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The Wizard of OGG

By John Perkinson, Staff Writer

For decades, both flight crews and passengers arriving at Kahului Airport on the Hawaiian island of Maui have puzzled over the facility's "OGG" designation. Airport codes typically acknowledge the community the airport serves or the facility's name. But what does OGG have to do with Kahului Airport? Hawaiian Airlines, the Transportation Security Administration, and the Hawaiian Department of Transportation recently put an end to this mystery.

On September 15, they unveiled an 8-foot by 42-foot commemorative exhibit near the airport's Gate 19, shedding light on the code that was created to recognize former Hawaiian Airlines Capt. Bertram James "Jimmy" Hogg. A legend in Hawaiian aviation history, Hogg was recognized by the Civil Aeronautics Authority (CAA)—a forerunner of the FAA—in 1957 when the agency assigned the airport its three-letter designator.

The Kauai-born pilot spent an impressive 38 years with Hawaiian Airlines (previously Inter-Island Airways), starting as a mechanic in 1929. A year later, Hogg was promoted to the ambiguous rank of "mate." He explained, "The mate was copilot, 'smashed' all the baggage, maintained the plane, changed the engines, dispatched the flights, and served as radio-telegraph communicator in those days." The job paid \$125 a month.

Hogg upgraded to the official copilot position in 1936 and captain the next year, spending his time flying the airline's Sikorsky S-38, a twin-engine eight-seat am-

An Ogg Coincidence

The commemorative exhibit at Maui's Kahului Airport lays to rest previous speculation that the airport's OGG designator might have been attributed to Richard Ogg.

Ogg, the captain of Pan Am Flight 6, and his crew, flying from Honolulu to San Francisco, Calif., in October 1956, had to ditch their Boeing 377 Stratocruiser in the middle of the Pacific Ocean when two of the airplane's four engines failed.

Miraculously, there were no fatalities and the incident served as the basis for the 1958 movie *Crash Landing*. ●

prohibious aircraft. The S-38 delivered mail and transported passengers, traveling at approximately 85 miles per hour. Remembering these early years, Hogg recalled, "When we flew to Kona, we'd land in the bay and outrigger canoes would come out to bring in the passengers."

Hogg flew a wide array of aircraft types for Hawaiian, including the Convair 340 and 640, the Vickers Viscount, and various Douglas airplanes.

Following the infamous Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, Hogg flew the first commercial interisland flight, transporting plantation owners and military personnel to Maui and the island of Hawaii. He told a newspaper reporter, "The weather was lousy. The visibility stunk. We flew at 50 to 100 feet all the way. I navigated in the old style—by the color of the water."

The airplane was fired upon several times

during the trip by those mistaking it for enemy aircraft. At both destinations, the DC-3 had to circle while tractors and bulldozers were moved from the runways. These vehicles had been strategically positioned to prevent surprise landings.

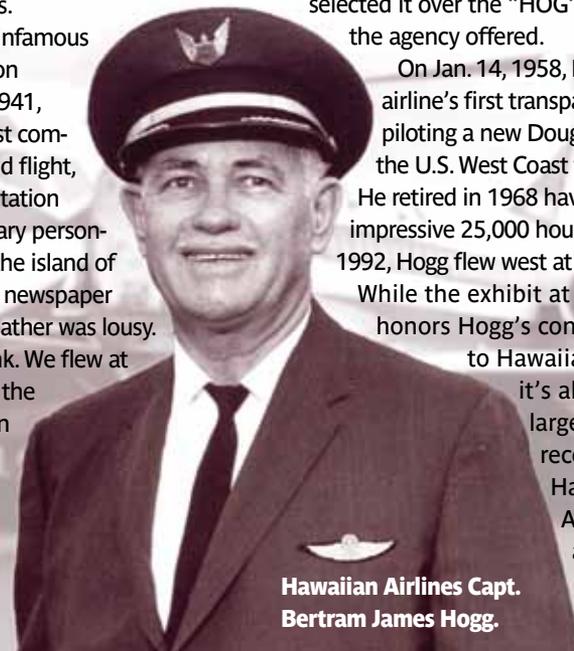
Hogg had a number of hair-raising experiences, including an emergency night landing on the island of Lanai to pick up passengers who needed to get to Honolulu. On the evening of March 5, 1947, Hogg had to touch down on and take off from a new field that had no landing lights. The local news reported that the airport manager and a police sergeant rounded up every available car or truck they could find. The vehicles were then lined up along the runway with their headlights turned on to provide some illumination for the cockpit crew.

After World War II, Hogg played an integral role helping the CAA position navigational aids throughout the Hawaiian islands. As thanks, the CAA established the OGG airport code for Kahului. Hogg selected it over the "HOG" alternative the agency offered.

On Jan. 14, 1958, Hogg flew the airline's first transpacific flight, piloting a new Douglas DC-6 from the U.S. West Coast to Honolulu.

He retired in 1968 having logged an impressive 25,000 hours of flying. In 1992, Hogg flew west at the age of 84.

While the exhibit at Gate 19 honors Hogg's contributions to Hawaiian aviation, it's also part of a larger celebration, recognizing Hawaiian Airline's 85th anniversary on November 11. ●



Hawaiian Airlines Capt. Bertram James Hogg.

▼ The 8-foot tall by 42-foot wide exhibit at Maui's Kahului Airport explains why the facility's airport code was named for former Hawaiian Airlines Capt. B. James Hogg.

