

Cannon Ball

Reg Farrar, Editor

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REUNION JULY 2 - 5

May 15, 1975

The CNAC-AVG Reunion is July 3-5. The Cnac Reunion starts 1 day earlier at the Ojai Valley Inn, Ojai, California, 93023. Write direct for reservations.

Everytime we meet someone else turns up. Renewed interest is never too late. This is our youth, but it is fading further and further away. In spite of this you can recapture it for a moment. This is the year that everyone who flew or serviced the "Top Side Rickshaws of the Middle Kingdom Space Machine Family" should gather. Now Hozytaw lies over the next ridge, but before we see the beacon, lets meet again. What you were and what you did and what you didn't do is of no importance now. All is forgiven. We lived a moment in a strange land. We may even have made a little history, but all of us made friends. Now is the time to renew those acquaintances.

The CNAC Reunion will start on July 2, 1975. This is one day before we are joined by the AVG. That evening we will show movies of China, Calcutta and past reunions. If you have any film of the Hump bring it along. The next morning we will greet the AVG and late comers as they arrive. That evening there will be the outdoor bar-b-cue and dancing. There will be 2 banquets, one for CNAC and one for AVG. There will be business meetings with elections. There will be a golf tournament. In addition to golf there is tennis, swimming and riding.

If this is your 1st reunion you will like the Ojai Valley Inn. It is perched on a small hill surrounded by a golf course in the heart of the Ojai Valley. They turn the whole place over to us so everywhere you turn you will see a familiar face.

This promises to be a great reunion and may be our last one on the West Coast for awhile now that the Flying Tiger Line is unable to take us out. We have been very lucky in the past and we owe so much to the generosity and courtesy of this great airline. So - on to California. We have a great program for our banquet. Our featured speaker is Dick Merrill.

Captain Dick Merrill, christened Henry Tindell Merrill at Iuka, Mississippi. In 1894, started his colorful flying career prior to World War I, at the controls of Tiny Jenny with an OX-5 engine. Since that time he has amassed a record unequalled in aviation. After several years of barnstorming around the United States, Dick, on July 20, 1928 joined Eastern Airlines, then known as Pitcairn Aviation. Flying everything from Eastern's open cockpit Mailwings to today's jets, he has logged 40,300 hours and 8 million miles in the air. Due to today's federal regulations requiring pilots to retire at 60, it is doubtful that another pilot will ever approach these impressive totals.

Dick is proud of the fact that he still passes the pilot's rigid physical examination. In his spare time Dick frequently pilots private planes between Miami and the Bahamas. His log book now has recorded a total of 41,711 hours.

Dick has been a record setter throughout his career. In the early air mail days, he set a record for hours and miles of night flying at a time when night flying was dangerous business. In three years he never cancelled a flight because of weather, but there were other times when he had to hunt for a place to land until his gas ran out. Then he jumped and he hoped his parachute would open.

More recently, in June 1966, he helped set 21 world records when he, Arthur Godfrey and two other pilots flew around the world in a jet Commander. They took off from New York's LaGuardia airport, flew 23,373 miles and landed back at LaGuardia 86 hours and nine minutes later. They were in the air 55½ hours according to the Federation Aeronautique Internationale.

Dick's most memorable record was set in the summer of 1936 when he made the first round trip flight over the Atlantic Ocean. With entertainer Harry Richmond as a passenger, he flew a single engine Vultee plane to and from Ireland. They carried a load of ping pong balls for buoyancy in case of a forced landing. The following year Captain Merrill teamed up with a fellow Eastern pilot, Jack Lambie, to make the first commercial round trip flight over the Atlantic. They flew to England and back with first photographs of the Coronation of King George VI. This trip, not a stunt, but payload flight credited with opening up the era of commercial transatlantic aviation, won for him the coveted Harmon Trophy, presented by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

In later years, Dick established various official and unofficial speed records for commercial planes, participated in newsworthy rescue operation and during World War II served in the Military Transport Division of Eastern Airlines, ferrying urgently needed supplies between Miami, South America and Africa.

Dick and his wife, the former movie actress Toby Wing, live at their East DiLido Drive home on Miami Beach, Florida.

IN MEMMORIUM

There are three new places set in Holy Taw this year

George Hamill
J.R. McCleskey
Kerstin Moffat Thorn

AMPHIBIAN

THE STORY OF THE LOENING BIPLANE

by Grover Loening

Never before revealed in its entirety, the enthralling story of the Loening Amphibian is now told by its designer, builder and test pilot.

In a lively, authoritative, often humorous narrative, Mr. Loening lets the achievements of his Amphibian speak for themselves, and these achievements were extraordinary, because the plane's ruggedness and ability to land almost anywhere made it uniquely versatile.

Outstanding among the many uses made of it was the choice of the Loening for these pioneer undertakings:

- MacMillan-Byrd Arctic Expedition of 1925
- U.S. Army Good-Will Flight around the South American continent in 1926-27.
- Wyatt's (1926) and Radford's (1929) U.S. Navy Alaskan Surveys
- China National Airlines' fascinating operation up and down the Yangtze River in 1929-38 China
- The heroic spanning of the North Atlantic by Thor Solberg
- Commuting by "air yacht" and the development of amphibian airlines

The air pioneering that Mr. Loening describes was nearly as venturesome as space exploration is now, and the reader will thrill to the courage and daring of the many early flyers—well-known, like Byrd, Eaker, Lindbergh,



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LAST PLANE FROM SHANGHAI, OR
COMMENTS ON COSTELLO'S ACCOUNT

By-Vince de Salvatore

Because we all know that Costello is an absolute teetotaler we must, therefore, come to the logical conclusion that father time has caught up with him. In addition to external physical evidences of this there must be a softening of the gray matter. His accounts of the "Nanking incidents" and the "Last Plane from Shanghai" bear uncontroversial proof of this. Therefore, from one who mostly kept his head above the bar, rather than hitting his head against it, here is what happened.

