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This issue is dedicated to Royal Leonard. Not all of us knew him but those of us who did will never forget him. This intrepid pioneer in aviation came early, served through the middle and near the end of CNAC. I have reprinted an article that he wrote in 1944. It describes some of the war years of flying by CNAC.

## REUNION 1991

Its set at Holiday Inn, Crown Plaza, 600 Airport Boulevard, Burlingame, California 94010 (near San Francisco Airport). Tel: 415-340-8500

Dates October 31 to November 2 Special Rate - \$69.00 per day (available same rate for early arrivers)

The response has been phenomenal over 60 so far.

The following have already responded and will be there. This doesn't count the locals, to name a few.

Jim Moore Catfish Raines Helen Young Jack Foley Francis Jong Felix Smith Gene Powers
Ken Henry
Bart Hahn
Oakly Smith
Jennifer Dobbs
Joe Harden
Reginald Farrar

Mitchell Rossi Oldenberg Van Cleve Welchmeyer Conrad Keninmonth Everyone received the notice about a reunion in San Francisco last month. There are so many Californians and so many around San Francisco that it seemes desirable to accomodate them so we can see so many old friends. This notice is being reprinted to remind you to write to Jerry! Lets get it moving!

Jerey Shrawder CNAC Secretary

45922 Florida Ave. Hemet, Ca. 92544 (714) 927-1935

Remember Walter Huston and the September Song. How many more Reunions can we have. When the CNAC Association was young we could afford reunions every 2 years. Now as the days dwindle down.... If you have never attended one of these, make one! You are remembered and you will remember someone. Reclaim your youth. You were one of a unique group. Maybe you did bigger things later, but remember you were once a member of the motley crew. Alternatively if you didn't make it big (most of us didn't) you were once a member of this gallant adventurous group of pioneers.

I still drive around Calcutta or Shanghai in my mind. I still play Bidow with Mangan in the Palace Hotel in Shanghai. I still walk the street at Ge-Nan with Indian Jim, and play the finger game at a check out celebration at the Nanking in Calcutta's Chinatown. I remember Cliff Groh and Steve Kusak establishing my reputation with Carmen. (It's a burn). Dow Rich put an end to that. I live and relive those days. Maupen, Allen, Petack, McClelland, Hauptman, Moon Chin, Buzzard, Gibby, Van Cleve, Dillo and Kenehan where have you been. Of all of us, I would have expected to have seen you. What happened to you?!

Last year, Robby, Farrell, Oldenberg and you were missing, they have no excuse.

To this list a hundred more can be added. Those of you who live in California have no excuse. Run over, up, or down for at least 1 day.

## 1990 REUNION IN SAN FRANCISCO

The Sofitel Hotel now seems far away, but not forgotten. The 3 days we had together are vivid in my mind. The combined reunion was a success beyond all our expectations and CAT and CATC and CNAC was entirely compatible. The turnout was fabulous. The Chinese dinner turned out over 250 people. Joe Rosbert, President of CAT is as you remember CNAC was great in bringing us together. We must show our bountiful appreciation to Su Hacker. Her behind the scenes efforts was largely responsible for the CAT Association and the smooth operation of the reunion. We wish to thank them both.

Again the Reunion was far too short. We hardly got settled and it was over. Hopefully next year it will rund 4-5 days.

Let me try to reconstruct our experience. When we arrived I made a dash for the bus to take us to the Sofitel Hotel. Seated in the back of the bus was Bob Rengo. At the hotel we registered, went to our room and then down to the lobby for registration. There we saw Felix Smith, Bill Maher and we met Sue Hacker at registration. I had never met her before. Joe Rosbert showed up. Then my first real suprise I saw Ced Mah from Edmonton. I hadn't seen him for 20 years. It was hard to realize he was as old as we. What was this young guy doing here? His son was with him. Jules and Peggy Watson, Jim Dalby, then there was Indian Jim Moore from Bangkok. A little later Bob Newkirk appeared. He was in from Hongkong. I ran into Chuck West from Seattle. This was his first time out. I recognized him from his photo published in the Cannon Ball last year. Theyn they began to show up fast and furious, Tommy Wong and Al Mah. CK Wong introduced himself. I honestly didn't recognize him, fortunately he recognized me. I think this was his first but no one contributed more than he.

