

CNAC CANNON BALL

ASSOCIATION



PRESIDENT:

William Maher
1700 S. West Avenue
Jackson, Michigan 49203
Apt. A3

EDITOR:

Reg Farrar
319 Euclid Avenue
Loch Arbour, NJ 07711
Office: 201-333-1515
Home: 732-531-4071

MAY 15, 2004

This is the 50th anniversary of the founding of the CNAC Association. It all started at the House of Chan in New York City. What it grew into was an enduring association which still goes on even though so many of us have gone to Hogy Taw.

There have been meetings every two years in Miami, Las Vegas, San Francisco, San Diego and Orlando.

We have published several books, a newsletter, has been able to establish exhibits at National Aviation Museum, The Oshkosh Museum and the San Diego Air Museum.

Over the years the importance of this airline in inaugurating the Hump flying with its profound effect on the Chinese war effort. It was the first massive air lift in history, and the only commercial airline to exist in a zone of war.

Finally, this service was recognized by the U.S. Air force and we were given "Honorable Discharge" with the appropriate medals.

At the present CNAC Association has a web site WWW.CNAC.ORG, and its history has been recorded on tapes.

In this issue Roy Farrell's manuscript is continued. Unfortunately it was not published so it has been serialized here.

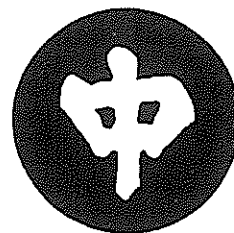
EDITORIAL

As I think back to Christmas 1953 (with tongue in cheek) I mailed the initial notices. I could not believe the response. The formation of the Association took place May 15, 1954. It seems impossible that 50 years later we would exist and have accomplished so much. the credit goes to Mac, Bill and so many others. It has been a mutual effort. I am so happy to have played a small part.

~~generally speaking, over 80.~~

THE CNAC STORY

THE CHINA NATIONAL AVIATION CORPORATION



The China National Aviation Corporation played a significant role in the history of modern China. Originally a partnership between the Chinese government and the Curtiss-Wright corporation, the airline became a part of the Pan American Airways empire in 1933.

Surmounting massive technical problems, CNAC established the first air routes in China, connecting the commercial center of Shanghai with Canton, Peking, and the cities along the Yangtze River.

Following the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war in 1937, CNAC remained China's sole means of speedy communications with outside world. Operating conditions were extremely hazardous because the airline was forced to fly under the worst possible circumstances to avoid Japanese attack.

Before America's entry into the Pacific war, CNAC pioneered the famous route over the Hump between China and India. When the Burma Road was cut off by the Japanese Army during WWII, this route became the only source of outside supply for China. CNAC's operation of an air-lift over the Hump became the most glorious chapter in a notable history.

It was the world's first major airlift, and it was a pilot's nightmare.

The 500-mile route traversed some of the most treacherous country in the world. Flying with few or no radio aids over inadequately charted areas, under constant harassment from enemy fighters, CNAC pilots had not even the satisfaction of being able to shoot back. Their C-47s and later C-46s were unarmed.

In the early days of WWII, CNAC also provided airlift for the AVG, transporting personnel and supplies to and from the various Flying Tiger bases. To fly pilots to India on their way to pick up new planes for the AVG and CAF, CNAC provided the service. General Jimmy Doolittle and his Raiders who landed in China,

were flown across the Hump on the beginning of their journey home.

In addition to its regular commercial operations, CNAC carried military supplies between India and China under a Chinese Government contract arranged in 1942 with the U.S. Army, which supplied Douglas C-47 and C-53 planes and, later, Curtiss C-46 transports. During the war, CNAC and the U.S. Army Air Transport Command carried approximately 10 and 90 percent, respectively, of the total lend-lease supplies flown across the Hump. From April 1942, when the Burma Road was lost, to April 1945, CNAC made more than 35,000 trips over the Hump. In 1944 it flew almost 9,000 round trips, or 10,000,000 miles, over this route, transporting approximately 35,000 tons of lend-lease, and also strategic materials. During the war it also transported to Northwest China considerable amounts of strategic materials destined for Russia. Carrying 38 percent of all strategic air cargoes on world routes in 1944, CNAC ranked second only to the Air Transport Command, which carried 57 percent. CNAC also played an important role in the Burma campaign by dropping food to Chinese expeditionary forces, evacuating besieged Chinese and British troops, and supplying the Ledo Road project with men, equipment, medical supplies, and food. Between October 22, 1944, and January 21, 1945, it made 523 trips, dropping 1,836,970 pounds of rice to roadbuilders.

To fill their ranks, CNAC added many Tiger pilots to their number when the AVG was disbanded, as well as other commercial pilots recruited in the United States and China. Some of the new pilots never had flown anything bigger than a Cub. Most of them never had been at the controls of multi-engine equipment nor were they familiar with instrument flying.

Now they were called upon to fly day and night over the world's roughest and highest terrain in all kinds of weather 16 to 20 hours daily.

THE BIRTH OF THE CNAC ASSOCIATION

I visited Natalie Mickelson. I guess it began on the way to Maine. Early in 1952, she and her husband owned the Cascio Day Trading Post in Freeport, Maine.

Each visit we asked of anyone we had known. I thought someone should get the group together. To me almost anyone else would be more appropriate. On one visit, she commented that why not you... I, at last agreed. We contacted Howard Dean and pooled our lists. The Christmas Day 1952 I mailed letters to each name. The response was astounding. We got back over 100 names and addresses. The letter told me of a reunion of the AVG in May 1953. I suggested we meet with them. My idea was rejected by their president but was told there was no reason we could not meet at another hotel down the street. I wrote the list we had suggesting that anyone who wanted to come was welcome.

The first day I sat at the table in the hotel, registering each who came. I could not believe those who came. They came from Texas, California, Michigan, Florida. That movement which I had wistfully started induced so many to come. These added to the AVG members. We all attended the AVG banquet and then May 15 at the House of Chan. This was the most exciting meeting we have ever had. I was elected the first President. Fifteen minutes later I resigned and Red Holmes was elected President.

We chose Mac as the honorary president. Red Holmes called on each one for a story of those days. We tried to duplicate this but never quite made it. We set the pattern of reunions every two years. The next was at the Fountainbleu in Miami Beach. This brought out the many who were local. Zack Mosley of Flying Jack Comic Strip. In the meantime, we found Pappy who was working in Newark. He came to Florida and appears in the photo as he usually stood in the front row in the middle. George Hamel, Mr. Bond, Mac ~~Allen~~ were there. Ray Allen made in only one appearance. Rocky Roncaglione invited us to his restaurant the Tail of the Tiger in Fort Lauderdale. Ray Farrel was elected our third President.

WILLIAM MAHER

The Association can never honor this captain enough. He is our current President. He has contacted so many to keep the Reunion successful; mostly through his efforts we are represented at the San Diego Air Museum. His undying efforts secured Honorable Discharge from the U.S. Aircorps. This was a tough battle in Michigan and Washington, D.C.. The last miracle wass to secure recognition and a large exhibit at the U.S. Air Museum at Wright Field in Dayton, Ohio. As an association has headed to its final years. He has carried us to heights never imagined.

CNAC PHYSICIANS

There were four American physicians in CNAC and one Indian physician hired in Calcutta. Dr. Richards was the head physician. He had been the flight surgeon for the AVG in Burma in 1941 and 1942. He was employed by CNAC when it became necessary to expand the airline with the Hump operation. Doc Richards was a general practitioner and a very credible flight surgeon. On one of his trips home on leave he wrote a letter to Charity Hospital in Louisiana offering a job in India and China.

At that time a young physician Reginald Farrar was interning at Charity Hospital. He was a native of Maine, graduated from the University of Buffalo that year. At Charity Hospital he took courses in Parasitology and Tropical Diseases at Tulane Medical School. As he was already in the Army he applied for the job was accepted and in 1944 proceeded to Calcutta. There he met Dr. Paul Laube a surgeon already there.

Dr. Laube had worked in Liberia and then CNAC. He shortly left to teach in China. Dr. Hoey was recruited just before the end of the war. He and Doc Rich went to China with the company. Reg Farrar left the country also went to China before returning to the United States.

PAUL J. LAUBE, M.D.

* Job with CNAC - Medical Officer

Dates of Service - June 1943 - June 1944 - Calcutta

Wife's Name - Lavon

Children's Names - David (stockbroker). Douglas - born in Calcutta - University of Iowa Staff Doctor in OB-Gyn. Edgar - born in Chengtu - China Scholar.

Paula born in Tsinan - Medical Technologist. Sara - born in Dubuque
How he got there (early life) Native Dubuquer. Surgical Training Yale University. He heard of PAA need for medical officers in Africa. Served 1 year Fish Lake, Liberia; 1 year Calcutta; transferred with full agreement PAA to Chengtu to join West China and Cheeloo University Medical Staff 1944, under mission suspices. 2 years Chengtu, 2 years Tsinan. 1 year Foochow. 1 year back to Boston for further surgical training Lahey Clinic and since 1950 practicing Dubuque, general surgery. Still going. President Dubuque Area Chamber of Commerce 1968. Serve on Board of Directors, University of Dubuque (Liberal Arts College and Seminary); Board of Directors Bethany Home (founded by my Father, 1920). Am summer time river rat on Mississippi, winter time ski bum at local ski area (honest, have great ski area here in eastern Iowa with ski buses coming from Wisconsin!) Enjoy reading Cannonball, Anyone from former days passing through please stop. (Kusaks have done it 4 times).

Kentucky Aviation Hall of Fame Class of 2003

October 28, 2003 / Contact Alice McCormick (859-271-5600) or Ray Holbrook (859-873-3372)

Hugh Lee Grundy, Springfield

Hugh Lee Grundy, born in 1916 at Valley Hill, Kentucky, earned his pilot's license at Louisville's Bowman Field. He attended Curtis Wright Institute of Aeronautics and Plosser Flying School, and occasionally helped Howard Hughes with his Boeing 307 and his famous Speed Holder.

In 1941 Grundy went to Africa with Pan American, supposedly to establish a commercial air route but actually to build an Allied supply route. After service in the Army Air Corps, he worked with China National Aviation Corporation in Shanghai and was chief engineer when CNAC's Chinese management fled before the Communists.

American officials encouraged Grundy to remain with CNAC, but he joined Chennault's Civil Air Transport. From 1954 to 1976 he served simultaneously as president of CAT, of the CIA's Air America and of Air Asia. He also managed Pacific operations of Southern Air Transport. He commanded over 10,000 men and women who served America's objectives (either openly or covertly) in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Taiwan, Japan and Korea. He served 27 years in China, retiring from Air America in 1976.

For 40 years, Hugh Grundy served America with dedication and discretion. Only when he was honored by the Congress and the CIA in 2001 did his wife, Frankie, realize his true role. She had accompanied him throughout his career, enduring war and rebellion, thinking he was simply an aviation executive. In fact, he was an invaluable – but secret – asset to America.

David Lee "Tex" Hill, Louisville

David Lee "Tex" Hill was born in Kwang Ju, Korea, on July 13, 1915. His missionary family returned to the US in 1916 and lived in Louisville, Kentucky, while his father was pastor of the First Presbyterian Church. The family moved to Texas, and following college David entered Naval flight training at Pensacola. He earned his wings in November 1939 and flew carrier-based dive-bombers over the Atlantic.

In 1941, FDR secretly authorized Col. Claire Chennault to recruit US military pilots to serve a six-month civilian tour in combat in China. Hill joined this American Volunteer Group, 110 pilots who became the legend known as the Flying Tigers.

Chennault developed combat rules that turned the P-40's strengths against the Zeroes' weaknesses. Even with supply and logistical problems, by July 1942 they had destroyed 299 aircraft (with an additional 300 probables) while losing only eight pilots. Eventually, however, enemy ground forces closed the Burma Road, the supply route from India, and the AVG was disbanded at the end of the tour.

Hill accepted a commission in the new 23rd Fighter Group. Flying P-51 Mustangs and P-38 Lightnings, by November '44 they had virtually cleared the China skies of Japanese aircraft. Following discharge, he joined the Texas Air National Guard; at 30, he was the youngest brigadier general in Guard history.

Tex Hill accumulated 2,400 flying hours, including 700 combat hours. He had a total of 18-1/4 victories. His military honors include American, British and Chinese decorations. In 2002, he received our nation's second-highest award, the Distinguished Service Cross, for valor in battle over enemy-held territory in China 60 years earlier.

A courageous leader against great odds, Tex Hill went to war before our American war was declared. Six months prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor, he fought the Japanese air force – and became the second-leading Ace of the legendary Flying Tigers.

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From the New York Times

DEAN-Howard B. Died August 23rd in Southampton Hospital of respiratory failure. He was 80 years of age and a resident of East Hampton, New York. Mr. Dean attended the Browning School in New York City, Pomfret School and Yale University. During World War II, he served with Pan Am Africa and the Chinese National Aviation Corp AVG in India and China. He received commendations from the Chinese National Government and the United States Air Force for his service in the Asia Pacific Theatre. An active member of the Wall Street community for forty years, Mr. Dean was a partner at Harris Upham before becoming a Senior Vice President of Dean Witter Reynolds, Inc. He served on the Board of Governors of the Investment Bankers Association, the American Stock Exchange and the Association of Stock Exchange Firms. He was a member of the Vestry of St. Luke's Church, East Hampton, New York, and served for a number of years as Senior Warden. He served as a member of the Board of Trustees of Browning School, of Pomfret School and as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of St. George's School, Newport, Rhode Island. He was a member of the Board of Directors of the Hospital for Special Surgery and the Freedom Institute, both of New York City. He is survived by his wife of 54 years, Andree Maitland Dean, three sons, Howard B. M.D. (Judy) Governor of Vermont, James H. (Virginia) of Fairfield, Connecticut, and William G. (Beth) of Dover, Mass. and ten grandchildren; two sisters, Marianne Hill of Cold Spring Harbor, New York and Nancy Felch and her husband, William C. Felch M.D. of Carmel, California. He was pre-deceased by a son Charles, who died in Laos in 1974. Above all, his memory is defined by his friendship, humanity, integrity, and humor which will be missed by all of us. Funeral Services will be held on Thursday, August 30th, 2001 at 11 A.M. at St. Luke's Church, James Lane, East Hampton, NY 11937. Interment will be private. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to St. Luke's Church Endowment Fund.

ROBERT HEILIG

Job with CNAC - Pilot

Dates of Service - 1943 44

Wife's Name - Lee

Childrens Names Linda Lee, Judy Lou, Leslie Ann

How he got there (early life) He was in the U.S. Army Reserve on inactive duty. At time of hiring to CNAC he was a Glenn L. Martin Test Pilot. Test flew the Martin B26 Maurauder mostly for a three year period. Previous to this time I had received an engineering degree in aeronautics and a mechanics degree from what is now known as the Northrop Aviation Institute. He was also a flight instructor and taught for the Army as a civilian instructor. Joined CNAC in New York and flew over with Snell and Reg Farrar. He was the Co-pilot on the flight.

CHINA NATIONAL AVIATION CORPORATION
ASSOCIATION



W. J. Maher
PRESIDENT

P.O. Box 984
Jackson, MI 49204



Phone (517) 784-5603 • Fax (517) 787-8187
www.cnac.org • www.hunpplots.com

Jean Chang.
China National Aviation Corp Limited
5/F CNAC HOUSE
12 TUNG FAI ROAD
Hong Kong International Airport
Lantau, Hong Kong

February 3, 2004

Dear Mr. Jean Chang

Allow me to introduce myself since I believe we have some important history to share with you. My name is William J Maher President of CNAC Association CNAC Captain during and after WW II.

CNAC Association commissioned and produced a video history of CNAC covering the years from 1929 to 1949. This documentary contain pictures and interviews with CNAC personnel who where with the airline during this period.

Several Chinese television stations have expressed an interest in the documentary but have not had the funding required to help us offset the cost of the production.

We are very proud of the resurgence of CNAC and believe that the documentaries distribution would be an asset for the current CNAC Corporation. Any assistance from your organization would be greatly appreciated.

The producer Mr. Arthur Lindgren of Monumental Production Company, Everett, Washington (E-MAIL Address ONGRAND@AOL.COM) is handling the sale and distribution of this Three Part Documentary.

WJ Maher
President
CNAC Association

Bill Maher is attempting to connect with the new CNAC in Hong Kong. The following letter is his first attempt.

Christie Hanks single handedly on his own initiative found Jim Fox's plane Number 53 an engineered its removal to Kunming where it has become a memorial.

Talk at the Oxford Scribes program on November 16, 2003

I am Fletcher Hanks. I wish to clear up two misconceptions about my World War II activities. I was not a Flying Tiger. The license plate on my car refers to my wife, Jane Hanks, who was the only registered nurse of the American Volunteer Group, the real Flying Tigers. Jane went to war in 1941 to defend the Burma Road. She fell in love with John Petach, an AVG pilot, married him and got pregnant in that order. John was killed in China.

I have not served in the U.S. Armed Forces but I have an honorable discharge from the Navy for special flights I made for them in Alaska flying the wounded out of Attu and Kiska. I also have an honorable discharge from the Air Force by flying 347 round trips over the Hump. I am a card-carrying-veteran with veteran status. (Here is my card.) There are less than 100 veterans qualified as I did. There are two of them at 104 North Morris Street. How this happened is another story. I am here to sell you my book.

“Saga of CNAC #53”, written in the first person, about a military operation of World War II and particularly about an airplane that crashed in the Himalaya Mountains, March 11, 1943. After I located this airplane 53 years later and brought it off the mountain, it made history by revealing to the Chinese in 1997 that the Japanese invaded their country during World War II and America was instrumental in saving them from certain defeat. The Chinese lost these historical facts when their recorded history was destroyed by the “Gang of Four”. I was instrumental in restoring it. An American piloted CNAC #53 a freight airplane and both his crewmembers were Chinese. That was undeniable proof to the Communist rulers six years ago that Americans came to China’s aid in their darkest hour. It was the biggest news in China for a long time.

This historic airplane CNAC #53 owned by China National Aviation Corporation, CNAC, pronounced C-knack and flown by Jim Fox a civilian pilot, a soldier of fortune, one of the highest paid pilots of the world.

