

Dutch Airmail to the East Indies and the Great Air Races of 1933 and 1934

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Dutch Colonial Empire



Fokker F.VIIb/3m

- Construction:
fabric covered
steel-tube
fuselage and
plywood-skinned
wooden wing
- 8 – 10
passengers
- Widely used
internationally
and in US in late
1920s
- 1931 crash of a
Fokker F10 killed
Notre Dame
Coach Knute
Rockne



KLM Forerunner Flights to Netherlands East Indies - Longest Airmail Route in the World

- First experimental flights started 1924.
- Post card
- 'sGravenhage, September 6, 1928
- Postcard rate 7½ cents + 45 cents airmail surcharge
- Weltevreden, September 25, 1928

Handelsverg. Smalhout, Weltevreden,
Mijne Heeren,
Zooals U uit de dagbladen bek
trekken er in den loop dezer maand e
tuigen naar Indië voor de Ned.-Ind.L
hiervoor een speciaal zegel en postd
Als postzegelverzamelaars zul
vliegtuig een schrijven doen toekome
U beleefd, de betreffende kaarten en
binnenkomst van het vijfde vliegtuig
ons adres te willen retourneeren, zulks als curiositeit
voor ondergeteekende.
Wij danken U bij voorbaat voor Uw bereidwillig-
heid en vertrouwen, dat U aan e.e.a. Uw aandacht wilt
schenken.
Inmiddels verblijven wij
hoogachtend,
N.V. HANDELSVEREENIGING
HAUSSMANN & VAN DEN AKKER.
5/9/1928



KLM First Commercial Airmail Amsterdam to Java, 1928 – Longest Airmail Route in the World

- Souvenir Card
- 'sGravenhage, September 13, 1928
- 45 cents postage
- Additional Sunday Delivery stamp
- Bandoeng, September 25, 1928



Crash of 4th Flight in Rangoon, October 1928

- Posted October 3, 1928
- Reached Rangoon, October 15
- Landing gear broke on take off in soft mud from recent monsoons.
- Plane sent to Java by ship.
- Mail forwarded by train
- Bandoeng arrival, October 26.



KLM First Air Post Amsterdam to Sydney, 1931

- PH-AEZ, Fokker F.VIIb/3m
- Depart April 15 and arrived Sydney, May 18, 1931.
- 225 letters and 1 passenger
- Franked 12½c postage + 30c airmail surcharge + 15c Registration + Netherlands Indies 100c "Pattist" stamp issued solely for the flight (overfranked by 10c).



Fokker F.XVII PH-AIP

- Top speed 149 mph



KLM Contract with Dutch PPT

- KLM would carry 500 kg mail per year
- Negotiated a flat rate of 42.5 Guilders per kg. (Approx \$20 then, \$300 now)
- Delivery in 2 weeks
- 36 cents/ letter – 6x sea-mail (six weeks)
- The high subsidy brought competition to be decided by the
- 1933 CHRISTMAS AIRMAIL RACE TO EAST INDIES

1933 Amsterdam to Java Christmas Race: Two New Aircraft

- Fokker F.XX
 - Elliptical rather than square fuselage
 - Retractable landing gear



1933 Amsterdam to Java Christmas Race: Two New Aircraft

- Pander S-4
 - Built by Pander & Son
 - Intent was to compete on both aircraft construction and airmail service.
 - Low wing design



Pander & Son

- Well known furniture manufacturers
- Had a small division making recreational aircraft and sail planes
- No experience with commercial aircraft construction.

