



North Star over My Shoulder: A Flying Life

By Bob Buck

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Captain Robert N. Buck retired from TWA after having flown well over two thousand Atlantic crossings and thirty-seven years of service as chief pilot and director of thunderstorm research. During World War II he was engaged in weather research for the U.S. Air Corps, for which he was awarded, as a civilian, the Air Medal by President Harry Truman. More recently, Buck has worked with the International Civil Aviation Organization -- the UN's body for aviation -- to develop a new plan of world airspace.

In *North Star over My Shoulder*, Bob Buck tells of a life spent up and over the clouds, and of the wonderful places and marvelous people who have been a part of that life. He captures the feel, taste, and smell of flying's great early era -- how the people lived, what they did and felt, and what it was really like to be a part of the world as it grew smaller and smaller. A terrific storyteller and a fascinating man, Bob Buck has turned his well-lived life into a delightful memoir for anyone who remembers when there really was something special in the air.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Bob Buck may not be as famous as Charles Lindbergh, but he's well known among aviators for setting flight-distance records in the 1930s, flying a B-17 in the Second World War, and finally, becoming a commercial airline pilot who logged more than 2,000 trips across the Atlantic Ocean. *North Star over My Shoulder* is Buck's memoir of a life spent in the skies. He shares plenty of cockpit wisdom: "A copilot can make a trip or ruin it; get someone who talks too much, gripes about the company, tries to impress you, tells long and boring anecdotes, or is overly aggressive in suggesting ways to run the flight, and the taste is unpleasant." He also answers the question he says nonpilots are most likely to ask him: How do you overcome jet lag? "You don't," he says. Buck addresses offbeat subjects, too, such as what an airline pilot does when one of his first-class passengers is irate about the lack of caviar on a long trip. Readers fascinated by flight will enjoy this book, both for its historical perspective on advances in aviation ("a time no one will ever experience again") and the good advice that springs from almost every page ("sitting low tends to make you level off a little too high, while sitting up high tends to make you fly into the ground and not level off enough"). Pilots will appreciate this book, as will anybody who has ever wondered what it's like to fly a plane. --John Miller

From Publishers Weekly

What's not to love about flying? For all the numbing routine, constant danger and bad food, Buck can't find much to complain about. He's been flying since the 1920s and still today, at age 87, takes the occasional glider for a spin. His autobiography is a thumbnail history of the air transport industry, which he's been a part of practically since its inception. The book skips most of Buck's personal life and focuses on airplanes. Buck relates his wide-eyed first flying experience at 16 with an enthusiasm normally relegated to the pages of romance novels. He quickly became a copilot and eventually a pilot for nascent Missouri airline TWA. His descriptions of these early flights in bare-bones vehicles have a white-knuckle intensity, especially when the weather turns bad (one passage tells of the few options pilots had when dealing with ice forming on their windshields: opening a small window at 10,000 feet and scraping it off with a putty knife was one of them). During WWII, Buck flew a special weather-research B-17 around the world and after the war became one of the airline's most senior pilots. In the course of his life, he flies over most of the known world and meets fellow air aficionados Tyrone Power and Howard Hughes. Buck writes in an appealing, no-nonsense manner that only occasionally becomes labored the literary equivalent of one too many friendly punches in the shoulder but this is an exciting memoir from an endearingly obsessed man who has been just about everywhere and can't wait to tell how he got there, and in what kind of plane and at what altitude.

From Library Journal

A former chief pilot for TWA and the holder of a world distance record for light planes, Buck is also the author of *Weather Flying*, a classic text for pilots. Here he describes his long life in flying, which mirrors the evolution of aviation in America in its scope and versatility. Buck began his flying career during the age of biplanes and Charles Lindbergh, when navigation consisted of looking down at roads and other landmarks. By 1937 he was a pilot for a major airline. His career lasted for 37 years and included stints as the pilot for several of Hollywood's biggest stars. He conducted weather research during World War II and received the Air Medal as a civilian from President Truman. The author has a knack for storytelling, and his straightforward narrative flows easily from one chapter to the next, giving the reader a feel for what has been called "the golden age" of flying. While this blow-by-blow account may appeal primarily to subject specialists, collections that include aeronautical history will welcome its personal approach to a similar subject. Mark Ellis, Albany State Univ., GA

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Lavelle Hildreth:

The e-book untitled North Star over My Shoulder: A Flying Life is the publication that recommended to you to read. You can see the quality of the e-book content that will be shown to you actually. The language that publisher use to explained their way of doing something is easily to understand. The copy writer was did a lot of exploration when write the book, to ensure the information that they share for you is absolutely accurate. You also might get the e-book of North Star over My Shoulder: A Flying Life from the publisher to make you much more enjoy free time.

Pedro Turk:

The particular book North Star over My Shoulder: A Flying Life has a lot associated with on it. So when you read this book you can get a lot of profit. The book was written by the very famous author. The author makes some research prior to write this book. This particular book very easy to read you will get the point easily after reading this book.

Stephanie Carter:

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Bobbie Freeman:

With this era which is the greater man or who has ability to do something more are more valuable than other. Do you want to become considered one of it? It is just simple way to have that. What you are related is just spending your time little but quite enough to get a look at some books. On the list of books in the top record in your reading list is actually North Star over My Shoulder: A Flying Life. This book that is certainly qualified as The Hungry Hills can get you closer in turning into precious person. By looking way up and review this guide you can get many advantages.

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