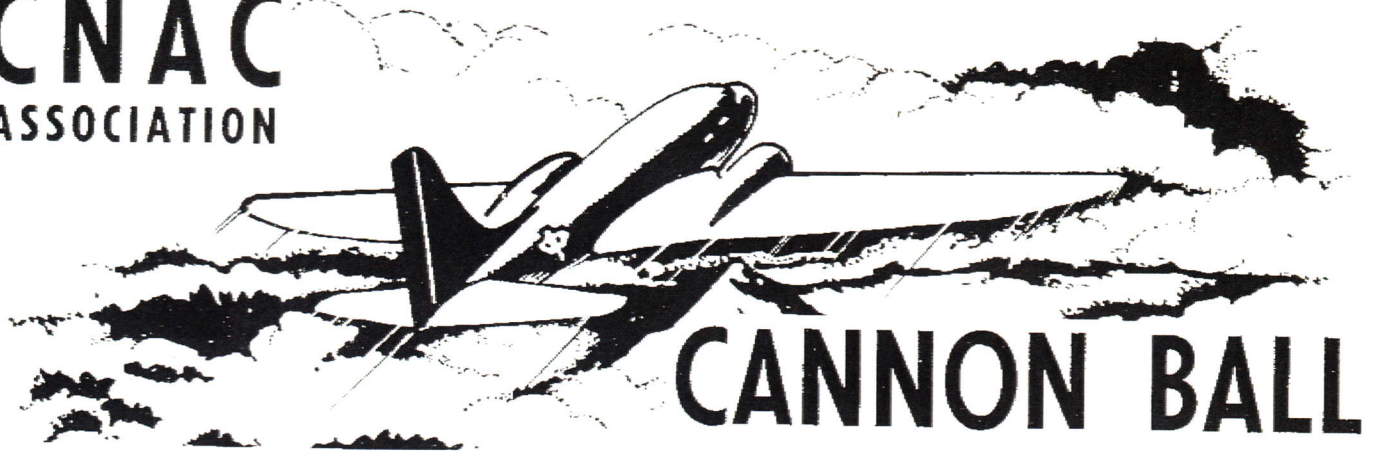


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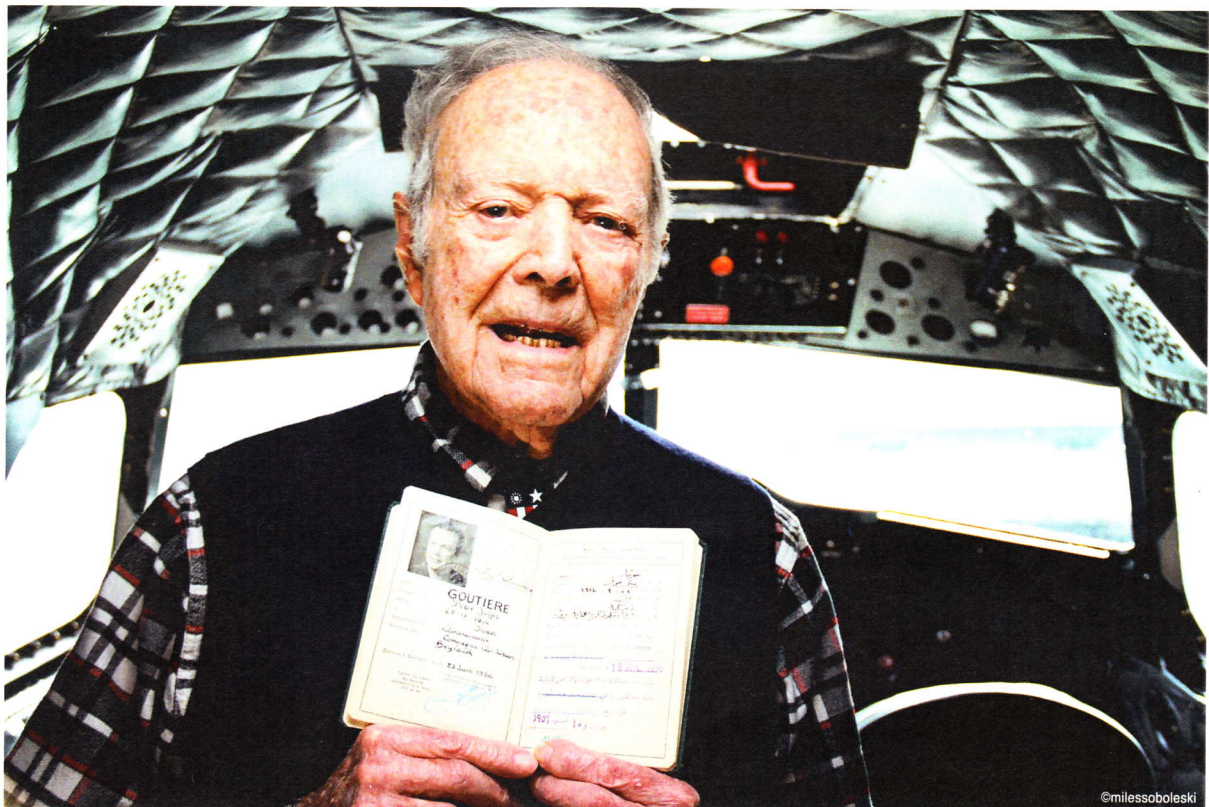
Eve Coulson, Editor
291 Russell Road
Princeton, NJ 08540
eecoulson@gmail.com
(917) 439-4702

MARCH 2015

Peggy Maher, President
PO Box 294449
Kerrville, TX 78029
PeggyMaher@starband.net
(830) 896-5030

REUNITED AFTER 70 YEARS

Peter Goutiere in the cockpit (again!) of CNAC #100 September 3, 2014



©milesoboleski

(photo by Miles Soboleski)

REUNION [ree-yoon-yuh n]

1. *The act of uniting again.*
2. *A gathering of relatives, friends, or associates at regular intervals or after separation.*