There was this very attractive young woman walking around, recognized by many but me. I had the privilege of sitting beside her. It was Nancy Allison Wright who had been. Then I heard a loud voice and I knew Doc Rich was there. In the meantime I met a lot of CATs. I can't remember just who most of them were but I did add a couple new names, because they were coth CAT a CATC and we didn't have their names. Christie and Red Hanks were there and after cocktails the Hanks Rengoes, Mahers, Rosbert and we dined at the hotel.

That was Friday and in the evening we threw a cocktail party before our combined banquet. At the cocktail party many of the locals appeared. David Wong, and no one can understand my feeling of exiliration at seeing them. These were the fabulous . I know he's an old man for I saw him in 1944 but Donald Wong looked the same as I remember him in 1964 and that my friends is 25 years ago.

The next day Saturday there was a lot of chatting as others showed up. At approximately 6:30 we all departed for Chinese dinner at a local restaurant. There were 267 there. The menu was great, one dish after the other. The only thing missing was Sham Shing Jeau and the finger game.

It was an incredible party. Our resident comedian, Al Mah kept us in stitches. We all wetn home and little groups reminisced with into the night. In the morning there was a parting breakfast and then back home.

To me it was almost a dream. A bubble that finally burst as I drove down my street in Loch Arbour. There were some missing faces all detained elsewhere by urgent affairs. Most of whom will be there next time, Robby Rosberts, Moon Chin and Ray Farrell and Al Oldenberg. Those who read this and did not come missed the greatest reunion of old friends and comrades. There was a lot of white hair but such young of spirit. If you didn't come we missed you and expect to see you next time.

The Reunion in San Francisco was great. Sue Hacker, and Joe Rosbert really sparked the few days. Meeting with CAT was a great idea. We share the same traditions and so many CNAC went with CAT. I was very surprised. A few CATC also came. There will be another combined reunion in the Fall of 1992, maybe in Texas. The attendance at the 1990 Reunion follows. Some of the legendary characters showed Donald Wong, Al and Ced Mah, Indian Jim. Indian Jim and Newport even came from Hong Kong and Thailand.

Doc Richards Art Chin Harold Chin Hal MacNichol C.Y. Liu Joseph Rosbert Tommy Wong Richard Rossi Robert Rengo & Marjorie Fred Pittenger & Louise William Newport Clara Bussert Rowell Henry & Gloria Chaus William Newport Gordon & Alexander Smith Oakley Smith Byron & Marian Sherrell Richard Stuelke Diedra Kimball Gerry & Angela Shrawder Roy Thompson Al Turney Jules & Peggy Watson Nancy Allison Wright Cedric Mah Al Mah & Heather

Neese Hicks Hobbs Bill Jim Moore & Meiling Bill & Mary Lee Maher Felix Smith Tom & Zena Sailer Eric & Ilsa Shilling Eddie Sims Donald Wong Reg & Mary Farrar Fletcher & Jane Hawks Tom & Marcel Applegate Glen & Shirley Carroll Jim & Shirley Dalby Jack Folz Ray & Joanne Gilliland Wallace & Kay Hash Don & Emily Hassig Ken Healy Art Kinninmonth Frank Letts

I hope I didn't miss anyone.

00.1 - By Royal Leonard

1944

It was the last day in January. All flights over the "hump" had been cancelled both by the U.S. Army and by C.N.A.C. The weather should have been clear over these Tibetan mountains during this part of the year. But it wasn't. It seems as tho old man weather was out to make up for the weeks he had been off duty.

Under normal circumstances we should have considered ourselves grounded along with the others. However, we had been experimenting with new supercharged high altitude engines and one final test needed to prove their worth, was a demonstration of their performance in the heaviest weather possible. This seemed to be the day to do it.

