



AMERICAN MOSAIC - July 12, 2002: Balloonist Steve Fossett / Songs by Rosemary Clooney / Question About Actor Bruce Lee



HOST:

Welcome to AMERICAN MOSAIC — VOA’s radio magazine in Special English.

(THEME)

This is Doug Johnson. On our program today:

We play songs by Rosemary Clooney ...

Answer a listener’s question about actor Bruce Lee ...

And report about the man who recently broke a world flying record.

Steve Fossett’s Balloon Flight

HOST:

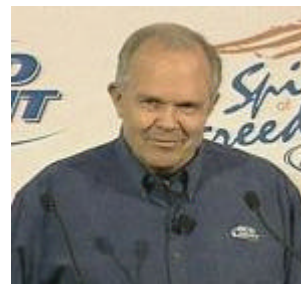
Last week, American businessman Steve Fossett became the first person to fly around the world alone in a balloon. He landed his balloon in Australia on July fourth, American Independence Day. Mary Tillotson tells us about his record-breaking trip.

ANNCR:

This was fifty-eight-year-old Steve Fossett’s sixth attempt to fly around the world in a balloon. He called the balloon the “Spirit of Freedom.” It was forty-two meters tall and powered by helium and hot air. He rode in a small area a little more than two meters long underneath the large balloon. This capsule was not pressurized, forcing Mister Fossett to use oxygen much of the time. He was able to sleep only about four hours each day, usually forty-five minutes at a time.

Mister Fossett chose to fly over the southern part of the world to avoid the need to get permission to fly over many countries. He experienced very few problems during his flight. Some days, winds pushed the balloon at speeds of up to three-hundred-twenty kilometers an hour.

Mister Fossett had more problems attempting to land. High winds forced him to continue flying after he set the record. Then he had to put out an equipment fire on the balloon in the middle of the night of July third.



Steve Fossett at a news conference after his landing.



Steve Fossett began the trip on June eighteenth in Northam, Australia. He landed the Spirit of Freedom in that country on July fourth. He broke the record for distance flown by a balloon, traveling more than thirty-one-thousand kilometers. He set his record on July second, thirteen days and twelve hours after he first lifted off.

But he had spent almost fifteen days in the air by the time he landed the balloon about one-thousand-four-hundred kilometers northeast of Sydney.

Steve Fossett now holds world records in flying balloons, flying airplanes and sailing ships. Over the years he has done many difficult activities. For example, he climbed many of the world’s highest mountains and swam across the English Channel. He also completed the Iditarod dog sled race in Alaska and drove in the Twenty-Four Hours of Le Mans car race. Steve Fossett is already planning his next adventure. He plans to fly a glider plane into the

stratosphere -- eighteen-thousand meters above the ground in southern New Zealand.

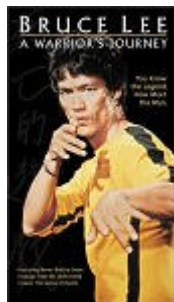
Bruce Lee

HOST:

Our VOA listener question this week comes from Israel. Rafi Halabbi asks about actor Bruce Lee.



AP



His name was Lee Jun Fan Yuen Kam when he was born in San Francisco, California in nineteen-forty. A nurse at the hospital said he should have an American name too. She suggested the name "Bruce." Bruce's father was a movie actor. Young Bruce appeared in his first movie with his father when he was only two months old. Bruce and his parents returned to their home in Hong Kong in ninety-forty-one. Bruce began to act in Chinese movies at the age of six.

In Hong Kong, Bruce Lee began his life-long interest in the Chinese system of self-defense called Kung Fu. He studied with Yip Man, a master of the famous Wing Chun Kung Fu. Bruce was also involved in many street fights. His parents decided this must stop. They sent him back to the United States. He became a student at the University of Washington in Seattle. Later he opened a school to teach Kung Fu in Oakland, California.

Bruce Lee was not a big man. However, people who saw him fight could not understand how he could be so powerful. He seemed to have the strength of several men.

In nineteen-sixty-six, Bruce Lee acted in an American television series called "The Green Hornet." The program was not a success. But many Hollywood movie actors began studying Kung Fu with him. He appeared in several other television programs.

Bruce Lee returned to Hong Kong in nineteen-seventy-one to act in a Chinese movie known in the United States as "Fists of Fury." The movie was extremely popular in Asia. He followed this with another film, "The Chinese Connection." It too was extremely popular.

In nineteen-seventy-three, Bruce Lee made his most famous movie, "Enter the Dragon." It was the first movie made in cooperation between American and Chinese movie companies.

But Bruce Lee died a few weeks before the movie was released. He was thirty-two years old. Doctors said his death was caused by swelling of the brain.

More than twenty-thousand people attended his funeral in Hong Kong before his body was taken to Seattle, Washington for burial. "Enter the Dragon" became a major hit. It made Bruce Lee an internationally famous movie star. Movie critics say his early death ended what would have been a very successful movie career.

Rosemary Clooney

HOST:

Rosemary Clooney died last month of lung cancer. She was seventy-four years old. Millions of people around the world have enjoyed listening to her sing for the past fifty years. Shep O'Neal tells us about her.

ANNCR:

Rosemary Clooney was born in the small town of Maysville, Kentucky and began singing as a child. She moved to New York City at the age of twenty-one. She began recording for Columbia Records. Mizz Clooney was ordered to record a song she did not like. It became a huge hit record. It is called "Come On-a My House."

((COME ON-A MY HOUSE))

Rosemary Clooney sang on radio programs. She later had her own television show. She also performed in the movies. Her best known film is "White Christmas."

Listen as she sings a song from that movie, "Count Your Blessings."

((COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS))

Rosemary Clooney married the actor Jose Ferrer. They had five children in five years. But they were not happy and they ended their marriage. Later, Mizz Clooney suffered from the mental disease depression and dependence on alcohol. But she always returned to her singing.




In nineteen -ninety-five, Rosemary Clooney celebrated fifty years in the music business by recording the album "Demi-Centennial." We leave you now with one of her biggest hit songs -- the only hit she included on that album. Here is Rosemary Clooney singing "Mambo Italiano."

((MAMBO ITALIANO))

HOST:

This is Doug Johnson. I hope you enjoyed our program today. And I hope you will join us again next week for AMERICAN MOSAIC — VOA's radio magazine in Special English.

This AMERICAN MOSAIC program was written by Nancy Steinbach and Paul Thompson. Our studio engineer was Curtis Bynum. And our producer was Paul Thompson.

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