There are reunions, and then there are *reunions*. In 1954 the CNAC Association was formed and since then we've enjoyed countless gatherings large and small. This past year was practically littered with reunions—starting with a dinner at Rosie O'Grady's in New York City to commemorate the first post-war CNAC gathering at the original location (by the way, another one, again in New York City, is in the works, details soon; for now save the date of Saturday May 16). Our usual convergence at the Embassy Suites Burlingame in September was a blockbuster, adding the opening of the fabulous SFO Museum exhibition, *The Legend of CNAC: China National Aviation Corporation, 1929-1949*, and the arrival of CNAC #100 to an already reliably wonderful annual event (see definition #2 above). And of course, the arrival of CNAC #100 was preceded by an emotional reunion of a pilot (our beloved Peter Goutiere) and his plane. You can read Peter's first person report in this issue. Nothing beats being there in person, but new member Ben Barrett's account of the reunion is comes close!

Sadly, I must include news of Renee Robertson's passing in early January. Fortunately, her dear friend Patti Gully eloquent eulogy provides us with a comprehensive account of her life. We will miss Renee.

Other reports include some progress towards digging up CNAC #60, pushed forward by Bob Willett, news of a summer 2015 US concert tour for Lady Q, and Angie Chen's remarkable collaboration on a museum exhibition in Nanjing, China, slated to open in April.

We've already begun planning for our next CNAC Association reunion, so be sure to save the dates September 9-13, 2015. Please contact any of the officers if you have a suggestion or a program you'd like to present.

NEWS FLASH: The Legend of CNAC exhibition at the SFO Museum (International Terminal A) originally scheduled to close in February was extended to April 10. Assistant Director John Hill advised us that the exhibition "continues to be very popular and extraordinarily well received." If you haven't yet seen it, or want to see it again, you have time!

--Eve Coulson, Cannonball Editor



Greetings CNAC Friends!

Now in its 61st year, the CNAC Association continues to expand its activities, supporting museum projects along with having fun and good times. While we all know we are not as riotous as the CNAC pilots, but for many of us, getting together is a high point of the year!

The 2014 reunion was exciting and amazing, as you will read about in this newsletter. Many thanks to John Hill, the creative and hard working staff at the SFO Museum, and our own Craig Chinn, who together crafted an exhibition which since late August has been telling the story of CNAC for thousands to see (to see details about the exhibit, Google "Legend of CNAC" or visit the SFO Museum website www.flySFO.com/museum). Thanks of course to all who lent artifacts to the exhibit. We are grateful to Moon Chin for generously sponsoring the cocktails and buffet we enjoyed at the museum, dining close by the six beautiful display cases.

The other amazing event of the reunion got its start about two years ago, when Liz Matzelle of the Historic Flight Foundation contacted us about a plane they were restoring, which was CNAC #100. In collaboration with John Sessions and the HFF we were able to fly the plane to San Francisco. John Session said to me at the end of the weekend, "You know it has been a good reunion when nobody wants to leave!" – an observation that so well captured the feelings of those who were there. This was one of those experiences of a lifetime.

We are working on programs for CNAC 2015 reunion, to be held September 9-13th at Embassy Suites, Burlingame, CA. Registration information will be mailed this spring and updates can be found or questions can be asked at www.cnacassociation.com. You will want to come to hear about the "Hot Foot" that almost burned down House of Chan Restaurant, in New York City at the first reunion in 1954, to be told by Pete Goutiere.

I hope to see you in September for a fun and educational time. We have learned so much from each other regarding the history, life, and times of the people of CNAC. This year we had many who have been coming for years as well as some very welcome newcomers who had a great time, and who we hope and expect to see again. We are most certainly in the business of making memories. So please mark your calendar today and plan to join us.

Peggy Maher
President, CNAC Association



CNAC ASSOCIATION EVENTS 2015

The Legend of CNAC --SFO Museum, International Terminal A, level 3 San Francisco Exhibit dedicated to the history of CNAC. **Extended through April 10, 2015** Hours: Sunday through Friday 10:00 am to 4:30 pm email: curator@flysfo.com

Hump Airlift Exhibition—Nanjing Anti-Japanese Aviation Memorial Hall, Nanjing, China CNAC Association member Angie Chen **April 3, 2015 to August 2015**. Contact Angie 260215123@qq.com

Anniversary Dinner in New York City—**weekend of May 15-17, 2015**. Exact time and location TBA. Return to the site of the first dinner in 1954? Lunch on Saturday instead of dinner? If interested in joining us, contact Eve Coulson 917-439-4702 or eecoulson@gmail.com Details forthcoming!

Ella Sharp Museum, Jackson, Michigan Exhibit honoring hometown hero and veteran of WWII Captain W. J. Maher. **Opening reception Friday August 7: exhibition to run through October 17, 2015**. Michigan is a beautiful place to visit in the summer and early fall! Contact: Peggy Maher 830-896-5030 or 830-370-4633 www.cnacassociation.com PeggyMaher@starband.net Peggy.a.Maher@gmail.com

President Peggy Maher says, "Each one of us can create an event like this or publish something honoring CNAC veterans. Look for an opportunity and be persistent. You may get a lot of no's before you get a yes. Let us know what you are working on or have in mind for publication in next Cannonball. Team CNAC may be able to help you!"

CNAC Association Annual Reunion 2015 **September 9th – 13th** Embassy Suites, Waterfront, Burlingame, CA. contact Peggy (see contact info above) or Valerie 707-459-5165 with questions and for more information

A VERY SPECIAL CNAC ASSOCIATION REUNION

By Ben Barrett

This year's China National Aviation Corporation (CNAC) reunion ran for 5 days, from September 3-7, 2014, with a home base at the Embassy Suites in Burlingame, CA, which made for easy access to the San Francisco Airport (SFO) museum venue. And as "luck" (and believe me, there was no luck involved) would have it, the long awaited CNAC exhibit had just opened prior to our arrival.

