

**CNAC**  
ASSOCIATION



## CANNON BALL

June 2007

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Some words carry such meaning they bear repeating.

"There are many things which fashion our lives. Some of these were at work before we went to India and China. We were already pilots, mechanics, doctors and all. For me especially, as for many others, that brief time influences and colored my life forever after. As those days recede into the past our lives have diversified. We have made new friends, climbed a few mountains, raised our kids, lived and died, but that interlude flashes in my memory; ever more remote but like a distant beacon.

We came together there and then scattered to the 4 corners of the globe. This time we had in common remains. Someone said common tradition is the strongest link that binds people together."

---Editor Reg Farrar (pictured above), from the October 1979 CANNONBALL

If you think you haven't received a CANNONBALL in a long time, you're right. The last issue was mailed in September 2006. Since then, largely due to the website ([www.cnac.org](http://www.cnac.org)), we have heard from a number of people who had been out of touch in for a while. Please visit the website (whether or not you have before, as it is constantly updated by Tom Moore); do let us know if your address changes. You can do this through the website or by contacting Bill Maher, Valerie Kendrick or Eve Coulson by phone, letter or email—our contact information is on pages 1 and 3 of this issue. A complete address list of members and associates will be available at the reunion.

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# CHINA NATIONAL AVIATION CORPORATION ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 984  
Jackson, MI 49204

W.J. MAHER  
President

Dear CNACers

The 2006 reunion was an outstanding success. Over seventy-five people attended, which was more than the last two reunions. Thanks to our website we picked up several attendees who were not even aware of our existence. Plus, the interest and support generated by our co-pilot group is serving to perpetuate our organization. This is in the face of both the CBI and the Hump Pilots organizations having been disbanded. This is partly due to their having sold so many lifetime memberships and failing to enlist the support of their second generation.

The board of directors has decided to lengthen our next reunion to four days. We had numerous complaints that attendees did not have any free time because there was so much interesting material presented. Namely: Dr. Wen, China Diaries author Louis Stannard, Christy Hanks, CNAC author Greg Crouch, AVG/CNAC film producer Jeff Green, CNAC stewardess Margaret Soong, and Steven Loane. Clayton Kuhles presented an excellent film on his search for CNAC 58. He has since reached CNAC 58 and will have that film this year. I am pleased that Joe Rosbert was aware of this before he passed away on January 6th.

Moon Chin has suggested that we hold our next reunion sooner as the weather in San Francisco is much nicer in early September. We selected September 5, 6, 7 & 8th this also resulted in a \$20.00 savings on our room rate. The new contract was for \$129.00 but we negotiated a rate of \$109.00 for these dates. Still a very good value considering all of the amenities including breakfast and cocktails.

I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to join the CNAC association and attend our reunion in San Francisco.

Our second generation intends to perpetuate this association so that the world never forgets the sacrifices and contributions made by those who served with CNAC.

Author Louis Stannard has recently written an excellent book of historical fiction entitled China Diaries. The characters in the book were actual CNAC personnel, and it is a must read for those with interest in CNAC.

Sincerely,

**Dues: \$35.00**  
CNAC  
Valerie Kendrick  
252 South Main St.  
Willits, CA, 95490  
(707) 459-5165

W.J.,. Maher

**Reunion: Sept 5 - 8, 2007**  
Embassy Suites  
Burlingame, CA  
650-342-4600  
(CNAC rate \$109  
inc. breakfast and cocktail hour)

**Make your hotel reservation  
today...rooms are filling up fast!**

# C.N.A.C. REUNION PROGRAM 2007

(TENTATIVE)

## BURLINGAME, CALIFORNIA

MEETING ROOM: ALAMEDA ROOM

HOSPITALITY ROOM: 10:00 AM UNTIL??

### WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5

1:30 REGISTRATION IN HOSPITALITY SUITE

5:00 COCKTAIL HOUR – HOTEL ATRIUM

7:30 DINNER AT MEMBERS OPTION

### THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 6 - ALAMEDA ROOM

8 – 9:30 BREAKFASTS – HOTEL ATRIUM

9:30 GREG CROUCH – DISCUSS HIS BOOK

SET UP INTERVIEWS, CLARIFY FACTS

10:00 CNAC WEBSITE PRESENTATION\* (see note bottom of next page)

TOM MOORE AND CRAIG CHINN

11:00 CNAC CO-PILOTS DISCUSSION MEETING

EVERYONE WELCOME

1:30 CNAC- SHOW AND TELL -ORAL PRESENTATIONS

MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATES TELL THEIR PERSONAL STORIES,  
SHOW MEMORABILIA

4:00 JEFF GREENE- MOVIE (maybe?)

5:00 COCKTAILS- HOTEL ATRIUM

7:00 DINNER AT MEMBERS OPTION

**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 7**

**9:00 CNAC-SHOW AND TELL-RAL PRESENTATIONS; MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATES TELL THEIR PERSONAL STORIES, SHOW MEMORABILIA**

**1:30 FILMS AND ORAL PRESENTATIONS: FLETCHER HANKS**

**3:00 FILMS AND ORAL PRESENTATIONS: PETE GUTIERE**

**4:00 DINNER WITH MOON FUN CHINN – MEET IN HOTEL LOBBY; TRANSPORTATION PROVIDED; CASUAL DRESS**

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8**

**8-9:30 BREAKFASTS – HOTEL ATRIUM**

**10:00 BUSINESS MEETING- ALAMEDA ROOM**

**1:30 ALAMEDA ROOM – 2005 TV “UP CLOSE” (INTERVIEWS RECORDED IN CHINA)**

**3:00 BOOK SIGNING: FELIX SMITH, ILSE SHILLING, LOUIS STANNARD, PETE GOUTIERE, CHRISTY HANKS, GREG CROUCH, CYNTHIA BOWLES**

**5:00 COCKTAILS-HOTEL ATRIUM**

**7:00 CNAC DINNER-BANQUET ROOM**

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 9 8-9:30 BREAKFASTS and GOODBYES**

\*\*\*\*\*

**\* Visit the CNAC WEBSITE today!**

You don't know what you are missing if you haven't explored the CNAC website. Do not let trepidation about the Internet, computers, or modern technology keep you from this wonderful resource, developed by Tom Moore. You simply won't believe what you will find there! All are welcome to contribute new information and photos. The website address is [www.cnac.org](http://www.cnac.org). If you are not sure what to do with this information, get your daughter, son, grandchild, or teenage next-door neighbor involved. If you have flown the Hump, you can travel the World Wide Web.