His route was flying from India to China, which crossed over a spur of the Himalaya Mountains that forms a natural border between China and Burma. The CNAC pilots who flew it first named it the Hump. During good weather the Japanese fighters gunned for them and during the monsoon season they experienced the most violent turbulence and icing conditions known to aviators. It was the only place then and since then where planes

lost their wings in flight. It is now considered the most dangerous transport flying in the history of aviation.

CNAC pilots flew the Hump along side of the Air Transport Command, ATC, part of the U.S. Air Force. The ATC developed their own ignominious name for the Hump; that was the Aluminum Trail as they destroyed 1556 airplanes while CNAC only lost 39. Although they delivered seven times the amount of freight into China, their losses were staggering, equal to the rate of losses of the Eighth Air Force bombing Germany.

“Saga of CNAC #53” is not just about the blood and guts of airplane crashes; it relates what CNAC pilots did for amusement when they were at their apartments in Calcutta, India for two weeks a month. It was the time when sex was safe and flying airplanes was dangerous. Both required a degree of nerve. Any one who dared to regularly fly the Hump route certainly had enough nerve for the other, especially after he had a few brushes with death and he realized that his life expectancy was suddenly contracted.

“Saga of CNAC #53” is scheduled to be published the first week in January by 1st Book Publishers. It contains 65 pictures and maps most of them have never been published before, many were made especially for this book.

Fletcher Hanks

RAY E. GILLILAND

Job with CNAC - Pilot

Dates of Service - October 1943 to January 1945

Wife's Name - Joanne

Childrens Names Ron, 33 yrs, Scott, 28 yrs, Chris 25 yrs.

How he got there (early life) He had a student at Purdue who had a sister working for Pan Am in the New York Office. This is how he found out about CNAC.

HENRY R. JOHNSTON

Job with CNAC - DC-4 Instructor Captain

Dates of Service - April 1946 to October 1947

Wife's Name - Allaire G.

Children - None

How he got there (early life) - He came to CNAC with DC-4's after leaving the Air Force in 1946.

ANDY
ANDY ANDERSON

PAGE 1 OF MY "TURBINLIGHT" FERRY TRIP TO SCOTLAND:

ACTUALLY, (FINALLY), I REMEMBERED THAT TIME WHEN I FLEW INTO GANDER, NEWFOUNDLAND AND HAD PROBLEMS WITH WEATHER AND AN ENGINE OF MY B/25 (TURBINLIGHT) AIRPLANE, THAT I WAS FERRYING FROM MONTREAL, CANADA TO PRESTWICK, SCOTLAND (VIA THE NORTH ATLANTIC OCEAN):

THE AIRPLANE HAD A BIG AND LONG BARREL (HOLDING ELECTRIC WIREING)? IT EXTENDED THE LENGTH OF THE PLANE, UNDER THE FLOORBOARDS TO THE ENORMOUS LIGHT AT THE TIP OF THE NOSE, FOR GUIDANCE OF THE PURSUITS, TRYING TO LOCATE THE ENEMY PLANES AT NIGHT (I SUPPOSE), TOO, THERE WERE "FINGER STACKS" AS AN EXHAUST SYSTEM IN EACH ENGINE, TO GIVE LITTLE OR NO LIGHT (INSTEAD OF THE USUAL "COLLECTOR RING" EXHAUST, IN MOST AIRPLANES' ENGINES).

WELL, I HAD NO CO-PILOT (ONLY A RADIO OPERATOR, WAY IN THE BACK-END). MY RIGHT ENGINE CAUGHT AFIRE, (AND, OF COURSE, THAT WAS A WORRISOME PROBLEM. I BELIEVE THAT THE FIRE HAD GONE OUT (RATHER QUICKLY, AS I REMEMBER, BECAUSE THAT PART OF THAT FLIGHT HADN'T STUCK IN MY MIND. I SUPPOSE THAT I FEATHERED THAT RIGHT ENGINE'S PROPELLER, TOO).

ONE OF THE MAIN PROBLEMS, WAS, THAT I COULDN'T GET THE PLANE, HIGHER THAN 17,000 FEET ALTITUDE, IN ORDER TO TAKE A "BEARING" ON A STAR OR THE MOON. THE "OVERCAST" WAS VERY THICK, (PROBABLY, ENDED 1,000 TO 2,000 FEET HIGHER THAN WE COULD (THEN) CLIMB TO. UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES A BEARING WAS VERY IMPORTANT, IN ORDER TO REMAIN ON OUR (DESIRED COURSE) TO SCOTLAND (AS I DID NOT WANT TO LAND IN FRANCE OR GERMANY). TOO, SINCE I HAD THAT PROBLEM WITH THE RIGHT ENGINE, I HAD, IMMEDIATELY, THOUGHT THAT IT MIGHT BE NECESSARY TO "BAIL OUT", BUT I, SURE, DID NOT WISH FOR US TO BAIL-OUT AND GO INTO THAT COLD (MAYBE 50 DEGREES BELOW ZERO-CENTIGRADE), NORTH ATLANTIC WATER!

AT ONCE, THEN, WE TRIED TO GET PERMISSION (FROM THE GANDER RADIO-PEOPLE) TO GO TO GANDER AND LAND THERE, BUT THE RADIO-PERSON AT GANDER, TOLD US THAT GANDER AIRPORT HAD BEEN "CLOSED" TO ANY AIR-TRAFFIC ALL NIGHT, DUE TO THE "WINTER-STORM", AND HE SUGGESTED THAT WE GO TO STEPHENSVILLE, MAINE, WHICH WE JUDGED, WAS ABOUT THE SAME (OR A BIT MORE) DISTANCE AWAY.

PAGE 2 OF MY "TURBINLIGHT" FERRY TRIP TO SCOTLAND, CONT'D:

(IMMEDIATELY), I SAW A RED LIGHT (WHICH I HAD PRESUMED TO BE THE BACK LIGHT OF ANOTHER AIRPLANE) HEADING IN THE SAME DIRECTION OF THE GANDER AIRPORT. (WE WERE OVER THE OCEAN AND ABOUT PARALLEL OF THE GANDER AIRPORT, I FLEW MY PLANE SEVERAL HUNDRED FEET BACK OF THAT PLANE'S RED LIGHT, AND EVENTUALLY, HE FLEW OVER GANDER AIRPORT, WITH ME FOLLOWING HIM. AND, JUST THEN A "HOLE" IN THE "OVERCAST" DEVELOPED OVER THE "FIELD", AND WHAT I THOUGHT WAS ANOTHER PLANE THAT I HAD BEEN FOLLOWING, FLEW "ON". OF COURSE, I THOUGHT, FOR A MOMENT THAT IT WAS STRANGE FOR HIM TO DO THAT, BUT, I DOVE OUR PLANE THROUGH THAT "HOLE" AND LANDED ON A RUNWAY OF ICE, AND SKIDDED ON THE ICE OF THAT RUNWAY, CLEAR-BACK TO THE HANGER AT THE END OF THE FIELD, AND WE STOPPED THERE, AND WENT IN.

THE MECHANIC, THERE, CAME OVER TO MY SIDE OF MY PLANE, AND YELLED UP AT ME, AS TO WHAT THE MATTER WAS. I TOLD HIM THAT I "LOST MY RIGHT ENGINE" (MEANING I COULD NOT, OPERATE MY RIGHT ENGINE. THEN THE TELEPHONE OF THE HANGAR RANG, THAT MECHANIC WENT TO ANSWER IT. HE CAME BACK UNDER MY SIDE WINDOW, AND YELLED-UP AT ME, THAT IT WAS THE TOWER OPERATOR ON THE PHONE, AND WANTED TO TALK TO ME.

OF COURSE, I GOT DOWN AND WENT OVER TO THE PHONE. THE TOWER OPERATOR, ASKED ME, HOW I MANAGED TO FIND THE AIRPORT, AS NO "HOLE" HAD APPEARED OVER THE AIRPORT ALL NIGHT-LONG. AND THAT HOLE THAT I WENT DOWN THROUGH LASTED ONLY FOR ABOUT 3 MINUTES ALL NIGHT. I TOLD HIM, TOO, THAT I FOLLOWED A PLANE OVER THAT HOLE, AND HE SAID THAT WAS IMPOSSIBLE, FOR NO PLANE FLEW IN NEWFOUNDLAND ALL NIGHT. WELL, I WAS DUMNFOUNDED, AND TOO EXHAUSTED TO "PONDER" MUCH ABOUT THAT, SO BOTH OF US (CREW MEMBERS) WENT ON-UP TO BED!

THE FOLLOWING MORNING, I WENT TO THE HANGER, WHEN THE MECHANIC SAID TO ME, "CAPTAIN, HAVE YOU SEEN YOUR RIGHT ENGINE"? OF COURSE, I SAID "NO". WELL, HE THEN TOLD ME, THE TOP ENGINE-MOUNTS HAD BURNED AWAY, THE FIRE WALL HAD BURNED AWAY, AND ONE OF THE LOWER ENGINE MOUNTS WAS "GONE", AND IF THE OTHER ENGINE MOUNT HAD "GONE", YOU'D HAVE "LOST" THAT ENGINE, FOR SURE! GOSH, I HADN'T DREAMED WE HAD THAT MUCH OF A PROBLEM!! WOW!!

WELL, I DO NOT BELIEVE MUCH IN "MIRACLES", BUT MAYBE ALL THAT WAS A "MIRACLE".

THAT MECHANIC (PERHAPS, BECAUSE OF THE "FINGER STACKS" EXHAUST, AND THE MAJOR FIRE IN MY RIGHT ENGINE), ALL OF THE SQUADRONS OF THE WORLD "GROUNDED" THE "TURBINLITES", AT LEAST, TEMPORARILY. I GUESS WE CREW-MEMBERS WERE LUCKY!!!

“BAIL OUT”

BY ANDY ANDERSON

3/19/02 (AFTER READING THE HEADLINE ON THE COVER OF AN AMERICAN NATIONAL MAGAZINE RECENTLY, RE-THE “RATED” AND “UNDERRATED”, AIRCRAFT PILOTS, I DECIDED TO WRITE ABOUT ONE INCIDENT THAT HAPPENED TO ME, AS I WAS 15+ A YEARS YOUNG “YESTERYEAR” AND “UNDERRATED” (“UNHERALDED”) PILOT:

BEFORE WW II, I FERRIED MOSTLY “LEND LEASE” PLANES, FOR THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, THROUGHOUT ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, WALES AND NORTHERN IRELAND, WHERE I WAS WHEN PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT ANNOUNCED, OVER THE RADIO, RE-THE BOMBING OF “PEARL HARBOR” AND “THE DAY OF INFAMY,” AND THE START-UP OF WW II.

(AS A 2ND THOUGHT, I DECIDED TO NAME THE FLYING-JOBS THAT I HAD, SO IF THERE ARE OTHER PILOTS READING THIS, THEY MIGHT EMPATHIZE):

I FERRIED BRITISH AND AMERICAN PLANES FROM FACTORIES TO SQUADRONS, SQUADRONS TO MAINTENANCE UNITES, ACROSS THE NORTH ATLANTIC OCEAN FROM CANADA TO SCOTLAND. (I WAS THE CAPTAIN-PILOT WHO STOPPED-OVER IN GANDER, NEWFOUNDLAND, FOR FUEL, AND I WAS FERRYING A B-25 “TURBANLIGHT” PLANE TO SCOTLAND, AND WHO GROUNDED ALL THE “TURBANLIGHT” B-25s USED IN SQUADRONS ALL OVER THE WORLD, BECAUSE OF THE POOR JOB DONE ON THE PLANE’S EXHAUST (FINGER-STACKS) SYSTEMS. LATER, I TRANSFERRED TO THEIR NASSAU, BAHAMAS BASE AND FERRIED PLANES ACROSS THE SOUTH ATLANTIC OCEAN TO SCOTLAND VIA AFRICA.

(ONE TIME IN FLYING ALONG THE COAST OF AFRICA, I PASSED BY A MEETING OF THE HEADS OF COUNTRIES CALLED “YALTA” IN MARRAKESH, MOROCCO). (ROOSEVELT, CHURCHILL AND STALIN WERE AMONG THESE IN ATTENDANCE).

THEN, FOR AWHILE, I WAS A PRODUCTION-TEST-CO-PILOT FOR THE CONSOLIDATED VULTEE COMPANY, DOMINANTLY ON B-24s. LATER, I TRANSFERRED TO THEIR NEWLY ESTABLISHED AIRLINE (CONSAIRWAYS), FLYING AS A CO-PILOT ON THEIR B-24s, WHICH ONLY FLEW HI-PRIORITY PASSENGERS AND CARGO TO AND FROM THE FAIRFIELD, SUISUN AIRBASE IN CA., TO SAN FRANCISCO TO HAWAII, CANTON, FIGI, NEW CALEDONIA AND BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA, AND BACK VIA NANUMEA (A COUPLE HUNDRED MILES FROM THE ISLAND WHERE AMELIA EARHART WAS REPORTEDLY, RECENTLY, FOUND ALIVE). THE I FLEW THE “HUMP”. LATER, WAS CO-PILOT WITH NATIONAL AIRLINES AROUND FLORIDA, A VENEZUELAN RANCH’S MEAT HAULING PILOT. AN EXECUTIVE-PILOT A VENEZUELAN OIL COMPANY – TAKING THEIR PASSENGERS TO AND FROM THEIR OIL RIG. LASTLY, AERIAL PHOTO PILOT FOR THE

VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT.

ALL IN ALL, ABOUT 52 DIFFERENT TYPES AND MARKS OF PLANES WERE FLOWN (BRITISH MADE, AND AMERICAN MADE). ALL GAVE ME ABOUT 2000 HOURS OF FLYING-TIME. (NOT MANY HOURS-THESE DAYS REALLY).

IT SHOULD BE MENTIONED THAT THERE IS NO MORE "HUMP." AS THE MODERN AIRLINE PLANES, FLYING OVER THE SAME AREA FLY TOO HIGH.

I PROBABLY FIRST SHOULD WRITE ABOUT THE LIFE THAT WE "HUMP FLYERS" HAD: WE ALL LIVED IN A LARGE HUT ON A "TEA PLANTATION" NEAR WHAT WAS CALLED "DINJAN" (THE UPPER ASSAM VALLEY OF INDIA) AND WE FLEW FROM THE BASE TO AND FROM KUNMIN, CHINA MOSTLY VIA THE "NAGA HILLS" AND BURMA EVERY DAY AND INTO THE NIGHTS.

WE PILOTS AND CREWS FLEW FOR (CNAC) CHINESE NATIONAL AIRCRAFT CORPORATION. CHANG KAI CHECK RAN THAT GOVERNMENT. THE CHINESE NATIONALIST WHICH OWNED 80% OF CNAC. PAA (WHICH PUT IN THE RADIO NAVIGATIONAL EQUIPMENT) ALL OVER THE "HUMP" OWNED THE 20% REMAINING.

WE FLEW, MOSTLY, C-47s AND C-46s AND, MOSTLY, WE FLEW CARGO OR WORKERS - OR BOTH. MUCH OF OUR CARGO WERE BALES OF PAPER CHINESE "YEN" MADE IN USA, FOR THE CHINESE, AS THEY HAD A TREMENDOUS MONEY PROBLEM THEN. AND UPON MANY OF OUR RETURN TRIPS, WE HAD "HOG BRISTLES" AS CARGO. THE HOG BRISTLES ARE THE "BRUSHES" PART OF PAINT BRUSHES.

IT MIGHT BE MENTIONED, THAT ANYTIME A PLANE DID NOT RETURN TO BASE, AFTER A TIME, THE PLANE AND CREW WERE FIGURED TO BE "GONE", CRASHED EITHER IN THE WILD CHINESE OR BURMESE "JUNGLE" OR IN THE MOUNTAINS, WHERE THERE WAS 6 TO 9 FEET DEEP SNOW, AND IT WAS DEEMED THAT NONE OF THE PLANES COULD BE FOUND, NOR COULD THE CREWS. APPARENTLY, THE MANAGEMENT HAD TRIED SEVERAL TIMES TO NO AVAIL, AND FINALLY, IT WAS DEEMED TO BE IMPOSSIBLE TO FIND ANYONE, ALIVE OR DEAD!

(MY WIFE AND OLDEST SON LIVED IN LIBERTY, MO. THEN, AND SINCE SHE GOT ONE OF HER LETTERS BACK - STAMPED "DECEASED" ON HER ENVELOPE - CAUSING HER TO GO TO BED FOR A DAY OR SO, BUT SHE GOT ON FROM ME, QUICKLY, THOUGH, AND REALIZED THAT I WAS NOT DECEASED!")

NOW! TO (FINALLY) WRITE ABOUT MY "BAIL OUT" INCIDENT OVER THE BURMESE JUNGLE, WHILE I WAS FLYING FOR (CNAC):

THIS IS ONE EPISODE THAT HAPPENED TO ME AND MY CREW, THAT I'D LIKE TO

SHARE:

MY PLANE (C-47) AND CREW OF A RADIO OPERATOR (ONLY) WERE ABOUT TO RETURN TO OUR BASE IN INDIA, FROM KUMING (EMPTY OF CARGO), WHEN A NEARBY (BASED) USA SERVICE MAN ASKED ME IF HE COULD GO ACK WITH US, AS HE WANTED TO GET, EVEN PART-WAY IN INDIA FROM SOME "R & R" IN CALCUTTA. WELL, I AGREED TO TAKE HIM BUT I TOLD HIM THAT MUST BORROW A PARACHUTE, AS WE HAD ONLY 2 ON BOARD OUR AIRPLANE, AND, IF WE HAD TO BAIL-OUT, I COULDN'T LEAVE HIM. AFTER A BIT OF CONVINCING, I TOLD HIM THAT I'D WAIT FOR AN HOUR FOR HIS RETURN. HE DID, AND WITH A PARACHUTE AND HE BECAME MY CO-PILOT.