The *Legend of CNAC* exhibit (www.flysfo.com/museum/exhibitions) opened in late August of 2014, and in typical fashion, John Hill, Assistant Director, Aviation for the Museum and his crew at the San Francisco International Terminal Museum really shined. The professionalism shown there was beyond description. The ongoing Pan American exhibit continues to inspire, and the CNAC exhibition (which runs through April 10, 2015) not only dovetails nicely with the Pan Am collection, but also enhances it because of the correlation between the two entities.



The six displays are skillfully laid out, with historical materials loaned by CNAC families and collectors.

The CNAC directors (Peggy Maher, Craig Chinn, Eve Coulson, Valerie Kendrick and Tom Moore) clearly had done their homework by choreographing an agenda for the reunion with plenty of activities and programs of interest. Speakers included Craig Chinn, William McDonald III, Moon Chin, Hao Chen, Gregory Crouch, Tripp Alyn, Liz Matzelle, John Sessions, Peter Goutiere, Kenn Yazzie, Caitlin Rumery, and Angie Chen.

One of the most monumental feats was the arrival of CNAC #100, a DC-3 which was flown down from the Historic Flight Foundation in Mukilteo, Washington. Many participants were able to tour this aircraft on Saturday morning.



Historic Flight Foundation Douglas DC-3 "CNAC-100"
SFO Museum Education Program – CNAC Lecture Series and Special Presentations
San Francisco International Airport – September 6, 2014
Photograph by Alex Esquerre



One of the highlights for me, personally, was having lunch with Moon Chin on Saturday. I was fortunate enough to have found my grandfather, Harold M. Bixby's flight logbook where he made an entry on November 7, 1949 in Tokyo saying that he had had lunch with Moon Chin and Ki Chun. So I brought out my copy of Bixby's logbook and pointed out the entry referring to the luncheon I asked him "so what did you have for lunch that day?" and without even skipping a beat, Moon Chin responded "A chicken sandwich." I busted out laughing. Talk about a quick wit. I had him sign my copy of the logbook.

If you have the opportunity to spend some time at the SFO International Terminal, you could use it to explore the resources available in the Aviation Library. I spent the better part of four hours looking for more fodder for my book on my grandfather. One gem in particular I found was a wonderful memoir by Chile Vaughn, a very close friend of my grandfather's. Chile was one of the primary pilots who flew Loenings (among others) for CNAC on the Yangtze. This memoir is in his own hand and it has been transcribed as well for easier reading. John Hill is proud, rightfully so, of the collection in the library there, and it is well worth investigating. And Mr. Hill alluded to it being "your library"--meaning it is there for the benefit of the public, and he implored each of us to take advantage of it. Librarian Julie Takata was particularly helpful and generous with her time.



Russ Coldren and Morgan Lew enjoy a stroll around CNAC #100



Stewardess Margaret Soong back on the job, helping Tom Houlton, cousin of Shirley Wilke Mosley step up into CNAC #100.



Friday night at the museum: banquet host Moon Chin, Jack Young, Pete Goutiere and Susan Ip (granddaughter of senior CNAC pilot Ed Chin, who flew more than 900 times over the Hump)



One of the amazing *Legend of CNAC* displays created by the SFO Museum staff.

Flight Of CNAC # 100

by

Captain Peter J. Goutiere

To me, in aviation, while strange things *can* happen, one may not know it until it does! So it was that it happened to me.

It was in June of 1944 that I had just completed my month's flying the "Hump" route. Still at the Dinjan airbase, I was approached by our CNAC operations manager, Capt. Hugh "Woody" Woods. He stated that I was due for my home leave and on return would probably be scheduled to ferry a new C-47 back to Calcutta for China National Aviation Corporation (CNAC) some time in August, though he still had to check that further with Pan American in New York.

By the end of June I was able to hitch a ride on a US Air Force DC-4 all the way to the USA! It was a long flight for almost ten days, but great to be home and family. The vacation went fast. The next moment it was August. I checked in with Pan American at their office on the 44th floor of the Chrysler Building in New York. It was confirmed that a Douglas C-47 would be ready in Miami for me to ferry back to Calcutta. At Miami I checked in with Pan Am Operations and was told the plane would arrive any day, and that it would be fitted with a large cabin fuel tank, which would hold 400 gallons. This was necessary for crossing the long flight across the South Atlantic from Natal, Brazil to Accra, British Gold Coast, now known as Ghana. I was also introduced to my new copilot by the name of Gene Powers. He was a new hire for CNAC. Around the 10th of the month our new, olive drab, camouflaged plane had arrived and was being fitted with the cabin tank.

On the 12th of August the C-47 was towed out of the PAA hangar and would be ready for the long flight by the 14th. That early morning moment had arrived. My crew, Powers, navigator and myself, were driven out to our plane with all baggage and other loot!! When all was stowed in the cabin, I told the mechanic I would first do my walk around the plane for the usual pre check (kick the tires!). I was also briefed on how to operate the huge cabin fuel tank! When all set, I was given clearance to start engines. Just before being given the take off signal, I requested permission from the Miami Tower to give a slight "Buzz Job" to the airport as a farewell. Permission was granted! The take off was on RW 90.

It took us right over the Atlantic; at about 300 feet I turned back to give the field the "Buzz Job". I zoomed just past the tower and wagged the wings as a farewell. I now settled down to the flight to South America and Brazil. That lovely plane performed perfectly all the way to Calcutta. Almost 14 days and 90 hours of flight. I delivered that C-47 to our CNAC office at Dum Dum Airport with its filled in logbook! I now settled down to my regular flights to China. I would also fly my C-47 on the "Hump" route. The CNAC number given her was #100!!

