

Cannon Ball

Reg Farrar, Editor

Issue No. 5

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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LETTERS RETURNED

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Robert Murray
Wm. Price

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

consultant to put 747's in service. He married Elizabeth and had one son. He is presently retired living in Manhasset, Long Island. Chile Vaughn was one of the mainstays of the early CNAC days and aviation in China. He was 7th on the seniority list of pilots.

ROBERT W. PRESCOTT

Robert W. Prescott, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Flying Tiger Line, Inc., and Chairman of the Board of Tiler International, Inc. pioneered the beginning of the air cargo industry in the United States when he founded the Flying Tiger Line as the first all-cargo air system nearly 30 years ago.

Prescott was born in Fort Worth, Texas, on May 5, 1913. After high school, he joined his father in the trucking business, but in 1934, he moved to California, attended Compton Junior College and entered law school at Loyola University, Los Angeles. He left school in 1939 to enlist in the Navy as an aviation cadet, training at Pensacola, Florida. He graduated as an ensign in 1940 and was a flight instructor until September, 1941, when he resigned his commission to join General Clair Lee Chennault's American Volunteer Group in China.

He participated in five major campaigns while serving as a flight leader for the AVG, popularly known as "The Flying Tigers". When the AVG was disbanded in July 1942, Prescott returned to the United States and began flying with the intercontinental Division of Trans World Airlines. He was co-pilot of the famous "Mission to Moscow" flight of Ambassador Joseph E. Davies in 1942. Later that year he returned to China to fly as a captain for the China National Aviation Corp. He was assigned to fly military supplies into China from India over the famous 'Hump', completing more than 300 flights.

In November 1944, he returned to the United States and on a trip to Acapulco, Mexico, met a group of Los Angeles businessmen who were exploring the possibility of establishing an air freight line along the west coast of the United States and Mexico. He convinced them that a better idea would be a transcontinental route across the United States. They agreed to match whatever capital he could raise. Prescott was appointed to find aircraft and set up the airline that was to become the Flying Tiger Line.

He is also a member of the board of the Transportation Association of America and has been a member of the Board of Directors of the Air Transport Association since 1969. In 1973 Prescott was named "Man of the Year" by the National Defense Transportation. He is active in civic affairs as a trustee of the City of Hope and regional industrial championships in the United States.

KERSTIN MOFFAT

Kerstin Moffat Thom passed away Sunday May 11, 1975 after a short hospitalization in White Plains, New York.

Many of us who entered Owen Johnson's office at Pan America, Chrysler Building, N.Y.C. were confronted by a supposedly indomitable secretary -- Kerstin --. Not so, those who really knew her realized that this was not true. Behind that facade was a warm and whole-hearted support of her "boys". Kerstin followed our footsteps, wavering as they might be at times, also had the unpleasant task of notifying "those nearest" mostly by person if possible. Besides being Johnson's "Girl Friday" (she had quicker access to Bixby's office than her boss) she was the one who obtained hotel rooms; suggested where to replace the worn-out tropical "hump" clothing; got that ticket to West Palm when a flight had been missed; who inserted (?) many items into Chuck Sharp's Calcutta purchase order; who would meet with each and everyone at -- the Grand Central Oyster Bay, Sammy's Gay ninety's, the Waldorf Peacock Alley or wherever to help pick up the spirits of those "tired CNAC hump jocks". Though of Scandinavian descent she could come out with a brogue that would put many a Scottish lass to shame -- a favorite -- "Twas a brae bricht moonlicht nicht t'nicht". Kerstin was at one of our last N.Y. get-togethers.

After CNAC was employed as an executive secretary by The Nestle Corp. in White Plains, N.Y. where she remained for more than 12 years until her retirement early this year.

Surviving are George M. Thom, a former Pan American and Flying Tiger pilot, and a son George Jr.

NEW YORK REGIONAL MEETING

On December 1, 1974 the local New York Group met at Rus Armstrong's home in Alpine, N.J. After cocktails we adjoined to a local Chinese restaurant. It was one of our more interesting meetings as we were more relaxed and had an opportunity to swap stories without interruption. We saw Vince Byrne for the first time in years. He is presently a Chevrolet Dealer (Byrne Motors) in White Plains, New York. Many thanks Rus.