The Route

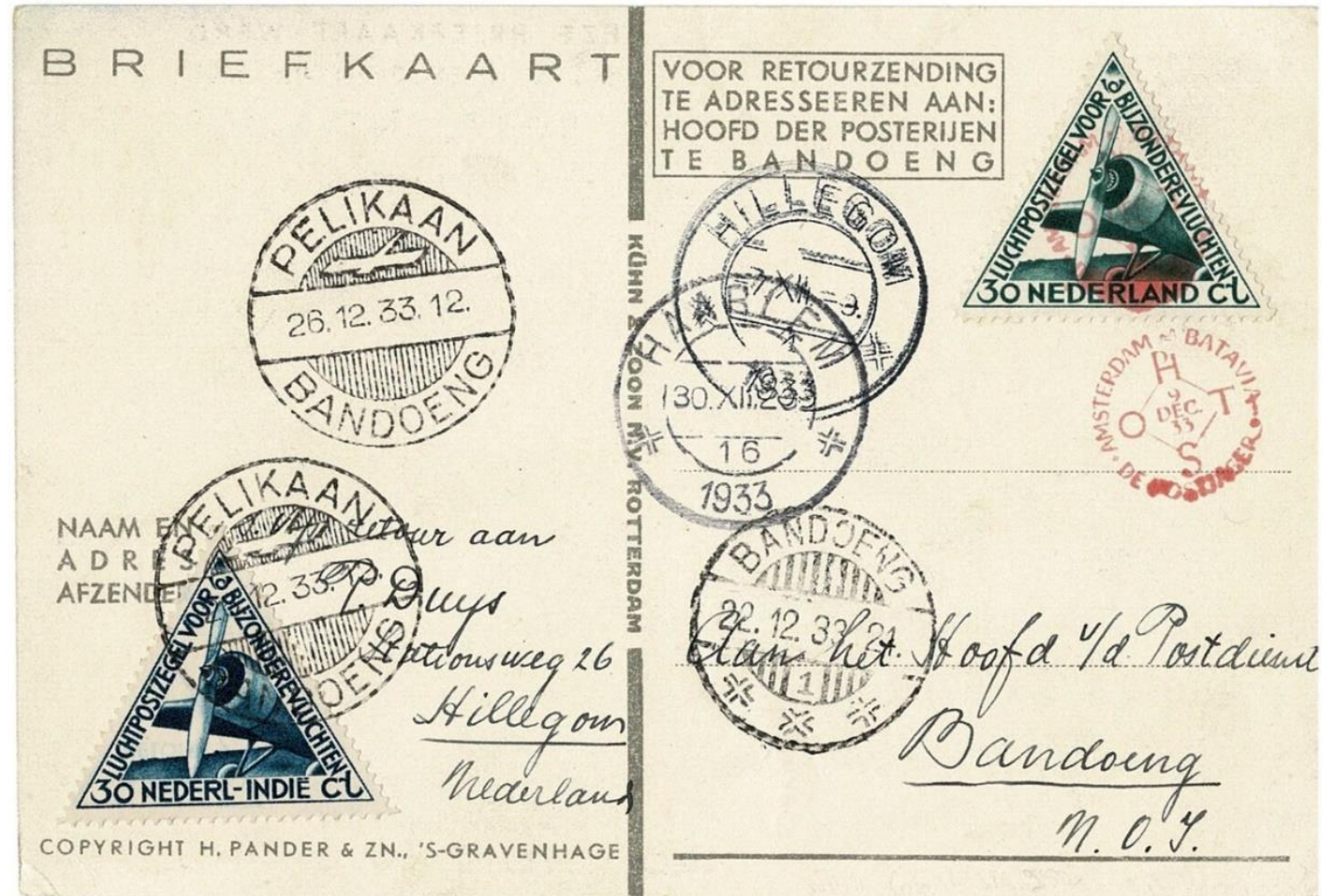


Pander S-4 "Postjager" (Mail Rusher)



Special Flights Triangular Stamp

- Triangular “Special Flights” Stamp
- Netherlands C10
- Netherlands Indies C18
- Both stamps show a single engine airplane



Race Day:

- Pander S-4 departed Amsterdam December 9, 1933.
- Fokker F.XX planned departure December 18, however, it developed engine failure before take off and flight was scrapped.
- Mail was transferred to an older F.XVIII named *Pelikaan*.



Pander trapped in Italy

- Pander developed engine trouble after departing from Rome and was forced to land in Taranto.
- Mail was forwarded to Cairo by *Imperial Airways*. And picked up there by the *Pelikaan*.
- Pander arrived Bandoeng December 22.
- *Pelikaan* made record breaking flight in less than 5 days.