Many, many years have passed by---As it is said, "Time waits for No One"--"It passes on like the clouds in the sky"! As so many pilots, we all went in different directions to seek our future and fortunes. In time, I joined the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) as an Air Carrier Operations Inspector. This would take me to many parts of the world. After retirement I first settled in Florida as a married man to a lovely Philippine girl named Evelyn. Eventually we moved up here to Katonah, New York. For a time I felt lost with very little to do. Gone was my more than fifty years of aviation. Gone were the times I would check and walk around different planes and "kick the tires"! Gone was the fun and good times of flights around the world.

I have now settled down to do a lot of reading. Also, I started writing stories of my different adventures etc. I have introduced myself to the modern age of computers! This has given me contact with the outside world and friends. One main joy I relish, is to visit with many CNAC second-generation folk. We now have reunions every year in San Francisco. It brings back memories and great friendship with these people; and of course, to meet again with that fine CNAC pilot, Capt. Moon Chin!

So it was; one of those strange phenomena was about to hit me right dead center of my mind and heart! This how that strangeness occurred:

One day I was checking my e-mail, when I received a message from our lovely, young president of CNAC, Peggy Maher. The message I read contained a question from an outfit known as the Historic Flight Foundation (HFF), located at Paine Air Base in Everett, Washington, near Seattle. Their message basically stating that they had obtained an old DC-3 aircraft that had once been operated by Johnson & Johnson Company as an executive plane. So? Historic Flight Foundation had now purchased the discarded DC-3 and rebuilt it back into first class flying condition. Restoring old planes is one of their hobbies! Now, having restored the DC-3, the HFF decided to check out its history. They had learned that the plane was built by Douglas Aircraft Company in August 1944, and was then flown to Miami. From there it was flown all the way to Calcutta, India and given to CNAC, which gave the C-47 the number 100!! Realizing it was once owned by CNAC, HFF contacted President Peggy Maher of the CNAC Association. They wished to know if there was any one in the CNAC Association still alive that might have flown #100 on the "Hump" route. So it was that our President Peggy forwarded the HFF question to CNAC members via e-mail!

As I sat by my computer that same lazy morning checking the incoming e-mail, there was the message with the question from HFF. Even after reading it, I was not certain what it was all about. It took several minutes for me to wake up and really read the message over again. It then hit me solidly into my mind. There, staring me in the face was my C-47 sitting at Miami Airport on August 14, 1944, just waiting to be flown half way around the world to Calcutta. I almost flipped my lid. I called Evelyn and showed her the message of CNAC ship#100. My lovely old C-47 that I had walked and checked so often. I now had to relax and

catch my breath. I don't really need excuses for a good healthy drink of scotch; but I couldn't wait. I raced over to my little bar only ten feet away!! There I poured myself a healthy scotch and water. I raised my glass and drank a toast to my special plane #100!

It took a short while to cool down and gather my senses. The scotch had helped. I returned to the computer and reread Peggy's message a couple more times. I then sat and answered her message, saying that it was I who had flown Ship#100 from Miami to Calcutta! Peggy then relayed it on to HFF and the person handling the messages was a Miss Liz Matzelle.

I was now introduced to Liz via the e-mail. I reiterated the fact that I had flown #100 to Calcutta. Later, she asked if I had that flight in my logbook, and if so, would I kindly send her a copy? "Oops"! I was sorry to inform her, that my logbook was now in a museum that was located in "Shangri-La", China! In due course I contacted my friend Mr. Wong How Man, because the museum was at his place there, far away in China!! I asked him if it was possible to have someone at the museum that could copy that particular page and e-mail it to me. Within a few days there was my Mia-Cal trip entries, with all stops and times. This I was happy to send on to Liz with a copy to Peggy Maher!

The first phase of my knowing that my C-47 #100 was now residing at Paine Field and the excitement was cooling down a bit. However, at this old age of almost 100 years, the excitement was imbedded in me and made me think often of my trip in August to Calcutta.

Now, one could say that the next phase was slowly starting to build up in my excitement once again. It was the e-mail messages racing back and forth between Liz of HFF and Peggy. Plans were being made for the possibility of my going to Seattle and Paine Field, to be introduced to HFF and see my lovely C-47 plane again. Perhaps even sit in the cockpit etc. It was getting to the point of my nearly "Peeing" in my pants!! I could blame that on old age. Or could I? With new innovative ideas coming up--Get Pete to Paine Field. Get pictures of him with the plane. He would be 100 years old; seeing the plane #100, he had flown 70 years ago! It would make a great story! I was being clued in on all this via e-mail whirling around! "Wow"!

Wouldn't a 100 year old codger be about to "pee" in his pants? I even thought to ask Evelyn to get me diapers!!

I kept myself busy mixing my scotch which was beginning to have bad effects on me. I should stop; perhaps go for walks? Walks?? I then thought, why not change from scotch to gin and ginger-beer? This was a specialty of the Royal Calcutta Golf Club. Yes! Why not? It might take my mind off Ship #100; back to the days of golfing in Calcutta! Gin and ginger beer became my specialty. Oh no; now I have Ship #100 and golfing in Calcutta on my mind!!

Now what am I supposed to do? Go see a "head shrinker" doctor? Negative. I was mixed up a bit; when here comes "phase three"! More e-mail and phone calls. Peggy and Liz have gotten the idea to have my grandson Miles escort me to Seattle and have many pictures taken with me and my C-47 at Paine Field. Then have #100 flown to San Francisco in time for the annual CNAC Reunion. Now; the "bomb" that sure will make me "Pee", is: that I, with Miles fly to Seattle and on to Paine Field, and we would stay there for a couple of days. It would be great for many people and friends to witness this old "Rogue" visiting his 70 year old friend CNAC #100!

Then on Friday September 5th, the plane will be flown to SFO and I may have an opportunity to fly it part of the way. Miles then can take loads of pictures on the flight down. There will be a special parking spot at SFO. This will allow all of our CNAC people and friends to come through security and be with me on arrival. Especially Moon Chin! By now I was completely gone "Wacko"! But was trying not to let it be shown!!