# CHINA NATIONAL AVIATION CORPORATION ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 984  
Jackson, MI 49204

W.J. MAHER  
President

## REUNION 2007

**SAN FRANCISCO - EMBASSY SUITES, BURLINGAME, CALIF**

**SEPTEMBER 5<sup>th</sup>, 6, 7, & 8<sup>th</sup>**

Hello CNAC Members-Associates-Interested Parties;

Our 2007 Reunion will be held in September at the Embassy Suites, 150 Anza Boulevard, Burlingame, CA 94010. Phone (650)342-4600 or Fax (650)343-8137. Tell the representative that you are with the CNAC Association group and ask for the special room rate of \$109.00 US. Breakfasts are included. Please do not delay in making your reservations as the Hotel will only hold these blocks of rooms for so long.

Upon arrival at the Hotel, please come to the Hospitality room to register. Starr Thompson and I will be there to greet you and give you your name tags. We will dine as a group on Saturday, September 8<sup>th</sup>. The menu for the CNAC dinner will be New York Steaks complete with side dishes, dessert, and wine/coffee/tea. Pre-dinner cocktails will be served in the Hotel Lobby...free

Moon is hosting Friday night Dinner at his lovely home...Friday, September 8. He needs to know who will be coming so that he can plan dinner/seating accommodations.

Please complete the form below and mail to me with your check. Should you find it necessary to cancel, for whatever reason, please contact me, and, I will refund your deposit.

	<u>No persons</u>	<u>Total</u>
Registration Fee.....	\$ 50.00 per person	-----
CNAC Dinner- Saturday.....	\$ 50.00 per person	-----
CNAC Yearly Dues...\$ 35.00 per member/associate/interest	-----	----- ***

\*\*\*\* If you've already paid...Please disregard

Friday Night Dinner...Moon Chin-Host... Number of Persons \_\_\_\_\_

See you at the Reunion!!!

*Valerie*  
Valerie Parish Kendrick (dau of Len Parish)

Mail completed form to:  
Valerie Parish Kendrick  
252 South Main St.  
Willits, CA 95490

Phone# 707-459-5165 Email... rosebud@saber.net

**Make your hotel reservation today...rooms are filling up fast!**

## **Minutes of CNAC Co-Pilots Meeting**

**September 30, 2006**

**Embassy Suites Solano Room**

**Burlingame, California**

**Meeting called to order @ 11:30 Am PST, in Solano Meeting Room, which was full of 2<sup>nd</sup> Generation/Co-pilots as well as some 1<sup>st</sup> generation members.**

### **Topics of discussion:**

**Craig Chinn's question--What are we going to do to promote and preserve CNAC History?**

### **Ideas:**

**1. Lucas Films-Someone to contact George Lucas of Star Wars fame and/or request an interview. Besides being a world-renowned filmmaker, Mr. Lucas is Chairman of the Board of Lucas Educational Foundation and serves on the Board of the Film foundation and the USC School of Cinema-Television Advisory Board.**

**Lucas Film, PO Box 29901, San Fran, Ca 94129**

**The company's location is Letterman Digital Arts Center at the Presidio in the Old Letterman Hospital.**

**2. To look into creating a Teacher's Manual Script to go along with the CNAC video's/DVD's so that CNAC History can be taught in the schools/learning institutions.**

**3. To obtain Captain Yu's father's book written in Chinese for translation into English. Book details CNAC's operation under the Minister of Communications. Goal is to obtain 2 books.**

**4. Consider supporting museums i.e. Shangri La, Kunming construction is underway. Help obtain Artifacts/memorabilia for them?**

**5. Help with Greg Crouch's Book promotion/marketing in members' local areas by doing newspaper interviews in local newspapers/media.**

## Discussion of ideas:

- Steve Loane to see/make app George Lucas, Lucas Film in SF
- Nancy Allison Wright to approach Boeing/Museum of Flight about obtaining book for translation into English
- Ted Elms to help Nancy and Steve with projects

All 3 very excited about project

Teacher's manual/script--Need to know what age group to target and establish a goal. John Lisk has knowledge as to what is needed. \*\*\*\* To Do List...Consider asking him for more input.

\*\*\*\* Please note that the Teacher's manual might require extra effort as it has been brought to the forefront that some teachers are of the liberal persuasion and don't want this part of Chinese/American history taught. Further consideration might be necessary.

Lydia and Ilse--consider spreading artifacts around to different smaller museum so that memorabilia will be displayed.

Create a foundation for loaning purposes...artifacts could not be sold.

Jeff Greene...contact Chinese Museums

Put something in Cannon Ball about artifacts preservation. Janet Muff is an expert on artifact storage. Told story about 16<sup>th</sup> century manuscript being digitize, then destroyed or sold. Lydia told story of Seattle Museum packing AVG memorabilia away and not displaying them. Museum was large and lacked space for displays. All attendees horrified at the practices of some museums. Attendees determined to avoid such practices.

Phil Rengo donate memorabilia to 501 3c foundation

Ask Pres Bill/CNAC Board about CNAC 501 3c Fund status

Can Fund status include memorabilia donations?

Peggy suggested using airplane hanger for artifact storage.



Craig Chinn...keep artifacts catalog. Craig to contact attorney and do research.  
Jeff Greene asked to explore Sino Foundation...they are a 501 3c group

Lydia Rossi and Peggy Maher to speak to membership at CNAC Dinner and inform membership about artifact problem and possible solutions

Eve Coulson suggest 2<sup>nd</sup> Generation trip to China as a means of continuing fellowship. Also suggested a Mission Statement: "To support and promote in telling the Historic Story and Legacy of CNAC through museums, media, institutions of learning and historical societies, researchers and historians at home and abroad through friendship and the common good "

Janet Muff suggested not to limit contact with just museums.

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Ask President Bill/Moon/ CNAC Board to endorse idea of CNAC Co-pilots mission statement.

Eve to ask in newsletter, Cannon Ball, for input from membership on mission statement and artifact/memorabilia preservation. Janet Muff to work with Eve to inform membership on artifact preservation---absolutely do not store anything in plastic.

Craig Chinn suggests... Co-pilots to ask parents/family...what do you want done with your CNAC memorabilia?