Other than these special engines our plane was exactly like the others, a twin engined Douglas cargo transport. To make our demonstration more impressive we added an extra ton of cargo to the normal two and a half ton load.

In addition to my crew there were two passengers, Mr. Whiting Willauer and Eric Watt who were acting as official observers.

The normal flight into China with freight is from Dinjan to Kumming, Dinjan is the name of the tea plantation on which our first field was built. There are several other fields now but generally we still refer to this end of the line as Dinjan. It is located on the Brahmaputra river in the eastern tip of India above Burma.

Kumming, a key city on the famous old cobble stoned caravan road over which Marco Polo traveled when entering China, marks the China terminal of the old French railroad from Hanoi.

The towering multi-ridged granite barrier extending down from Tibet between Dinjan and Kumming is referred to as the "hump".

not dare come lower until I could be sure that w

As long as a pilot keeps on the direct course between Dinajn and Kumming, an altitude of 16,000 feet will clear the mountains. However, when flying in the clouds and the drift unknown, we must allow for 18,000 foot mountains a few miles to the north of the course.

Today, our flight was to be direct from Dinjan to Chungking. On this course we had to be careful of 22,000 foot mountains. However, we were not concerned because at 23.000 feet we were above the ice storm.

When the clouds soared higher we knew that we were near the lofty peaks of southern Tibet. At 24,000 feet we were in the clouds trying to increase our altitude.

Suddenly, there was a terrific wallop and our unexpected fight began. We were smacked from every possible direction. Those 110 mile an hour winds, so often encountered, seemed to meet here coming from all angles.

A few seconds later I was busy trying to disconnect the automatic pilot. One of the gyro instruments connected to it had tumbled. Those extreme didos were more than it could handle. I had to be quick to avert a spin.

The violence seemed to push us down. With motors wide open we continued to settle, At 21,000 feet, and just when the storm gods seemed determined to dash up against those 22,000 foot peaks, a friendly updraught carried us up to 25,000 feet. We thought our altitude worries would be over after that but it was only the beginning.

After a lull, the rugged hand of old man weather, toying with our destiny would throw us down to 19,000 feet and then toss us up to 25.000 feet almost within the same minute. The three and a half tons of cargo broke loose, hit the ceiling and then the floor. Can you imagine a three and a half ton truck having that much weight dropped on it from a distance of 7 feet? That is the wallop this airplane was taking several times each minute.

The two observers in the cabin were in constant danger of being mangled.

Each time the cargo hit the floor there was a sickening thud and a shudder and each time we wondered if the wings were still there. I did not have time to look. I was too busy watching the instruments. When the rate of climb needle makes a complete turn it will register level altho the ascent or descent might be more than 4,000 feet per minute. It was like walking a tight wire in a tornado. Sometime this needle would make a complete revolution during that moment when my eye would glance at the compass and I would brush away the startling thought, "is that instrument reading reading up, down or level?"

Ordinarily, such violence would not last more than a few minutes at our altitude. It was 40 minutes since the first wallop and there was no sign of abatement. Instead, the violence increased by the minute.

There was no time to look at a map and see where we might be. If the winds could be 110 miles per hour in clear weather, what might it be in such a storm? I tried to draw a mental picture of our map.

Minya Konka, a huge rugged heap of granite extending 25.000 feet into the sky might be near. It is famous because that is the throne where the Gods were supposed to sit while brewing their storms. Maybe that is why the violence had increased? Could we elude the grasp of those gods as well as the hoary hand of old man weather? We could not be sure until we reached the top.

If we were directly on course we would miss this mountain by fifty miles but that is not much when it is possible to have an unknown drift of over 100 miles per hour.

Trying to get that high seemed as futile as reaching for the moon. 25,000 feet seemed to be our limit and that was not enough.

The lowest temperature our outside thermometer can register is thirty below and now it was down to the bottom.

