

This meant that the last time the engine had been run was over 33 years ago when it was being "pickled" and filled up with conservation oil just before going into its long hibernation period.

I had just met our flight engineer instructor, Jerry Steele, who by the way probably forgot more than I will ever know about a Super Constellation.

"So why did they send two engines, Jerry?" I asked.

"Well...." he said, "In case you need extra parts."

This was a smart decision which was most probably based on experience in these manors.

Just a little additional note here; I have realized over my career that there seems to be quite a few good things that come out of Arizona. Connie's from Avra Valley, Connie spare parts and engines from the bone yards in Tucson, German pilots trained by Americans at Goodyear Arizona, and two Flight Engineers, me and Jerry which happen to have identical birthdays! Now you wouldn't notice it by looking but..... I am younger than Jerry! He probably dyes his hair!

So we spent the next four days changing the engine. Under the watchful eye of course of flight engineer - mechanic Carlos Gomez who was in from Miami.

None of us will ever forget the commandeering kind calls coming from Carlos:

"Hand me a seven-sixteenths! Gimme a ratchet! I need a rag! Somebody get me a bucket!" and ----- "Hey Hans.... Don't fall asleep over there! You got that bolt tightened yet?"

And my favorite; "Where are my nuts?"

Watching Carlos crawling up and over and around that engine kind of reminded me of a one-legged man in an ass-kicking contest. He was somehow everywhere all at the same time.

Everybody joined into help. All of our air crew and additional Lufthansa mechanics from Hamburg and the "Breitling Boys" which consisted of the Super Connie Flyers Association volunteer mechanics. Even a Ju-52 flight engineer candidate and his wife showed up and were willing to get their hands tattooed in oil.

And we don't want to forget "Sparky". That would be Rolf Harlacher who is the Connie's own personal private spark-chasing electrical flight engineer mechanic.

So with our Chief Pilot, driving the fork lift we got the replacement engine installed, hung the prop

After about twenty blades of engine rotation it huffed and puffed like an old steam locomotive pulling out of the Berlin Hauptbahnhof. (*Berlin Hauptbahnhof (Berlin Central Station), is the main railway station in Berlin, Germany and the largest crossing station in Europe.*)

We all watched as the motor coughed its way to life again, clearing out the conservation oil that has filled its cylinders and passageways for the last 33 years.

Jerry pulled on the un-feather button a few times and the prop came out of feather, blew away all of the smoke and we saw the engine settle down and begin ticking over like a finely made giant Swiss watch.

Except for a minor oil leak at the generator pad this new old engine performed flawlessly for the remainder of our training. It was a lot of hard work and long days to get it installed and running. But it was worth it.

According to the Chief Flight Instructor's calculations during the 10 days of training we accumulated: 114 landings, flew 44 hours, burned 15,880 gallons of AVGAS, (*aviation gasoline*) and used 525 gallons of aviation-grade oil.

We changed 27 spark plugs, and one prop-synchronizer box, changed of course by Sparky the spark-chaser! And we even flew over to Basle to change a tire.

Now that's what I call some serious training.

Oh, Basle, that reminds me; There is one thing that Burkhard especially wanted me to mention to Claus was one of our other pilots getting a checkout; "If you ever want to know how it is to fly to three air ports in Europe on international flights in a Super Constellation and not just stay in the traffic pattern in Epinal doing touch-and-goes, well, just ask us!

We know what it is like. We did it!"

Unfortunately, one of the other things we accumulated during our training was the self-destruction of yet another engine which happened on our last flight. And it went something like this:

My pilot Burkhard and I were getting our check rides on the last leg of training. This was scheduled to be the last flight for the year and the aircraft was to be landed, parked and towed into the hanger for it's winter "Kur" over at Lahr.

Everything was going as planned. Some approaches, some simulated engine-out work, a stall series. We were just starting some steep turns as part of the skill test.

Jerry had gone back into the cabin to have a look at the number 3-engine, which by-the-way did give us a fire warning on the ground after the run up. We determined at the time, that it was just a false warning caused by a pretty strong tailwind during taxi which had allowed the heat to gather in the cowling near the fire detector which caused the warning to trigger during the run up. Jerry was just keeping an eye on it.

To set up for the steep turn Burkard called out "Increase MAP 3 inches".

I repeated the command and pushed the throttles up a bit so he could try and maintain his airspeed during the 45-degrees banked turn. The turn went well and we had just rolled wings level when for some unknown reason, my trusting instructor Jerry comes up into the cockpit following the urge of his "sixth-sense".

I asked him later, why he had decided at that particular