HISTORY OF CNAC

More references from Chris Colthorpe.

MAGAZINES

Living Age:	July 1935 P. 384 & P. 397
New Republic	May 16, 1934 P. 2 & P. 34
Asia	Aug. 1935 P. 458
	Dec. 1935 P. 45
	Nov. 1937 P. 171
	Dec. 1937 P. 28
	Jan. 1942 P. 28
	Oct. 1945 P. 470
Nation:	Apr. 17, 1973 P. 551
Fortune:	Aug. 1945 P. 119

Do you have any artists out there. The mast head isn't too good. Can someone re-do it so it will look nicer.

HERBIE - by Reg Farrar

In 1946 after leaving CNAC I stayed around China another year living in Peking and in Shanghai. When I eventually decided to come home I went to War Shipping to see if I could sign on a ship and work my way back to the States. They were pessimistic, but while in the office, I overheard the Master of the Liberty Ship ask for seaman to replace two men who were detained by the Shanghai police for killing a U. S. sailor in a brothel brawl. He specifically asked for experienced men because he had so many injuries and so much sickness on the trip. I went over and told him that I had no experience but that I was a physician, and might be of some help. He wouldn't let me go; in effect I was shanghai'd in Shanghai.

We put to sea. I shared a focsle with Joe Furton the boatswin. I shipped as deck maintenance, working winches, sounding the bilges, and painting when there was nothing else to do. I was also placed in charge of the medicine chest, which I leisurely examined. It contained a few common medications, 3 or 4 liters of intravenous fluids, 2 pints of plasma, and 3 or 4 hemostats. I couldn't correlate our supplies with the usual needs of a merchant ship but that was unimportant then.

We were out about 2½ weeks and were proceeding through moderately heavy seas about 600 miles south of Alaska on the great circle route from Shanghai to San Francisco. We had no cargo, so periodically the screw would break from water and shake the vessel from stem to stern. The ship rolled violently at times in the seas still turbulent from a recent storm.

It was just after mess, Furton and I were sitting in our bunks in our focsle. Then the 3rd mate came down and asked me to look at Herbie, a British Guiana messman who had taken sick.

Herbie gave a history of nausea, vomiting and epigastric pain, similar to a previous attack about six months before. He had been treated with tincture of belladonna at that time. He had no fever and had mild generalized abdominal tenderness, slightly more in epigastrium and in the lower right quadrant, but had no guarding. After checking him over I also started him on belladonna to watch him.

Captain Roy Newkirk had come down from the bridge and said "what's he got, appendicitis?" I replied, "I don't know yet, but it could be." "The seas are too heavy to land a flying boat. If you have to operate we could put into the wind and the ship would be steady", he said. I hadn't thought too much about the possibility of appendicitis, but the Captain was already planning the operation. Maybe I didn't want to think about appendicitis because I had almost no surgical experience and had only assisted once or twice at an appendectomy, when I was an interne three years before.

As the evening went on Herbie became sicker and developed a fever. The pain had shifted to the lower right quadrant and there was no doubt Herbie had appendicitis. I was in a spot. After all, I was a physician and should be able to handle such a plebian problem as an appendectomy. This was also complicated by the heroic story, current at the time, of a navy medical corpsman who had done a successful appendectomy on board a submarine.

I bravely began to make preparations. We had an ambulance driver who was a work-a-way on board, but he had never seen an operation. In fact, no one besides myself had ever been in an operating room, except as a patient. The instruments consisted of the hemostates, bent spoons, a razor, cotton thread and some needles. I sterilized them in the gallery pressure cooker. Then, with Captain Newkirk pouring ether into a cloth covered strainer, Joe Furton assisting, and the Purser as a non-sterile attendant, we put Herbie on the mess hall table. The 1st Mate brought the tossing ship around and indeed we did have a steady operating table.

I started with a lateral rectus incision (I didn't know how to do a muscle splitting incision and it is just as well). I bravely went through the peritoneum and looked around for the appendix, but I couldn't find it. There was no going back.