WELL, WE TOOK OFF AND "LO AND BEHOLD" WE WERE ABOUT 60 MINUTES EN ROUTE TO INDIA, AND THE PLANE CAUGHT FIRE (NOT FROM GUN-FIRE), AND WE THREE BAILED-OUT OF THE PLANE, OVER THE BURMESE JUNGLE. ON THE WAY FLOATING DOWN, I YELLED AT THE OTHER TWO FLOATING DOWN, NEAR BY, "WE JUST PASSED OVER THE IRRAWADDY RIVER AND MEET ME AT THAT RIVER. LATER, WHEN WE MET, THEY TOLD ME THAT THEY DID NOT HEAR ME. (I FOUND OUT LATER THEN, THAT ALWAYS, ONE'S VOICE MUST BOUNCE OFF SOMETHING, FOR ANOTHER PERSON TO HEAR, NO MATTER HOW CLOSE.

WELL, I LANDED IN A TREE, RELEASED MY PARACHUTE, AND FELL TO THE GROUND (NOT A VERY FAR FALL). I SAW A PATH IN THE DISTANCE, HEADING TOWARD THE IRRAWADDY RIVER, WHICH FLOWED SOUTH, AND ON WHICH, AND FARTHER SOUTH, WAS THE U.S. AIRBASE AT A TOWN CALLED MYITKINA, BURMA). (WE ALWAYS CALLED IT "MITCHANAH").

I WALKED DOWN THAT PATH TO THE RIVER, WHERE I SAW AN ISLAND TO SLEEP – ON (AS I DID NOT CARE TO SLEEP IN THE – WILD ANIMAL JUNGLE –). I LAY DOWN AND WAS "DRIFTING-OFF", WHEN I SAW, WHAT I THOUGHT WAS A CROUCHING (SITTING) TIGER ABOUT 20 FEET FROM ME. WELL, I CONTINUED "DRIFTING-OFF", AND WENT TO SLEEP, AS I WAS EXHAUSTED. THE NEXT MORNING I AWAKENED AND LOOKED TOWARD THAT TIGER, IT TURNED-OUT TO BE JUST A BUSH!!!

I WALKED BACK TO THAT PATH (AS IT VEERED SOUTH, TOO, ALONG AND NEAR THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE RIVER). I NOTICED A SMALL 2-MAN (BAMBOO) RAFT ON THE WATER'S EDGE, AND FAIRLY NEAR THE PATH THAT I WAS WALKING ON. I GOT THAT RAFT, AND STARTED TO FLOAT DOWN THAT RIVER, BUT IT WASN'T MANY HOURS WHEN THE RAFT HIT A "WHIRLPOOL," WHICH BADLY DAMAGED THAT RAFT, BUT, JUST THEN, I HAPPENED TO SEE ANOTHER 2-MAN (BAMBOO) RAFT ON THE RIGHT BANK, AND I PADDLED (WITH HANDS) TO IT AND GOT IT AND PLACED IT OVER MY DAMAGED ONE, AND CONTINUED MY FLOATING DOWN THAT RIVER.

A BIT LATER ON, I NOTICED, ON THE RIGHT SIDE PATH OF THAT RIVER (THAT I HAD STARTED WALKING DOWN ON), A GROUP OF COWS BEING DRIVEN BACK UP BY YOUNG FELLOWS. TWO OF THOSE FELLOWS SAW ME AND GOT A 2-MAN RAFT NEARBY AND PADDLED OUT TO ME. THEY, THEN, GUIDED ME AND MY RAFTS BACK TO THEIR SHORE AND THEN TOOK ME TO THEIR VILLAGE, NEARBY (AND TO WHERE THE COWS APPARENTLY WENT). WE STOPPED AT THE FIRST EDGE OF THEIR VILLAGE AND GAVE ME A BIG LEAF FULL OF RICE AND SOME OTHER FOOD TO EAT. I ATE IT ALL, AS I WAS FAMISHED.

WE, THEN, WENT TO THE CHIEF'S LARGE, THATCHED HUT ON THE OTHER EDGE OF THAT VILLAGE, HIGH (ON STILTS) – SO THE WILD ANIMALS COULDN'T COME, I GUESS. WELL, WE THREE, WENT UP THAT LADDER AND INTO THE THATCHED HUT.

THERE WAS A FIRE IN THE FIREPLACE UNDER THE FLOOR, AND IN THE MIDDLE OF THE BIG LIVING-ROOM (I GUESS), AND THE ENTIRE VILLAGE OF PEOPLE WITH SARONG SKIRTS ON SITTING ALONG THE WALLS (CURIOUS, I GUESS), AND MY 2 COMPANIONS AND I SAT IN THE MIDDLE OF THAT ROOM NEAR THE FIREPLACE.

SOMEONE HANDED ME A SKIRT-SARONG TO PUT ON. I WENT IN THE OTHER ROOM AND DID SO. THERE WAS NO BATHROOM, AND SINCE THE HUT HAD AN OUTSIDE (RAILED) WALKWAY SURROUNDING TH UT, I PRESUMED THAT WAS USED FOR BATHROOM PURPOSES, SINCE THERE DIDN'T SEEM TO BE ANY OTHER.

THE CHIEF OF THE VILLAGE RETURNED FROM "HUNTING" THEY HAD TOLD ME, AND HE, IMMEDIATELY, TOLD ME IN "ENGLISH" TO GO INTO THE NEXT ROOM AND PUT MY SARONG-SKIRT ON CORRECTLY, AS PEOPLE COULD SEE MY NAKEDNESS, AS I HAD PUT IT ON INCORRECTLY. WELL, I PUT IT ON CORRECTLY.

SOON, I ASKED A PER SON FOR A CIGARET (AS I HAD HEARD A LONG TIME AGO, THAT THE U.S. AIR FORCE PEOPLE HAD "CACHED" CIGARETS, ETC. IN FIELDS OF NEARBY VILLAGES FOR THE CRASHED SERVICE MEN TO USE.) NO ONE IN THE GROUP UNDERSTOOD MY LANGUAGE, SO GAVE ME MORE RICE TO EAT.

I DO NOT REMEMBER SLEEPING IN THE VILLAGE, BUT MY TWO COMPANIONS TOOK ME TO THE PATH, AT THE EDGE OF THAT RIVER, AND, WE 3 BEGAN WALKING TO THE AIR FORCE BASE, AND WHEN WE ARRIVED, I ARRANGED TO GIVE THEM BLANKETS, AS A GIFT, AND THEY DEPARTED.

THE ORDERLY, THEN ASKED ME, "CAPTAIN, WOULD YOU LIKE TO EAT?" THEN HE ASKED ME IF I'D LIKE TO WASH FIRST. WELL, ID DID, AND LOOKED IN THE MIRROR OF THE LATRINE, AND SAW MY HAIR STANDING UP LIKE A FIGI ISLANDER, AND MY SUMMER FLYING SUIT WITH BURN HOLES ALL OVER IT. WELL, I STRAIGHTENED MYSELF AS BEST AS I COULD.

HENNICK'S



Higgs went to college with Milton Caniff. He was the model for Dude Hennick, so named for a Columbus, Ohio hangout. Higgs crashed shortly after the war.

THEN I ASKED HIM IF MY CREW HAD COME IN. SINCE HE SAID NO, I ASKED FOR A PLANE TO LOOK OUT FOR THEM. HE SUGGESTED FOR ME TO EAT FIRST, AND TOLD ME THAT A SMALL PLANE AND A PILOT WOULD BE WAITING TO TAKE ME TO LOOK FOR MY CREW, RIGHT AFTERWARD. I ONLY REMEMBER GETTING IN THAT LITTLE AIRPLANE.

WHEN I GOT IN, THE PILOT TURNED AROUND AND HE YELLED AT ME "HOMER ANDERSON"? I YELLED BACK, "BENT AGEE"! HE THEN SAID, THE LAST TIME I SAW YOU IN MY ENGLISH CLASS AT SOUTHWEST HIGH SCHOLL IN KANSAS CITY. GOSH IT WAS GOOD TO SEE HIM!

WE TOOK OFF AND LOOKED, AND LOOKED, TO NO AVAIL, BUY MY CREW WALKED IN TO THE BASE, SOON THEREAFTER!

MY (AMERICAN "CO-PILOT") WALKED TO THE NEXT RIVER AND FOLLOWED IT DOWN. THE CHINESE RADIO OPERATOR HAD GONE TO A FAMILY'S HUT IN BETWEEN TWO RIVERS, AND HUSBAND BEAT-HIM-UP, THINKING HE WAS JAPANESE (THAT WAR WAS STILL GOING ON). HE, TOO, WALKED-INTO THAT BASE. GOSH, THAT WAS GREAT!!

WELL, WE ALL GOT BACK TO THE CNAC BASE IN INDIA. I DO NOT RECALL THAT ANYONE SAID MUCH ABOUT OUR VENTURE.

MY WIFE AND LITTLE SON, MOVED TO CALCUTTA, INDIA, WHERE I SPEND MY OWN "R & R'S." I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE CO-PILOT, NOR RADIO OPERATOR.

HOPE YOU ENJOYED AT LEAST S-O-M-E-, OF WHAT YOU HAVE READ. I'M NOT A PROFESSIONAL WRITER, AS YOU CAN TELL (AND I'M FULL OF BLAH, BLAH, TOO!!).



Vince De Salvatore



Secretary Jerry Schrawder

THE AIRCORP MUSEUM

Bill Maher almost alone, has developed a CNAC Exhibit at the major air museum in the United States. It includes a large painting and mannequins dressed in CNAC uniforms and other memorabilia. This should have been impossible, but we are there.

On May 19 & 20, 2004 there will be a dedication at Wright Field in Dayton, Ohio. Several of our members will be there. Contact Bill if you can attend.

William Maher
P.O. Box 984
Jackson, Michigan 49204

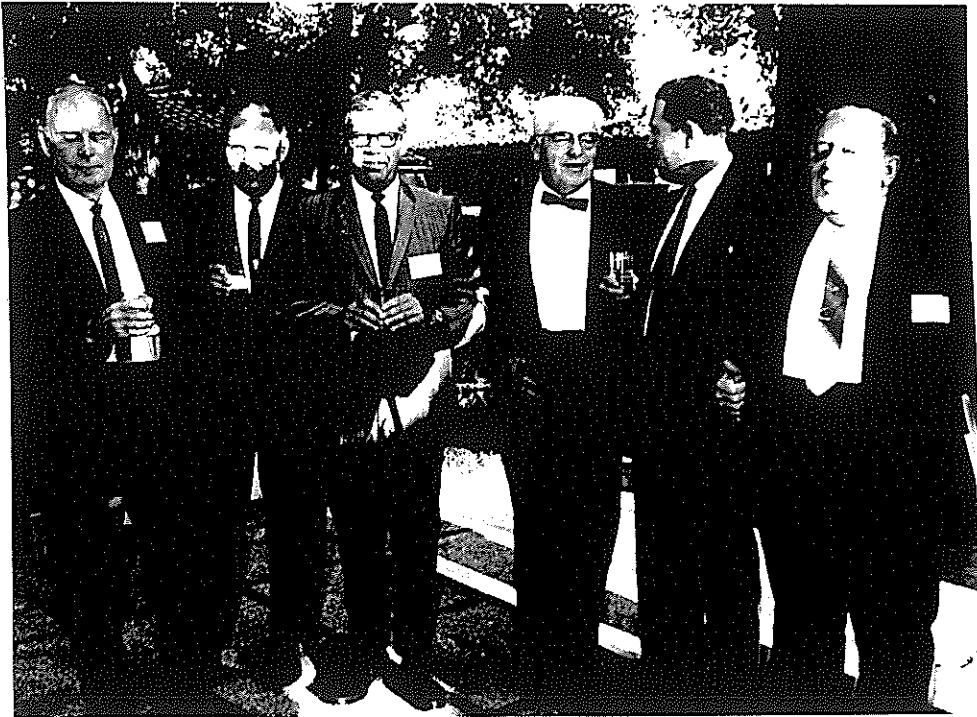
Internet

In case you didn't know, we have a web site:

CNAC. ORG

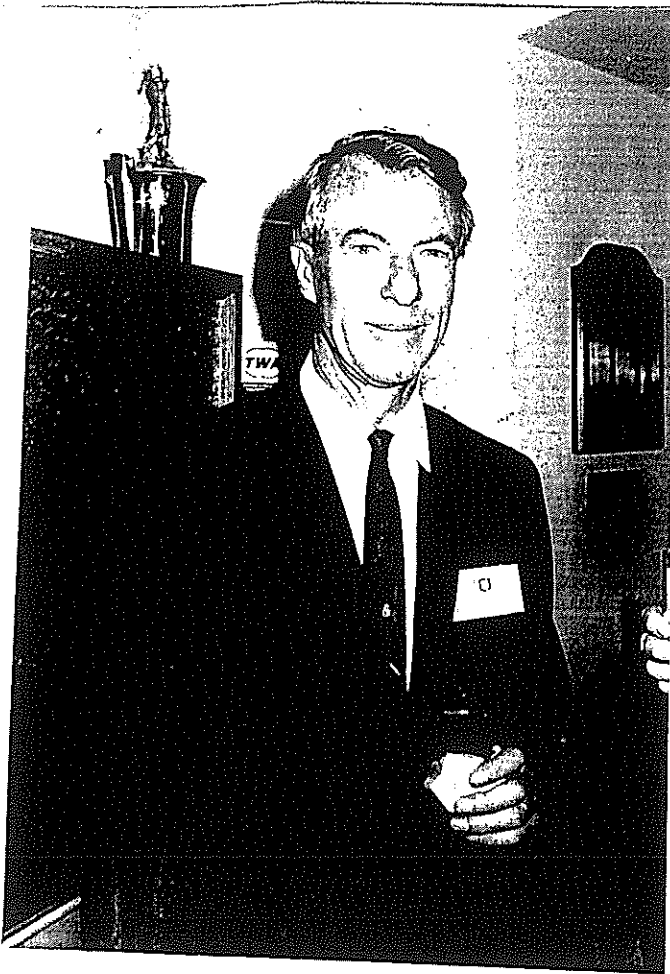
Also, HUMMPILOTS.COM
I'm not on there but look anyway.

Pappy
↓

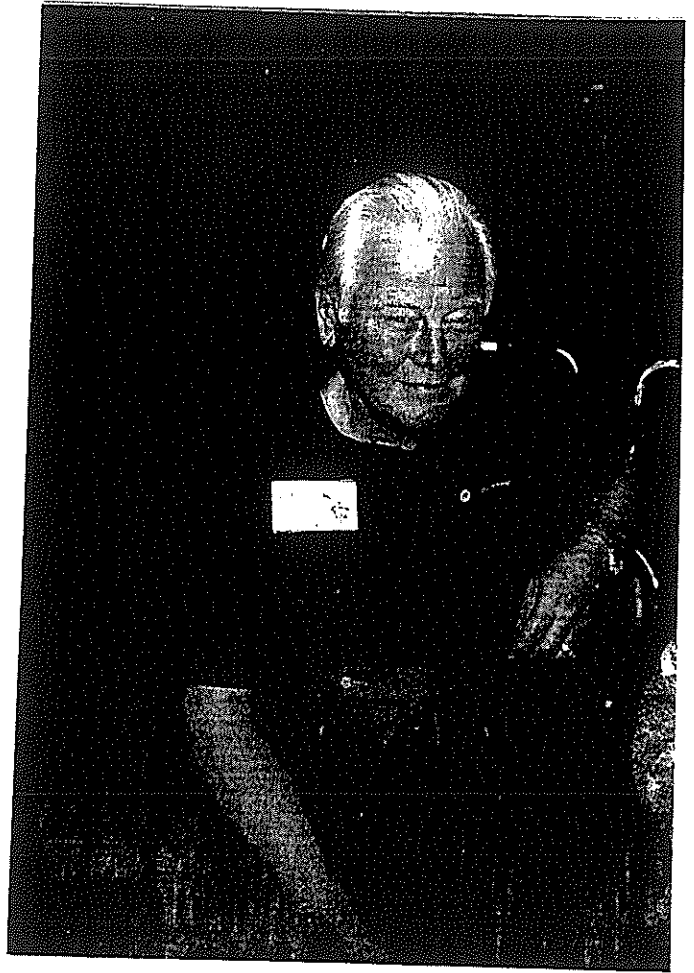


PAPPY QUINN

Of all the unbelievable characters in CNAC. Walter (Pappy) Quinn is alone. Without flight experience he came to CNAC to become a pilot. He didn't make it but became one of the Hostel Managers. When we found him he came to every reunion, served as Treasurer and did so much as anyone to promote our Association. In every group picture he was front and center leaning a little to one side. He was never President but he did more than any president. I'll bet that on that mountain top he will still be out on front. No one did more for our CNAC Association.



Oliver Gleason



Chuck West

NEXT REUNION

Next reunion to be held probably in October 2004. Two locations have been proposed. Since we will have an impressive exhibit at the Air Force Museum at Dayton, Ohio. Otherwise we will go back to San Francisco at the Embassy Suites Hotel near the airport. We had one of our most successful meetings there.

*Embassy Suites in Burlingame Calif near airport
99⁰⁰ a night, includes breakfast and a cocktail
hour in the evening. A few years ago one of our
Oct 7, 8, and 9 best reunions
was held there!
2004*

Ray Farrell Continued

MY NOMINATION FOR MOST INFLUENTIAL

We're all familiar with the "if" game. If this hadn't happened, something else wouldn't have happened; if that hadn't happened...and so on. Still, I know that if one particular man had not lived and figured in the history of China and, ultimately, in that of CNAC, World War II in the Pacific Theatre might have an entirely different cast to it. That man was Billy McDonald, and I feel fortunate that I knew him well. In an article complimenting Art Pendergast and his Chinese maintenance crew for their work in salvaging Capt. Carroll's plane, Billy used the expression, "Men behind the scenes rarely get credit for a job well done." That expression could apply equally well to Billy himself.

Billy McDonald was born in Birmingham, Alabama, and had a normal childhood with no hint of the important role he would play later as part of world history. By 1936, he had been a mechanic at a flight line when he enlisted in the 106th Observation Squadron in the Atlanta National Guard at Roberts Field. In his senior year at Howard College he received an appointment to the Army Air Corps flying schools in San Antonio, Texas. Later Billy was assigned to the 94th Pursuit Squadron at Selfridge

Field in Michigan. Then after 14 months at Selfridge, he accepted Capt. Claire Chennault's invitation to re-enlist in the Army Air Corps.