Towards the final phase---Maybe? I was beside myself! I kept asking; "do you really think you can fly that plane?" Off and on I would try to figure the old cockpit set-up. "Would it be the same?" How about this and that? What were the power settings and air speeds? Many questions were on my mind. It got so wild that I had to take sleeping pills the last few nights.

Finally the time had come. My grandson Miles had arranged our tickets to Seattle via Frisco on Virgin Airlines. "Virgin?" Never heard of that airline. Miles' younger brother Weston also would come along. We met at JFK Airport and were on our way the second of September. Around 3:30 pm. we arrived at Seattle, to be met by Liz Matzelle, who then drove us to a hotel near Everett. I kept my coolness and no "Peeing"!! But the tension to see Ship#100 was getting to me. About the same as a little kid waiting to see his first Christmas tree!!

Liz came by next morning to take us for breakfast. I was beginning to notice Miles, Weston and Liz were watching me closely. Now I could hardly wait. The tension had grown so much; the moment had arrived. Liz had now driven us to their large hangar on which was written "Historic Flight Foundation." Liz led the way through the double doors with Miles and Weston right behind me. There in the vast hangar were a great number of planes. But where was #100? After a quick look around the assortment of planes, Liz took my arm and led me out onto the ramp.

It was a bright sunny morning as we all stepped onto the ramp area. The bright morning made me place my hand over my eyes because of the glare. I then quickly put on my sunglasses. Once adjusted to the brightness, I went along



with Liz and my two grandsons. It only took a couple moments to adjust. I then looked across the ramp and there about fifty yards away, at the further end of the ramp, I saw a DC-3 parked facing toward our direction! I stopped and asked Liz; "Is that CNAC ship #100"? She quietly replied, "Yes"! I looked at the DC-3 and the aura of excitement came over me. I couldn't wait to rush over to my old plane! However, I was able to control myself and started walking normally straight to her! I mentioned to Miles and Weston to get ready to take pictures. Once we reached Ship#100, I immediately went to her and caressed the propeller of the left engine and patted the cowling, with Miles starting to take pictures. It was awesome to say the least. I kept a lot of the emotional feeling within me and 70 years rushed by and here we were together again!!

It seemed only moments had slipped by, when many people seemed to appear around us. Most seemed to be from the Historic Flight Foundation. I told Liz that I'd like to walk around the plane as I had once done so very long ago. I think she felt the excitement in me. Then on my own, I did the check walk around Ship #100. Yes; it all came rushing back, remembering the moment we had met in Miami so very long ago. Meantime Miles and Weston were busy with their cameras!

(below, Pete, grandsons Miles and Weston, and Liz of HFF)



After the walk around, I was back at the passenger door. Before that, the door had been a "cargo door". I was now getting used to the new Pan American logo paint job. Liz then said to climb aboard! Old age was now gone as I climbed up the passenger steps to

enter the cabin. There was a vast difference; all plush and soundproofed. There were lounge-type seats. I entered the cockpit area, which had been vastly changed. I now gradually entered the cockpit proper and sat in the left seat (captain's)! By now many people had followed me, possibly checking my reaction! I tried not to show my emotions too much. Pictures! Pictures and pictures galore were being taken by many curious folk! Whispers were going around as to who this old fellow was? Soon after the initial "Hello" to CNAC #100, I calmed down and joined my grandsons and was happy to pose for more pictures.

So! The 3rd and 4th of September had slipped by. I had now spent these two days with friends and members of Historic Flight Foundation. Also, my nephew Tony de Goutiere from Vancouver showed up. We had a great get together with a special dinner at a seafood restaurant near by.

Friday the 5th arrived as another sunny day. The pilot and owner of HFF was John Sessions. He would fly the plane from Paine Field to San Francisco. Being a bit old and insurance difficulties regarding age etc.!! I would not be allowed to fly from "take off and landing etc." I did mention to Sessions, that I would like officially to make the walk around check? "No Problem, go ahead." This was done with Pilot Sessions watching!!

I sat with a few of Historic Flight Foundation personnel, including Liz Matzelle and with my two grandsons. Once airborne and on the way to San Francisco, John Sessions gave me the left seat to fly my old friend #100 once more. I say again, it became difficult to state the emotional effects that were going through me as I sat once more, flying CNAC ship#100. There I was, this almost 100 year old CNAC pilot flying his 70 year old plane! One member, who took a picture of me flying, casually said; "Pete, I hope you don't mind, I have one picture of you that shows you may have tears in your eyes"! "Heck no!" "That is from old age"! Of course he could have correct!!

After couple hours of hand flying #100, I gave the controls back to Sessions. I could have used a big drink of scotch about that time! Though the flight schedule was to be about four hours, the flight was deviated around a large forest fire right ahead. In a short time we had arrived over San Francisco. With clear weather John Sessions made a visual approach and safe landing. The SFO tower then directed us to the special area for parking. Here we were met and greeted by my good friend Capt. Moon Chin! I don't know how I kept my tears back and hoped no one would notice any strangeness about me!!



Peter and Moon Chin greeting each other at SFO (by C. Chinn)

This was the biggest and greatest event since my retirement from the FAA in 1990. There I stood once more with Moon looking over our lovely plane #100. It was then arranged that Moon and I should sit in the cockpit in both seats for more pictures! I think I may have mentioned to Moon what I been going through for the past few days! He understood. So ended the greatest event for me after so many, many years that had passed on.

"God Bless you CNAC Ship #100. Welcome back to flying once more. You are someone special."



Peter in the pilot's seat

(by Miles Soboleski)

#

Peter's grandson, Miles Soboleski, along with his brother Weston, accompanied Peter to Seattle, and filmed the reunion of plane and pilot, and the flight to San Francisco. Here is his account of the experience:

Looking at the footage is pretty unreal. I remember while I was filming him while he was flying I was just shooting video like I normally do for work. Going through a checklist of angles in my head making sure I had total coverage. But at one point I put the camera down and let the reality of the situation soak in. I wasn't just filming my friend fly an airplane. I was Peter's passenger, in the same plane he used to fly, 70 years after his first flight, while he's 100 years old. It was an out of this world experience. I would get uncomfortable when he used to drive me around in his minivan, but felt completely fine with him flying me over the ocean at 6,000 feet!

