



KLM
Royal Dutch Airlines



De Havilland DH-9



Fokker F-III



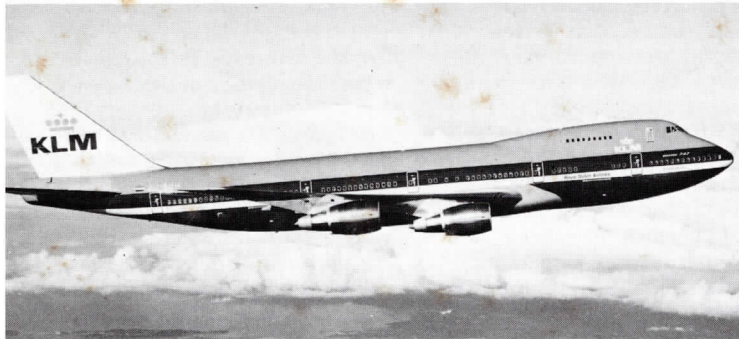
Douglas C-54



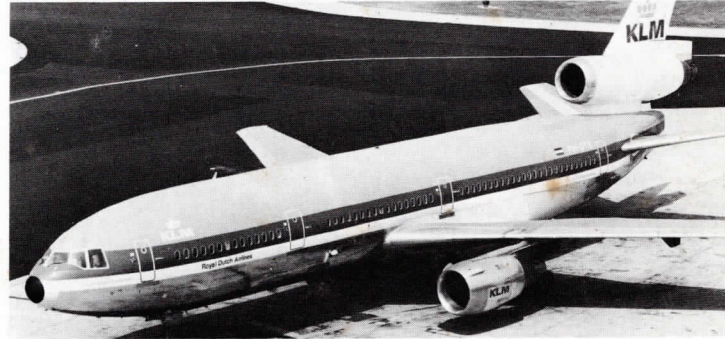
Lockheed Super-Constellation



Vickers Viscount



Boeing 747 (Variant)



Douglas DC-10

KLM's historical aircraft show

In 1984, KLM will reach the age of 65 – the first airline to do so since no one of today's airlines was founded before October 7, 1919. People may be forced to retire at that age, airlines are not and therefore there is no particular reason for KLM to commemorate this 65th birthday. In fact, 1984 will be a pretty busy year!

But this anniversary is a good excuse to do something I have been wanting to do for some time: a pictorial history for the aircraft 'freaks'. And before we go on one warning: this show is far from complete, because the

last time we counted them there were over 65 different aircraft (including helicopters) in the aircraft gallery – meaning they were owned by KLM for some time. Roughly one aircraft type for every year! Some were the

trustworthy Reliables that formed the mainstay of the fleet for years on end – but some were oddities that did not make it, like the Douglas DC-5, of which KLM had 4 in operation as the only airline in the world.

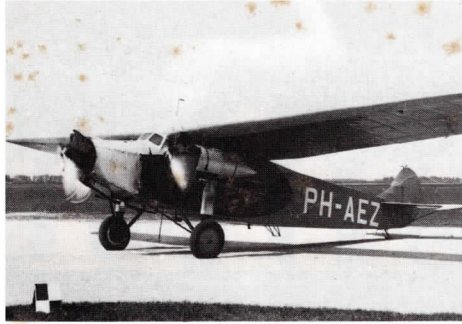
LET'S START at the beginning: the De Havilland DH-9 used for the first KLM flights on the London-Amsterdam route. It carried two passengers and a pilot and was a direct development of a World War I bomber.

Then began the link between KLM and Fokker. In 1920 Fokker brought out a 'real' passenger aircraft with closed cabin, the F-II, immediately ordered by KLM. The F-III was slightly

larger, carried 5 passengers and had a separate freight compartment.

This was followed by the F-VII, the first to have a toilet on board (!) and a radio set. In 1924 the F-VII made the historic first flight to Java, but scheduled flights to the East Indies were made with the three-engined F-VIIb. Amsterdam-Batavia (now Djakarta) was the longest scheduled air service in the world until after World War II, by the way.

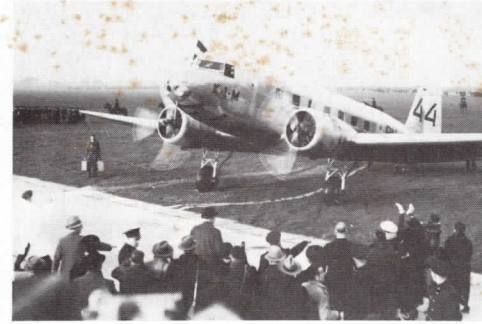
A further development was the F-XVIII, which became famous because of the record Christmas flight to the East Indies and back (Dec. 18-30, 1933) and the first flight from Amsterdam to the Caribbean.



Fokker F-VIIB



Fokker F-XVIII



Douglas DC-2



Fokker Friendship F-27



Douglas DC-8



Douglas DC-9



Airbus A-310

And then came a revolution: the **Douglas DC-2** (the illustration shows the unforgettable Uiver, winner of the 1934 London-Melbourne race) was the first really modern passenger aircraft. It had an automatic pilot, retractable landing gear, a sound-insulated cabin and was of all-metal construction. Two years later came a new development, the **DC-3**, the first to offer adjustable passenger seats.

After the war, KLM had to start from scratch – with military-type aircraft such as the **Dakota** and the **C-54**. In the civil version, this was called the **Sky-master** and using these aircraft, KLM was the first European airline to open transatlantic services to New York.

ANOTHER first: the introduction of the Lockheed Constellation in 1946, with the revolutionary pressurized cabin and airconditioning. The Constellation and its further development the **Super-Constellation** certainly rank among the most beautiful aircraft ever.

The end of the piston-engine era was heralded by the **Vickers Viscount**, which introduced the Rolls Royce Dart turboprop in 1957. Modern versions of this superb engine power a superb aircraft: the **Fokker F-27 Friendship**. This was introduced in 1960 and may well establish the record production run for any aircraft type (including the Dakota!).

In the same year, 1960, came the jet, in the form of the DC-8. Introduced in Europe by KLM, this nearly doubled the speed and number of passengers carried. Several versions were developed, including a 'stretched' **DC-8**. On the shorter routes, 1966 saw the introduction of jets in the form of the **DC-9**, again with several variants.

At the end of the Sixties, the 'wide-body' jets appear, again roughly doubling the number of seats. The 747-B was introduced in 1971 and new variants keep being developed. The stretched 747's are still the largest passenger aircraft extant. The second wide-body introduced was the **DC-10** which is smaller than the 747 but still carries over 260

passengers.

And so we come to the latest introduction, the **Airbus A-310** wide-body for the European routes. The first flights of this silent and economical aircraft were made in the summer and operations will start during the winter. The time is long past that schedules were suspended during the winter months...

As you can see, aircraft and operations have changed beyond the wildest beliefs of the pioneers 65 years ago: from 2 passengers to nearly 400, from about 120 kph to almost 1000 kph. In that era, KLM did pioneering work and scored numerous 'firsts' – not for the sake of novelty but because there were sound reasons to do so!