Highlights of Co-pilots meeting to be discussed at CNAC Dinner by Peggy, Lydia and Valerie on Sept 30 7:30 pm; meeting adjourned 3:10 pm PST

## PILOTS and their CO-PILOTS

\*President Bill Maher Peggy Maher [PeggyMaher@starband.net](mailto:PeggyMaher@starband.net)

\*Vice President Carey Bowles Pam Biederstedt [Percort@aol.com](mailto:Percort@aol.com)

Eve Coulson [Ecoulson@aol.com](mailto:Ecoulson@aol.com)

\*VP Historian/Nominating Committee Fletcher Hanks

Tom Moore [pepperbud@sbcglobal.net](mailto:pepperbud@sbcglobal.net)

VP Legal Bob Sherwood

Royal Leonard [royalsleonard@aol.com](mailto:royalsleonard@aol.com)

Ted Elms (nephew) [ted\\_elms@evanex.com](mailto:ted_elms@evanex.com)

Secretary/Treasurer

Valerie Parish Kendrick [rosebud@saber.net](mailto:rosebud@saber.net)

Chairman, Documentary Committee Giff Bull

Steve Loane [stephenloane@gmail.com](mailto:stephenloane@gmail.com)

Chairman Emeritus Moon Chin

Craig Chinn [cchinn2520@earthlink.net](mailto:cchinn2520@earthlink.net)

Donna Lee and Patty Lee

## CNAC Dinner, Sept 30<sup>th</sup>, 2006 7:30pm

**Co-pilots gave highlights of CNAC Co-pilots meeting**

A cake for the 7 “Nifty Ninety” group was displayed. President Bill acknowledged the group. The cake had the CNAC Chung with a plane flying out of it. Everyone had a fit over it. Pictures were taken behind the displayed cake. People were standing on chairs taking pictures of it! Kudos to Peggy Maher for having the cake made. Everyone agreed the cake was delicious!

Louis Stannard author of China Diaries spoke and told a very cute joke. Laughter rang out through out the crowd. There were approximately 59 people in attendance.

In attendance, was a 3<sup>rd</sup> generation attendee, who was able to answer Valerie’s question, Dr. Boon Wen’s grandson, who is very interested in CNAC. He said that he thought the age group that would be interested in learning about CNAC history in the schools is 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> graders. Of course grandpa and parents were very proud of their son/his grandson’s participation. Dinner completed between 10:00-10:30 PST

**Copilots meeting minutes taken and submitted by Valerie Parish Kendrick**  
.....

Sad news from Craig Chinn on June 19, 2007: I am sorry to announce that my father has passed away quietly in Seattle. As you know, Dad broke his hip and had a hip replacement during Thanksgiving. His health deteriorated from that point. Another member of the greatest generation has gone and with it a little bit of the legacy of CNAC.

Take care and see you all at the reunion.

## SPECIAL OFFER ON CNAC DOCUMENTARY DVDS

**DRAGON WINGS** Complete history of CNAC 1933-1949  
All three volumes \$39.95

**THE WAR YEARS: 1941-1945** Footage of CNAC during World War II, starting with Pearl Harbor. Interviews with Dick Rossi, Eric Schilling, Robby Roberts, Don McBride, Joe Rosbert and others.  
\$39.95

### BEIJING CCTV9: UP CLOSE SEPTEMBER 2005

The 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the victory over Japanese aggression and fascism throughout the world. China veterans share their most memorable moments. This features pilot interviews including Dick Rossi, Moon Chin, Pete Goutiere Bill Maher, The Doolittle Raiders 14<sup>th</sup> Air Force  
\$39.95

**CANNONBALL SPECIAL PRICE** when you purchase all three...\$99.95  
(total value \$119.85)

Tax deductible checks payable to:  
CNAC Documentary Fund  
PO Box 984, Jackson, MI 49204



### CNAC C-47

These CNAC C-47 model airplanes are now available for purchase as authorized by the CNAC board in 2005. These planes are made by Fairchild Mint, the best of the model builders and have been custom painted for the CNAC. This is the same airplane that was presented to Moon Chin in appreciation for all that he has done for the CNAC. It was also sent to Wong How Man and is on display at the CNAC/AVG museum in Shangri-la (Likiang) China. We have a limited number of these available for \$300.00 plus shipping and handling (approximately \$50.00)  
Checks payable to: CNAC, PO Box 984, Jackson, MI 49204

## **Chuck West, pioneer in Alaska tours**

**By Tom Boyer**  
*Seattle Times business reporter*

**Chuck West, a one-time bush pilot who fell in love with Alaska's craggy wilderness after World War II and started one of the first Alaska tourism companies, died Tuesday in his cabin in Haines, Alaska. He was 90.**

**Mr. West had lived with his family in the Seattle area since the 1950s and founded Seattle-based Cruise West after he sold his first company to Holland America.**

**Cruise West, now led by Mr. West's son, Dick, has become the largest small-ship cruise line in Alaska, with eight vessels offering nature-focused cruises from the Alaskan Panhandle to the Arctic Circle.**

**The company's vice president, John Kreilkamp, said Mr. West was involved with the business till the end, just two weeks ago asking to discuss a new itinerary he thought Cruise West might offer.**

**"He was probably one of the most charismatic people I've ever met," Kreilkamp said.**

**In 1946, while working as a pilot for Fairbanks-based Wien Airlines, Mr. West organized air tours to Nome and to the Eskimo village of Kotzebue on the Arctic coast.**

**As the air-tour company grew, he started a hotel chain for tourists, a fleet of tour coaches and an Inside Passage cruise line. The company, called Westours, established its headquarters in Seattle and thrived for two decades. In the early '70s, when a union dispute left him in financial difficulty, Mr. West sold his company to Holland America and continued to work there.**

**Holland America and he parted ways, leaving Mr. West briefly without a job in the industry he had helped start.**

**"He was furious, but he wasn't defeated," said Stan Patty, a former Seattle Times travel writer who covered Mr. West for years and got to know him well.**

**"This guy didn't know anything about quitting."**

At age 58, Mr. West began again with Cruise West, which offers cruises on eight vessels carrying up to 114 passengers. In addition to Alaska, the company visits Oregon, and California, Mexico, Costa Rica, and Panama, and next year plans to expand into Japan.

Patty said Mr. West, in a Seattle hospital with a terminal illness, recently asked his family to join him on one last trip to his cabin in Haines.

He is survived by his wife, Marguerite; three daughters, CarraLee Bolger, Barbara West and Ral West; his son Dick; 12 grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.

*Tom Boyer: 206-463-2923 or [tboyer@seattletimes.com](mailto:tboyer@seattletimes.com)  
Copyright 2005 The Seattle Times Company*

#####

I emailed Chuck West's son in early June to let him know that we were including a story about his dad in the current newsletter, and he wrote me the following:

*Thank you for the e-mail - yes I could add something -*

*Here is something from his "Celebration" - which was held in the Museum of Flight here in Seattle - with a DC 3 hanging from the rafters!*

Dad had three great loves that defined his life. Like the legs of a three-legged stool they formed the solid foundation of his wonderful life. If any one of them were missing, it would have changed history.

His first and longest Love was flying – so it is fitting that we are gathered here in this aviation museum. He flew several of the planes represented here – and he continued to fly until just a few years ago. He loved to boast that though he couldn't walk, he couldn't drive, but he could still fly!

His second love was Marguerite – mom – who supported him in his ambitious endeavors - and was responsible for getting him to Alaska – the third great love of his life.

