of the WACA clan in Montreal in early February to celebrate the 50th wedding anniversary of two long-time interliners Denise and Claude Loiselle.

Val and Gerry Philbrook, Sheila Read and Sharon Revel came in from Vancouver, Rita and David Larkin came in from Spain, among the local interliners, to name just a few, included Maud and Julio Seiz, Rita and Roger Sutton, Anna and Stan Fafoutis, Helene Racicot, Chico Valdez, Don Cole and Kitty Winterbotham.

Aubrey Winterbotham

Farewell to a true Interliner



Dear colleagues, Dear friends,

We are very sorry having to inform you that we had to take leave of our dear friend Irma Bärtschi. She passed away in the early morning hours of 8 February 2007.

Irma had worked for Swissair and been a member of the Internairline Club Zurich for many years. She was a Member of Honour and a member of the IACZ Charity Team. But she was not just a member of the IACZ; for many of us she was grandmother, mother and friend. She devoted most of her life to aviation, interlining, and charity projects. At the age of almost 86 years she still worked for the Air Force Museum in Dübendorf near Zurich. As she travelled a lot during her life, she had friends all over the world, whom she also warmly welcomed and accommodated in her house in Switzerland. In the IACZ, she strongly supported all activities of the Charity Team and always helped where help was needed.

We will all miss Irma Bärtschi very much. She will always have a place in our hearts.

On behalf of the Interairline Club Zurich and its Charity Team

Heidemarie Gilardoni

Several years ago the Zurich Interline Club hosted the Executive Committee meeting and kindly organised home stays to keep costs at a minimum for the meeting. I was fortunate enough to be hosted by Irma, a long and devoted member of WACA.

Irma had for many years worked fro Swiss Air and remarked that since its demise she was unable to travel as often as she used to, due to Swiss air employees being unable to receive travel benefits. I discussed the same situation arose with Ansett Australian employees who lost benefits when the airline went into receivership.

This started me thinking and as a result of our discussions I implemented a Petition to request benefits for employees. Like Irma who had lost out due to an airline being put out of business. Through WACA I received over 4000 petitions and as a result have been able to join a programme that enables such former employees to receive some benefits that they otherwise not have been able to enjoy.

Irma will be sadly missed by the Zurich Interline Club and by members who enjoyed her company at various AGA's and functions but her memory will live on in the knowledge she supported my action to help airline employees, like her who lost privileges once entitled to those in the industry whose airline went into receivership.

Details on the programme can be obtained from me at kitpar@netspace.net.au

John Aarons,

Vice President, Special Projects and International Events

Meeting the Queens



February 20th marked an historical event with the arrival at 5.30am of the Queen Mary on its first visit to Sydney, on its maiden voyage around the world.

That evening over 120 members of the Sydney Interline Club joined two small harbour cruises to witness the historical event of the arrival that evening of the Queen Elizabeth into Sydney Harbour marking the first time that both Queens has been on one port at the one time. The event was marked by Sydney Harbour full `of every type of boat to witness this meeting. Both the Captain Cook and Matilda vessels with our members on board witnessed the passing of both ships in the harbour....a moment nobody will ever forget, not to mention the party atmosphere, as always created by our Interliners.



Then the most amazing fireworks display seen on the harbour for some time.

It was a momentous event and will be followed next year with the arrival of the new Queen Victoria and Queen Elizabeth in Sydney again on the same day. Already the Club has booked 150 spaces for members to watch the re- enactment of this spectacular event in one of the most wonderful harbours in the world.

John Aarons VP International Events and Special Projects



Airline Event in Petra



Today first of April is a very special day for me being a Royal Jordanian staff where RJ officially joined oneworld alliance. Royal Jordanian is the first airline from the entire Middle East to find a home with any of the global airline alliances and oneworld's first recruit for some six years.

On 27of March 2007 RJ was welcomed on board at a series of special celebration events in its Jordan home base. Some tours were arranged for oneworld members and guests. They visited Petra, the Red Rose City which is racing to be one of the New Seven Wonders of the world and sightseeing to some of the world famous sites close to the Dead Sea - the lowest point below sea level.-.There you find the sight of Jesus baptism and Mount Nebo, where Moses first surveyed the Promised Land and where the Prophet is reputed to have died and been buried. Madaba's archaeological park and St. George church, with its 6th century mosaic of Jerusalem and the holy land- one of the world's earliest maps – was also visited. One day tour was arranged for oneworld guests to visit the Red rose city -Petra- where they had the chance to enjoy seeing the City that built in rocks.