The contraction of the airplane allowed the control cables to become sloppy. My arms and legs ached from the struggle to remain right side up. I wondered how much longer my muscles would hold out.

When we were again pushed down to 19,000 feet I knew there was no alternative but to turn south where the terrain was not so high. No longer could we afford the risk of passing unseen peaks so much higher than that. When I thought it would be safe, I headed for Kumming hoping that my guess on the drift was not too far off.

I asked the radio operator to get a bearing on Kumming. There was nothing but silence. Were we beyond the range of the Kumming radio? This was no time for a radio failure! We were back up to 24,000 but still no even a peep at the sun.

The operator was almost unconscious. What was the matter? Upon investigation I discovered that he was getting only enough oxygen to keep from passing out completely. I did not dare come lower until I could be sure that we were beyond those towering peaks.

After the fourth hour above 24,000 feet, the sun broke through for only a few minutes. However, it was long enough for a sight with my sextant. Calculations showed that we were near Chungking. It was safe to descend.

At 18,000 feet the operator came to life and soon had a bearing on Chungking. From that moment on, our let down and landing was merely routine. Another three and a half tons of cargo had arrived in China.

A week later I flew Dr. T.V. Soong and his party over the same route on their way to America. This time the weather was clear and we could fly on a direct course between Chungking and Dinjan. Beyond our right wing tip we could see Minya Konka, a stately granite king, commanding rugged snow covered scenic grandeur as far as the eye could reach.

All the passengers were supplied with oxygen and each had a mask. At 24,000 feet the air was smooth, altho for more than three hours we had a 100 mile head wind. During one of those hours our ground speed was 70; our true airspeed was 182 miles per hour. This meant that our head wind had a velocity of 112.

Prior to my arrival in China I flew the transcontinental night mail. Only once during a period of six years did I find a wind that could equal the fierceness of these Tibetan gales. Flying from Los Angeles to Albuquerque, I climbed to 20,000 feet in order to take advantage of the 100 mile tail wind that had been reported by the weather bureau. With an airplane that cruised at 120, our ground speed while crossing the continental divide, averaged 220 for about 2 hours.

Out here we find that winds exceeding 100 miles per hour are common phenomens. For days on end we would have this for a tail wind and then have it to buck on the return. Needless to say, at the lower altitudes the resulting turbulence is severe.

Every pilot who has flown the hump many times can relate an experience something like this:---

17,000 feet is often the limit of these overly loaded airplanes with low altitude engines. While struggling for more altitude a friendly updraught would relieve our anxiety by boosting us up to 23,000 feet. Some vertical currents would be more than our rate of climb instruments could measure, possibly six or seven thousand feet per minute. During the next few minutes a sinking mass of air would hold us down to 13,000 feet in spite of wide open engines. Under those conditions we would often be faced with the dilemna of what to do when the nearness of 15,000 foot ridges accelerated the turbulence so much that turning around would be a dangerous

April 1943 Although we have been able to elude enemy patrols over our route, the Japs have made a few concerted attempts to stop this service by hitting us on the ground at Dinjan.

Their raid caught us flat footed. One of our Chinese co-pilots, who had just been checked out as a captain, was practicing landings. He had received no warning and was unmindful of any danger. A Jap pursuit swooped for his tail and was ready to shoot when an American fighter pilot of the tail of the Jap shot first and the Jap hit the ground. The American pilot in turn was attacked from behind and went down in flames.

The tally of American losses was alarming. Many pilots were ready to quit. Defenseless, they did not want to fly transport planes if we could not depend upon more warning. Others thought that we might fly at night. That would be difficult if our base was bombed every day.

Most of the Indian help ran away. There was no one to fill up bomb holes. We had depended too much on Indian help. Most of our refueling staff vanished and joined the grand exodus of Indians fleeing from this area.

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Radio Tokyo blantantly announced that their airmen would finish the destruction of China's serial life line in four days.

It was the eighth year that I had been flying for China. Could it be that it was also the last?