In 1931, Chennault received authorization to form an aerial aerobatic team, and he picked three men: sergeants Billy McDonald and Luke Williamson, and Lt. "Possum" Hansell. After months of practice, they made their debut at Sashan Airport in New Orleans. The news media dubbed them "The Three Men on the Flying Trapeze." They flew such tight formations that they were accused by the flight-illiterate newsmen of "having their wings tied together." We of the "flight literati" know, of course, it would be a little difficult to do slow- or snap-rolls with wings tied together. After each performance, many people wanted the team's autographs, and Roscoe Turner--himself a world-famous pilot--was heard to remark, "The autograph seekers better hurry, for the way those guys fly, they won't live long enough to give many autographs."

In 1936, Billy McDonald and Luke Williamson went to China. Luke stayed a while but returned to the States. Billy stayed on and started flying with the Chinese Air Force. With the Marco Polo Bridge Incident,* suddenly

* In July 1937, a clash between soldiers of the Japanese garrison at Peking and Chinese forces at the Marco Polo Bridge became the pretext for Japanese occupation of Peking and Tientsin. It marked the beginning of the Second Sino-Japanese War.

China was at war again with the Japanese. As a fighter pilot, Billy was much superior to the Chinese pilots, and his skills served as a sort of focus of resentment on the part of the Chinese. Many years later, he and I were together with many many Chinese Air Force personnel. As one three-star general walked by, I heard Billy say under his breath, "That son of a bitch!" When the general was out of hearing range, I asked him, "What was that all about?"

Billy said that one morning he was with a Chinese fighter group, dog-fighting with Japanese Zeros, and the general who had just walked by was the wing commander. In Chinese, he told the Chinese pilots he was going to tell them in English to turn right into more Zeros--but when he issued this order for a right-hand turn, they should turn left and break off contact with the Zeros. The wing commander gave the order and Billy turned right, right into the heart of the Japanese Zeros, while the Chinese pilots turned left and ran or flew for home base. Billy managed to fight his way clear. I asked if he reported this to the Generalissimo or Madame Chiang Kai-Shek. Billy said, "No."

Shortly after this episode, the Madame sent a messenger to have Billy come to her home. Billy met with Madame Chiang Kai-Shek, and she asked him to take over control of the Chinese Air Force. Billy told her he didn't consider himself to be the one to take on such an assignment, but he knew a man who was well-qualified for the

command: he gave her the name of *Major Claire Chennault*. The Madame then told Billy to get in touch with Chennault, and she also would have the Chinese Embassy call him.

A short while later, Madame Chiang called Billy and told him he should meet Chennault at Yokohama, Japan, and she gave Billy the name of the ship Chennault would be on, plus the date it would dock. Such an assignment posed quite a problem for Billy: he was such a fine fighter pilot that the Japanese had put a price on his head, and here he was being asked to go to the heart of Japan to pick up the soon-to-be commanding officer of the Chinese Air Force. A few nights later, Billy was sitting at a table in Shanghai with the manager of a U.S. nightclub entertainment group, telling the manager of his problem. The manager said not to worry: as of that moment, Billy could become co-manager of the entertainment group who would be appearing in Japanese nightclubs within a few days.

Billy got a new passport and a new name, and he met Major Chennault's boat at Yokohama. The major was dressed in full Army Air Corps uniform, ribbons and all, and Billy had one hell of a time getting Chennault to debark in a gob's (sailor's, deck hand's) uniform. The entertainer and the sailor got a car and toured the islands of Japan, taking pictures and making notes -- to such an extent that, when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, Chennault and Billy had in their possession more intelligence information

about Japan than all the military services back in Washington, D.C. *Pause for a moment and consider the nerve and courage such an undertaking required.*

The two men left Japan, and Claire Chennault joined the Chinese Air Force. He and Billy McDonald made a pact between themselves that neither would ever tell how many Zeros they destroyed. Over many years, Bill McDonald and I had many a confidential talk, but never did he mention either his or Chennault's destroying a Zero. Later, Claire Chennault returned to Washington to begin organizing the A.V.G. (American Volunteer Group). It was a ticklish international undertaking. For instance, the U.S. could not supply the Chinese with P-40 airplanes. However, Tommy "The Cork" Corcoran arranged for the British to give their older, inferior P-40's to the A.V.G.'s and we, the U.S.A., could then replace the British air groups with newer and better P-40's. By that time, McDonald had joined CNAC, but on Chennault's return to China, he helped Chennault organize the "Flying Tigers," get them operational, and flew a few missions with them.

Shortly after disbanding the Flying Tigers (July 1942), General Chennault was made commander of the 14th Air Force. His 14th Air Force and the Nationalist Chinese Army were able to fight the Japanese and reopen the Burma Road. They kept thousands upon thousands of Japanese troops -- and hundreds upon hundreds of Japanese Zeros -- on the

Asian mainland. Now all that is history

If Billy McDonald had not made an impact, however, it *might have been* written like this:

Chennault would not have become commanding officer of the Chinese Air Force. He would not have been in China to form and become commanding officer of "The Flying Tigers," a group who marked up an aerial combat record never before equaled and one probably never to be equaled in the future.

Billy McDonald was one of the key figures in starting CNAC's flying the Hump. If CNAC had not started Hump-flying, Pan Am's Mrs. Archibald would not have been able to place memos on President Roosevelt's desk each morning, giving the number of trips CNAC planes had made over the Hump the previous day. So, when General "Hap" Arnold submitted his report, stating that an aerial supply route from India to China was not feasible, President Roosevelt would not have known better -- and Hump-flying probably would never have come into existence.

The 14th Air Force would have been without supplies and would have ceased to exist. The Chinese Nationalist armies would have been without arms and ammunition and, soon, would have been overrun by the Japanese--thus releasing tens of thousands of Japanese troops and hundreds upon hundreds of Japanese Zeros, pilots, and maintenance crews to fight in the Pacific theatre, with untold numbers of

additional casualties within the Allied forces.

Also, because of CNAC's pioneering the Hump run, the Air Transport Command (A.T.C.) and the Army Air Force were forced into flying the Hump. Without the expert data learned from flying the Hump, it is possible we would not have been able to initiate a successful Berlin Air Lift and, quite possibly, Berlin could have fallen to the Russians. Had the Berlin Air Lift been unsuccessful, history would be different from what it is today. "For want of a nail, the shoe was lost; for want of a shoe, the horse was lost..." and so on.

After CNAC ceased to exist [Saturday, December 31, 1949], Bill McDonald started flying for Pan American World Airways, and he and his family moved to South America. Shortly afterward, Peggy Spain McDonald, Bill's wife, contracted polio and the family returned to the States. After Peggy's recovery, Marjorie and I traveled rather extensively with the McDonalds until Bill had a devastating stroke. He was partially paralyzed and never able to speak again, even though his mind was clear and sharp. Peggy and their two children, Cammie and Bill, Jr., planned to have a quiet family funeral when Bill died. But word spread that a fine man, a great and daring pilot was gone. Hundreds were present for the graveside rites, and the Air Force flew over in their "missing pilot" formation, bidding farewell to one of their great ones.

Here is (below) a verbatim copy of a letter Billy wrote to Madame Chiang Kai-Shek before his death, the copy of which Peggy was gracious enough to give to me to use as I saw fit:

April 23, 1977

Her Excellency Madame Chiang Kai-shek
Residence of The President
Taipeh, Taiwan
Republic of China

Dear Madame Chiang:

I have recently learned that you are still suffering from illness that started when you made an automobile trip from Nanking to Shanghai in 1937. I am real sorry to learn about this as I feel you have had about as much suffering as any one human should ever have. I am very much concerned and have offered prayers for your improvement and comfort.

Often I think back and remember the wonderful experiences and moments that took place many years ago. It does not seem possible that I first went to China in 1936. There were many great events and moments that I will never forget. They mean a great deal to me.

It all started when our group first met you and The Generalissimo in Kuling. Such a cool and beautiful resort. We also met that very fine gentleman, Mr. Donald. We then went to Hangchow.

Later in December, The Young Marshall seized The Generalissimo in Sian. You sent word to find out if there was an American pilot at Hangchow that had Tri-motored Ford experience. I volunteered and our Group of Transports under Captain Stennis took off for Loyang. It was there that I found Captain Just who was the German Ace that shot down my next door neighbor, Major James Meissener, who survived the crash in the First World War.

Colonel Reinberg died at Hangchow and you asked Luke Williamson and me who we could get to replace him. Chennault was recommended and you later sent me to Japan to meet Chennault in May of 1937. This was a real thrill in itself.

Arriving in Changhai and after an audience with you, we were off to inspect all Air Force installations. We were in Sian when the Japs attacked at the Marco Polo Bridge. We immediately volunteered and you sent us to Nanchang, and later to Nanking to test and fly the Hawk 75.

I remember when Jap bombers hit the Nanking Hospital. You and Chennault and our group scrambled over the destroyed buildings trying to help the wounded and survivors. I remember your broad brimmed sun hat tied under your chin.

I well remember Jap bombers almost hitting Dr. Kung's home where we were staying. Also you came to this house to see Colonel Chennault and Mr. Donald the evening after our pilots had mistakenly bombed the President Hoover.

The night at the Military Field when your pilots returned from a raid on Jap targets and made several bad landings is still vivid to me.

Several days later, Colonel Chennault, Smith, Watson and I went up on top of Purple Mountain to better observe Jap tactics and as we started back down the mountain, a Company of Infantrymen saw us and thought we were Japs and started firing at us. The Colonel was really upset and I understand that the Generalissimo immediately transferred this Company to the Front Lines.

Shortly after this episode we evacuated Nanking and went to Hankow. It was while I was there that the Japs sank the USS Panay. Then Colonel Chennault planned a Birthday Party for the Japanese Emperor. It was a great success and many Jap planes never returned to their bases.

We were transferred to Kunming to try and build up the training program. In late 1939 Colonel Chennault left me in charge of the American Groups at Kunming, Mengtse and Yunnanyi. He went to the States to organize the American Volunteer Group. While he was in the States, our contracts expired and the Americans started back to the States when CNAC employed Higgs, Angle and myself. This took place on April 15, 1940.

In January or February 1942 I was honored to have been chosen by you to fly yourself, The Generalissimo, Dr. Hollington Tong and several other Cabinet members from Chungking to Calcutta via Kunming. I seem to remember several AVG pilots whistling at a very pretty Chinese Lady.

Next comes the most memorable evening I think I have ever had. After we landed in Calcutta, I had gone to my apartment when Dr. Hollington Tong came to extend yours and the Generalissimo's invitation for a "family dinner." Madame, I will never forget that evening. I was absolutely fascinated with your story of your Cabachon Rubies. I regret that I never had the chance to see them.

The War ended. We moved back to Shanghai and probably the last time I saw you before leaving China was when Peggy was pregnant and we were at the Airport to welcome General Marshall. You insisted that Peggy sit down and rest.

We left China August 1, 1947. The Koumintang departed for Taiwan and Chennault returned to the States also. Our daughter Cameron was born in

Shanghai on January 8, 1947. She has dual citizenship and is proud of her Chinese connection.

Chennault died in New Orleans in July of 1958. I think you had paid him a visit about two weeks prior.

We were all very much saddened at the funeral in Washington. I was standing near you outside the chapel. I felt greatly honored when you placed your hand on my arm to be escorted into the chapel.

The last time I saw you was at The CNAC Flying Tiger Reunion in Taipeh. I am deeply proud to have known such a great Lady.

Peggy joins me in warmest regards and best wishes.

Sincerely,

/s/ Billy McDonald

* Note. Those who would like to know more of Bill McDonald's influence in CNAC might enjoy The Dragon's Wings by Wm. Leary, Jr. published by The University of Georgia Press, 1976.

Remembering Fuzzy. It was on one of those heavenly mornings that Sherwin (Fuzzy) Ball and I started visiting. We were in an open-air Pierce Arrow touring cab driven by its massively-built, be-turbanned, full-bearded Sikh, riding along Parke Street. Normally the members of CNAC seldom talked of their homes or families. Why, I don't know, except maybe we felt our previous lives were so far removed from the lives we were living in India that they had little or no connection. Or, because of the dangerous routes we were flying, we chose not to think of the more or less secure and comfortable lives we had enjoyed back in the States. Possibly we felt that any intrusion of memories from home might have some bearing on our determination to carry out our flying duties, might soften our devil-may-care postures, or somehow lessen our chances of survival. But this morning Fuzzy was telling me of his early life back home.

He said he had never received a whipping when he was growing up, regardless of bad behavior. His father had

meeting
a custom of . . . out corporal punishment in the coal shed behind their home. Fuzzy said he learned all about snakes at an early age and always kept one or two in the coal shed. When he misbehaved, his father would grab him by the ear and head for the coal shed, but Fuzzy invariably would break loose and beat his father to the whipping post. As his father entered the door, Fuzzy would have a live snake in his hand. His father was deathly afraid of snakes, and all thoughts of punishment would vanish. Fuzzy was expounding on his knowledge of snakes just as we came to the intersection where Parke Street dead-ends into Chowringee. Across Chowringee was a *mayadan*, a park, and slightly to the left was the white marble Queen Victoria Memorial. That masterpiece of sculpture glistened so in the sunlight it seemed as though it might have been carved from new fallen snow.

Just as Fuzzy was finishing his tale of how much he knew about snakes, we saw a fakir on the left side of Parke. He carried a bamboo pole over his shoulder, with a sack at the end of the pole. That sack carried a cobra, I knew, or maybe several. I asked the Sikh to drive onto the *mayadan* and bring the fakir over to go through his act with his snake. Almost immediately, a circle of Indians formed around the seated fakir, and Fuzzy had a 50-yard-line view of the show. He had opened the rear door of the taxi and, one boot on the running board, watched all the preparations

from just a few feet. I had gotten out of the taxi and was standing to one side.

The show began: the sack was in front of the fakir and, as the flute began playing low gentle notes, the snake gradually came alive. He raised his head, spread his hood, and started gently swaying back and forth to the tones of the small reed instrument. Then the music stopped. The cobra lay down and the fakir, with a lightning movement, grasped the snake behind the head and put it back in the sack. By this time, many more Indians had joined the crowd. All were men. No women. Having put the cobra safely away in his sack, the fakir began to release his *dhoti*, which he'd been wearing only to his waist. The upper part of his body was naked, but he took his *dhoti* completely off, fanned it around in the air, then retied it around his waist. He was demonstrating that he had nothing up his "sleeves" as it were. We had seen him completely naked, with his *dhoti* fanned openly in the breeze. He had no hiding place for anything...or so we thought.

Having retied his cloth, the fakir reached over to a small boy and took a piece of dirty rag from him--about five or six inches square. Then he bent over, pulled up a few blades of grass, and started to cross the few feet between himself and Fuzzy. He wanted to drop the bermuda grass over Fuzzy's shoe, but Fuzzy protested violently. I reminded him about how he'd said he knew all about snakes--

and to keep from losing face, he decided it would be all right for the blades to be spread over his shoe. Gently the fakir sprinkled the blades over Fuzzy's left shoe. Then with another lightning movement, he thrust his right hand (with the small piece of dirty cloth) up Fuzzy's trouser leg and slapped a 3-1/2 or 4-ft. cobra to the ground. Everything happened so quickly it was unbelievable, and as the snake was slapped to the ground, Fuzzy straightened up and did what, also, was almost a feat of magic: he jumped, rose into the air, and (this is true) landed on the opposite side of the touring car.

Everybody liked Fuzzy Ball. I never knew of anyone who didn't like him, and I don't think he had an enemy in the whole world. Several years later, Capt. Steve Schuster
Jan. 7, 1945
told me what happened on the day Fuzzy was killed. Several pilots had overnighted in Kunming and the next morning the weather was lousy. Fuzzy decided to start his return trip to Dinjan, going on instruments almost immediately after take-off. Evidently he made the same mistake I had made a few months earlier in correcting for only a 5° drift, but with not enough altitude to clear Mt. Tali. Steve said the drift was about 18° when he took off about an hour later. Fuzzy smashed into Mt. Tali. It was only a week into the New Year: January 7, 1945.

With Fuzzy's death, we lost one of the most well-liked CNAC pilots, and I suddenly realized how calloused we

had become. A few months earlier, even at the time of M.K. Loh's, Al Wright's and Cookie's crash, we were at least shaken to a slight degree, but Fuzzy's crash hardly caused a ripple. When pilots finished their tour of duty, they would head for the States, and many times we would never hear from them again. It was as though Fuzzy had finished his tour and was ready for departure for Stateside. It was not so much a callousness we had developed, actually, so much as a realization--one the Orientals had accepted thousands of years earlier--that one's life possibly might be lost with no forewarning and for small, almost inconsequential reasons. If any consolation were to be had, it was in our intuitive feeling that Fuzzy had joined his old buddies in the ever-growing ranks of CNAC's Valhalla, "Hagitaw." While it was in existence, CNAC lost a total of 26 crews--27 of whom were captains.

On the other hand, all these crashes, losses, and hair-raising rescues do not diminish one central fact: those of us who survived remember our time in India as an enchanted period of our lives. Many of our flights still catch at our memories with the magic of our youth and our certain knowledge we would never see such beauty again. Recently, my sister unearthed a letter I'd written her during one of my night flights over the "Hump." Neither of us can recall the exact date, but it's the best record I can give you of what it was like.

Dearest Susan,

If everything permits, I am going to give you a play by play account of my trip tonight. Late this afternoon, the little Chinese Hostel boy came to me while I was sitting in front of a nice fireplace reading The Razor's Edge, and he told me there would be a ship for me in a few minutes. I went in to eat but was able to get down only part of the soup and dessert and a cup of tea. While [I was] eating, he came to say my ship was ready, but on getting to the field, I was given another ship because of mechanical trouble on the first.