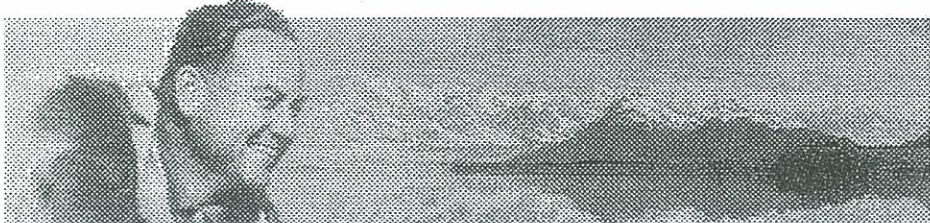
## Dick

Richard G. West (Chairman, CRUISE WEST, 2301 Fifth Ave., Suite 401, Seattle, WA 98121 Direct line - 206-733-5603 E-mail - [dickw@cruisewest.com](mailto:dickw@cruisewest.com) [www.cruisewest.com](http://www.cruisewest.com))

# Combining business with pleasure in Alaska Chuck West



## Chuck West, founder & Explorer A Legacy of Exploration.



**rs. Alaska**  
Marguerite West, Chuck West's wife and lifetime companion of 60 years, has taken Alaska that go back to the 19th century. Her parents mined gold dredges in Nome—and she herself was in Alaska in 1937.

In 1946, a young pilot just back from piloting the Hump between India and China in World War II was serving as a bush pilot in Alaska. As Chuck West flew over some of the most spectacular terrain on earth, his dream was born. He dreamed of sharing these wonders with the world.

Chuck set his dream in action that very year, founding Arctic Alaska Travel Service in Fairbanks. He began by offering local sightseeing tours, and the first air tours above the Arctic Circle. The business took off, and soon Chuck was responsible for the first hotel chain in Alaska, the first motorcoach line, and the first modern small-ship cruises. His company became Westours, a dominant operator in Alaska. Chuck earned the affectionate title "Mr. Alaska" from his peers in honor of his pioneering the modern Alaska travel industry.

In 1971, Chuck decided to sell Westours to Holland America. For awhile, he thought he might have done all he needed to do to share Alaska with the world. But as he watched, he realized travelers were hungry for something more. So two years later, he founded the company that became today's Cruise West. Initially offering space on the Alaska state ferries and other lines' ships, in the mid 1980s Chuck started experimenting with multi-night daylight-only yacht cruises in Alaska's Inside Passage. This program, featuring the sleek 90-foot touring yacht *Sheltered Seas*, still operates today on 5- 6- and 9-day tours between Ketchikan, Petersburg, Glacier Bay National Park and Juneau.

### Moving Forward - Small-Ship Cruising

In 1990 Chuck and his son Dick, now chairman & CEO of Cruise West, acquired a 52-guest mini-cruise ship and renamed her the Spirit of Glacier Bay. The initial operation was 2-night cruises from Juneau into Glacier Bay National Park. This program proved so successful that in 1991 the company acquired the Spirit of Alaska to inaugurate the first cruises between Seattle and Alaska for nearly 40 years.

Cruise West's style of up-close, casual, personal cruising was enthusiastically welcomed by the traveling public, and the company grew phenomenally, adding nearly one new vessel per year. In the early 1990s, Cruise West expanded its cruise operations to lower British Columbia, the historic Columbia and Snake Rivers, and the California Wine Country. In December 1998, winter-season cruises to the spectacular Sea of Cortés and Baja California expanded the company's range of offerings to Mexico. In 2001 Cruise West acquired its flagship, the 114-guest, all-suite Spirit of Oceanus. Equipped with stabilizers, the Spirit of Oceanus can cruise all seas. Her itineraries in Alaska include rare opportunities to explore the remotest waters of the Aleutian Islands and the Bering Sea.

Cruise West added small-ship explorations of Costa Rica and Panama in 2002 aboard the 100-guest M/V Pacific Explorer. The pristine national parks and tropical offshore islands here are best - and sometimes only - accessible by small ship. This region offers incredible biodiversity, with over 800 species of birds in Costa Rica alone.

In 2004, Cruise West enhanced its Alaska Inside Passage offerings by becoming the first cruise line to venture up Portland Canal to the community of Hyder, where guests can watch black and grizzly bears feeding on spawning salmon in season. We also added Kenai Fjords to our Alaska Coastal Odyssey cruises, giving guests the opportunity to watch for puffins, orcas, seals and sea lions in the water and along the shore.

Other changes for the 2004 season include the increased use of inflatable excursion craft and the addition of a third ship on the Alaska Inside Passage route, the 100-passenger Spirit of '98. A two-night stay at Glacier Bay National Park has also been added to the Alaska Daylight Yacht Tour portfolio, and the Bering Sea itinerary features several additional ports and highlights.

### Cruise West Today

The Cruise West experience has always been designed around our guests, and that tradition continues today. Unlike other cruise lines, every guest survey is reviewed by every manager at Cruise West, allowing us to constantly adjust our itineraries, shore excursions, and programs to better meet the needs and desires of those who travel with us.

Small-ship cruising is infinitely flexible, and demand for such high-quality life experiences is ever growing. Watch this space for future developments!

## Readers Are Writing About Louis Stannard's *China Diaries*

*Robert Gandt, author of China Clipper & Acts of Vengeance —*

"This is historical fiction the way it ought to be. The characters are believable, the flying scenes accurate to the finest detail, the tragedy of WWII evoked with honest, clear-eyed realism. Best of all, *China Diaries* just happens to be a cracking good story!"

*Major Van Harl USAF Ret., columnist for numerous veteran's periodicals including Veteran's Voice*

"The new book, *China Diaries*, is a historical-fiction 'must-read' on this forgotten subject [1930's Japanese atrocities]. I could not put this book down! ... Most of the world does not know or care about the horrors that this small island nation [Japan] delivered onto millions of their fellow Asians but reminding the world of Japan's crimes of death and destruction is the underlying theme of the *China Diaries* ... Read Louis Stannard's *China Diaries*, it is very entertaining, but more importantly, it is our history."

*Captain Fletcher Hanks, Vice-President-Historian, CNAC—*

"My wife, Jane Petach Hanks, was the only registered nurse for the Flying Tigers during the war. She and I both think Louis Stannard's *China Diaries* is the most interesting book that we have read of that era in that we actually lived so much of what the fictional character Anna relates in her diaries. It was one of the most exciting times in history and through Louis's characters, he rekindles our interest in that period reminding us of the impact we actually had on the war. Louis is historically accurate at all times."

*Patricia Jackson, columnist for Miami Pan Amigo Newsletter —*

"Former Pan Am Pilot, Louis Stannard has written a new novel, *China Diaries*, a new novel about Pan Am and its subsidiary, CNAC, in thirties China ... Action, romance, intrigue written with the savvy of a Pan Am pilot. You can't Beat the Experience."