Their tour included seeing the Nabataean temples and tombs that carved into the rock. And walking through "Siq" the path that leads to "Khazneh" or what is called treasury which is the best Petra's known monuments. Guests enjoyed their unique experience and returned to their homes filled with unforgettable memories of Petra and Jordan. And their mouth saying as Dean Burger said: "Match me such a marvel, save in Eastern clime. A rose -red city, half as old as time"

["Petra" Dean Burger]

As a new JIC WACA Rep. I take this opportunity and on behalf of JIC President and Members to encourage you to vote for Petra to be one of the new seven wonders of the world and welcome you to visit our country Jordan and enjoy its historical places and warm hospitality.

Suhair Mahmoud Jordan Interline Club WACA Rep.





Interregional Get-Together in Prague – I -20 – 24 April 2007

"Prague is an unique and wonderful city and all who see it leave with a sense of fascination."

Prague- the city of a hundred Spires- is the capital and largest city of Czech Republic, situated on the Vltava River in central Bohemia, was Interliners new destination, where the WACA Interregional get together took place between 20-24 April 2007.



Around 80 Interliners joined WACA Interregional get together program hosted by Hungarian Club, where 19 interliners from Jordan Interline Club participated in this event.

First day of our trip was discovering Prague, interliners walked through Prague streets, that walk included a thousand years of history, architecture and stories. We visited the oldest and most interesting parts of Prague:

Prague Castle- the largest ancient castle in the world and the symbol of Czech history and culture with its Royal Gardens and gothic St. Vitus Cathedral, old town square with its various architectural styles including gothic Ty'n Cathedral and Baroque St. Nicolas Church. We had the chance to see the famous astronomical clock that has been measuring time in Prague for six centuries and Charles Bridge that crosses Vltava River, which was very busy with painters and souvenirs shoppers.

Walking in Prague streets was amazing and we had the feeling that boundaries between the past and present were dissolving in to fairy tale.

We ended up our day in mini cruise on the River Vltava with dancing dinner.

Next day we headed to Kutna Hora city- the silver mine- Gothic city situated in central Bohemia region of Bohemia and since 1995 the city center has been UNESCO world heritage. We visited the St. Barbora Cathedral, the Wallach courtyard and had our lunch in Kometa Restaurant, and then we visited the Bone Chapel where the bones of 40,000 dead parishioners were drug up and used to line the walls. We went back to Prague and had our dinner in downtown and enjoyed night walking at downtown illuminated.

Last day was to visit Karlovy Vary city, which is also known in English as Carlsbad.

Karlovy Vary is a SPA city situated in Western part of Czech and famous of its hot springs.

We visited the famous Moser Crystal Manufactory and museum, where each Moser piece is hand crafted and is subtly different from the next. Later we had our lunch in restaurant Lazne, we enjoyed the sightseeing of Colonnade, fountains and hot springs, and some of us tasted it. Finally, we visited and tasted liquor at the Bicentennial Becherovka Factory.

Our trip was over and we left with unforgettable memories of the "Golden City" of Prague.

"Prague is an ever – changing, unexpected, charming and always surprising city. While much is visible and a tour offers interesting sights, much more is hidden. If I search for one word to express mystery, I find the best one is Prague"

As JIC WACA Rep. and on behalf of Jordan Interline Club President and members we thank Hungarian Club for hosting this magnificent trip to Prague and especially to Barna and his team.

Thank you Interline I'm grateful.

Suhair Mahmoud Jordan I.C., WACA Rep.



Interregional Get-Together in Prague – II - 20 – 24 April 2007

Wenn man keine Flugvergünstigungen mehr hat, muss man sich etwas einfallen lassen. So kamen wir auf die Idee, mit dem Auto nach Prag zu reisen. Im Nachhinein muss ich sagen, die Idee war super!

Es war kurzweilig, landschaftlich wunderschön, und wir, Ria, Mia, Janine, Peter und ich, hatten viel Gelegenheit, uns während der neunstündigen Fahr (mit Pausen) zu unterhalten.

In Prag angekommen, trafen wir im Hotel auf Hilde und Eugen, die geflogen sind, sowie auf 70 weitere Airliner aus aller Welt. Es ist jedes Mal ein fröhliches Hallo, wenn man die vielen lieben "alten" Freunde wieder trifft.

