

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 Detrouiter 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.

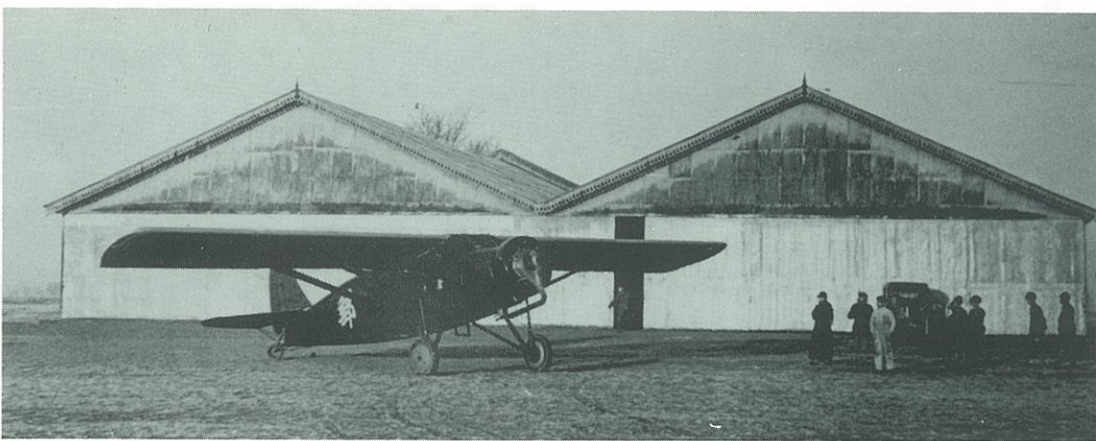
Communications Minister Wang Pei-chun figured that by extending the competing line to Hankow and adding four more Stinsons, he could do a sprightly business running opium on the upper Yangtze. Those dreams, however, never materialized. What did happen was that China's only existing commercial airlines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

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-Chengtu 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

"...A REAL PIONEERING SHIP"

COLLECTOR'S SERIES XI



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 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 Lungwa 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-2s, 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

C.N.A.C.

COMPLIMENTS OF
CAPTAIN BOB RENGO
CHINA NATIONAL AVIATION CORP.

HONG KONG



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
DECEMBER 1992 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	FEBRUARY 1993 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28				1 NEW YEAR'S DAY	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR'S BIRTHDAY	16
17	18 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR'S BIRTHDAY OBSERVANCE	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

1993

JANUARY

1993