*Captain Steve Dixon, Polar Air Cargo and Amazon reviewer —*

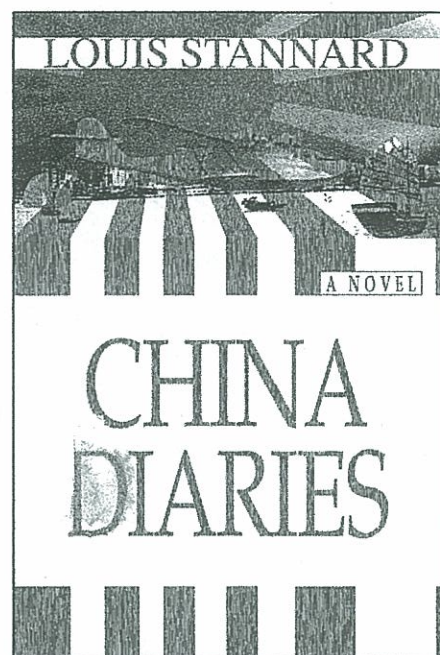
For anyone interested in the days leading up to the US involvement in WWII, anyone interested in the Clipper Flying Boats of the '30s and '40s, this book is a must read. The author brings the characters and locations to life. You won't want to put the book down just wondering what happens next. Love, drama, action, suspense, and a little humor is all there. Excellent book, highly recommended, five stars.

*Ted Bache, editor of Pan Am Association —*

"I've now met one Pan Am-er who has taken up the pen and produced stunning results. He is former First Officer Louis Stannard, whose novel, *China Diaries*, had my heart and eyeballs in captivity for 48 hours and 446 pages ..."

*Barbara Sharfstein, Editor World Wings, San Francisco Bay Area Chapter Newsletter —*

"A romantic and exciting work of fiction – woven into the historical setting of Pan Am's Pacific Operations from the mid '30s, through the onset of World War II and beyond... Amazing research has been done to tell the story in a spellbinding and most readable way – yet stay close to factual events. ... Your editor thoroughly enjoyed it!"



Learn more at [www.chinadiaries.com](http://www.chinadiaries.com)

To purchase your own copy contact Louis Stannard directly at  
(919) 881-9647 or (919) 889-9082 or email [lstannard1@earthlink.net](mailto:lstannard1@earthlink.net)

## Tribute to Julius "Pete" Petach

Pete Petach passed away October 8, 2000, and several months later his widow Elise wrote the following letter to Bill Maher. Following her note are a lovely tribute from his daughter-in-law, and an interview Pete's grandson Jeff conducted, which could serve as a model and inspiration for all of us as we collect information that our beloved pilots have to share about their experiences. Share this with your children and grandchildren!

Dear Bill,

It was very nice talking with you a couple weeks ago.

I finally, with the help of my daughter-in-law, got some of the "stuff" together. My daughter said it was a shame all this wasn't documented years ago when memories were better. Pete would read the stories in the "Cannon Ball" & say - "The stories get better with age!"

I'm also enclosing the reading my daughter-in-law gave at the funeral. Everyone said "That's Pete!"

Am anxious to see & read the complete works. I'm sure this will be quite a project. Hope some things I've sent will be of interest.

Best to you & your family  
Elise - PETACH!



## Some of the Things I will Cherish about Pete

### His Hearty Laugh

Some simple thing or event could tickle him pink, and he'd laugh so loud, everyone around couldn't help but smile, too.

### His Hard-working Attitude

Whether working for IBM or in his garden, he'd plunge tirelessly into what needed to be done and do it. No questions asked.

### His Generosity

I don't think we ever visited without his literally loading us down with vegetables from his garden. And he never, ever gave us what was left over. He always gave us his very BEST tomatoes, squash, peppers, or whatever. That's REAL generosity, and I've tried to learn from that.

### His Humility

I'd known him quite a long time before I had any inkling of the courage he had displayed through truly hair-raising times in World War II as a pilot. If you pressed him, he'd talk about it, but it was all matter-of-fact. He didn't see the point in the medals or talking about his exploits.

### His Faith

When we'd get together for meals, he nearly always said a quick prayer, whether one had already been said or not! Every Easter he'd boom a hearty line- I don't know if it was in Greek, Latin, or Ruthenian- but it meant "Christ is Risen!" He'd wait hopefully for one of us to give the appropriate response, but we didn't know the language, so he'd give the enthusiastic response himself that meant, "He is risen, indeed!"

Pete's favorite personality was John Wayne. But I think it was Pete who displayed TRUE GRIT in his life.

# My Grandpa, the Pilot

By Jeff Petach

I asked my Grandpa the following questions.

- 1.) Did you enlist or were you drafted?
- 2.) Where were you stationed?
- 3.) Where did you receive your training?
- 4.) What did you fly?
- 5.) When did you fly?
- 6.) Why did you fly?
- 7.) What position did you hold?
- 8.) Did you encounter any enemy planes?
- 9.) Did you get shot down?
- 10.) If so, where and when was it, and what happened?
- 11.) Name some memorable events that happened.
- 12.) What does Veterans Day mean to you; do you do anything special?
- 13.) What did you carry in your airplane?

These are his answers in my own words.

My Grandpa, Julius (Pete) Petach flew planes during World War II. He enlisted in the United States

Army in July of 1940. In Lima, OH, St. Louis, MO, Montgomery, AL, and Gainsville, FL, he received his training. On August 12, 1941 (his 25<sup>th</sup> birthday), he was stationed in England. Later, from 1942 to the end of the war, he was stationed in Calcutta, India. From 1941 through 1946, my Grandpa flew Spitfires, C-46's, and C-47's. On his airplane, he hauled wolfram, gold bars, Chinese soldiers, tin, ammunition, and rice, crossing the "hump" 675 times. The hump was the nickname for the Himalayan Mountains.

Because he was well-trained, my Grandpa enjoyed flying for the U.S. government. In England, he held the position of second officer and in China, he was a captain.

While flying, he never encountered any enemy aircraft, but he did see them in the distance. He didn't get shot down, but crashed twice: once in England and once in China. In the hospital in England, Princess Mary, who was Queen Elizabeth II's aunt and King George VI's sister, visited him. After a forced crash in China, some Chinese people measured his airplane with balls of yarn.

Veterans Day means nothing special to my Grandpa, because to him, every day is Veterans Day.

Almost 50 years after the war, The U.S. government sent him several medals and pins for his service in World War II.



# War heroine nursed secret for decades

On October 9, 2006, I received the following note from Bob Willett:

Dear Eve: I was happy to meet you at the recent CNAC reunion and wish you luck in your new job. I know it means a lot to the membership to have the *Cannonball* reappear.

I'm enclosing an article (dated 9/15/06), which appeared in the Shanghai Daily when we visited China in August. The nurse's story might be familiar to some of the old pilots since she appeared to be with both the Flying Tigers and Hump pilots.