Bei einem gemeinsamen Nachtessen testeten wir die verschiedenen tschechischen Spezialitäten.

Am Samstagmorgen, während die Delegierten ihr Meeting hatten, sind Janine und ich durch Prag gelaufen. Die Stadt ist wunderschön mit den vielen prunkvollen Bauten, den engen Gassen und den vielen Brücken. Zum Mittagessen haben sich alle Teilnehmer beim Schloss getroffen, wo uns in einem schönen, alten Gartenlokal ein echt böhmisches Essen serviert wurde. Gut gestärkt ging es zur Burg- und Stadtführung.

Dieser herrliche Tag fand dann mit einer Dancing Dinner Schifffahrt auf der Moldau seinen Abschluss. Noch einmal konnten wir die nun prächtig erleuchteten Gebäude bewundern und uns nebenbei den leiblichen Genüssen hingeben.

Alles war wunderbar, und wir möchten uns ganz herzlich beim Hungarian Interline Club, speziell bei Barna, Georgina und Zia, bedanken. Sie haben diesen Anlass hervorragend gemeistert.

Am Sonntag hiess es bereits wieder Abschied nehmen. Während sich ein grosser Teil der Teilnehmer auf die Best of Bohemia Tour begaben und die anderen sich für den Heimflug rüsteten, bestiegen wir unser Autor für unsere wiederum sehr angenehme Heimreise.

Heidemarie Gilardoni Interairline Club Zürich



Executive Committee Meeting in Rümlang, Zürich 08. – 11. February 2007

Vom 8. bis zum 11. Februar 2007 hat der IACZ zum EC-Meeting, also zum Executive Committee Meeting, der alljährlich wiederkehrenden Frühjahrssession des WACA-Vorstandes eingeladen – und alle sind gekommen, teilweise sogar samt Familie. Unsere Privatunterkünfte haben zwar (offiziell) keine Sterne, werden aber von den einzelnen Clubmitgliedern mit viel Freude und Engagement zur Verfügung gestellt und sind für die Gäste inklusive Frühstück und bleibenden Freundschaften gratis.



Das Mittag- und Nachtessen wird nicht von Starköchen in noblen Restaurants zubereitet, sondern von mir und ist einfache Hausmannskost oder Schweizer Spezialitäten.



Das Wohnzimmer wird zur "grossen Tafelrunde" umfunktioniert, was bei 15 bis 20 Personen gar nicht so einfach ist. Es hat aber jedes Mal vortrefflich gemundet, und das gemütliche Beisammensein wurde von allen geschätzt.

Dank Inkas grossem Wohnzimmer im Haus gleich nebenan konnten wir auch ein perfektes Meetingzimmer zur Verfügung stellen.



Der grossen Traktandenliste fiel leider unser Ausflug zum Üetliberg zum Opfer. Es hat lediglich für einen Kurzbesuch auf den Käferberg gereicht, um wenigstens einen Blick auf Zürich werden zu können.

Einige Teilnehmer sind noch ein bis zwei Tage länger geblieben, um so noch etwas von unserem schönen Land zu sehen.

Den erhaltenen Dank, der per E-Mail aus allen Ecken der Welt hereinkam, möchte ich sehr gerne an meine Helfer weitergeben. Ohne die Gastfamilien, Chauffeure und Küchenhelfer könnten wir so etwas nie durchführen.

Ich bedanke mich herzlich bei Hilde, Ingrid, Inka, Mia, Ria, Sonja und Trudy sowie bei Eugen, Ernie, Heinz und Peter. Ihr alle habt mit dazu beigetragen, dass das EC-Meeting ein voller Erfolg wurde und der WACA-Vorstand sicher gerne an den Aufenthalt in Zürich und seine alten und neuen Freunde aus dem IACZ zurückdenkt.

Heidemarie Gilardoni Interairline Club Zürich

An excellent and most productive Executive Committee (EC) Meeting was held Zurich on 9/10 February. The EC was hosted in various homes of members of the Interairline Club Zurich with the social activities held in the beautiful home of Regional V.P. Europe, Peter Gilardoni and his wife Heidemarie. The meeting room itself was graciously offered in the equally beautiful home of Peter's daughter, Inka Gilardoni. The EC would like to express its sincere appreciation to all in the Interairline Club Zurich for the help, assistance and generosity to ensure the meeting was such a success.