During my first year I was personal pilot for Chang Hsueh-Liang, known as the "Young Marshal . As his pilot I flew over most of China. However, because of the Japs I did not dare fly near Peking. When he staged the famout mutiny of the "Double Twelfth" at Sian Fu and kidnapped Generalissimo Chinag Kai-shek, I automatically became a rebel pilot.

When the Generalissimo was released I had the honor of flying both parties of this kidnapping out of Sian Fu.

Later, I became the personal pilot to the Generalissimo. Under his command I could fly any place in China except that the area near Peking was still tabu. After the Japs started their fight on the famous Marco Polo bridge, July 7th, 1937, other places in succession became tabu,

Shanghai, Nanking and Hankow. My job was to always flee from danger. Would I ever see the day when I could make the Japs run from me?

The Japs shot down their first C.N.A.C. plane near Canton. All commercial flying to Hongkong was suspended. From the command of the Generalissimo I was transferred to C.N.A.C. and began to fly their air liners in and out of Hongkong at night or during bad weather for cover in the daylight. (China National Aviation Corporation is a commercial airline o ganization owned jointly by the Chinese Government and Pan American Airways).

After the loss of Canton our flying was across the Jap lines. For three years we did this. Hongkong fell, then Burma. The loss of the "Burma Road" meant that all practical ground transportation to China was finished. We were pushed back to India.

China's remaining life line hung on our ability to fly from India to China. The mountains were high and foreboding. The weather was treacherous. Experts said that it could not be done. Only a fool would try it. Fortunately, there were enough fools and the line was started. Every month thereafter, the volume of essential cargo increased. The Japs at first laughed at such a puny effort. When our tonnage soared they gave us a new reckoning.

The U.S. Army and C.N.A.C. transports flying side by side often use the same radio stations and landing fields. Some of the C.N.A.C. captains are Chinese. Among them are veterans who have logged thousands of hours as co-pilots. Interesting to note is the fact that no C.N.A.C. Chinese captain has lost an airplane over the hump.

The Americans and Chinese were organizing a joint army in India. The Chinese furnished the men and the Americans sent over all the needed equipment along with expert instructors. Every one concerned was pleased with the way it was growing. Some day it would play a large part in the recapture of Burma.

Jointly, the U.S. Army and C.N.A.C. were flying more than a thousand men each day from China to India. Our flying was no longer something for the Japs to laugh at. It was a dangerous threat and had to be stopped.

If the Japs could keep up their devastation for another few days maybe they would make their boast over the Tokyo radio. If we had to quit, then Japan's strangle hold on China would be complete.

If we could not lick the Japs in the air then our only alternative would be to confine our flying to night. Without Indian help, we would have to fly in Chinese ground personnel. When an Indian starts running from a

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bomb he keeps going. We could depend upon the Chinese to return to work after taking cover during a bombing. However, all this might prove futile if the Jap war planes were overwhelming.

Again the Japs struck. However, it was their day to be surprised. They not reckoned with the fact, that our lads, who they considered harmless amateurs just out of school could become deadly veterans overnight.

When the Jap leader hit the ground the others fled for home leaving a trail of dead comrads along the way. Their carnage was almost complete.

When the flying monkeys came again, (that is what the Chinese call them) it was evident that fear, caution a healthy respect had replaced their former arrogance and contempt for our young fighter pilots.

When our boys landed, their disgust was evident. Because all their guns were empty, they were unable to complete the slaughter of all the flying monkeys. A few had escaped.

With this news to bolster their courage, the Indian workers paused in their flight and cautiously filtered vack.

China s aerial life line, stretched a bit, was never broken. We had carried on the best we could. Flight crews helped the ground crews in servicing and unloading. Our flying in the danger zone was confined to the hours of darkness.

The Japs had enough and their threat has never again been so serious. Nevertheless, it is enough ti keep us always on the alert.

