

Jane McDonald Jamison's Graduation - A Graduation to Remember!

The class of 56-2 was in Stewardess School at Midway Airport in Chicago. Some of us were living in the dorm there, others (who came in late) were bussed to the Shoreland Hotel on Lake Michigan because the dorm rooms at Midway were full; I was one of the late comers. We had dorm-type rooms at the Shoreland until the last few days of our education when class 56-1 graduated and the dorm rooms were available, so we were moved to Midway.

At the end of our indoctrination into life as a stewardess with American Airlines, the 56-2 class was dressed in their new uniforms, was excited, preening, and looked beautiful.

We had just had our group photo made, and who should walk in but C.R. Smith! Hugs were given all around and he stood back and said "How would you girls like to graduate in Pittsburgh at the William Penn Hotel and help Pittsburgh celebrate the opening of their new airport?" As we all chattered, he said "I have a DC-6 standing by, so get your things together and meet me at the gate."

Needless to say, this was exciting and unique. When we landed we were told to line up in front of the plane. Three USAF jets did a flyover and saluted us. (I am fourth from the right and looking at the jets!) From there, we got in convertibles (and it was cold) and were taken to the Pittsburgh courthouse where we stood on the steps and sang the song that we had made up for our graduation.

The class went through the graduation ceremonies on a stage in the hotel and from there we went to the dining room where we had lunch with Mr. C.R. and Pittsburgh dignitaries.

At the end of the luncheon, we boarded our plane and flew back to Chicago, chattering away and running up and down the aisle because we had been selected to enjoy this unique experience.

And, as a tidbit of information, in 2023 this "new" airport closed to commercial flights and a new airport was opened. Too bad they didn't have an AA class come and help with the celebrations.