Best regards, Bob

## SPOTLIGHT

By WANG SHANSHAN

The story of Rita Wong, the only Chinese nurse at the hospital for the Flying Tigers, could be one of the most touching tales of World War II.

And it is being told again as people today celebrate the Japanese surrender 61 years ago.

Her story is about hardship and a lost love.

At 94, Wong, also known as Huang Huanxiao, could have kept silent forever about her past if she hadn't wanted to meet her colleagues at the hospital and the Flying Tigers in the last years of her life.

The woman from Macao, who got her degree in nursing at the University of Hong Kong in 1941, had lived in anonymity in Kunming, capital of Southwest China's Yunnan Province, for the past six decades.

Wong's children didn't even guess how eventful her life used to be until she and her husband, who was the only Chinese doctor at the hospital, took them to the Hump Flight

Monument in the suburbs of Kunming one day in 1989, her eldest son Gao Demin told China Daily.

With a hunched back, which was broken in beatings during the "cultural revolution" (1966-76), she read out the inscriptions in a firm voice and a graceful British accent.

"China and the United States lost more than 500 airplanes, and more than 1,500 airmen devoted their lives..." she said as tears fell from her eyes.

It was not until the death of her husband, Gao Shengdao or Vivian Gao, in 2002 that she began to write down her memories in a diary, which she initially kept to herself.

But in 2004, the 92-year-old learned from media reports that several Flying Tigers were to visit their old airport in Yunnanyi town in the mountains of Yunnan's Dali. She told her children that she wanted to go and meet them.



Rita Wong



Rita Wong, also known as Huang Huanxiao, shares a happy moment with US soldiers in 2004 when she met with former Flying Tigers in Kunming, capital of Southwest China's Yunnan Province.

COURTESY OF GAO DEMIN

# Nurse's diary tells stories of wartime heroes

In an effort to persuade the children, Wong showed them her diaries, fading pictures and letters from the US.

She only received the letters in 2003, 57 years after they had been posted.

"I thought I was too old to cry, but I just couldn't help it when I read the lines," said Gao, the son, who is in his late 50s.

He flew with her to Dali, where he had an ambulance waiting. Lying in the ambulance, Wong travelled a dozen hours back to the deserted airport.

She met the Flying Tigers, who were in their 80s and 90s. They remembered her as the only woman working at the small hospital beside the airport.

Since then they have been helping Wong look for her friends at the hospital and at the AVG.

Help has also come from all those who have heard of her and her wish, including descendants of the Flying Tigers in the US; descendants of Chinese pilots at the non-governmental organization the Sino-American Aviation History Foundation in Beijing and Kunming; and Donald M. Bishop, former minister-counsellor for press and cultural affairs at the US Embassy in Beijing.

It was two months ago that they were informed about one of those whom Wong was longing most to see.

Hubert S. Bush, president of Wong's hospital at the airport, went back to his medical practice in Long Island, New York, after the war. He passed away in 1992.

Hearing the news, Wong's son wrote a letter to Bush's son, who is also a doctor and is in his 70s.

Following this, Bush's son invited Wong's children to visit him in Connecticut.

Last month Wong's daughter, Gao Aimin, and her husband flew from Stuttgart in Germany, where they live, to Connecticut to visit the family of Bush Jr.

The two families brought daisies to the grave of the late Bush, and spent a week sharing information about their heroic parents.

"I saw many pictures of mum, with her colleagues and the pilots," said Gao the daughter. "I couldn't believe them at first - she looked so great!"

In these pictures, Wong was wearing her nurse's uniform and had her hair in curls as she laughed heartily. Her stories, which she had hidden so well, became known to her daughter.

At the beginning of the last century, when most Chinese girls got married in their teens and stayed at home afterwards, Wong decided that she should receive an education and become a professional.

She had just finished her course in nursing and started her internship at a hospital in Kowloon, Hong Kong, when Japanese troops attacked the region and took over on Christmas Day, 1941.

All foreigners working at the hospital were sent to a concentration camp, and the Chinese were gathered at a hospital where they had nothing to do but wait for their meagre food rations.

The Japanese made it a rule that no doctors or nurses were to leave Hong Kong and those who were caught doing so would be killed.

But Wong was determined to flee. One night, on a small sampan, she floated with her brother, who was also in Kowloon, back to Macao.

There she worked at a church hospital and saw dozens of people die every day for lack of medicine.

When she met one of her friends at nursing school and learned that several of her classmates were working at the American hospital in Chongqing, the wartime capital of China, Wong decided that she would go and join them.

Her brother accompanied her on the arduous and dangerous trip of more than 1,000 kilometres from Macao to Chongqing.

Once there she went to the headquarters of Allied Forces, showed her nursing certificate and applied for a job. She was told that English-

speaking nurses were badly needed in Yunnan and was sent the next day to a hospital in Kunming, capital of the province.

It turned out to be a hospital of the US 14th Air Force, which was stationed in Kunming during the World War II.

First established as the American Volunteer Group (AVG), its airmen, whose planes had shark's teeth painted on them, were better known in China as Fei Hu, meaning Flying Tigers, because of their courageous battles in the

skies over China and Myanmar during World War II.

These US soldiers made their name in aviation history by flying with their Chinese counterparts on the air supply route known as the "Hump," which linked China's Southwest and India via the Himalayas.

The flight over the Himalayas was so dangerous that planes crashed almost every day. Most often the airmen were never found, Wong recalled in her diary.

On one particular day she saw two pilots, who were the boyfriends of her two best friends at the hospital, die after being wounded.

A small hospital was built beside Yunnanyi Airport, one of the destinations on the China side of the Hump, in the mountains of Dali in 1944.

Wong was transferred there and was astonished to find she was the only woman working among more than 30 men.

On one of the first days after her arrival, she saw an airplane, having been attacked by Japanese fighters, crash

land at the airport. When the cabin was opened, several crew members inside had been disfigured or burnt.

Despite the great risks, Wong fell in love with a pilot called Panny, who returned to the US towards the end of the war after his father's death, and promised to find Wong at her family's address in Macao after the war.

When the war ended, Wong was reunited with her family in Macao. But when her mother passed away and her father lost his business, the family had to move to a cheaper

home. When they were moving, Wong's purse was stolen so she lost Panny's address.

At the end of 1946, Gao Shengdao, Wong's colleague at the airport hospital, found her in Macao. He managed to do so because Wong once mentioned casually that she would often go to a lighthouse in Macao - so he waited for her there on and off until she finally came.

At 34, Wong married Gao. The couple returned to Kunming and worked at an army hospital.

They stated to work at a local hospital after the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949.

They didn't flee to Taiwan at the end of the civil war in 1949 partly because Gao's mother was too old to travel. Wong made the decision that the whole family would stay with her.