The amount of energy that he had after flying that hour or so was really amazing to see. He woke up at 6 that morning in Mukilteo, flew the plane down to San Francisco, greeted everyone, had a couple scotches, and gave a talk after dinner. The whole trip for him gave him a huge boost. And it's things like that that keep him going. We really appreciate everything you and CNAC have done to make it possible.

I'm really happy that Weston was able to go on this trip with us. I remember three years ago when Peter asked me to go with him to the CNAC reunion I wasn't sure what I was going to get myself into. The way that we grew up with Peter was having him visit at our mother's house for dinner and he'd tell us stories while we were at the dinner table or while he watched football. So the first time I saw him grab a microphone and tell a story for CNAC with such charisma I was completely floored. And the amount of energy he has when he sees everyone at the reunions is 10 times more than what we're used to seeing him have at home. It's really a great thing and I think it was really important for Weston to be able to see Peter in his element, doing what he does best.

#

Finally, for the serious aviation enthusiasts, here is a bit more about the plane itself, courtesy of Liz Matzelle of the Historic Flight Foundation:

The aircraft was delivered from the Long Beach plant on July 31, 1944. Pete Goutiere picked it up in Miami and flew it to Calcutta, where it was given CNAC markings and the number 100. It flew the "Hump" for the remainder of the war, and suffered one minor accident that we know of. After the war it stayed with CNAC. For a while it flew cargo as XT-T-20, and then it was reconfigured with 32 passenger seats. In this configuration it was given a special livery ("Air Bus") and a new number, XT-119. It flew a Shanghai to Canton/Hong Kong route making many stops along the way.



In 1949 it went to Kai Tak with the rest of the CNAC fleet, and in 1950 it was damaged by time bombs placed by Nationalist agents. In 1952 it was shipped back to the U.S., and in 1953 it was modified at Grand Central Aircraft Co, into a VIP transport for Johnson & Johnson. From there it changed hands and registrations many times, always staying in the States, until it was purchased by the modifications/upgrades to facilitate long-distance flying. We purchased it in 2006 and restored it to a stock DC-3 configuration, except for retaining the more powerful engines and long-range fuel tanks. We fully restored the cockpit, but left the interior as-is, since the 1953 VIP interior was still intact.

On January 4, 2015, we lost Renee Robertson, beloved friend of the CNAC Association, daughter of Arthur Lym, the man introduced aviation in China. We will remember Renee's intelligence, energy, and keen interest in preserving the history of aviation in China. She was loyal and generous to the CNAC Association and we will always treasure memories of good times we had with her. The following eulogy was written and delivered by her close friend Patti Gully at the memorial service on January 25.

RENÉE LYM ROBERTSON

林美玉

Muse, mentor, madcap, First Lady of Chinese Aviation History. Charismatically imbued with the extremes that characterize only the greatest works of art, Renée was both the quintessential American woman and profoundly Chinese in her makeup, swashbuckling and elegant, a leader amongst her family and friends, and yet one who always walked alone. She was East and West, *yin* and *yang*, and grew more youthful as she aged, feeding her passions with the celebrated energy she both exuded and sought.



Renee with Moon Chin at a recent CNAC reunion

On 4 August 1928, Renée Lym Robertson was born Lym May Yoke in Shanghai, China, to San Francisco natives, Art Lym and his wife, Sarah Chuck Lym. She was also named Renée after the daughter of the doctor who delivered her. Her pioneering father, only the second licensed Chinese American aviator, would go on to become Chief of Staff of Chiang Kai-shek's air force during WWII, and much of Renée's life would be dedicated to preserving his legacy.

In 1932, Renée was still a child when the violence of the so-called Shanghai Incident sent shockwaves throughout China and the world. It was the first of four wars she would endure.

In 1939, when she sailed to San Francisco to meet her Lym grandmother, she was incarcerated on Angel Island until she was finally admitted to America upon personal intervention by the renowned Donaldina Cameron of the Presbyterian Mission Home. When she returned to China, the Sino-Japanese War was in full flood, and in 1940 her parents evacuated her and sister Judy to the safety of the U.S. for the duration. Renée attended San Francisco's Irving M. Scott School, where she learned to speak English, but America's entry into the war in 1941 ensured that the girls' exile would be

prolonged, and she always bitterly regretted this separation from her mother and father during her formative years.

Upon her post-war return to the family home in Guangzhou, she was working for Civil Air Transport (CAT), "The Orient's Airline," when she was caught up in the Liberation of China. As Communist forces stormed Guangdong, she evacuated to the safety of Hong Kong on the jump seat of a CAT aircraft.

As a refugee of little means eking out an existence in the Colony, Renée triumphed over hardship by teaching piano, and then entering the retail garment industry, working for



Shanghainese on Carnarvon Road. Renée branched out and put to good use her flair for fashion by opening a dress shop near the Star Ferry in Tsim Sha Tsui showcasing high quality Chinese gowns and jackets of her own design.

In 1952, at the fabled Peninsula Hotel, she met prolific author, Ernest Gann, who was seeking local color for his latest book, *Soldier of Fortune*. Gann recalled, "Renée knew the pedigree of nearly all the Peninsula regulars, the state of their health, marriage, love life, and prosperity. She achieved her respected status because of her great heart and perpetual interest in helping others solve their problems. Her personal empire ranged far beyond the Peninsula Hotel, extending to the most remote regions of the Far East. I had expected to meet a Dragon Lady and found instead a young and utterly charming oriental woman." (Ernest Gann, *A Hostage*

to Fortune, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978, p. 379)

In 1954, Gann's book was made into a movie. One of his characters, "Maxine," was loosely based on Renée's life, and when the production team arrived in Hong Kong, she famously began dating leading man, Clark Gable, who was then the 'King of Hollywood.' "During that time when Clark and I went out together, I learned how to drink screwdrivers. He ordered 'Dublais vodka' – I thought it was a brand name, but it was 'double vodka'! We usually didn't finish lunch until 3:30..." Renée herself was already known as "Empress of the Peninsula," but her local status now rocketed to even more dizzying heights.

