

holland news

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LEGENDARY UIVER FLIGHT RELIVED

The DC-2 "Uiver", the KLM airplane which took part in the legendary London-Melbourne Race of 1934 and, with Captain Parmentier, won first prize in the handicap section, is going to fly again!

A group of enthusiastic Dutchmen have definitely decided, after two years of intensive preparations, that the race will be re flown, now almost 50 years later. In Holland and other parts of the world people will once again be able to experience this flight along almost the same route prescribed then by the Australian chocolate manufacturer and organizer of the race, McPherson Robertson.

Many older Dutch people still know exactly how the Uiver, the DC-2 with a 4-man crew, under Captain Parmentier, and three passengers on board, started off the race together with 19 other airplanes at Mildenhall near London. Participation in the race was the initiative of KLM's President at that time, Albert Plesman, who wanted to prove that it was possible to transport passengers and mail safely and on time by air over a distance of more than 20,000 kilometers. In 1934 there was still no single airline which had developed a regular scheduled flight over that distance.

The race, which started on October 20, 1934, kept not only Holland, but the entire world in a state of excitement. Tense moments were experienced with the morning papers and radio reports which told of the adventures of the Dutch participants. The courageous crew which, in spite of a storm-forced landing at a horse race track in Albury (Australia), saw a chance to finish second in the speed race and first in the handicap section.

The crew of the KLM aircraft then took 3 days, 18 hours and 13 minutes. The winners Scott and Black from England took 2 days and 23 hours with their Comet, which was designed especially for speed.

NOS TV SERIES

An enthusiastic team from the NOS Netherlands Broadcasting Corporation has traced the best, still airworthy DC-2 in the world in the US. This DC-2 is in very good condition and is being overhauled at present at KLM's Technical Maintenance facilities at Schiphol Airport. It will be painted in KLM's former colours with contest number 44 on its tail.

If all preparations progress according to plans, the Uiver will redepart in mid-December 1983 with a television and newspaper team on board to film the entire flight and the locations along the way.

UIVER MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

In order to pay the high costs of the entire Uiver project (total costs, including the film production, are about 2.5 million guilders), the Uiver Memorial Foundation was set up. The foundation is managed by representatives of Fokker, KLM, EVD (Netherlands Foreign Trade Agency) and Holland's largest daily newspaper De Telegraaf.

These are also main sponsors of the Uiver project. Other large sponsors include Shell, Schiphol Amsterdam Airport, Bendix and Philips. The public relations is being handled by the international Hill & Knowlton Agency in Amsterdam.

THE ROUTE

The route will take off from Mildenhall near London.

The route is as follows:

Mildenhall (England), Marseille (France), Rome (Italy), Athens (Greece), Larnaca (Cyprus), Aleppo (Syria), Damascus, Kuwait, Abu Dhabi (United Arab Emirates), Muscat (Oman), Karachi (Pakistan), Jodhpur (India), Allahabad (India), Calcutta (India), Rangoon (Birma), Alor Setar (Malaysia), Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), Singapore, Jakarta (Indonesia), Rembang/Selaparang (Indonesia), Kupang (Indonesia), Darwin, Cloncurry, Charleville, Albury, Melbourne (Australia).

THE CREW

The DC-2 crew will consist of 4 people, just as then: Captain Jan Plesman (First Officer Boeing 747 and grandson of KLM founder Albert Plesman); Co-pilot Fred Schouten (also First Officer Boeing 747); Mechanic Bonne Pijpstra (retired Flight Engineer Boeing 747) and Mechanic Ton Degenaars (KLM Operations Officer at Schiphol Airport).

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AMS/DR/OV/ans