By the time I was in my ship and ready to go, the last rays of day were gone and the moon was up about an hour. Just after takeoff the air was a little rough but smoothed out at about 9,000 ft.--when I started this letter. We are now 24 minutes out at a little over 10,000 ft. and have just put on our oxygen masks. The air here, at the moment, is like velvet and I have a good plane for tonight. The motors are running very smoothly, but I knock on wood. Looking out the window I can count eight forest fires. One large one. Not at all unusual for this time of year as everything is very dry over the Hump. There is very little haze on this end tonight and the moon is shedding a soft velvety glow over the hills and valleys. The valleys look as though they have a light ^{frost} on them, but the temperature down there tonight is probably 40°. It will be colder a little farther on though. Almost under me now is one of my check points which is 80 miles out, 31 minutes. Am bucking a pretty strong headwind and am going to fly the passes as each 1,000 ft. adds considerably to my headwind, and at 17,000 ft. I probably would have a 90 to 110 mile wind. Sounds fantastic I know, but this time of the year it is unusual for us not to have them.

I have my headphones on listening to traffic and warning conversation. This kind of a night and this location makes this almost a "must" for at any time the red balls may start going up all over this area and everyone will have to start for cover. The number of red balls given as warning denotes the proximity of the Jap ships. Have just checked one of the stations on my course tonight. Both their radios are off the air. Have had no notification but hope it isn't Japs. Have just taken out time to light up my pipe -- the one you sent me. It really is a "honey," Susan. For the next few minutes I will be alternating between my oxygen mask and pipe.

I am now out 50 minutes and have been writing all the time I haven't been checking my instruments or position. Everything is going very smoothly and the second weather report has just been handed me. No clouds tonight--only haze on the other end. About a month from now it will be almost as heavy as clouds though.

Am now at 13,000 ft. and not counting up and down drafts, am climbing about 200 ft. per minute. Since I am writing, I am flying a little higher than usual for contact weather on this course. No notice of Japs yet and I should be pretty much in the clear from them in just a few minutes.

I have about eight degrees drift and about a 50-mile headwind. I will be getting into the taller mountains in about 20 minutes. Most of the ones I have been over till now have been about 9,000 ft. The first large one is a little higher than Pike's Peak but on this course I don't go over the high ones. Sounds funny, doesn't it? I have a medium-sized forest fire to my right now. From up here they look about like a highway would look from a 50-story building right after a football game.

The moon is a little higher now and the mountains are taking on sharper outlines, but they still have a soft appearance instead of the rock piles they are. [20 minutes] Out of my right window is a big snow-covered mountain. The snow and ice are glistening almost as much as broad daylight and the stars look as though I could reach out in any direction and get a whole handful. I am at 14,200 ft. -- temperature is 5° below but we have a good heater and I am sitting in my shirt sleeves. It looks as though I could reach out in any direction and get a handful of snow. Just hit a down draft that knocked 2,500 ft. from the altimeter!

It is now 8:25 p.m. local time. I can see you about now getting Jimmy and Susan dressed for the morning. Wish I didn't have to use my imagination.

In under us now is the route they tell us Genghis Khan travelled on his march into Burma. Am back into another group of forest fires. Five are visible now.

One hour and 30 minutes out, and all Japs should be behind me. A year ago their forces would have been directly ahead of me though. The taller mountains are beginning to come into sight, but we'll only be in them for about 30 minutes and will then be able to drop to a lower altitude. Am at 13,000 ft. now -- the updrafts and downdrafts won't let me be -- and am exactly on course for a series of passes. Another 1,000 ft. would clear nearly all of the mountains, but heading for and through the lower parts makes it easier should a fan decide to quit turning. Everything is OK though.

THERE IS A HUGE FOOTBALL GAME RIGHT AHEAD. LOOKS 12 OR 15 MILES LONG. THE SCORE WAS 0-0. GOOD GAME. WE SHOULD HAVE WON THOUGH. [15 minutes] Got a little rough.

Am in the high "stuff" now. Snow capped peaks in every direction. They look about like a chocolate sundae with a big scoop of whipped cream on top. Some look about like Arapahoe when driving into Boulder in the afternoon. I counted 18 forest fires at one time about 10 minutes ago. Must be a lot warmer in the valleys.

All of this run of course is the "Hump" but the ridge or actual hump is now about 6 minutes in front of me. It looks like a big snow bank, "but we know better, don't we?" In just a minute now it is going to be on both sides and below me. Sometimes we come in like this, catch a bad down draft, and have to turn around and try again. No fun! Looks like we are going to make it. Am right on top now--or I should say, I'm the middle man. If Joe Ruchman had had anything to do with what I see, he would be saying, "Lovely mountains, beautiful snow." These mountains can be very unlovely though. My right motor is getting a little temperamental. Hope it doesn't decide to break off relations entirely. At least for another 15 minutes.

Am a little over half way now. Been out two hours and eight minutes. Just got a message from another ship that there is a 30° drift tonight. I figure only eleven. Hope he doesn't get lost too badly. The high mountains are now almost behind me and I am starting a slow descent from 14,000 ft. Beginning to get into lots of haze. Still snow capped peaks on both sides, but another five minutes will put them behind me.

Am passing over the place now where all of our pilots go. The heaven, or haven, we have set aside for those who hit mountains. It is a lovely spot and Bartling, although he is still with us, has set himself up as Mayor and allots to each [pilot] a certain concession. They must be having quite a time of a beautiful night like tonight. Also maybe quite a reunion. Five new

arrivals this month. We have named it Hagitaw. Quite a name, don't you think?

We are now almost over the head hunter country. We used to be forced to fly very low through here, and many is the time we probably have blown the roof from their houses. I don't like to think of it but I imagine we would make quite a trophy for their collection!

The big star in the West is about to set and when it gets right on the horizon it will start changing colors. I would like to know how many landing lights have been blinked at it when pilots have thought it was an approaching plane. Maybe I can work on those statistics if I ever get "hump happy."

The haze has just about blacked out everything under me except some ground fog. Have now been in the air two

hours and 30 minutes and should be in in about an hour and 10 minutes.

The star in the west is really putting on a show. If you will get where you can see it set about 9:30 or 10:00 your time you will see partly what I mean. [18 minutes] Am now over some of the thickest jungle in the world. A person walking would be lucky some days to cover a mile or two. All low country and one more ridge before I get a cup of hot coffee and start back. Am planning a trip and a half tonight. Will probably finish about 8:00 a.m. Just when you have finished putting Susan and Jimmy to bed. Will have been quite a day! How was yours?

Lots of haze here. Almost like being on instruments. Forgot to tell you that engine got over its spell. Am about to drop over the last ridge into the valley.

Made it again. That makes 215 or 20 round-trips. Starting back.

All my love,

In September, 1944, Capt. Robert W. (Potty) Pottschmidt, our chief check pilot, called one day and asked me to take a special flight with him to Kharagpur. Chakulia, Charra, and Kharagpur were originally envisioned as B-24 Liberator ~~bomber bases~~. ~~Construction of the fields~~ was slow, however, and when they were designated as B-29 bomber bases, they were in very poor condition for such a large aircraft.

Potty and I took off from Dum Dum and headed out on a 260° heading for Kharagpur. On landing, we had tea with the commanding officer in his office, where he invited us for a circuit-and-bump trip around the field in one of the new B-29's. Had I known then what I learned later, I wouldn't have thought so highly of this short flight as I did that day. The B-29 we flew belonged to the 20th Air Force.

All commanding generals in the ETO and Pacific, and all admirals in the Pacific theatre, wanted the B-29's. But General Arnold (Chief of Staff) and Admiral King approached President Roosevelt with their plan, and the 20th Air Force was established. Its primary purpose was the destruction and dislocation of the Japanese military, industrial, and economic systems. Also, it was to undermine the morale of the Japanese people to a point where they would negate the continuance of the war. The problems facing such an undertaking, as it turned out, were insurmountable. Chengdu, ~~China~~ was to be the jumping-off airfield for raids against Japan, but because of its distance from Japan, only the southern

island of Kyushu could be reached. The logistics were awful. Supplying gas, bombs, spare parts, and the like to Chengdu was the major problem. It cost from 2-to-12 gallons of fuel to fly 1 gallon of gas to Chengdu. Also, the B-29 motors in many instances quit operating or caught on fire in the first 40 or 50 hours of flying time. Those are a few reasons why I should not have considered it an honor to fly one of these planes.

Finally a shakedown raid was made 5 June 1944 against the Makasan Railroad yard at Makasan, Burma. A total of 98 B-29's took off from eastern India on what was to be a 2,000-mile round-trip. Before reaching the target, 14 planes aborted because of engine problems. Because of short gas supply, 42 had to land at fields other than their own. And five crashed on landing. Result? Only 18 bombs landed near the target. And this was only the beginning of a most inauspicious operation (from Indian and Chengdu bases) called "Matterhorn." The last raid from Chengdu occurred 15 January 1945, and operations then transferred to the recently captured Marianas in the Pacific. From these bases, B-29 bombers finally proved their worth. The raids on Japan were extremely effective. After the war, my first trip from Tokyo to Yokohama gave me stark evidence of these raids' success: between the two cities, nothing was standing save an occasional smoke stack.

During the time B-29 flights were being made from their bases in India to Chengdu, however, I literally cried for the fine young men being sent on suicide routes. Japanese kamikaze (Divine Wind) pilots were volunteers, but those young kids were being ordered to fly to their deaths in planes with bad engines. While flying my own routes, I would hear a B-29 pilot say, "We just lost number #3 engine." A few minutes later, the same voice would say, "We just lost number #1 engine." Then a short while later, the same voice would say, "Number #2 engine is on fire. Leaving plane." Part of the route they were flying over was a 17,000' plateau, making their parachutes almost useless. If they survived their landing, they probably would be killed just for the shoes they were wearing. The planners and commanders of these young kids were, in my opinion... well, to be charitable: incompetent or misguided.

APPENDIX A.**THE LAST DAYS OF C.N.A.C. IN HONG KONG, 1941****-- Zigmund Soldinski**

The story about C.N.A.C.'s exodus from Hong Kong must go back a way to give credence and understanding of the awful nightmare facing us and cannot be told in one sentence. P.W. Wong was the Managing Director; Chuck Sharp was Operations Manager; Z. Soldinski, Chief Engineer and Director of Maintenance. Bill Bond was Vice President, and he was in-and-out, never long at any one place.

The airport plus all aeronautical activities in and out of the Crown Colony were under direct control of Lt. A.J.R. Moss, Director of Civil Aeronautics. Max Oxford was his deputy and also a member of the Crown intelligence team. We also had the constant advice and information of Herman Noether; he was in charge of Chinese Intelligence.

For some time prior to December 8, Sharp and I had almost daily contact with the intelligence people. We were constantly told that "it seemed imminent the Japs would strike." But when? It was surely getting closer all the time and we could really feel it. In the meantime, it was decided that it would be prudent to look for another route into China from some part of the free world besides Hong Kong and Rangoon. We were told both would be untenable, [because they] as well as Lashio would fall. An expedition was set up by C.N.A.C. with the permission and advice of

the British to survey what later became the "Hump." A British geographer was to go on the flight to make maps. The most sophisticated instruments obtainable at that time were brought out to Kai Tak to be installed in the airplane. Chuck decided that he would head the expedition and captain the aircraft. We debated which airplane he would take and decided on a DC3.

Chuck asked me to set up the airplane; I had our Chinese engineer, Loy Locke, help me make up the installation plans. We called in B.L. Chang, my metal foreman, for the job. Joe Chow would supervise the installation of the instruments. A table was set up with drafting instruments. Flight instruments and a special barometer were installed for the geographer. All was set. The flight crew besides Chuck was chosen, and we decided to send a mechanic along for extra insurance. We asked Arnold Weir if he wanted to go, and boy! was he ever ready.

The flight went on a routine flight to Kunming, then Chuck flew to Lashio and overnighted there. Next day, they flew to Assam, where they conferred with local people and stayed the night. Next morning, Chuck took off for the first known direct flight over the "Hump" and direct to Kunming. They checked summits and peaks, measured them, and the Britisher came up with a pretty darned good map. Thus the "Hump" was born. In the meantime, we operated as usual. But Chuck and I got some disquieting news from

Intelligence, and we notified Bond and P.Y. Wong. Bond called a meeting a few days later. Present were Bond, P.Y. Wong, Chuck, and Soldinski.

The gist of the meeting was to make plans for an evacuation of Hong Kong in case of an attack. Each person was to make a list of key persons to be evacuated in priority sequence. P.Y. Wong was to list the business people; Chuck, the flight personnel; and Sol, ground personnel, equipment and tools. The plan was for as many flights each night to Nanyang as possible by freighters and to lay over there in the daytime, camouflaging and hiding the airplanes. The DC2's and DC3's were to fly two flights to Nanyang and then a flight to Chungking. As it happened, it didn't turn out that way.

We asked the British how long they could hold out in case of an attack. They told us 10 days to two weeks for Kowloon and the New Territories. They sure were overly optimistic.

Came Monday, December 8, 1941. My phone rang at about a quarter to six a.m. Of course it was still dark. Tom Heinie was calling, and he had just received a call from Elsie Soong. She told him the Japs blew up Pearl Harbor, destroyed Clark Field, and that we probably would get it at dawn. I asked him to call Chuck Sharp and told him I would get to the field as fast as I could. As I left for the airport, I told my family to get to the air-raid shelter and stay there. Now Sunday night was a zero night.

All the freighters were serviced and loaded but did not fly. They were parked on the ramp, ready for flight.

When I arrived, the Pan American Airlines (PAA) Clipper was still at the dock. Lt. Moss was trying to get the crew to take it out. They had more than ample fuel to fly to Rangoon or Calcutta, but the Captain said he would have to wait instructions from San Francisco. They had been there more than two hours.

Dawn began to break. I was heading for my office and telephone when someone shouted, "Hark, airplanes!" They jumped into a drainage ditch, and I jumped into my car and away. I lived only a short distance from the airport, so I was home in a hurry and called Chuck. Then I called Lee Taylor. He lived on a hill overlooking the airport. With him lived Ski Sydlowski and Dusty Roads. I told him to get to the airport as soon as the Japs left and that I'd be there.

I drove into the field. Heine, Chuck Sharp, and Price joined us. Everything outside the hangar was afire. So was the PAA Clipper. Three DC2's and three Condors were also destroyed, as was a Eurasia JU52 on the north side of the hangar. We opened the hangar doors: all the airplanes inside were intact. The Chinese ground personnel and the foreign flight personnel were swarming in. The airport Fire Department started to douse the burning craft. I told them to stand off and save the liquid--as they could not save anything anyhow. In the hangar were CNAC's DC3, a

Condor, and a Vultee. Eurasia had a JU52. The Japs dropped one bomb only (a 100-kilo bomb) into the hangar. It hit, penetrated the roof, struck the cement floor, burst open, but did not explode. Man, picric acid was inches deep!

We decided to pull the DC3 out and hide it in the little village north of the field. Gimpie Price jumped on the tractor, and Jimmie Porter climbed into the cockpit to ride brake. Heinie climbed aboard the tractor; ^I/_^ handed them a pair of bolt-cutters to cut a hole through the chain-link fence. A group of Chinese volunteered to hide the airplane. The villagers didn't like it and threatened to burn the plane, so Moss had an armed guard placed at the airplane. A DC2 and a DC3 were en route and would be in after dark.

Bond was staying at the Repulse Hotel and *could not get to Kai Tak because the ferries were tied up*. P.Y. Wong was sick and moved his bed into an air-raid shelter. He never did go out with us.

Now pandemonium hit, everybody milling around. I called Sharp into his office and told him it would be impossible to get anything done under such conditions. All non-essential people had to be removed from the airport. Chuck called a meeting of all flight personnel. He told them all to go home, except one or two pilots, and told them to get ready for evacuation. Those with families

would be the first to leave. A limit of 10 lbs. baggage was placed in effect. Chuck started packing essential records, aided by the two pilots. In the meantime, I called our supervisors, Chinese and American, of maintenance and communications into a meeting. Of course, our plan to fly personnel out for a week or 10 days, as intelligence had told us before, went up in smoke.

Price and Wah were to pick up as much communication equipment as they could carry and get all hands ready to load. Joe Chow was to do the same for instruments. Jim Lotta was directed to get together as much line maintenance parts and equipment for the engines as he and his men could --and package and weigh them. Sien, our stockroom manager, was a marvel. *He was already systematically packing essential parts, wrapped, boxed, and identified.* Tom Heinie and Lee Taylor were doing their bit, as were Loy Locke and Y.Y. on spares.

Of course, we realized the Japs would be back soon as they got re-loaded. We had two men outside the hangar listening and watching for aircraft. Lt. Moss had men on the Tower doing the same thing. We agreed that, as soon as we got the word, we would all disperse. And sure enough, it wasn't long in coming. The yell went up! Most of us sped to Lee Taylor's house as it was ideal--located on the hill, with many big boulders affording good shelter. On this run, the Japs took a look at Kai Tak, but went on to

the docks and wharves and bombed the island. I took some good pictures of this, only to have my film stolen by Harrison Foreman in Chungking.

The Japs left, and we took it for granted that they would not bomb or destroy the hangar because they wanted it intact. We went back to work. Chuck and I had our personnel to leave that night, all set. *Bond called and said he could still not get over to Kowloon.* He was at the town office. He asked Chuck if we had the Clipper crew on the list for the first airplane to Chungking, and the answer was, "Hell, no! They lost their airplane. Let them stay. We have too many of our own people to get out." Bond, of course, over-rode us, and we had to send them out. Bob Engle and his wife were on the same airplane.

As stated before, we had a Condor and a Vultee in the hangar. The Vultee was a heap of junk that the C.A.F. (Chinese Air Force) gave us for a trainer. Lee Taylor was assigned to get it flyable and to work day and night on it with a picked crew. Ski Sydlowski was assigned with a crew to try to get the Condor flyable, also to work day and night. The Condor had ground-looped on landing with a load of Wolfram ore and was damaged. Night fell and bedlam broke loose: the families of the employees burst in on us. The hangar was a mass of pushing and shouting people who all wanted on the first airplane out. We had to get Lt. Moss and his guards to remove them, lock the gates, and

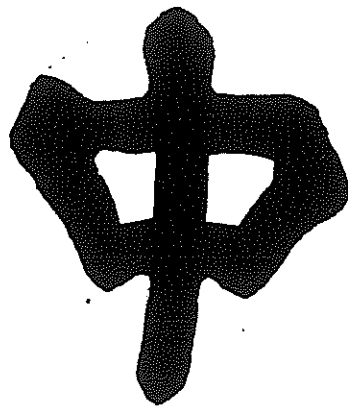
allow only authorized personnel to enter. That gate turned into hell.

