

CNAC

Cannon Ball

NUMBER 4 October 1, 1974

Reg. Farrar, Editor

CNAC Association

Harold Chinn, President

It is appropriate as President to have a President's message. However, since I ascended to the position under such sad circumstances, I find it only fitting and proper to make this a tribute to "Sol" Soldinski, President CNAC 1973-1975 - that every effort will be made to carry out his wishes to try and get more members into the association and to attend our meetings and Reunions. Harold T. Chinn, President

Do you remember the ride from Dum Dum into town, up Chitranjan Ave. to Chauringhe, crossing Dharumtala, the maidan on the right, all the street cars converging past the Grand Hotel on the left. Firpo's down Park Street, Khnarni Mansions, Park Mansions to lower Circular Road to Ballygunge Circular Road, to Store Road or Rainey Park. Or perhaps by the Victoria Memorial, past the race course on the right, turning left to Alipore Rd. and on to a fine glass of beer or nimbu-pani and a grilled cheese sandwich under the punka. A nice cool bath, another drink, and then a trip back to town for dinner at the B-A Club (now the site of an office building), possibly at the officers club in Khnarni Estates, or chinese chow at the Nanking in Chinatown. After a few more drinks a stop at the Hawaiian Club and after listening to the closing strains of Aloha and Drifting and Dreaming, a quick stop at the Puerto Rican Club and home. Remember the 500 Club, the Saturday Club, and the Swim Club? Those, my friends, were the days. It's too bad we didn't know that then. I wonder where they are now?

Start planning for the next Reunion - Ojai July 1975. We want this to be the best and largest ever.

IN MEMORIUM

Charles "Chuck" Sharp, Jan. 14, 1974
Sygmund "Sol" Soldinski
King Clouse, winter 1973
V. Edward Smith, May 31, 1970
H. R. "Pete" Lucas

For CNAC this is a year of sorrow. The gang in Hoky Taw has increased. We have lost Chuck Sharp, the man who guided us through the war years, the man who flew the 1st Hump flight, and the pioneer aviator who came to China to work for a struggling Asian Airline.

We have most recently lost our President Zygmund (Sol) Soldinski, architect of the DC 2 1/2, master mechanic who pioneered in aviation mechanics, who kept CNAC flying.

No less important, we have heard of the death of King Clouse last year. This man took over after Sol went home and carried CNAC through the war.

These were the men who were there when it really counted.

CORRECTIONS & CHANGES MEMBERSHIP & MAILING LIST

K.T. Chang (changed)
306 Villa Kyoto
77 Kazankubo-cho
Yamashina Kigashijama-Ku
Kyota 607 Japan

Mrs. King Clouse (new)
Ft. Brown Apartments #602
Brownsville, Texas

Betty (Mrs. Pete Lucas) (changed)
Box 149
Waverly, Tenn. 37185

Peter Goutiere (misspelled)
Jeff Hanan (misspelled)

Letters returned address unknown
Cyril Pinkava Tommy Wong
Ed Russell Numi Dillo
Charles Sharp

Gordon Tweedy (changed)
Elmore Mountain Road
Stowe, Vermont 05672

Samuel S.C. Yen, M.D. (new)
P.O. Box 109
La Jolla, Calif. 92037

Arthur N. Young (new)
985 E. California Blvd.
Pasadena, Calif. 91106

Floyd & Dorris James (friend
Urdaneta Apt. 6 of CNAC)
Ayola Ave. cor. Recoleta St.
Makati Rical
Phillipines, D 708

J.R. Rossi (changed)
3038 E. Mission Dr.
Fallbrook, Calif. 92028

We are preparing a Directory of former CNAC Employees for eventual publication, possibly in "Wings Over China." Since no list appears to exist it must be slowly and painfully put together. To help in this we hope you will complete the questionnaire and return it to us.

**Stay active -Attend your local meetings. There will be one
in New York, Miami, and Los Angeles**

Chris Colthorpe wrote me a nice note last year. In it he listed several references to articles about CNAC. It seems these are of general interest. Many might be available in your Public Library.