They had a happy life in the following years, apart from during the "cultural revolution" (1966-76). The couple had two sons and a daughter.

When China opened its doors to the rest of the world at the end of the 1970s, Wong set up a toy factory in Macao at an age of 67 with funding from her sisters sent from overseas.

She became the general manager and had more than 200 people working for her three years later.

She then handed the management of the factory to her children and returned to Kunming to live with her husband until he passed away in 2002.

In 2003 she received a package from the US. The family of her brother, who had died that year, sent it to her after they had found some papers relating to her while sorting through his things.

When she opened it, she saw her identity card used at the airport hospital, a picture of Panny and also several unopened letters, which were postmarked 1946.

They were from Panny, who tried desperately to get into touch with her and even flew to Macao in a failed attempt to find her in 1946.

*This is another essay my father wrote during his time with CNAC, in between flights (I featured another one in the previous issue of the CANNONBALL). This one was most likely written in 1944. It is one of 18 essays he wrote while he was there. Let me know if you recognize a fellow pilot in the story--Eve*

### YAHBUT, LAST YEAR...

By Bert Coulson

One sultry night in April, we were sitting around the hostel on the Indian side of the Himalayas discussing the relative merits of the P-40 and the P-51 for strafing purposes. That it was a discussion rather than a heated argument was accounted for by a number of reasons. For one thing, we hadn't lost a plane in over ten days, so no one felt the need to relieve any personal tension by becoming vocally aggressive. Too, it was so oppressively hot that no one had the energy to expend. "Horseshoe Hal" Smith had just been outside to shake hands with an old friend, and upon returning to the dining room remarked that it was so damned hot, even the tea bushes were sweating. The muggy monsoon season had just begun, and we agreed he might be right.

Since none of us had ever flown a P-51, the discussion desultorily petered out just as we heard a command car drive up from the airport. Don Bussart of St. Louis wearily dragged himself and his parachute in and ordered a cup of tea. He had just brought a ship from the China side, and as he drank his tea, someone asked the inevitable question, "How's the weather, Ace?"

"Weather?", the "Buzzard" gargled through his beard. "Hell, there just ain't room for no weather out there tonight. The whole damned sky is full of ice and overcast. I picked up a load of wing ice and prop ice climbing out of Blank Field, and carried most of it all the way home."

Charlie Uban wanted to know where the icing level was.

"Fifteen thousand feet and on up; probably twenty is the upper limit", the Buzzard answered. "Damn me, but I had a load on that old clunk. The wind-deicer boots didn't knock off any ice, and the props were throwing chunks all over the fuselage. Seemed like some joker was heaving rocks at me. Christ, I had such a load of frozen water that when I came on down over the Brahmaputra Valley, they must have reported precipitation and light showers as she melted off!"

"Horse manure, Son. Ye ain't seen nuthin' yet". This from "Robbie" Robertson, a veteran Hump pilot from Georgia. When most of us were in knee pants, Robbie had been flying for years at county fairs and as a cotton-duster. In some circles his rich cracker accent might have

marked him as just another "bush pilot", but we knew better; his ability as a crack instrument pilot was legendary.

"Well, I don't know," Buzzard maintained, "but if I ain't seen nuthin' yet, I sure as hell need glasses."

"Yah, but last yee-ah we shuah "nuf had some ice 'bout this time," Robbie went on. "Why, boy, we was totin' so much of that stuff ovah th' ridge they was shippin' it down the Bramee-pootree River to supply th' whole city of Calcutta!"

Robbie's "yah but last ye-ah" routine was always good for a laugh, for no matter how bad conditions were, he always came up with his "facks and figgers" to prove that last year or the year before had been incredibly worse. Men who knew Robbie well recognized a method in his madness; unlike some of the other veteran, he didn't mention previous years to indicate his prowess in surviving the Hump so long—he was sincerely concerned about the welfare of the younger men and continually impressed them with the hazards of the job to keep them on their toes. His jibes at Bussart, an exceptionally good pilot who had been with us only a short time, indicated he was off to the races again, and we settled back to watch the fun.

"What was the naychah of youah ice, Son? Was ye carryin' 'Scotch-and-sody' ice or 'poetry' ice?"

Bussart was tired and a bit annoyed, but willing to continue the catechism. "Whaddye mean, Robbie? I went to a lot of ground schools, but I never heard of those types of icing conditions."

"Ye jest tarry a minnit while Ah light up my see-gah, and Ah'll teh ye all about it," Robbie magnanimously replied.

When his cigar was smoking like a forest fire, Robbie shifted his gun belt for comfort, cocked his boots on the table and expanded his theme. "Now heah's the way it is, gentlemen. That refrigeratah ovah yondah in th' cohnah produces th' two kinds of ice we gits on ouah flyin' machines. In th' trays wheah ye git the ice-cubes, is what Ah call 'Scotch-and-sody' ice. I figger if Ah evah allow my ol wings and propellah-fans to git too much like that, Ah'll nevah git to drink no moah Scotches an' sodies. Ye can see through them ice-cubes, and that's why them damyankee perfessers call it cleah ice. Now teh me, Bussart, are ye with me?"

"Yeah, I follow you—I'm right in your slip-stream. I had enough of your 'Scotch-and-sody' clear ice tonight to supply Hank Smith's gin-mill from now on." Bussart's reference to another Smith among us was occasioned by the fact that Hank Smith was an ex-bartender who owned a cocktail lounge in Manhattan.

"Rogah, then; we'll go back to ouah ice-box ovah yondah," Robbie continued. "Ye see that frosty stuff collectin' on them coils?" Well now, theah's youah othah kinda ice. Them college-perfessers an' shoe-clerks call it 'rime' ice, an' it's as dangerous as ticklin' a skittish mule in the tail section. Mind now, it ain't quite as mean as 'Scotch-an-sody' ice, 'cause it don't take so much trouble to git if off youah little airyplane, but ye git



a big enough load of it on, and shuah as Ah'm chewin' on this heah see-gah, ye ain't about to be flyin' that little beauty ennymoah—she's gonna lose airspeed and decide to squat on some foggy mountin' top! An' what Ah mean, a spiny mountin' peak 'thout no landin' strip built onto it. Ye'll be jest another man agin the mountin, and Ah do mean agin!"

Bussart nodded that he understood, but was still a bit perplexed about one thing. "Why do you call it 'poetry' ice, Robbie? Why not call it 'rime ice, and be done with it?"

Robbie assumed a mock grimace before he answered. "Why, man, 'rime', or 'rhyme', or howevah ye want to spell it is 'poetry', ain't it? An' whin Ah look out at the wings of mah ol' flappin' bird, an' thet frosty ice stahts accumulatin', Ah knock it off 'til she begins hittin' the' sides of th' cockpit. Brothah, thet sounds like poetry tuh me!"