The DC3 was hauled in, loaded, and made two trips to Nanyang, then on to Chungking. The DC2 was serviced and did likewise, each with their allocated numbers of personnel and family members. Moss came down with a message direct from headquarters in Chungking. It was a list of Chinese government officials who had to be evacuated, among them Madame H.H. Kung.

We kept dismantling machinery, for if the British intelligence was even partially correct about "hold out," we would have the Condor flying, in which we could pull out most of our equipment. That, too, was certainly not what happened. In the meantime, more bad news: Hal Sweet was on his way in with a bad engine. Boy, did we need airplanes!

So we sweated Hal in. After unloading, we started on the engine. Bad news again: it had to be replaced and we didn't have one ready to go. Chuck and I had a conference with Hal. I told Hal we could doctor the engine enough for a take-off, but he'd have to continue on to Nanyang on one engine. Chuck asked Hal what he thought, and like Hal, he says, "Sure, get it ready. I'll fly it." So Chuck told him to get his suitcase, as he would not come back. Chuck asked Hal how much load he would take, and his answer was: a full load. I am sure that, at that time, each and every senior pilot would have given the same answer.

APPENDICES



We went home to get a couple of hours rest, then were back before daybreak. The Chinese officials to be evacuated showed up, and Chuck had Miss Lee check and re-check the list--and tell them the plane would not be available until after dark:

In the afternoon, Bond called. He told Chuck to put him on the airplane that night, the same plane to carry Madame Kung. Now I will tip my hat to Bond: Madame Kung submitted a list of herself and her retinue big enough to fill two complete airplanes. When Bond told Chuck, Chuck almost threw a fit -- and Chuck could get very rough. Bond then called Madame Kung and told her it [would be] was only she and her immediate family and only 10 lbs. of luggage, unless [the extra was] official documents. And that is the way it went. More of the company personnel were sent out on each airplane.

Trouble developed, however, the second night. We noticed a lot of commotion among our coolies as they were loading the airplane. I asked Jimmie Koo what it was all about...and I also noticed a strange coolie. He told me it looked like a Jap agent infiltrated and was trying to get the coolies to walk off. I called Lee Taylor. After a few words, we took hold of the guy and meant to shoot him, when Moss interrupted. The coolie jerked loose and ran; Lee and I both fired, and that ended that. But regardless, we noticed uneasiness, and the coolies started staying away. Plus we also had reports of looting.

Wednesday morning: everybody was tired. And drizzle, more misery. Numerous times we had to run because of Jap airplanes, but they did not bother Kai Tak. Most of our local employees didn't show at all. The gas truck was empty, and no Standard [Oil Company] people showed up, either. Fortunately, we had 1,000 five-gallon tins in the gas shed. The reason we had the gas was that we'd had to smuggle the gas out of Hong Kong aboard junks. To get gas to parts of China, we had to haul it by junk to a pre-determined point in five-gallon tins. Standard would deliver the tins to Kai Tak, and we would hire coolies to wrap the tins in straw so as not to damage the tins in transport.

P.Y. Wong would take a trip to Macao a day to two later. Than a big junk or two would pull up to the sea wall at Kai Tak, we would load the gas, and the junks would sail. This was all contra-law. [Legally] no gas was permitted to be shipped out of the Colony. The junks would reach their point, and a flock of coolies would be waiting to carry the gas right through the Jap lines. Somehow, there wouldn't be any Japs in that area (Macao) for a day or two.

So, we used this gas to fill the airplane tanks. When the last trip was made to Nanyang that night, the airplane was loaded with passengers and crew -- brought in early, as cars were being stopped and robbed. By this time, all our coolies had left, and it was getting close to

dawn. Dusty and I had carried so many tins of gas that I thought my arms would pull out. The crew were on the wings dumping it into the tanks.

Then I ran over to see how Lee Taylor was making out. He had run the Vultee and had a couple of small items yet to do. Said he'd be ready. Hugh Chen was standing by; he was to fly it out. I must say that Hugh wasn't the happiest man at that time: through all the commotion, no one reinstalled a compass that had been removed.

Chuck and I went over to Ski. He thought he would be ready for the next night. Moss walked over and told us either to leave [in the planes] or get off the airport as they were about to seal the airport. We asked him about the Condor. He said maybe it would be allowed to fly out, but he didn't think the airport would be open for a landing because the Japs were already on top of the mountains surrounding the airport. Ski said he would fly the Condor out if permitted.

We walked over to our airplane. My family was aboard and had a couple of dachshunds, and Chuck's fiancée had a bulldog. Little Joe McDonald was going out as co-pilot, and Chuck was flying. Little Joe took one look at the load and said, "This son-of-a-bitch will never get off." And Chuck said, "Well, let's try it," and we climbed aboard. I waved to Ski and closed the door. The field was a quagmire of mud, and Little Joe was right: it didn't take off. Chuck just flew it off the sea wall. As we were

leaving, day was just breaking, and the R.A.F. set all their airplanes and equipment afire. The field was lit up like the Astoria Ballroom.

So the airport was sealed, and Ski, Dusty, and his Chinese mechanics were not allowed on the airport the next morning. Two pilots flew to Kewlin Thursday night but were notified Kai Tak was sealed, and the Japs were at the gates preparing to take it over. Later I learned the Japs sent word to Moss that they would behead any and every man who would cause damage to or in the hangar. Nice people.

Ski and Dusty were taken prisoner. The Chinese scattered and eventually all showed up except T.S. Ling. Ski was beaten unmercifully, and the story has it that Dusty was beheaded by the Japs. Later, Ski slipped out and walked to Kewlin, where we picked him up. We were sure glad to see him. Shortly after we left, Hugh Chen and Lee Taylor took the Vultee off. Being on a flight crew on the coast previously, Hugh had no trouble navigating with only a Boy Scout compass as it was now daylight.

We had a wonderful team. But as Chuck landed in Chungking, news media (who had it in for the Kungs) saw our dogs and made a hell of a fuss about it -- accusing Madame Kung of hauling the dogs, when they were not even on the same plane with her.

When we were [established] in Chungking, another era started. We only had our bare hands and a strong will, determined that we would build and would operate.

Now time marches by and we look back with saddened, wet eyes, our vision blurred, and we think of our team and our comrades: Hal Sweet, Royald Leonard, Foxy Kent, Pop Kessler, Arnold Weir, Barney Wong, Frang Higgs, Billy (Little Joe) McDonald, George Huang, N.K. Loo, Syd de Kantzow, Joy Schuler -- Scott and Heinie and Dusty, and so many others of that era. All are gone to the Great Beyond. May God let them rest in peace.

I did receive a very touching citation (copy enclosed) for my part from Minister Pang.

/s/ "Sol" Soldinski

Ontario, California

July 25, 1971

Translation

CHINA NATIONAL AVIATION CORPORATION

Certificate No. 26

January, 1942

At the time of evacuation from Hongkong after the outbreak of War on December 8, 1941, all C.N.A.C. flight and ground personnel, who did not care of the tremendous situation, worked day and night either on airplanes or on the airfield to ship Government officials and materials away from Honkong.

In the special meeting of the Board of Directors, it has been decided to issue this certificate to Mr. Z. Soldinski to record and to encourage his bravery and loyalty in line of duty.

/Chopped/ H.P. Pang, Chairman of
the Board of Directors,
China National Aviation Corp.

APPENDIX B

"...A REAL PIONEERING SHIP"

Collector's series XI

First as an interloper then as a valued addition to the fleet, Stinson airplanes figured prominently in the early history of CNAC (nee China Airways Federal, Inc.)

On July 8, 1929, three months before CNAC's inaugural Shanghai to Hankow flight, a perky little four-passenger Stinson Detroitter splashed along the muddy runway at Shanghai's Hungjao military air field and, amidst much cheering and hand-clapping, rose into the air, bound for Nanking.

It was a fine looking craft, suitable for launching China into the aviation age. Emblazoned on the Stinson's silver fuselage in Chinese characters was the name Huyung No. 1. Its rudder bore the Kuomintang emblem, and on the door was a bird set against a golden circle. Above the bird, characters representing the Ministry of Communications identified the plane as belonging to the government agency that defied CNAC's claim to exclusive route privileges.

Communications Minister Wang Pai-chum figured that by extending the competing line to Hankow and adding four more Stinsons, he could do a sprightly business running opium on the upper Yangtze. Those dreams, however, never materialized. What did happen was that China's only existing commercial airlines operated the same route--Shanghai to Nanking--for nearly a year, then in July 1930 merged assets and limitations.

One of the assets CNAC acquired from the defunct line was the

four Stinsons. In a letter home dated July 30, 1934, Hewitt Mitchell, Ralph Mitchell's brother, described old Stinson No. 12. "It's a real pioneering ship," he wrote. "When the Peking line was opened up, it made all the survey flights and was the first ship used regularly on the run. Then it was first on the regular Chungking-Chentu run and has many survey trips in addition to its credit."

Moon Chin remembers that Donald Wong checked him out in a Stinson between Chengtu and Chungking. Dolly Wong, daughter of P.Y. Wong, CNAC managing director, took her first airplane ride in a Stinson piloted by Ernest M. "Allie" Allison. Dolly enjoyed the experience, but her aunt was terrified and clung to her mother's arm.

Stinsons propelled early CNAC men to some of their more memorable adventures. Allie was in command the day he, W.L. Bond, then CNAC operation's manager, and Harold Bixby, PAA's man in China, flew to Chengtu to negotiate a contract with Marshall Liu Hsiang.

Upon approach, Allie discovered, much to his dismay, that the military parade ground, which had been advertized (sic) as a suitable air field--1,000 feet by 400 feet--was bordered on one end by a wall 30 feet high and on the other by telephone lines.

As passengers Bond and Bixby peered anxiously out the windows at the milling crowd below, Allie circled the field calculating his distances. By the time the veteran pilot decided he could navigate between the barriers, half the population of Chengtu had rushed to the parade ground.

Allie dove at the crowd multiple times until finally the

towns-people, aided by the warlord's soldiers, cleared a path for the plane to land. As the negotiating team touched down, the mob filled in the runway behind them. Afraid they would crush the plane, Allie ordered one of the soldiers to keep the crowd back. Acknowledging the command, the soldier gave a nice snappy salute and, presenting arms, thrust his bayonet through the wing of the plane.

In the spring of 1937 CNAC's fleet included five Stinsons. Moon Chin recalls, "We flew three Stinsons into Nanking just before all the trouble in Shanghai started. I flew one, Pottschmidt flew one and Harold Sweet, I think, flew the other one."

Veteran CNAC pilot Frank Havelick remembers that Floyd Nelson flew a Stinson right out of the airplane hangar. "He rushed out to Lughwa when he heard the Japanese were coming and jumped in a Stinson, which was backed into a hangar. They started the engine inside the hangar, got it running and then gave it the gun and went flying out of the hangar right across the field and took off."

Saved from the Japanese, the Stinsons nevertheless succumbed to modern aeronautical innovation. The DC-2's, for one, outshone them at every turn. Still, CNAC's Stinsons made their mark in aviation history and in the minds and memoirs of the CNAC pilots who earned their reputations flying them.

--Nancy Allison Wright

APPENDIX C

PERSONAL HISTORY OF C.N.A.C.

by George Robinson

for Roy Farrell

Where We Flew and How

This is a chronicle of my experiences with the best flying outfit bar none in World War II. The outfit I'm referring to is the China National Aviation Corporation, better known to the CBI boys as CNAC, the original Hump Flyers having started flying the Ridge early in 1942 with C47's, DC 3's powered with Pratt and Whitney engines

In July of 42, the American Volunteer Group, better known as the The Flying Tigers, was disbanded. The following are the ones who joined DNAC.

Sheep Dog Shilling,	Moose Moss,
Catfish Raines,	Link Laughlin,
Bill Bartling,	Al Wright,
Lester Hall,	Duke Hedman,
Carl Brown,	Dick Rossi,
Bob Prescott,	Mickey Mickleson,
Joe Rosbert,	Buster Loane,
Cliff Groh,	Van Sheppard.

These were all throttle jockeys; Doc Richards came from AVG as the Flight Surgeon, and Sy Semester as radio jockey. Maintenance Chief was Soldinski: he was one of the boys that got out of Hong Kong by the skin of his teeth. Next to him was Arnold Weir.

The above-mentioned individuals were all there when I arrived in Calcutta, India, in late December of 1942, having flown as co-pilot from West Palm Beach, Florida, to Acra on the Gold Coast with Capt. Buster Loane. A tall goodlooking devil with an AVG uniform on showed up two weeks later and said to me, "Are you Robby? If so, you are to be my copilot from here to Calcutta. My name is Raines." With him was a skinny rugged-looking man. He said, "This is my radio operator, name of John Hicks." We made a Cook's tour of Africa, Kano, Medugri, Ft. Lamy, El Fasher, El Geninia, Khartoum, Luxor, Egypt, the location of the Thebes, and Karnak Ruins (the home of Ramsees II), and it was there that Catfish and I christened John Detarr Hicks as Ramsees Hicks. I'll tell you why later.

We spent three days there, then proceeded on to Cairo. It was there I found out what a free spender Catfish was. We had ambled out of the pyramids to a place called "Mary's." The pyramids were quite a way out of town, so in the morning we started out to walk to the main road. I asked Catfish to hire a taxi, but he could not afford it. After four hours we reached the Hotel National where we ^{WERE} ~~was~~ staying; I was nearly dead from the walk. Catfish pulled out a roll that would choke a horse and paid the hotel bill: that was when I found out that Catfish was not a big spender.

Baghdad

We left Cairo, flew direct to , refueled, went on to Basra on the Gulf, again refueled, and went on to Bahrein. Then to Sharjah, Karachi, and finally Calcutta, arriving Christmas Eve 1942. The day after New Year's, Catfish and I as copilot flew up to the Assam Valley to a place called Dinjan. It was the India terminal for the China Run.

By this time the senior members of CNAC held executive positions.

Chuck Sharp was the operations manager in Calcutta; William McDonald was the chief pilot in Calcutta; Royal Leonard, Sid DeKantzow, Pop Kessler, Moon Chin, Hugh Chin, M.K. Low, and Frank Higgs were all pilots on the passenger run based in Calcutta. H.L. (Woody) Woods was the operations manager in Dinjan, and R.W. (Potty) Pottschmidt was the chief pilot and check pilot. After flying 19 round-trips with Catfish to Kunming, China, and back, Potty checked me out as a captain. Incidentally, I did not see much of the Hump until six months later; then I found out why we were flying so high each trip.

When I got to Dinjan, I found the following pilots who were not

AVG:

Dick Snell,	Al Gingas,	Gen Genovese,
Skippy Lane,	Dick Neumeyer,	Al Oledenberg,
Chuck Sharkey,	Les Brown,	Orin Welsh (of light plane fame)
Ray Allen,	Ray Cooper,	Russ Johnson.

This was the list of personnel when I joined CNAC. All of the copilots were Chinese, also all of the radio operators. The mechanics were all Chinese except the supervisors. If there was any office work, it was done by Woody or his wife, Madge. She also supervised the hostel where the pilots lived. H.L. Woods or Woody as he was affectionally called by the boys was a very soft-spoken individual. He very seldom gave an order, and when he did it was still in that very soft tone. But as a lot of fellows found out when he said do not do something like buzzing the hostel, drinking while on duty at Dinjan, or turning down a flight for anything other than necessary maintenance, if the individual did not heed these soft-spoken rules, the next one in the same soft voice would be: GET YOUR BAGS...YOU ARE GOING TO CALCUTTA.

Yes, Woody was a very strict disciplinarian, but he never

interfered in your private life or commanded you to do something unreasonable. Our flight rules were strict. Number One, there was no weather on the Hump. Number Two, no fast-timing and no slow-timing. Number Three, never exceed the prescribed power settings, unless in extreme emergency.

Flying with CNAC was not like airlines in the States or Air Transport Command in the [Army] Air Corps. All of the ships regardless of type will quote the DC3, C47 at the standard gross load for any of the planes in the USA or other countries, 25,500 lbs. In CNAC our standard gross load was about 28,000 pounds.

The airlift across the Hump was in a direct line between Dinjan, India, and Kunming, China. The distance was 525 statute miles. The safe altitude on instruments was 17,000 eastbound and 18,000 westbound. If VFR conditions existed, you could make it 15,000 east and 16,000 west--that is, if you flew a straight course.

The Suifu Run or IPIN was a direct line Dinjan to Suifu, located at the junction of the Ming and Yangtse rivers. You flew along south of the Mismi plateau, behind Likiang mountain, and over Sichong. The minimum altitude on instruments was 21,000 ft. eastbound and 22,000 ft. westbound. VFR if possible was 17,000 east and 18,000 west. ~~Unfortunately 85% of our flights were on instruments, and the single engine altitude of a DC-3 or~~

The route to Kunming was the route that carried 90% of the cargo. This course up until 1945 carried you over 176 miles of enemy-controlled territory. We flew this section of territory constantly on the alert in VFR weather. If you saw an enemy aircraft you gave the following alert on the radio: GO SEE UNCLE TOM.

weather got Orrin Welch in early 1943. We never did locate the wreck but assumed he drifted into one [mountain] we called fifteen five located just north of the Hukwang Valley. That was the one that got Joe Rosbert and Ridge Hammel one day later. They survived but [it] took them two months to walk out. Joe had a broken ankle.

In addition to ice rain, etc., we had to contend with extremely strong winds. (At that time we were not aware that is what we now call the JET STREAM). Sometimes the winds would be over 100 mph from the west and northwest.

My personal opinion is that weather was our greatest hazard on the Hump Run. We lost only one plane to my knowledge to Jap fire: Sammy Anglin got it just north of the Hukwang Valley. He made the remark on radio as he was being attacked. We never found his wreck or other crew members.