After probing around with my hand I found a greyish necrotic "lump" attached to the large intestine. It didn't look like anything I had ever seen before. I freed it up a bit and had it outside the abdomen. As I looked at it, I not knowing exactly what to do, my problem was solved when it ruptured. Then there was no question - it must be the appendix, and anyway I had to take it out no matter what it was. I avoided any spill of pus into the peritoneum, except very locally, and proceeded to take it out. I think I did the right things and in the end invaginated the appendiceal stump with a purse-string suture (details for the benefit of Carl Brown, Doc. Rich and Paul Laube). When I placed the final stitches in the abdomen it had taken exactly 2 hours, midnight to 2:00 A.M.. I had a pounding tension headache and I think I was sicker than Herbie. Captain Newkirk had poured ether for two hours and had given me perfect anesthesia, and he, if anyone, is the hero of the story.

We placed Herbie in a bunk in one of the officers staterooms and for the next week we nursed him. First, he developed gastric retention so I gave him all the IV fluids I had and suctioned his stomach once through an improvised Levine tube. Herbie was still sick. He lay on his bunk all day looking as ghastly as possible. About every 10 minutes he would mumble and I would get up close and ask "What's that Herbie?" He would reply "I want to spit". He would try, but he was dehydrated and weak and almost prostrate.

Day after day the ship made its way toward San Francisco all complicated by the tossing of the ship with the propeller shaking the ship every time it broke water after a swell higher than usual. Herbie seemed to deteriorate, looking worse and worse and trying to spit. The surgery was satisfactory, but he did not respond as he should, and I could not understand why?

One morning, at dawn, after seven days we passed the Farralones and by noon we approached the Golden Gate. I insisted that the coast Guard come out and get Herbie before he died. We carefully lowered him over the side to the Coast Guard cutter, and much relieved, I saw them headed to land and the Marine Hospital.

It was two days later when we had finally docked, that Furton and I decided we ought to go to the hospital and inquire about Herbie. We asked at the desk and were directed to a ward. As we approached I saw his bed was empty. I thought, "Poor Herbie", we asked someone where he

was and they pointed to some open doors which led to a large veranda. We went out and there was Herbie seated at a table ravenously eating lunch. I couldn't believe it. I asked "How are you?" "Fine, Doc, you saved my life." I weakly answered "Yes" - and added quizzically "What did they do to you when you got here?" "Nothing." "They just have me somethin' to eat, I was hungry" he said.

It seemed impossible. The patient I had lowered over the side looked as though he was dying and now here Herbie - alive, and doing fine. Then the explanation dawned. The operation had been alright, but then Herbie had gotten seasick.



Ex-CBI Roundup

— CHINA — BURMA — INDIA —

Ex-CBI Roundup Magazine has come to my attention. It's directed toward the U.S. Army participation, but is oriented toward India & China with interesting and timely articles.

P. O. Box 125
Laurens, Iowa 50554

Ex-CBI Roundup is a reminiscing magazine for men and women who served in the China-Burma-India Theater during World War II. It is published monthly (except August and September).

George Hamill dies, aviation pioneer

A requiem mass for George F. Hamill, 73, an aviation pioneer, will be tomorrow at 10 a.m. at the Little Flower Catholic Church.

Mr. Hamill started his career as a maintenance and

quality control specialist with China National Airlines Corp. and Pan American World Airways. He aided their development as international air carriers.

He spent 25 years with the Federal Aviation Ad-

ministration as quality control and safety expert in Fort Worth, Tex. He came to Miami in 1953.

Mr. Hamill was a member of the Little Flower Catholic Church, the Sierra Club, the Ft. Worth OX-5 Club and the Key Biscayne

Yacht Club. He also belonged to the Riviera Country Club, the American Senior Golf Association, International Senior Golf Society and the Southern Seniors Golf Association.

He is survived by his wife, Hazel, son, Peter and daughters, Mary, Mrs. Susan Wiener and Mrs. Ruth Burroughs.



Dude Hennick



Giet Muimer and Capt Mack

Milton Caniff's characters from Terry and the Pirates
Do you remember who they were in real life?