Roof of the World - Spiritual Tibet 5. – 15. May 2007



Roof of the World, Buddhist Spirituality and the Himalayas conjure up images of Tibet. So this May, I finally hit the road and visit this fabled part of China with a group of Interline friends. We flew into Lhasa via an Air China flight from Chengdu and Beijing, choosing to take the train back after the trip. When visiting Tibet, one must be aware of the risks associated with Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS), hence it is prudent to spend at least 3 nights at Lhasa to acclimatize and avoid physical exertion on your first day. Lhasa's modern Gongkar Airport is newly rebuilt and a new tunnel now cuts travel time to Lhasa to an hour. Unlike Kathmandu in Nepal. Lhasa is a modern city with wide avenues and modern amenities. It is also relatively clean. We stayed at the welllocated Shangbala Hotel near the Barkhor square area in the Tibetan part of town, within striking distance of the souvenir shopping and the Jokhang Temple.

In Lhasa, the must see sights are the Jokhang, Tibet's holiest shrine and the Potala Palace. Hundreds of devoted pilgrims from all over Tibet journey here to prostrate themselves before the temple. Souvenir stands operated by the Tibetans and Chinese Muslims lined the square and tourists jostled for space with the Tibetan pilgrims, who spun their prayer wheels as they complete a clockwise circuit (kora) around the Jokhang. No other Buddhist temples in the world can compare to a Tibetan Temple. The insides of the temples are intricately decorated and there seems to be an endless array of Buddhas and colorful deities. Our local Tibetan guide, Baijen, was very knowledgeable and was able to explain to us the intricacies of Tibetan Buddhism.

Called the new Seventh Wonder of the world, the Potala Palace is an awe-inspiring structure that dominates Lhasa city. Access to the Potala is restricted to 1 hour and tickets must be bought in advance. The restrictions were brought into place to control the exploding visitor numbers. The Potala, home of the Dalai Lamas, is an impressive sight when seen from every corner of the city and it was hard work to walk up the numerous steps at such high altitudes. We also visited the Drepung and Sera monasteries, situated within striking distance of Lhasa. If you arrive after 3 p.m. at Sera, you could witness a lively debate among the Monastery's monks. This was quite interesting, as the monks were oblivious to the throng of tourists photographing and watching them.

After Lhasa, we visited the towns of Gyantse and Shigatse. Shigatse is the home of the Tashilhunpo Monastery, seat of the Panchen Lamas. Gyantse is famous for its Fort, which was made famous due to a siege by British Colonel Sir Francis Younghusband in 1904. Tibetan defenders threw themselves off the walls rather than surrender to the British, thus earning Gyantse the title "Hero City".



Next, we answered the lure of the Himalayas by taking a side trip to Mount Everest base camp. To reach Everest, we passed through the spectacular 5200 meters high Pang La pass. 4 of the World's 6 highest mountains can be seen from this vantage point. Makalu (8463m), the worlds 5th highest peak can be seen to the East. Next up is the 4th highest, Lhotse (8516m) and immediately next to Lhotse is Everest (8848m), the tallest mountain in the world. On the far West is Cho Oyu (8201), the world's 6th highest peak. In total, China has 9 mountains over 8000 meters high, more than any other country, including Nepal, with 8. We stayed at the world's highest monastery, Rongphu and from here, it was an easy trek of 12 kilometers to the Everest base camp, with the mountain's formidable North Face unobstructed, unlike the view from the Nepali side, which I last visited in 2003. Since May is the peak climbing season, many tents were spread out over the camp like a mini city. Whilst at the base camp, we saw a herd of wild Himalayan Blue Sheep. On our return from the base camp, we stayed at a "hot springs" hostel at Tingri, where some of us trekked to a nearby ridge to get a view of the dramatic sunset over Cho Oyu.



We rounded off our trip to Tibet by driving to Nam Tso, the world's highest salt-water lake. The color of the lake is of an incredible turquoise hue and the snow capped Nyaingentanghla range provided a dramatic backdrop. We ended our Tibet adventure by taking the Qinghai-Tibet railroad from Lhasa to Xian or Beijing. The train journey by itself is a highlight of any trip to Tibet. We passed through the Tibetan Plateau in comfort and the scenery was spectacular. Tibetan nomads tending to yak herds and flocks of wild Tibetan Antelopes. Within 24 hours, the icy plateau gave way to the heat of the North China Plains. The trip ended well with no one from the group suffering the worse effects of altitude sickness. The infrastructure of Tibet has improved by leaps and bounds in recent years; with new airports, highways, railway and hotels being built. Thus making a trip to Tibet much less arduous as compared to years past.