I was
due to
leave Kunming early one morning when the "Old Man" called me over to his office. (The "Old Man" was Claire Chennault, C.O. of the 14th Air Force.) He said, "Robby, I want you to do something in the morning," but he also said it was top secret. (This is the first time I have told this to anyone so help me God. He is gone and all the other people are gone now, so it is all right to tell.) The general said, "Am sending the B-25's over to bomb Bhamo in the morning and have got to have the weather along the route. I want you to fly the direct route to Bhamo and send me the weather every 15 minutes with your location."

I took off about a hour before dawn, with a new crew with me. Asked where my usual copilot and radio man was and was given an excuse which did not phase me. This happened quite often, and I had complete confidence in the crews, especially the radio operators. We took off and every 15 minutes would give the position--altitude and weather condition--to my radio man. He would grab the key and a few minutes later confirm the message had been sent and received.

About an hour after dawn we arrived in sight of Bhamo, which is located on the banks of the Irrawady River in Central Burma. We were at 14,000 ft. I turned to the radio man, who sent the report back "Wide open weather. Clear." However, to the north there was a cumulus cloud about 20,000 ft. high, just after the report was made, I looked down and saw two Jap fighters taking off from the field. I looked toward the big cloud and figured I could make it. Well, to make a long story short, we arrived back in Dinjan about two hours later, feeling real good knowing that the B-25's were right behind me and had blowed Bhamo off the map.

When I landed back in Dinjan, I was signalled to park at the end of the runway, and this was unusual. Standing with Woody was Capt. MacDonald and an army officer. I thought to myself something is wrong. The words that greeted me were as follows: "WHERE THE HELL HAVE YOU BEEN. THE OLD MAN HAD TO CANCEL THE RAID BECAUSE HE DID NOT RECEIVE ONE POSITION FROM YOU." I was highly insulted and told them the exact detail of the whole flight. The Army took my copilot and radio operator into custody, and after interrogation found they were both Japanese or Jap agents. Woody and Mac swore me to secrecy at the end of the runway, because it would ruin the morale of our pilots if they even suspicioned enemy agents were in our lots. As I repeat, this is the first time in 40 years I've

told this story. Woody and Mac and the Old Man could confirm it if they were alive today.

As I said previously, the weather was the greatest detriment to flying in China or India. Just remembered one more unusual weather experience we had. Was flying the passenger run between Kunming and Chungking; half-way between these two cities, Lake Weining is located. We approached this point at 13,500 ft. and there was a cumulous cloud over the lake about 20,000 ft. high. Didn't look too bad as clouds go. We walked into it at 13.5, and in less than 15 seconds we were at 16,000 ft. being pelted by the biggest hail stones I've ever seen before or since. They were the size of baseballs, and it sounded like we were being hammered with a sledge hammer. The windshield was cracked in several places. I looked at the copilot; he had put his seat to the bottom and had his head between his knees. Meanwhile I threwed on all the heat on the engines and started to turn around. I knew what was back of us but not ahead--probably more of this turbulence and ice. It took five minutes to make a 180° turn it was so rough. Any second was expecting one of those hail stones to come right through the windows or cause one of the engines to quit. After 10 minutes, we were out of it at 17,000 ft. and we headed back toward Kunming. I looked out the window, and the wing and engine cowling on my side looked like somebody had hit them with a 20-lb. sledge hammer. The aileron and flap were shattered. Meanwhile, the copilot had come to and looked out his window. He motioned to me to look out his side; it was the same as mine. We landed at Kunming and the mechanics came running, looking at the plane. They asked, "Were you shot up by the Japs?" This aircraft had to have new wings installed before being flown again, also cowlings and cockpit windows.

So much for the weather. If a pilot could fly through it for one 12-month cycle, he stood a good chance of making it the rest of the time. Those were the kind of pilots we had in CNAC. Will give you a list later of all I can remember.

We had a hostel and a small operations set-up at Kunming. The hostel was run by Rocky Roncaglione, one hell of a nice guy. He knew his business and we always had good chow to eat. When we were flying nights, we would spend the day in the hostel and go back the next night

There was no recreation there in Kunming, so we would amuse ourselves by playing poker and shooting crap. There was nothing downtown of interest, either. Jingabuloo St. was visited by the braver ones. Jeff Weiner went down one time with Cliff Groh, who incidentally was not scared of man or devil. Jeff had on a pair of flying boots, a flying suit with scarf, heavy leather gloves, and a helmet. Cliff asked, "Jeff, what in hell is all that for?" And Jeff said, "I heard there was possibility of catching a Chinese cold down here."

The CNAC People We Knew

The CNAC organization was composed of the greatest group of individuals ever gathered together in the flying fraternity, starting with our illustrious president, highly respected William L. Bond. "Mr. Bond," I always called him. Others often referred to him as "Bondy." He was about 50 years old, prematurely gray hair, and blue eyes that did not miss a trick. He had the knack of knowing how to handle each problem and individual in the proper manner.

C.L. Sharp was our operations manager. Prior to the war years, he flew in China. He was about 5'8" tall, kind of tubby, with premature grey hair, blue eyes, and a very pleasant smile. Chuck had been through the mill, [had been] shot down in China, and knew all the answers. It was said that when he flew, he was so cold and unruffled that he "pissed ice water."

He fined me \$200 once for making an instrument landing at San Hupah in Chungking when the ceiling was 100 ft. This was after the war. If it had been before the war ended, he would have fined me \$200 for not making the instrument landing. That was the kind of man he was, but we all respected him.

Billy MacDonald, the chief pilot, was an "old China hand," having come to China ^{before} Claire Chennault pre-war. Billy, Chennault, and Luke Williamson were the original Three Turtle Acrobatic Team stationed at Selfredge Field pre-war. Billy was an excellent pilot, second to none, and he had a very pleasing personality second to none. I never met anyone that did not like him. He never interfered with the men's private lives and was helpful to us all. Even when he questioned me in Dinjan after the Bhamo raid failure, he did not raise his voice.

Capt. R.W. Potts Schmidt commonly called "Potty" was one of the best pilots I have ever known. He was about 5'8" tall with blond hair and ice-blue eyes. He was very soft spoken, and he always had his ivory cigarette holder with him. Potty was our chief check-pilot. He had flown previously in China and (like Chuck Sharp) knew all the answers. He never lost his temper and was very cool in an aircraft regardless of circumstances. Potty was one of the best poker players I have ever had the privilege of losing to. He always ^Acome out at the top. He was never shady in any way, but he had the uncanny ability to outguess the other players.

I believe I told you about H.L. "Woody" Woods previously. He was the sole survivor of a crash out of Hong Kong when the Japs shot him down. This happened before the beginning of the war...We all respected him [because] he ran the operation very efficiently at Dinjan.

The line pilots were a motley lot. All kinds and professions. We had an undertaker, two college professors, a sourdough from Alaska, a French Foreign Legionnaire, several farmers, musicians, professional pilots, members of the Air Ferry Command, the Royal Air Force, North Atlantic Ferry Command, Pan American Air Ferries, and the U.S. Air Force and Navy.

R.W. "Catfish" Raines was a former AVG Flying Tiger, and prior to the war, he was in the Navy. His claim to fame was: "I am the sole survivor of Torpedo Eight." That was the outfit that got wiped out at Midway Island just after Pearl Harbor. The reason Catfish survived was that he had resigned from Torpedo Eight to join the AVG before our entry into the war. Catfish was about 6'2" tall with black hair and a moustache. He was a damn good driver, but he suffered from malaria, and

sometimes he said he could see three runways on the final approach. Catfish was not a gambler; he was a business man and saved his money. Even though he was tight as a tick we all liked him, and he was damn good for morale.

Clifford George "Cliff" Groh was another one you could not forget. He was about 6' tall. Had blond curly hair, a friendly smile, and a very good nature and personality. Cliff was Navy before he joined the AVG. He was a graduate of Northwestern University, a fencing champion, and he was unusually intelligent. He was a damn good pilot...one of the best. Cliff liked the happy life, and every time he went to Calcutta, he pissed his money away on the women. The only fault he had was that he asked every girl he went out with to marry him. Consequently us, his friends, had to do a lot of lying to cover for him. Everybody liked Cliff. He and Catfish and Link Laughlin were an inseparable trio. Having been in the Tigers together, they came to CNAC together.

R.W. "Moose" Moss came down from Kunming with the AVG boys. Before AVG, I believe he was Air Force. Moose was one of our best pilots, never turned down a trip, and had a couple of hair-raisers while with us. Moose was a country boy from Georgia and damn proud of it. He was about 5'8" tall, with dark hair, brown eyes, and a real friendly smile. Moose's smile disappeared, however, when he was referring to the "SHOE CLERKS"--his private description of a gutless pilot or a cheap gambler. We had a couple of both of those types; however, I will not name them as maybe their children might read this some day. Moose was a damn good crap shooter and poker player. He gambled because he loved it. On the whole, I believe he came out a winner. Moose sent most of his surplus funds home to buy a tobacco farm in Doe Run, Georgia...

Robert P. "Duke" Hedman. Now there was another outstanding pilot. He was with the AVG, holding the outstanding record of shooting down ^{four} bombers and one fighter on Christmas day of 1941 over Rangoon, Burma. Duke was a very quiet fellow. He never raised his voice, and everybody liked him. His flying record was perfect with CNAC, he never turned down a trip, and was always willing to help in any way--that included financial.

326

Appendix D

COMBAT REPORT - ATTACK AGAINST ENEMY AIRCRAFT

TIME: 11:30

DATE: December 25, 1941

SQUADRON: 3rd Pur.

CREW: Robert P. Hedman

- (a) PLACE: Mingaldon, Rangoon, Burma
- (b) TYPE OF ENEMY AIRCRAFT SEEN: Army 97 Jap Bombers, Navy Model "O" Fighters.
- (c) NOS. (1) ENEMY AIRCRAFT SEEN: . . . 30 . . . (2) ALLIED AIRCRAFT . . . 7(AVG)
- (D) TYPE OF FORMATION:
 ENEMY AIRCRAFT: Vee of Vee's
 ALLIED AIRCRAFT: 2-Shlp.
- (e) MARKINGS AND CAMOUFLAGE ENEMY AIRCRAFT: Light Brown with green patches light blue on bottom. Red circles on wing tips (top and bottom).
- (f) HEIGHT OF (1) ENEMY AIRCRAFT: 19,000 feet
 (2) ALLIED AIRCRAFT: 15,000 feet
- (g) TYPE OF ATTACKS MADE: Direct rear, and low rear quarter.
- (h) TYPE OF ACTION TAKEN BY ENEMY AIRCRAFT WHEN ATTACKED: Maintain tight formation and began firing on sight of our fighters beginning to attack.
- (i) RESULT: ENEMY AIRCRAFT DESTROYED; CERTAIN . . . 5 . . . PROBABLE . . . ? . . .
 DAMAGED . . . ? . . .

- (j) DAMAGED ALLIED AIRCRAFT: Canopy broken, gas tanks leaking, holes in wings, Propeller out of commission.
- (k) CASUALTIES ALLIED AIRCRAFT: None.

(l) ARMAMENT OF ENEMY AIRCRAFT: Small calibre (7.7) machine guns in rear turret (upper) and one remote control in tail.

(m) TYPE OF AMMUNITION USED:

ENEMY AIRCRAFT: 7.7 M.M.

ALLIED AIRCRAFT:

(n) SPEED AND GENERAL PERFORMANCE OF ENEMY AIRCRAFT COMPARED WITH ATTACKING AIRCRAFT: Bombers- 50 miles an hour slower than tomahawks (P-40), Navy Model "O" fighters- 30 m.p.h. slower, but slightly better climb & maneuverability

(o) DURATION OF ATTACK: 45 minutes

REMARKS: Took off in 7 ship formation to patrol south of Rangoon at 15,000 feet. Forty minutes later, we sighted 27 O ship Jap bomber formation of Vee's approaching Mingaladon from the West at 20,000 feet. We turned and climbed N.E., intercepting them 26 miles S.E. of Rangoon. We made an initial low rear quarter attack fairly strung-out formation, and then broke up making individual attacks. On my next attack I came up from low rear on the left flank of bombers, and came up to within 50 yards, leaving when one exploded. I always broke away from the engagement by half rolling and slipping violently. My next attack I fell from behind so came up from direct rear firing from 200 yards, into 50 yards at the last bomber until it began flaming from the underneath of the forward part of the fuselage and went towards the earth at a 45° angle. I stayed there, quickly charged my guns, and moved up and gave the next two in line good bursts with no apparent damage being inflicted then halfrolled out. On my next attack, I noticed 3 of them in a Vee move away 45° to the left from the main formation. I came up from slightly low rear quarter from the right and after a short burst at 100 yards into the right wing plane, it began emitting heavy black smoke from the right motor and did a slow half roll to the right. I pulled up directly behind the leader and gave him a longer burst at 100 yards range. It went straight forward into a steep dive leaving a trail of heavy pitch black smoke behind. A bullet from the remaining bomber on my left broke my canopy and lodged to the left of my head rest. I half rolled sharply. I was about a 1,000 yards behind this remaining one shortly afterwards, when I saw a Navy Model "O" turning away from me on my right side at about 500 yards. I immediately turned inside him and at 300 yards range gave him a burst. He burst into flames and went straight down. I noticed a P-40 down below (C. E. Smith, Jr.) who apparently this Model "O" about 200 yards away was preparing to dive on. I looked behind me and saw another Model "O" about 200 yards away that was firing at my plane. I half rolled from 20,000 feet to 5,000 feet and flew instruments through the clouds from over Martaban Bay to Satellite field near Pegu. I did this because my propeller was only turning up 1500 R.P.M., and my gas was nearly depleted due to leaky tanks. The Model "O" that I shot down did not seem to be as fast as the P-40, but as out speed dropped he seemed to gradually turn sharper than the P-40.

Between my attacks on the bombers, I noticed one or two other P-40's making attacks at close range, and saw several bombers leave the formation trailing thick black smoke. I also noticed several bombers trailing a thin blue smoke from one motor, but maintaining their position in the formation. They seem to begin firing at attacking fighters at great range, use many tracer bullets, maintain their positions (formations), and seem to be very inaccurate gunners. I did not notice a dust-pln gunner, but observed turrets on the upper fuselage. During my attacks, I heard them shouting over the radio on 6048 KC (our frequency) in bad English, they spoke very fast, in a high tone of voice saying "Hello, Hello, go home and land."

I claim 4 bombers and 1 fighter.

Robert P. Hedman,
Flight Leaders,
3rd Pur. Sq., AVG.

There were a lot of outstanding "characters" in the outfit, too. One was "Casey" Boyd, better known by us boys that came from England. He was one of us that went over there and flew in '40-'41 and the spring of '42. We called Casey "Bitching Boyd From Belfast." Belfast was where he was stationed with the ATA. Casey was a damn good pilot who never turned down a trip, and he had a lot of guts. But he could not help bitching about everything...He has been in Hoggy-Taw for quite some time now. 3268

Jimmy Scoff was an individual if you ever knew one. God knows how old he was. His home was somewhere in California, and I think he came from the Ferry Command. Jimmy had a chubby round face, curly hair, and eyes that rolled in all directions when he was talking. Also, when he got excited, he started to drool and mumble. He would tell the most hair-raising tales after a trip. One day Jimmy was on a Kunming trip from Dinjan. It was instruments all the way. When he got to Kunming, the beacon was off, so Jimmy started to mill around on top, actually for over eight hours. Then he told his copilot and operator to jump. Then he bailed out himself. As he told the tale to us, his chute had just opened good when he felt some bushes under him, and the chute caught on a tree. It was in the middle of the night, and he could not see anything. So, he decided to wait for daylight before trying to move. Good thing he did. When daylight came, he was hanging on a bush on the edge of a 9,000-ft.

cliff. Somehow he got loose and happened to be near a trail north of Suifu, just this side of Chengtu. After walking for a couple of hours, he came to Chengtu...His crew had already walked out.

We asked Jimmy what he was thinking of as he was hanging on that cliff in the dark. He said he was thinking of the two paychecks Lizzie at No. 6 Acker Lane was holding for him. You see, Lizzie was Jimmy's banker in Calcutta, and when he was in town that [address] was his home. One very dark night when Jimmy took off for Suifu, he disappeared. Six months later, an Indian boy looking for his goats found what was left of Jimmy's plane. The only part of Jimmy found was his jawbone full of gold teeth. I have been told, but don't quote me, that Doc Richards to this day uses Jimmy's jawbone as a paperweight in his office. Incidentally, the wreck of Jimmy's plane was less than six miles from the end of the Dinjan runway in the jungle.

"Pop" Hinkle was another one you could not forget. "Pop" was an ex-American Airlines pilot about 45 years old. That was why he was called "Pop" or "Pappy," because he was older than most of us. He was a damn good pilot and never turned down a trip, but when he got back to the hostel, he went through each and every trip down to the minutest detail. He would take 10 minutes to tell you how he fastened his safety belt. So, the boys got together and christened Pop "Flaptrap Hingle." Larranghitis was a common malady in the Assam Valley, and one day "Flaptrap" caught it. We all felt relieved. Flap had it for two weeks, but he still kept right on yapping although no sound came out.

We had a lot of unusual characters with us, and one of them was Privinsal. We never did know his given name. We just called him "Pri." I first met him in England in 1941. He was in my outfit. Never did talk

much and was a good pilot. He came over to China in the fall of 1943, flew a few trips and checked out [as captain]. Pri had been in the French Foreign Legion - prior to W.W.II and had a bayonet cut in the front of him about 12" long. His only recreation was playing poker and red dog. He was damn good at both and very seldom lost.

I imagined myself a fair shot with my Colt .45, so when we were setting around the hostel at Dinjan, we would do a little target shooting and a little betting, too, 1,000 rupees a shot. In those days, that was \$333 in U.S. currency. Pri never took part, just watched. So one day I felt very good and issued a challenge to anyone for 1,000 rupees a shot. Much to my surprise, Pri said, "I'll take you up on that."