Return Flight of the *Pelikaan* – One way



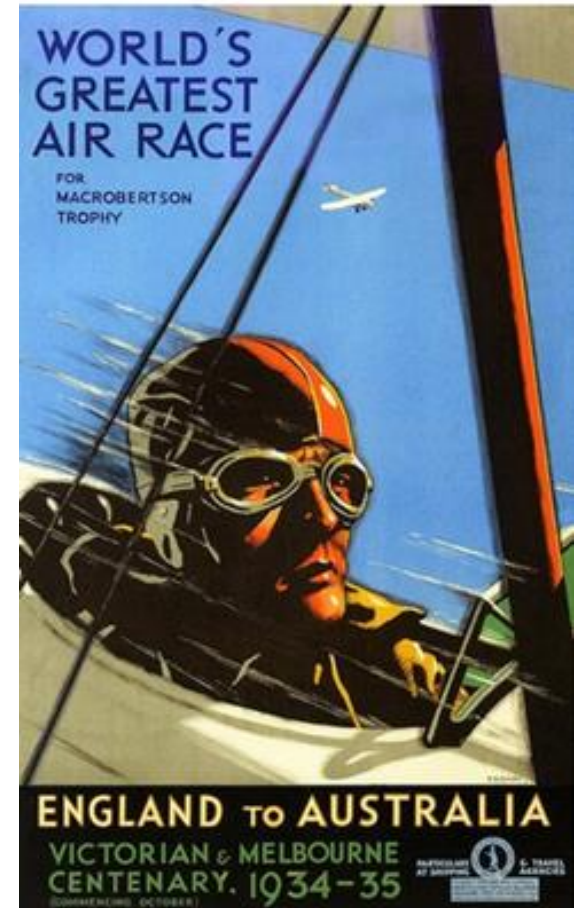
Other Fokker F.XVIII Successes

- At the same time in December 1933 another Fokker F.XVII, the *Snip*, successfully completed KLM's first trans-Atlantic Flight to Curaçao and Suriname in 55 hours and 58 minutes



MacRobertson Race London to Melbourne, October, 1934

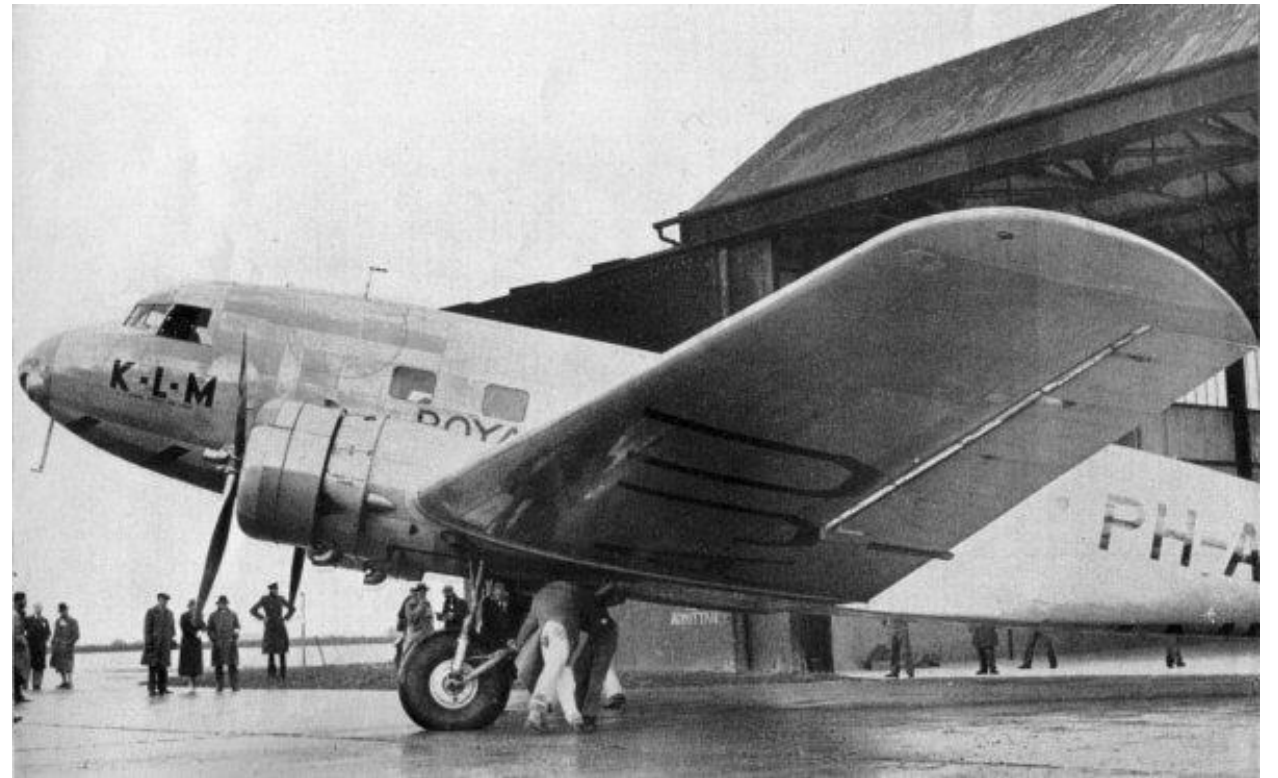
- Celebration of the Centenary of the establishment of Melbourne.
- Name comes from Sir Macpherson Roberson, the owner of the MacRobertson Confectionery Company who put up the £15,000 (estimated \$1,080,000 today) prize money and trophies.
- The race had few rules – no limits on size or power of the aircraft, no limit on crew size, each plane must have three days rations for each crew member, and no pilot could join the aircraft after it left London.
- There were compulsory stops at Baghdad, Allahabad (India), Singapore, Darwin, Charleville and finally Melbourne, although many more refueling stops were required for the long trip.