"And not only to you, Robbie," Fletcher Hanks interjected. "It would have been poetic music in the ears of Nasholds the other night. He picked up a load that wouldn't quit just before landing, and to make matters worse his windshield and side-windows were completely iced over—he couldn't see a damned thing, and nothing he did would remove it. As a last resort, he had to kick out the windows. I'll bet money, marbles, or chalk that his cockpit sounded like a wind tunnel on the way down."

"Yeah, but last year..." Bussart mimicked Robbie...

"Last year, hell!" Hanks broke in. "Two years ago in Alaska we really had some ice. The more we got the faster the old crate sliced through the air! Instead of slowing us down, we began to pick up speed in excess of 700 miles per hour, and we were afraid the airplane would come apart!"

"Bull" Mangun wasn't about to sit still for that kind of noise. "For the love of Lindbergh, Hanks!" he exploded. "You've been drinkin' yore own bathwater again. I may be a grease-monkey, but even a mechanic knows better than to believe such nonsense."

"Word of honor," Hanks insisted. "Tell you what happened. That soft Alaskan ice is just like soft clay. On that particular flight between Kodiak and Dutch Harbor, there were a lot of freak warm and cold air-currents, and when the ice began to hit the fan in those areas, it formed around that old Douglas wing in a new and different shape than any wing you ever heard of. That wing of ice was even more streamlined and efficient than the famous Davis wing. So the more ice we got, the more speed we got. Why, we were flying so fast that we were over Siberia before our navigator had time to plot our course and discover where we were! Of course we were out of that icing area by then, but if we hadn't flown away from it, we would have developed enough friction on the props to burn them right off the engines!"

"That ain't all that's burnin, Amigo," Mangun complained. "That last draft of hot air is scorchin' the thatch right off the roof. You damned pilots give me an ache in the fundament—if you don't knock off that

high-altitude flyin', you'll all go as nuts as Hanks and start patenting those "revolutionary" wings he dreams up!"

I suppose we would have continued the discussion of icing conditions throughout the world until we were all called to fly, if Ray Hilgert hadn't returned from the airport to introduce a new subject. He had the news that we might as well stand by and expect a bit of delay in taking off inasmuch as the field in China, which was our destination for the night was closed—no airplanes could land there for some time.

"What's the trouble, Ray?" someone inquired. "Did the U.S. Army Engineers hear the war was over and build a town on the runway when the gold-braid wasn't looking? Jeez, those guys are faster than a sailor on a short pass!"

"Naw, no such luck," Ray rejoined. "There was a hell of a cross-wind tonight, and a couple of overloaded bombers cracked up on the landing-strip—it'll take an hour or so to clear away the mess. And by the way, there's a problem for you arm-chair aeronautical engineers; maybe you chair-borne commandos can figure out a device for landing smoothly on these runways where the wind always blows like hell from one side or another, and never up and down the strip. I landed at Blank Field the other day, and had trouble keeping both wheels on the ground at the same time."

"It's a cinch," cracked Eric Shilling. "All you need is a landing-gear with swivel wheels controlled from the cockpit, and wings that warp at the wing-tips like a seagull's. Say you're landing toward the south, and the wind is across the runway from the west. All you need to do is point the airplane at the general direction of south down the runway, cut your throttle, and touch your wheels down with the nose pointed south or west. Even if you land sideways, the momentum will carry you down the strip sideways on the swivel wheels, and if you start to dig in a wing-tip, you just manipulate the 'Shilling Non-Groundloop Wingtip' and drag your feet until you stop. Nuthin' to it!"

At this new travesty on common-sense "Gremlin" Prendergast, one of our perpetually gloomy mechanics, virtually exploded. "If I live around loony birdmen another hundred years, I'll never understand how they can get so nuts in such a short time: I used to say that the airplane was just a passing fancy and not here to stay, and the more I see of aviators, the more convinced I am. But I reckon that cross-wind over there really is brutal tonight."

"Yeah, but last yee-ah ye shoulda seen it." Robbie was at it again. "Ye know that big lake jest uh hoot-an-uh-holler down the pike from th' airport? We was landin' on wheels on th' rock bottom of that body of water—Shoah! Ah'll teh ye how it was—the wind was so damned mighty an' steady that all th' watah was blowed plumb up agin them hills on th' east shore, an' the blow was so strong it held the watah up theah like a dam durin' the windy season. Th' Jaypanese bastids was layin' rotten eggs all ovah the reg-u-lah runway, but theah we was, a-droppin' down

tuh th' bottom of one-half of a lake tuh land! Put me in mind of th' Red Sea openin' up for th' Chosen People to amble throo when ol' Pharoah was after 'em! Jest goes to show whose side th' Almighty is on in this heah little shootin' match of a wah! But th' Good Book says that the Almighty he'ps th' flyah who he'ps himself, so y'all bettah a bein' flyin' hell outa them flyin' machines in that cross-wind tonight, an' do youah prayin' aftah ye git on th' terry firmey!"

This bit of sage advice was punctuated by the jangle of the telephone. "Red" Holmes answered it, and announced that now was the time for all scheduled men to man their aircraft. There was some sort of alert in progress, and we were to move our planes to another field in the event the Japs got close enough to us to bomb the local field. "Red" Holmes was a competent little Texan from Amarillo, and no bigger than a grasshopper's shadow. When loaded down for a flight with his parachute, gun belt, canteen, heavy flying-gear, and his navigation case, he looked like an overloaded ant busily engaged in pushing a biscuit up a hill. Just now he was complaining bitterly.

"I jest thought I'd teh ye—it's hell to be born poor and good-lookin', and have to tote all this damned gear aroun' jest to make a livin'! Whin I git back tuh th' Panhandle, I'm gonna take up playin' the piccolo for my bread an' butter, and hire me a boy tuh carry it, at that!"

"Bull" Mangan enjoyed riding Holmes, and threw him a final jibe before we departed for the airport. "Quit your bitchin', Red—by the time you get back to that windy Panhandle, these new-fangled rocket-ships will be ready. Then all you need is a cigarette lighter; you just light the fuses, jump in the cockpit, and swish! you're on your way!...by the way, Red, keep, an eye on the oil-pressure on that right-engine on your plane: she was actin' up the other day. An' for Christ's sake, check your de-icing equipment before you take off—you heard the Buzzard talkin' about how much water there is in them thar clouds tonight: it's gonna be a rough monsoon season this year..."

"Yeah, but last year..." we heard Robbie continue as we rumbled off through the tea bushes toward the airport.

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*Let me know if you have stories to share, or suggestions for the CANNONBALL. You can reach me by phone (609) 497-0324, fax (609) 497-1221, email [ecoulson@aol.com](mailto:ecoulson@aol.com) or even by USPS---*

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*Hoping to see you at the reunion!*



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