China's "Burma Road" is now in the air and growing wider every month. Cargo, its volume measured in the hundreds of tons, sails over the hump every day. Some of it is almost as vital to America as it is to China. Wolfram, the ore of tungsten, and bars of tin are China's chief export. If we stopped flying, possibly there would not be enough tungsten for the alloy linings needed in our big guns. There might not be enough to spare for your new electric light bulb when you need it. Everyone in America might be affected. The tin we carry would be enough for millions of tin cans.

Censorship forbids the release of our exact performance figures over the hump. However, an insight can be gleaned by looking at our record during the last year that C.N A.C. operated out of Hongkong. In addition to operating a regular airline which carried passengers, mail and express we operated a freight service both to

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Kweilin, 400 miles northwest and Namyung 200 miles north of Hongkong. Along with other cargo we carried 1,089,380 kgs. of wolfram and 657, 417 kgs. of tin to Hongkong on its way to America.

Including the passenger liners, our fleet then was a maximum of ten airplanes in service at any one time. The capacity of each was only a fraction of the cargo planes now flying the hump.

Compared to the prediction of experts, the volume of this skyway is super-phenominal, yet it is only a fraction of the "Burma Road" tonnage before the Japs took over. Compared to what China needs it is a mere trickle. It is like giving water, a few drops per hour, to a man dying of thirst.

China has improvised so long that it is any one's guess, how much longer this trickle will enable her to resist the strangling methods of Japan. The thought, that at least one small avenue remains open to the outside world is a pillar to China's morale almost equal in importance with the cargo we carry. However, this morale might be necessary to bring in the supplies that are going to be needed to prepare the way for the day when we are ready to begin our grand assault on Japan. Before we can safely make a large scale landing on the China coast it will be necessary to have a protecting air umbrella based in China. Enough bombers must be in action to hammer every Jap air base from which they can strike at our landing convoy. Hundreds of fighter planes will be necessary to protect our bases.

Jungle fighting on a large scale and the complete occupation of Burma will be a necessary prelude to the resumption of road and rail connection between Rangoon and Kumming. According to highway engineers, an additional six months will be required to prepare the Burma road for heavy traffic.

If we can multiply the volume of our cargo by ten, then the capacity of our skyway will exceed the theoretical maximum of the old "Burma Road". Providing more radio stations, building more terminal air fields and enlarging those now in use might be easier than opening the Burma Road.

This traffic increase would be easy to handle if the weather was always clear. Traffic control in the clouds would be our greatest problem.

However, it is not an insurmountable problem. Concould be eliminated in many ways. Instead of multiplying the number of airplanes by ten, we could use larger cargo

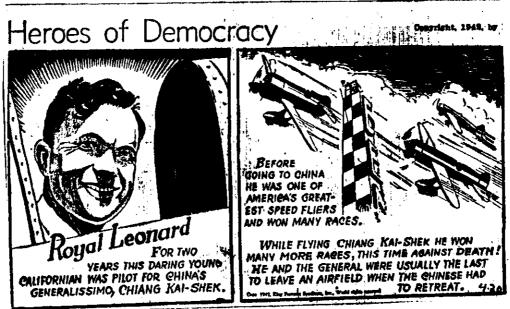
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carriers and operate them on a twenty four hour service. "Traffic policemen" at every radio station would be needed to keep the airplanes spaced at safe intervals along the route.

If fighter patrols operating out of Paoshan and and Dinjan can make it safe for us to fly between these two bases then we have an additional air avenue only three hundred miles long.

When transportation is considered in terms of dollars and cents, then a skyway cannot compete with a highway. Moving heavy cargo in a truck costs less per ten mile than in an airplane. However, when there is no other transportation available our skyway can substitute until the Burma Road serves us once again. America has more at stake over and beyond the hump than the matter of dollars and cents.







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Dearly G. S. J. S. C. S.

Sam Terry - died early October 1990 Jeff Weiner - died 1989

My Father, Howard L. Buller, passed away on July 14th of this year. 1990 Please delete his name from your mailing list.



DONALD WONG



SUE HACKER

DR. REGINALD FARRAR
319 EUCLIO AVENUE
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