"Robby," I said to myself, "this is easy money." We set up the Ace of Spades at 15 paces and he said for me to take the first shot. It hit one inch from the center. Then he took my pistol in both hands and fired five in a row, punched out the Ace. I took four more, all within an inch. Well, to make it short, it cost me 5,000 rupees to find out that Pri had been a champion pistol shot at Camp Perry. Prior to this, he had never told anyone.

Pri bought the farm on an instrument landing at Kunming. He was already on base leg at about 30 ft. when he hit a tree. He was carrying a load of Chinese money, and the people that got to the wreck first did nothing for him or his crew. They only wanted the money which was scattered all over the place. Pri's copilot got out through the escape hatch in the cockpit. His face was badly burned. But poor old Pri's feet were caught in the rudder pedals and he burned to death. I flew what was left of him down to Calcutta for cremation. His wife was there, and the Indian undertaker had put him in a box 3' long. I asked the undertaker

why in hell he did not put Pri in a full-size coffin. He said why use all that material if it was not necessary.

The ground personnel we had at Dinjan were quite a bunch, too. Jim Phillips was above all things an author by profession. A good man. And he used to tell us some interesting stories.

John Detarr "Rameses" Hicks was our radio fixer, one of the best I've ever seen before or since. He was about 5'7", 40 years old, skinny as a rail, and weighed about 135 lbs. soaking wet.

Howard Dean was another man in operations at Dinjan. He was a young man, very likeable, and it was said he had some connections on Wall Street in New York.

Arnold Weir was perhaps the best aircraft mechanic CNAC ever had. He was one of the pre-war early birds and had been fired more times by Mr. Bond than any other man. But Mr. Bond always hired him back because he could get more work out of our Chinese mechanics than anyone else. They loved him and would die for him if necessary. The only failing Arnold had was booze. When he got drunk, he would stay drunk for a week and was meaner than a rattlesnake. Everybody stayed clear of him when he was on a bender. I had to draw on him once to calm him down. The reason Mr. Bond kept giving him another chance was that, when sober, he was really on the

ball. The last time Mr. Bond got rid of Arnold, he replaced him with a damn good man from Pan Am, Martin Garrett. Martin stayed with us until the show was over and took over the Shanghai Maintenance. King Clouse was the man in charge of Engine Overhaul. We used to get 1,800 or 1,900 hours out of his engines before overhaul. The same engine-overhaul time in the States for this type of engine was 1,300 maximum. I'm talking about the 1830-92 and the 1830-90 Pratt & Whitney. King Clouse also stayed with us until the show was over.

J.B. Muff and Art Prendergast were two more damn good mechanics. J.B. had one wooden leg below the knee. They were both full of hell and enjoyed the Calcutta night life--at the Puerto Rico Club and others. Our medical staff was run by Dr. Richards when I first joined. After about a year he went home. He had had enough and needed a rest, having been with the AVG before CNAC.

Doc Richards was replaced by Dr. Reggie Farrar as chief flight surgeon. I remember he was giving some kind of head-shrinker tests to all the pilots. He called me in after the test and said, "Robby, I'm tearing the results of your test up. If I turned this over to Mr. Bond, he would fire you." So he tore it up in front of me.

Dr. Paul Laube came to us in early '44 to assist Reggie, but he didn't stay long. Fell in love with China and went up to Chengtu to work in a missionary hospital. Dr. Laube was a damn good doctor and stayed in China until the Nationalist government fell to the Commies. He got out by the skin of his teeth, along with his family.

Frank Meyers was the one in charge of the commissary in Calcutta. Frank was one hell of a nice fellow. He shared a flat with Arnold Weir in Calcutta, and we used to go up there for a little crap shooting. Frank

was pretty lucky at that. He also was pretty good at poker.

Charles Sharkey, better known as "Chuck," was the youngest pilot in our lot. I don't know his real age, but he looked every bit of 16. Chuck walked ding-toed and that made him look more like a kid. He was actually about 20--had come to us from the Canadian Air Force. He was an American, however, claiming Boston, Mass, as home....On top of all this, he was a natural pilot and was a good worker. But he was always seeing Japs. I believe he saw more Japs than all the rest of us combined, but he was good for the morale with a lot of hair-raising tales.

Dick Rossi was another pilot with exceptional skill. Dick was with the AVG before he came to us and had some Japs to his credit. Dick was a good-looking devil and had a wonderful personality. He did not go in for gambling or drinking or all that. He was always on a higher plane, could not stay still five minutes. When not flying, he was studying Indian Culture, etc., always visiting some place like the Taj Mahal or Bombay or Darjeeling. When the U.S. Army completed the Ledo Road from India to China via Mythinaw, Tenchung, Paosan, Yunnani -- with destination Kunming -- Dick took two weeks off and drove a jeep in the first convoy to Kunming. He said some of the turns were on the hair-raising side. Dick stayed until the show was over. Then, after the war, he went with Prescott to the Flying Tiger Airline.....Dick was a member of the unofficial club we had between us flyers. We called it the "300-Club." After making 300 round trips across the Hump you were eligible: that would be 600 crossings. The ATC gave out DFC's for 50 one-way trips. The average round-trip took about 7 hours plus or minus 20 minutes, so that would be about 2,100 hours flying time. We had 16 pilots in the club at the end of the ~~year~~ war.

Ray Allen was another outstanding pilot. He was with us in England in '41 and '42. Came with us the same time I did. Ray was not very big but was tuff as shoe-leather. Never turned down a trip. He was also a member of the 300-Club. He liked to play Red Dog and shoot a little crap. When he was drinking, he would not take any crap from anyone no matter how big, but when sober was quiet as a church mouse.

Charley Sundby was another one. He was a little Danish fellow. Came to us from North Atlantic Ferry Command. Charley was not one of the socializers but was of a serious nature. His flying was most important to him. He did not gamble or drink and saved his money. Never turned down a trip and was a member of the 300-Club. Charley and I used to go hunting green pigeons when we were in Dinjan. They were damn good eating, and the native cooks knew how to cook them. Charley used to say, "There's a doe, Robby." Being Danish, he could not say the letter "V" so "there is a doe" meant "there is a dove."

Charley stayed with us all during the war. Went on to Shanghai where we lived in the Palace Hotel. One day Charley and I were having dinner in the Cathay Hotel- incidentally, both hotels are located on the Bund in Shanghai. We were eating and talking, and a lady at the next table started to gasp for breath. We looked at her and she was blue in the face. Charley jumped up, grabbed her by the legs, turned her upside down and shook hell out of her. After about a minute, a piece of meat fell out of her mouth: she was strangling on a piece of meat! When the manager and head waiter found out what it was all about, they apologized to Charley because they had already called the police.

Charley flew out of Shanghai for quite some time. Meanwhile, CNAC had got some DC-4's. Charley was flying one down to Hong Kong one day.

he clobbered
 It was instruments. He was making his letdown at Kai Tak Airport when
 one of those mountains just outside the entrance to Hongkong Harbor.
 Killed everybody on board.

Pete Petach was another one of that bunch that you could not help
 but like and admire. Pete's real name was "Julius," but we all called him
 "Pete." Pete had been in England with us and was a damn good driver. He
 was good for the morale, too. He never bitched and always had some
 amusing story to tell. If I remember right, he played the harmonica, but
 don't quote me. Pete was not a drinker, but he would gamble a little...

We had several businessmen with us, guys that knew how to make a
 profit and still stay halfway honest. One of the most colorful of these
 characters was "Indian Jim Moore." Jim went over with the RAF in '40-'41
 but had a slight physical problem, so he came back to the USA and joined
 the Air Ferry Command. From there he came to our outfit. Jim was a
 westerner by birth, either Oklahoma or Texas, I don't know which. He was
 about 6' tall with black hair and brown eyes...Didn't do much talking, was
 a fair poker player and a damn good pilot.

He quit when we got to Shanghai, took off for Peking with a bag
 full of Chinese dollars. On exchange between the two cities, you could
 make roughly 35%. It didn't take Jim long to have a fair sized roll.
 Then he went to Hong Kong. Worked out of there for a while and took off
 for Hanoi. Those days, it was called Indo-China. He nearly got himself
 killed there but survived with a real bundle.

He took off for Beirut, bought himself a hotel and would have
 lived happy ever after, but his Arab partner made the mistake of double-
 crossing Jim. What happened is not quite clear, but the Arab was out of
 circulation for a long time.

The gamblers, all of them compulsive:

Red Holmes	Jimmy Foxx	John Hicks
Moose Moss	Dicky Stratford	Arnold Weir
Frank Meyers	Bob Prescott	Fuzzy Ball
Potty Pottschmidt	Jake Passett	Rocky Roncaglione
Jim Phillips	Howard Dean	Ray Cooper
Privinsal	Van Sheppard	Roy Farrell
Jim Binford	Art Prendergast	Cy Semester

and, of course, Yours Truly George Robertson. These were the ones that would gamble on anything and gambling was their favorite recreation when not flying or working. You will note these were not all pilots. Forgot to mention Skippy Lane and Dick Snell. The sums of money that were involved sometimes were very high. Moose made enough to buy his tobacco farm in Doe Run, Georgia. Most of us pissed it back in the next game or the next month. A lot of guys owed a lot when they went to Hoggy-Taw. The average pilot that did not owe when he bought the farm was grieved over for fully 10 minutes, but the ones that had the I.O.U.'s out were moaned for fully two weeks.

I remember when Jimmy Foxx went down, it was very sad around the hostel.

When I left CNAC I owed one of our better players the sum of rupees 68,000. We played five-card stud for 24 hours non-stop in his flat in Calcutta. It was head-to-head he and I, and when it was all over he had taken me to the cleaners. I still owe him. Maybe someday will be able to pick up the tab.

Bob Prescott used to play Red Dog. That was his favorite. Red Holmes loved to shoot crap, but he would play poker and Black Jack, too. Once in Shanghai he did very well for himself. Sharkey loved to play but was not big time. The games we had in Kunming and Shanghai, the usual

takeout was \$5,000. As Moose used to say that kept the shoe-clerks out. Toad Morgan had about \$15,000 worth of paper on one pilot who bought the farm; it shook Toad so bad he was crying for two months.

McCracken, a Georgia boy flying on the kamikaze run with a C46, Chungking to Kankow/Nanking, was a good gambler, but his luck run out one trip. We never found his wreck. Only once did I ever catch anyone pulling a fast one; he was one of the Johnny-Come-Lately boys, the ones that came in 1945. We were playing in Chungking at the time.....But all of the old hands played for the hell of it and there was no cheating.

Speaking of the Suifu Run, that was where we flew all the gold coins that President Roosevelt had given to Chiang Kai Shek to bolster up the Chinese currency. I myself flew 7 loads, 8,000 lbs. per load, and there were more that I do not know who flew them. These were beautiful gold coins minted in the USA, Roosevelt's picture on one side and Chang Kai Shek's on the other. They were about the size of a silver dollar. They were packed in small oak barrels that weighed about 400 lbs. each. All told about 90 million at \$35 per ounce were flown in. The general (Chang) loaded them all on a boat and took them down the Yantgtse River to Chungking. None of them were ever seen on the open market. It was rumored that the general had them all melted down into gold bars at Chungking.

Incidentally, when the general was evacuating China mainland for Taiwan, 125 tons of gold bars went with him out of Amoy on a U.S. destroyer.

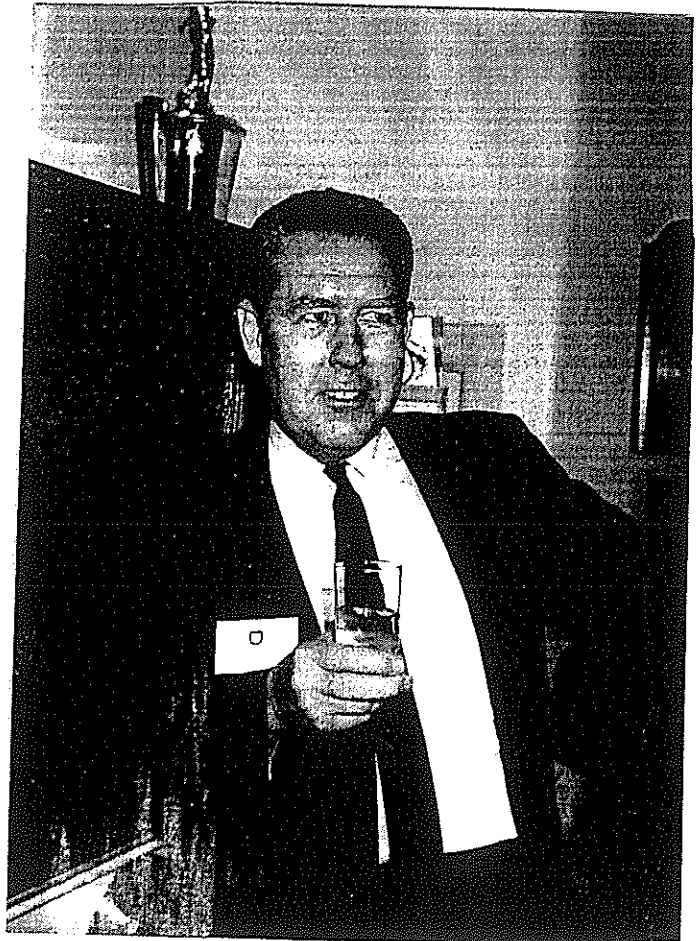
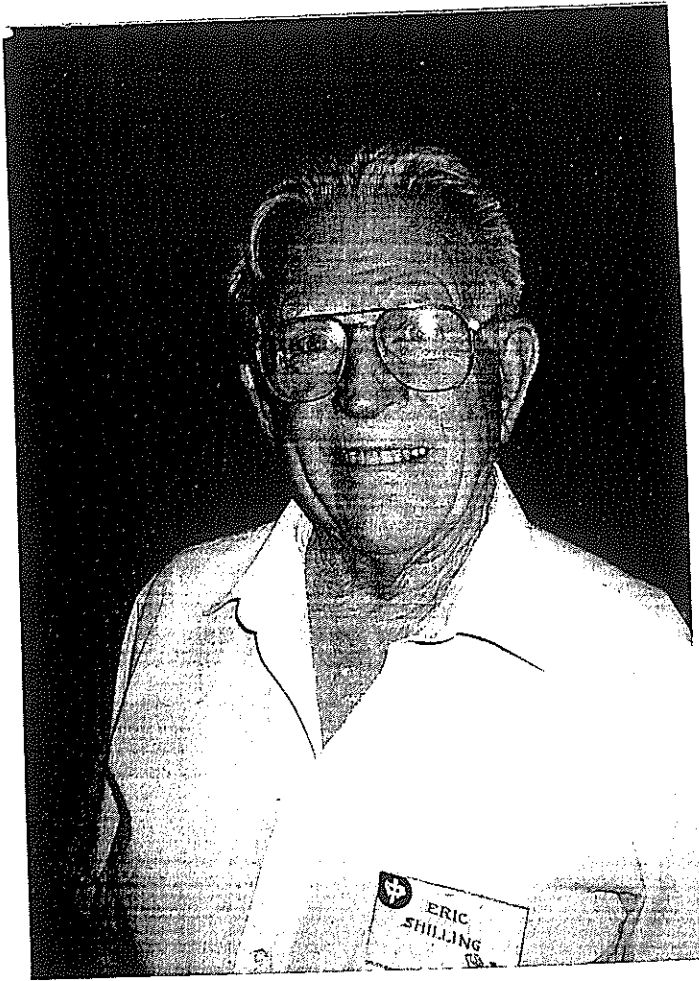
I forgot to mention, when the coolies were unloading one of my loads, they dropped a barrel. It broke open. That is how I know what they looked like. The next trip up there this was the news -- seems like a couple of coolies decided to keep a couple of coins. The Generalissimo had every coolie that worked on that field shot. So much for that compassionate gentleman. Bastard.

On December 18, 1944 M.K.Low, Al Wright and Charles Cook, and I were scheduled for a Suifu flight. Seems the Chinese had moved the DF station about 1/8 of a mile to the west during the night and did not tell anyone. M.K.Low, a very good pilot was the first to drop through the undercast, and immediately a black column of smoke broke through the undercast. I was right behind Al and Cookie and asked Al to talk to me on the radio. The last words he ever said was, "I'm at 1940 feet". Then a black column of smoke. Being cowardly, I beat it away from there and went to Dinjan.

When I flew back to Suifu the next day I found that both planes had hit the cliff at the bend of the Ming River. I flew Al and Cookie's bodies back with me. It was a sad day, and by the Grace of God, if I had been first it would have been me. And if Roy Farrell had not missed his flight-----you see, Roy was scheduled to fly with Al on that trip, but at the last minute, for some unknown to me reason, they put Cookie in his place. But for that fate and luck, both Roy and I would be dead, and this tale would never be written.

Another little incident that made me feel good. I was on a night flight from Dinjan to Kuming and as I crossed over the ridge of mountains on the west side of the Irrawadi Valley I saw the lights on a column of Japanese trucks headed north toward *Schwemyaung*, the northern most post of the Japanese in Burma. I sent a message to the Air Force at Chabau in the Assam Valley giving the location of this column of trucks, and when I got to Kuming I got the news that P-51's had knocked out this column of supply trucks. The Japanese withdrew from *Schwemyaung* shortly after this raid. It was a good feeling to know I had helped a little.

After the war had finished, I was flying between Nanking and Chungking with Mr. Bond as one of the passengers. We had to stop at Hankow to refuel, so we all went to the operations tent for a cup of coffee. As we were setting there talking, Mr. Bond said to me, "Now Robby, the war is over, and we are a scheduled airline. Every one of you boys must be in uniform, shaven, and put on a respectful appearance to the passengers. No more chewing tobacco, no more coonskin caps, and put your .45 in your flight bag. Remember we are a scheduled airline, Robby." Just then about six hogs ran through the operations tent, splattering mud over both of us. "Yes, Sir, Mr. Bond," I said. "This is a scheduled airline!"





Consuelo Bonifacio

**ELMER, THE SIBERIAN BEAR WAS A CNAC COPILOT
WITH ENOUGH TRIPS OVER THE HUMP TO BE ROTATED**