

# CNAC CANNON BALL

ASSOCIATION



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40th Anniversary Issue

CNAC ASSOCIATION FOUNDED MAY 15 1954

## CNAC 1994 REUNION

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Dear Reg, enclosed are labels for your Cannon Ball mailing. These are paid members. Think I sent you list of deceased members. Bill still has some on his old mailing list. I will send names to you if you do not have. Hope to see you and Mary in LasV.

CHINA NATIONAL AVIATION CORPORATION  
ASSOCIATION



CNAC will have their 1994 Reunion October 18-21st in

Las Vegas. Our Host, Capt John Kenehan, has reserved rooms for us at Imperial Palace with a large Hospitality room at our disposal. Located on the Strip within walking distance of the Larger Hotels and shopping Mall. Rooms are only \$45 a day! Thank you John! Please notify me if you are going when you send in your dues. A prompt reply is appreciated.

For those of you unable to travel to HongKong, I want to tell you we had a marvelous trip. Our Leader, Capt Roy Farrell, had emergency surgery days before our departure and cancelled. Forty eight members, family and guests on the trip and the 747-400 Cathay Pacific airplane landed after a fourteen hour flight. Landing at seven pm with a spectacular view of the isle HongKong. Weather was 74° while previous week had been 90°. Everyone enjoyed the marvelous breakfasts at Kowloon Hotel. Also dining and enjoying Tea at the Peninsula next door. The tours and shopping greatly enjoyed also. Witnessed several men buying up to five suits; ladies loved beautiful jewelry. Happily we found Roy home from hospital on return and convalescing nicely. Thank you Roy for making our trip possible.

Gerald R Shrawder

Secy-Treasurer

C N A C

At my age the past is all I have and I savor those memories. CNAC means different things to each of us. To me it was a time of freedom. A kid just out of medical school went off into the unknown, he broke away from what was expected after college, medical school and internship. I wasn't dry behind the ears. I certainly was not a man of the world especially the world I entered. This adventure colored my life ever after. When I came back I went to work as most of us did, making a living, raising a family. I made a lot of mistakes but always I had this brief encounter to remember.

March 13, 1994

Dear Reg,

Following are names of the deceased

CNAC: Carl Brown 91, D Buller 90, Carroll 93'  
Conrath 92, H Fisher 90, John Gable 93,  
Genson 92, Goodrich 92, Grimshaw 91,  
Gudeman 92, Havelick 92, Heilig 89, Histed 91,  
Leonard 91, Mabus 92, McDonald 91, Mei PK 93,  
Miller R 92, Moss 93, O'Dwyer 91, Richards Dr 92  
Terry 89. Cancel Binford-his letter returned  
unclaimed, JGR Shrawder

Does anyone know Fuzzy Ball's first name? I do.

Hogy Taw

In 1979 I credited Bartling with discovering Hogy Taw instead of Scoff. I hope Scoff does not hold it against me when I arrive.

Robbie

The article came to me just like this. I have changed nothing. It is one of the best commentaries about some of us possible. It was written by George "Hog leg" Robertson. George was one of the best. This is an unadulterate Robbie. One of these days I'll relate the story of parts of his life. George isn't too well now but then again he was a little older than most of us. A year or so ago I was privileged to spend a day with him on Merritt Island right near Cape Canaveral. I can only wish that I had the nerve to spend half the life he led. It abounded in adventure variety and the accomplishment of the impossible. Most of were too normal. He did not end up wealthy in money but certainly in color and accomplishment. When Robbie gets to Hogy Taw Scoff will have to move over.

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 Corp. better known to the GBI boys as G-NAC the original Hump Flyers having started flying the Ridge in the spring of 1942 with a very few DC-3's and C-53 powered with Wright Engines.

The first trip over the Hump with cargo was made by Chuck Sharp other pilots then were Royal Leonard, Fatty MacDonald, Pop Kessler, Hugh Woods, Potty Potts, Schmidt (R.W.) Sid Dekantzoy, Moon Chin, Hugh Chin, M.K. Low and the illustrious Frank Higgs.

In the July of 42, the American Volunteer Group better known as the AVG was conducted into the 14th Air Force several of the pilots did not want to join the Air Force so they came to GNAC Shepp Dog Shilling, Moose Moss, Catfish Raines, Link Laughlin, Bill Bartling, Al Wright, Lester Hall, Duke Hedman, Carl Brock, Dick Rossi, Bob Prescott, Mickey Mickleson, Joe Rosbert, Buster Loane, Cliff Groh, Van Shep these were all throttle jockeys, Doc Richards came from AVG as the Flight Surgeon, and Sy Semester as a 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 Dec of 1942 having flown as a copilot from West Palm Beach Fla to Accra, Gold Coast with Capt. Buster Loane, he got off the plane there and beat it back to the states on home leave, a tall good looking 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, Madugri, Ft Lamy, El Fasher, El Genina, Khartoum, Luxor, Egypt the location of the Thebes and Karnak Ruins the home of Ramesis the Second, and it was there that Catfish and I christened John Detarr Hicks as Ramesis Hicks, will tell you why later. we spent three days there, and proceeded on to Cairo. it was there I found out what a free spender Catfish was, we had ambled out to the Pyramids to a place called Mary, the Pyramids are quite a way out of town, 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 was staying, I was nearly dead Catfish pulled out a roll that would chock a horse and paid the hotel that was when I found out that Catfish was not a big spender, we left Cairo flew direct to Bagdad, refueled, went on to Basra on the Gulf, refueled went on to Bahrain, then to Sharjah, Karachi, and finally Calcutta arriving Christmas Eve 1942. The Day after New Years 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 GNAC 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. Woods (Woody) was the Operation Manager in Dinjan and R.W. Potts, Schmidt Potty was the Chief Pilot and Check Pilot.

After flying nineteen round trips with Catfish to Kuming China and back Potty checked me out as Capt. incidently 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 Gings, Gen Genovese, Skippy Lane, Dick Neumeyer, Al Oledenberg, Chuck Sharkey, Les Brown, and Orin Welsh of light plane fame, Ray Allen, Ray Cooper, Russ Johnson. This was the list of personnel when I joined GNAC, 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 Hotel where the pilots lived.

as done for Ray J. Smith