Two years later, also in the lobby of the Peninsula, she met her future husband, William Gordon 'Robbie' Robertson, director and general manager of a molasses company, whom she married at Tokyo in 1966. In addition to maintaining their beautiful home,

Renée was an invaluable support to her husband in his professional life, assisting with everything from clerical work to executive brainstorming.

Widowed in 1981, Renée quit Hong Kong and made a new life in San Francisco, thereafter concentrating her efforts on the collection and dissemination of the history of flight in China. Devoting her life to this cause, she generously made available her remarkable archive of materials and photographs to scholars and interested persons.

Renée loved talking with people of all walks of life, from ambassadors to busboys, learning about their stories, their struggles, their families, their recipes. She could not understand those who did not care about their origins or their ancestors. Accordingly, she placed the welfare of her family above all other considerations; the endeavors of its younger members especially were lovingly encouraged, applauded, supported. She also understood that sustaining relationships required considerable effort, and believed in the value of maintaining contacts.

Returning to China in 1982, she organized the Guangdong Aviation Historical Society 廣東航空聯誼會 to ensure the achievements of her father and other Chinese aviators would never be forgotten. She maintained a strong sense of responsibility toward the men who had been under her father's command and who, tainted by association with the West, were marginalized in the People's Republic of China. Recipients of Renée's legendary generosity are without number, and included these old airmen fallen on hard times, but also members of a younger generation who needed a helping hand.

She was not averse to risk-taking. "In the old days," Renée recalled, "I knew people who did under-the-table things," and she indulged in a few of these herself, running money to Catholic nuns living inside Red China; smuggling out model airplanes to be installed at Seattle's Pacific Museum of Flight; and, with the connivance of customs officials, procuring opium for a cancer patient suffering intractable pain.

Renée was instrumental in the renewal of the 19th Cavalry Cemetery at Guangzhou. This final resting place for airmen who died in conflict, many of whom served under her father, was desecrated during the Cultural Revolution, the grave stones smashed and the grounds left unkempt. Renée lobbied for funding and restoration of the cemetery to its former magnificence, and it is now a destination for pilgrims who belatedly appreciate the ultimate sacrifices of an earlier generation.

To commemorate her father's towering contributions to aviation history, Renée commissioned *Time Flies*, a biography and a DVD of her father's life, as well as an oil painting rendered by Art's grand-nephew, Arthur Okamura. She also commenced arrangements to deposit the Art Lym papers at the Asia Collections, Hoover Institution Library and Archives, Stanford University.

written by Patti Gully

*For those who wish to honor Renee's memory, the family suggests a donation to:
San Francisco Aeronautical Society (in memory of Renee Robertson)
P. O. Box 250250, San Francisco, CA 94125*

(This story first appeared in a 1990 issue of the Cannon Ball. Captain McDonald's son, William McDonald III, attended the 2014 CNAC Association reunion along with some family members and made a presentation at the SFO Museum)

OUT OF THE BLUE

By Captain William McDonald, Jr.

The year was 1928.

It was a warm June afternoon and I was standing in the shade of one of the hangers at Roberts Field, outside Birmingham, Alabama. Little did I know that on this cloudless spring afternoon the most vital decision in my young life was about to be made.

Roberts Field, home of the 106th Observation Squadron, Alabama National Guard, was little more than a glorified "skid" strip. Wooded hills and residential areas bound it on the east by a creek and a steel mill, and on the north and south.

In the distance I heard the rumble of an aircraft engine. I shaded my eyes and as the roar drew nearer I saw a tiny aircraft heading in the direction of the field from the south. The plane seemed to scrape the treetops as it zeroed in on the landing strip.

The pilot dove straight at the field, leveled off only a few feet from the ground, pulled up into a graceful loop and started down again. The pilot fishtailed and side slipped into a perfect landing and taxied up to the flight line. The plane, a Curtiss-Hawk biplane was a beautiful thing to behold.

Meanwhile, the squadron personnel, from the commanding officer to the lowest "yard bird" private, had tumbled out onto flight line chattering, waving and raising one helluva racket. The plane's pilot waved to the surrounding crowd, drew off his goggles and helmet and jumped gracefully from the cockpit to the lower wing and to the ground. Commanding Officer Colonel Sumpter Smith, smiling and waving graciously, strode to the pilot, shook his hand, patted him on the back and turned toward the crowd.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I would like you to know Captain Melvin Asp, US Army Air Corp."

That was when I made my decision—a decision that was to propel me into a flying career expose me to the adventures in the sky, meeting the greats and the near greats the world over.

I would be less than honest if I didn't admit my heart was pounding, my legs weak, and I was happily fascinated by the sights and sounds occurring only minutes before. I knew from that minute on I wanted to be a military pilot and I swore on the faith of my Scots forbearers that I would be a good one.

When Col. Smith introduced me to Capt. Asp, I asked what he would suggest I do to get into the Air Corps. He said the best route would be a letter to Senator Hugo L. Black, junior Senator from Alabama. I followed his advice and before many more weeks had passed I was appointed a Flying Cadet at the US Army Air Corps Flying Cadet School, Brooks Field, Texas.

It was an awesome feeling. William C. McDonald, Jr., a scrawny kid from Fairfield, Alabama, hard by the smoking steel mills, whose lone claim to fame was an Eagle Scout's badge, was going to be one of Uncle Sam's "Fly Boys"!

NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE RECOVERY OF CNAC #60

Many of us can recall the excitement we felt in November 2011 when we heard that Clayton Kuhles had made it to the site where CNAC #60 crashed near Dali in China on November 18, 1942, taking with it all crew including young co-pilot James Browne, cousin of CNAC Association member Bob Willett. Kuhles even found a piece of the wreckage bearing the aircraft's construction number. Bob has continued to follow the situation and encourage a return to the scene to search for artifacts and remains. He recently wrote, "You might share this in the Cannon Ball since CNAC played such a critical role in our quest. Without (the CNAC Association's) help we may never have gotten this far."

On November 8, Bob's son Tom attended a briefing for MIA families held in Orlando by the JPAC/DPMO (Joint POW, MIA Accounting Command and Defense Department MIA Office). Bob reported after the meeting: "They gave us a copy of an investigation done by the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) when a team of PLA archivists went to Dali to get to the site." The PLA summary concludes:

"Since the U. S. Department of Defense and the Chinese Ministry of National Defense signed the memorandum to search for information relating to U.S. military personnel missing in action in China from 2008, we have developed a good and specific cooperative mechanism. We keep on cooperating with each other smoothly in a friendly and practical way and have gotten a couple of good results. The crash site of the plane in the JPAC 3211 case (CNAC # 60) has been ascertained. The U.S. could then come to Cang Shan Mountain, Dali, Yunnan Province to carry out on-site investigation and recovery. The PLA Archives Department will actively collaborate with U.S."

Bob reported that the Chinese ambassador to the U.S. met with Flying Tiger Association officers last year, and he (Bob) contacted the embassy and has been corresponding with Shiquan Wang, Third Secretary to the Embassy, who has been very responsive. JPAC has scheduled a search for August-September 2015. Bob says, "I have permission to go along, but have to pay my way. I'm planning to go." He has talked with Roy Dean, brother of pilot John Dean who also was lost in the crash, who agreed to submit a DNA sample in case remains are found by JPAC. Cousin Jimmie was adopted so a DNA sample isn't available to help identify his remains, if found. Bob has submitted an article "The Search for CNAC #60" to *Aviation History* recently and hope to hear from them soon, as well one to *Smithsonian*.

ANOTHER MUCH DESERVED AWARD FOR CAPTAIN MOON CHIN

On November 13, 2014, Captain Moon Fun Chin was awarded the San Francisco Aeronautical Society's Achievement in Aviation Award, "for his outstanding contributions and excellence in the aviation industry, and his demonstrated commitment to preserving its history." Captain Chin was made a Fellow of the SFA Society IN 2002.

HUMP AIRLIFT EXHIBITION TO OPEN IN APRIL IN NANJING

CNAC Association member Angie Chen (daughter of CNAC pilot Wei Ling Chen) has devoted much time and energy to preserving the history of CNAC and creating vital connections between our Association and groups and individuals in China. Most recently, she has been meeting with Curator Zhang and his staff, of the Nanjing Anti-Japanese Aviation Memorial Hall, which our group visited during our 2010 trip to China. At that time, some of us gave photos to the museum, which will form the basis for the exhibit, along with photos and copies of the Cannon Ball that Angie has provided. Donors will be acknowledged in the exhibit.



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|---|--|------------------------------------|--|---|------------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 (behind 5) |
| 1.陈孔生(南京航空联谊会副秘书长) | 2.王小娟(抗日航空纪念馆讲解员) | 3.沈先金(南京航空联谊会副会长、中山陵园管理局副局长) | 4.庞照银(南京市政协办公厅副巡视员) | 5.张鹏斗(南京抗日纪念馆副馆长) | 6.邵发林(南京航空联谊会秘书长、南京市政协外事委办公室主任) |
| 1.Chen KongSheng (NAA vice general secretary) | 2.Ms.Wang (NanJing Anti-Japanese Aviation Memorial Hall staff) | 3.Shen XianJin(NAA vice president) | 4.Pang ZhaoYin(NanJing Municipal PCC deputy inspector) | 5.Zhang PengDou(NanJing Anti-Japanese Aviation Memorial Hall vice director) | 6.Mao FaLin(NAA general secretary) |

The exhibit is set for an official opening on April 3, 2015, running to August 2015. We are all encouraged to attend. Angie will continue to provide technical support and advice regarding CNAC's history. Please contact her directly (2602105123@qq.com) if you have questions about the exhibition or would like to know more about visiting Nanjing, which is easily reached from Beijing by high-speed train. Make plans to go!

Angie (third from left) working with Nanjing Aviation Association



The soaring **Nanjing Anti-Japanese Aviation Memorial Hall** and spectacular sculpture representing the three allies (China, Russia and the United States), Members of Nanjing Aviation Association group with Angie Chen in the foreground. Plan to visit!



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2015 GREETINGS FROM A FRIEND IN KUNMING

Greetings from Lillian Qiyu Liao in Kunming, China! Kunming is not only a beautiful ancient city but also a city with a history of friendship between America and China during WWII. I would like to tell you that from July 2 to July 7 this past summer we performed my opera: *Green Path and Rainbow – The Story of Flying Tigers and the Hump* successfully at Ala Moana Center Stage, Pacific Aviation Museum and the city's Municipal Auditorium in Hawaii. Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell presented me with a Certificate of Appreciation, which in part said, For bringing the Kunming Flying Tigers Opera Troupe to Honolulu, where they performed at various venues, spreading the history of the Flying Tigers and traditional Yunnan culture, dance and song to the citizens of Honolulu."

In summer 2015 I will again lead my opera group to visit America. We are going to perform the opera, singing more and more for brave flying tigers and the Hump pilots, and for the help from American people during WWII. I'm looking forward to seeing you at my opera in America next summer! Best wishes to you and your families! Love, Lillian

To suggest performance venues/for more information contact Lillian: liaoqiyu@126.com

CNAC CANNONBALL
Eve Coulson, Editor
291 Russell Road
Princeton, NJ 08540