Julian Chau Secretary General, WACA



RODRIGUES 2007 - A DIFFERENT TYPE OF ISLAND 4. – 07 June 2007



Having spent the previous night at the Preskil Hotel situated near the SSR Airport in Mauritius, it was not too difficult to get back to the airport after an evening of fun and dancing.

The Air Mauritius flight left, as usual, on time having on board some 40 participants at the discovery of this unique destination where "time stood still" the "Cinderella of the Mascarenes".

After one and a half hours of smooth flying, we attained Plaine Corail Airport in Rodrigues. No one was expecting the type of welcome we received. It would seem that people from all over the island had heard that a "Special Group from the World Airlines" were coming to pay them a visit and were anxious to see for them what we looked like. Drums made of goat skin had been warming up and the girls were busy fixing their frangipani flowers in their hair. As soon as the plane touched down at Plaine Corail one could hear the sega music being played on the land side. The sega dance itself dates back from the slavery days and is the rhythmic swaying of the hips.

The Chief Commissioner of Rodrigues Regional Assembly, Mr. Johnson Roussety, made his way to the Airport to greet us individually and addressed the audience to welcome us in Rodrigues Island.

A cocktail was offered at the airport itself by Mr. Yajeswar Ramloll of Ram Restaurant and we soon started tasting the potent local rum mixed with lemon and eucalyptus honey accompanied by samoosas, chili cakes amongst other delicacies. We were then driven to our hotel situated at Pointe Venus just uphill from the capital Port Mathurin. After check-in we had time to rest a little before the cocktail followed by dinner and dancing.

The following day we went on a full day tour to Coco Island off the Coast of Rodrigues Island. What we thought would be a rainy day turned out to be fabulous and sunny. It is worth mentioning that half way to the island we ran into low tide and had to push the boat for a while. Judith decided to walk and it took her a good half hour to reach the island accompanied by our guide Frederick. By the way, Frederick is a policeman by profession and part-time guide. He fell in love with all the females and kept telling us that he was not yet married !!! Our driver Casanova also lived by his name it would seem !!! We toured part of the island and came back from where we had landed to a mouth water-ing lunch prepared by Madame Toto.



Back on Rodrigues Island at around 4pm we had to once again get ready for another cocktail and dinner followed by dancing to the local band.

The next day we went on a full day tour of the island visiting the famous "Caverne Patate" (Potato Cave). With assistance of our guide we descended into the bowels of the earth, into grottos decorated with stalactites and stalagmites. We had a wonderful lunch up on the hill (after driving up 52 sharp bends) overlooking the bay in the presence of James our local member in Rodrigues and his charming wife Josee and daughter. Needless to say, another gastronomical adventure.

We visited the St. Gabriel Catholic Church, the biggest in the Indian Ocean. It is to be noted that 98% of the inhabitants are Catholics.

Back at the hotel at around 5pm we had to get ready for yet another cocktail at the foot of the hill at the "Chez Ram" restaurant. Local dignitaries, Mr. Gaetan Jabeemissar, the Deputy Chief Commissioner of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, Mr. Pritam Singh Mattan, Departmental Head of Tourism, Mr. Rosaire Perrine, Adviser for Arts & Culture to name but a few including local members of the club and the local media were there and once again we had the time of our lives with so many things to taste!!! Our President, Maga together with Peter Gilardoni RVP for Europe presented Mr. Gaetan Jabeemissar with toys, educational material and money gifts donated by club members to the needy children of Rodrigues as part of our Social Responsibility. We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to Mr. Ram for hosting this superb cocktail.

Back at the hotel for our farewell dinner we had the folkloric band waiting to get us on our feet ... another magical night to remember !!!

They say that all good things have to come to an end well !!!

We would like to thank the Rodriguans for their hospitality and authenticity of their friendliness.

Jenny Adams Indian Ocean Islands Interline Club



Do you remember?

This year, commemorating our 40th Anniversary, certainly some of you will remember those days when our Association was founded!



Members of the Airline Industry who were instrumental in the foundation of the World Airlines Clubs Association, pictured in Cannes, France in 1966.



Foundation members in the very first WACA meeting room.

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