MacRobertson Race London to Melbourne, October, 1934

20 Entries of which were two Dutch:

- Pander S-4
- KLM American made DC-2,
“Uiver” (Stork) – PH-AJU



MacRobertson Race London to Melbourne, October, 1934

- The race was won by a British entry, a de Havilland DH 88 Comet, which won with an elapsed time of 71 hours.
- The *Uiver* came in second at 96 hours.
- The Pander S-4 was taken out of the race when it crashed into a truck while taxiing in Allahabad (Uttar Pradesh) and was wrecked beyond repair.
- Only one S-4 was ever built, and Pander and Son permanently left the commercial aviation business.

MacRobertson Race London to Melbourne, October, 1934

- 25,000 covers carried by the *Uiver*.
- It is on Royal Dutch Airlines stationary and postmarked Hillegom, October 13, 1934.
- The front is endorsed by hand and with a red handstamp "per MacRobertson Race".



Flight of the “*Uiver*”

- the *Uiver* carried three passengers and 25,000 pieces of mail.
- It made 22 refueling stops along the route.
- The end of the *Uiver* flight made aviation history. The plane became lost at night in an electrical storm about 300 kilometers from Melbourne. Race headquarters in Melbourne sent a message to the town of Albury to flash a Morse code signal to the lost aircraft. The Municipal Engineer and the District Postal Inspector went to the Albury town electrical sub-station where they signaled A-L-B-U-R-Y in Morse code by turning the town’s street lights on and off.
- There was no airport in Albury, so the townspeople were rallied in the middle of the night by a local radio operator to take their cars to the local racetrack. The headlights of 80 cars lit a makeshift runway. The plane circled for half an hour and landed safely at 1:17 am. The next day the plane was freed from the mud and, minus cargo and passengers, was able to take off and complete the race coming in second.
- A month later it made an uneventful return to Amsterdam to great fanfare.

"Uiver" Cover



Fate of the Fokker F.XX

- Regular KLM flights to London and Berlin
- Rendered obsolete by the Douglas DC-2 and DC-3.
- Sold to French airline Air Tropique
- Used for covert operations between Paris and the Spanish Republican government
- Crashed (?) near Barcelona February 1938.
- Only one F.XX was ever built.

Fate of the “Uiver”

- Participated in 1934 Christmas Flight to East Indies
- Crashed during storm in Syrian Desert
- Aircraft destroyed and all aboard perished.
- Mail was scattered over desert but was recovered and forwarded to Batavia.
- Batavia receivers HS on reverse