Nanking - we were ordered, one mornin to fire up and get to hell to Shanghai "right now". We all fired up and got into trail on the taxi strip. Number 1 for the take off started to check his mags (pure fear), to the best of my recollection it was Frosty McWilliams.

Shanghai, last day - to the best of my knowledge there were more last planes from Shanghai than existed in the entire CNAC fleet. As most of you will recall we flew from Shanghai to either Taipah or Hong Kong for about eight days without benefit of bed or bath. On one particular day my airplane was ready to go, but I was told by the operations people to stand by. I foolishly asked why. I was told that I was to take them, the operations people out. There was firing from the airport gate as we took off. This was on May 9, 1949. I have heard that some CNAC planes visited Shanghai after this date. Neither at that time nor now does it seem important. I was badly in need of scotch, food, bath and bed.

Your will note that these were separate incidents. Not one, as Costello stated. However, to set the record straight, I am willing to meet with Costello for two reasons; (1) Refresh his memory; (2) Teach him how to drink.

REPORT BY: CAPTAIN FLETCHER HANKS
 DATE OF REPORT: JULY 26, 1945
 TO: CNAC OPERATIONS
 SUBJECT: JETTISON CARGO OVER BURMA
 PLACE: DINJAN, ASSAM, INDIA

I departed from Dinjan ramp on July 21, 1945 at 2330 GWT in C-46, #131, to make a trip to (Luhsien) on the Able course. At 0100 GWT I had an abeam bearing on Baker Mike (Shingbuiyang) which put me over Kindang Bum (40 miles from BM on a loading of 30° from BM). At that point I changed my heading to 95° continuing by climb. At 0117 I took an abeam bearing on DH (Fort Hertz). I leveled out at 17,000 feet in an overcast with the outside temperature approximately plus 5° C. I realized the danger of carburetor ice and applied carburetor heat on one engine at the time, at intervals of approximately ten minutes, maintaining carburetor temperature of plus 35° c. for one minute.

I had no indication of carburetor ice until at 0145, I noticed a drop in head temperatures of 140° c. and 150° c. on left and right motors respectively. I immediately advanced both mixtures controls to "autorich", turned both booster pumps on "Hi", advanced the RPM's to 2400. (the throttles were already all the way forward in high blower), and then applied full carburetor heat on the right carburetor. The right motor cut out momentarily so I took the heat off and reapplied it gradually until the carburetor temperature registered 45° c. (This manipulating of the right carburetor heat control took approximately 45 seconds). I did not apply left carburetor heat at the same time I applied right because it was by first experience with carburetor ice in a C-45 and I wanted to be sure I kept one motor running.

Then I applied about 50 percent left carburetor heat and the left motor stopped at once. Immediately, I took the heat off completely and then reapplied it full on and primed the engine for approximately fifteen seconds. The left engine did not start and I was losing altitude at 1,000 feet per minute, therefore, I feathered it and took up a heading of 270° and ordered the crew to jettison the cargo as I estimated I was between the east branch of the Irrawaddy and the Salween Rivers over terrain 14,000 feet high. Severe turbulence made it difficult to jettison the cargo of bails of cotton as the crew was reluctant to push it out the open door.

I lost altitude at an average of 350 feet per minute until I jettisoned most of the cargo. When I estimated I was over the west branch of the Irrawaddy (the bearings on DH and FC were erratic) the complete cargo had been jettisoned. At this time I turned south toward FC. At 9,500 feet I broke out of the overcast. I tried to start the left engine without success. I proceeded to Fox Charlie (Myitkyina) and landed there at 0320 GWT. When the motor was started at myitkyins a visible spray of water came out of the exhaust. The motor run-up was good so I returned to Dinjan.

If I had been carrying carburetor heat of 35° c. continuously I don't think I would have had icing trouble, but I would have burned another hundred gallons of gasoline during the trip and gasoline consumption is a factor in our operations. Now that I know the severity of carburetor ice on a C-46, I will carry carburetor heat at 35 c. or more when icing conditions prevail.

WHO WE WERE

CHARLES VAUGHAN

Chile came from Nashville, Tenn. He attended Vanderbilt College and in 1927 became a flying cadet at Brooks Field and Kelly. At the end of a year he was in commissioned reserves. He served 2 years at Langley Field with the 2nd Bombardment Group. He went with Curtis Wright who owned CNAC at the time and was stationed in Shanghai, July 1930. He stayed on with PAA till Japanese took Shanghai in 1937. He went to Manila to fly the Martin MI 30's (the original China Clipper) from there to Hong Kong for 8 months. He returned to Miami where he flew the Caribbean and South America. In 1958 he came to New York where he was head of operations for Pan American. In 1961 he became a PAA Vice President until he retired in 1969. He became a