BOOKS:

- 1) A History of the World's Airlines , R.E. G. Davies
- 2) A History of the American Aircraft Industry , G. Simmons
- 3) Climb To Greatness , J. Rae
- 4) Wings Over Asia Vol. 1 & 2
- 5) I Flew For China , Royal Leonard (A C.N.A.C. pilot)
- 6) Winged Highway , W.S. Grooch (P.A.A. pilot in China 1933-4)
- 7) World Aviation Annual 1948
- 8) China's Nation Building Effort, A.N. Young (economic adviser to Nationalist Government - sat on C.N.A.C. board of directors during part of W.W.II)
- 9) China- The Helping Hand , A.N. Young
- 10) China Among the Powers , D. Rowe
- 11) Communist Chinese Air Power R. Busscher
- 12) "Aircraft and Anticommunists", China Quarterly, William Leary Jr. , *OCT-DEC 1972*
- 13) The China Yearbook
- 14) The China Year Book (Annuals published by Nationalist Govt.. The years 1929-1950 contain sections on aviation with subsections on C.N.A.C.)
- 15) The Chinese Year Book

MAGAZINES

- 1) Life Magazine: June 7, 1948 P.13
- 2) National Geographic : Aug. 1945 P. 231
May 1938 P. 570
- 3) Aviation Week: July 19, 1948 P.51
Feb. 9, 1949 P.47 & P.55
- 4) Time : Nov. 21, 1949 P.31 Nov. 13, 1939. P.24
Aug. 16, 1948 P.84 April 5, 1937 P.62
Dec. 17, 1945 P.81 Dec. 2, 1935 P.46
Sept. 1, 1945 P.20
- 5) Literary Digest : April 30, 1932 P.33
March 19, 1932 P.32
Sept. 4, 1937 P. 9

WHO WE WERE

No matter who you were before, and who you were afterward, for one brief period you were CNAC. The roll that each of us played differed, some were more conspicuous, and some had more exciting experiences, but CNAC all.

This column will be continued and consist of sketches of individual CNAC.

HUGH ROSS (PETE) LUCAS 1920-1974

Pete was a native of Waverly, Tennessee, and attended elementary school there. Later he was graduated from Battle Ground Academy and Vanderbilt University. While at Vanderbilt, Pete began his flying career in the Civilian Pilot Training program. This led to his being an instructor at the Air Corps contract school in Jackson, Tennessee, during the earlier part of World War II. In 1944 Pete was hired by CNAC and reported to American flyers at Meacham Field, Fort Worth for instrument training.

Pete was well liked by all his associates in Calcutta, Dinjan and the other side due to his jolly nature and natural zest for life. He was also pretty handy with the two little spotted cubes, as some of the boys will agree. When it was all over in 1946, Pete resigned and signed as crew on an old Liberty ship bound for the States.

Pete had a natural business head and got the most pleasure out of a satisfactorily completed business deal. He died suddenly of a heart attack on March 9, 1974, in Waverly, where he was a successful developer, building contractor, and all around business man.

Surviving are his wife, Betty Warren Lucas, 'of 467 Powers Blvd. Waverly, and one son, John Griff Lucas of Knoxville, Tenn.

THE DRAGON'S WINGS

Correction: I tried to change William Leary's name to Timothy but he didn't like it so please make the correction on your membership list. I must be the one on the weed, certainly not him.

Dr. William Leary, Jr. has written the story of CNAC. Many will remember his visit with us at the Ojai Reunion a few years ago. Now the book is done and will be published early next year by the Univ. of Georgia Press. Advance orders may be placed with the Univ. of Georgia Press, Athens, Georgia, 30601. The price has not been announced. This may not go into many printings so it might be well to get your order in early, and for several copies. Send them to your friends, put one in your Public Library. Dr. Leary's book is named; The Dragon's Wings: The China National Aviation Corporation and the Development of Commercial Aviation in China. In this issue of the CNAC Cannonball there is an excerpt from his book.

The American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics bestowed its History Manuscript Award for 1973 for "the best historical manuscript dealing with the science, technology, and impact of aeronautics and astronautics on Society." We add our congratulations on his award.

The China National Aviation Corporation (CNAC), a Sino-American commercial airline that developed air routes in China during the 1930's, pioneered service over the Hump between India and China in 1942. Between April 1942 and September 1945, CNAC flew some 80,000 trips across the Hump, carrying more than 50,000 tons of goods to China and bringing out nearly 25,000 tons. It cost the lives of twenty-five crews.

The following selection from The Dragon's Wings depicts CNAC's wartime operations from the perspective of the cockpit.

CNAC's pilot group, one of their number has observed, "was probably one of the most unique in all aviation history, a wider assemblage of personalities, family and financial background, aviation experience, and nationalities could not be imagined." The men came from the United States, China, Australia, Canada, Great Britain, and Denmark, and had flown for the American Volunteer Group, the Eagle Squadron, the North Atlantic Ferry Command, the Royal Air Force, and the Royal Canadian Air Force. They had more than 1,000 flying hours to their credit, most had an instrument rating, and many had extensive multi-engine experience. "All were motivated by a thirst for either money or adventure or both, and it was impossible to gain much of the first with acquiring a considerable amount of the latter."