

CNAC
ASSOCIATION



CANNON BALL

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AUGUST 2011
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REUNIONS OF PEOPLE AND THEIR PLANES

It's not too late to make plans to join us in San Francisco next month at the CNAC Association Reunion. Our block of rooms at the Embassy Suites in Burlingame (a short shuttle van ride from the airport) is half spoken for already at the unbelievable rate of \$109 a night, and we look forward to seeing each other and welcoming new members. Two of our favorite authors will be on hand: Greg Crouch will be telling us about the completion of his long awaited book about CNAC and Nancy Allison Wright is finalizing *Yankee on the Yangtze: Romance and Adventure Follow the Birth of Aviation* which will be available for purchase at the reunion. See president Peggy Maher's letter on the third page and the reunion registration form on the last page for more information and to sign up. Please come! Everyone is welcome and we all have a good time!

As reported in the April Cannonball, Clayton Kuhles is making plans to go the Yunnan Province in China this fall to locate and recover CNAC #60, the first aircraft CNAC lost during the Hump airlift. Thanks to the generosity and vision of a handful of CNAC Association members, he has raised \$3000, and an additional and unexpected \$500 from an anonymous friend of CNAC and avid Cannonball reader. That in combination with a \$5000 grant from the CNAC Documentary Fund has brought him close to the total funds needed to make this trek a reality. Clayton always commits a significant amount of his own money to every trek. Be a part of this historic event by making a contribution to MIAR recoveries and sending it to Clayton Kuhles, P.O. Box 12871, Prescott, AZ 86304. The organization has applied for 501c3 status, approval expected shortly, which if

granted will make your contribution tax deductible. Questions? contact Clayton by email at claytonkuhles@cableone.net or call 928-899-1614.

Peter Goutiere will be speaking at the Maine Air Museum in Bangor, Maine, in August. He is presenting the museum with some photos and other materials and will talk about his experiences learning to fly in Bangor in 1940.

ALWAYS IN OUR HEARTS

We learned just before going to press that **Carey Bowles** passed away on July 20, 2011. Carey was deeply involved in the CNAC Association and his quiet presence will be missed. You can send a note to his wife Cynthia (and daughter Cindy) at this address: Cynthia Bowles, P.O. Box 983, Sparta, NJ 07871. We will be sure to include a remembrance of Carey's life in the next issue of the Cannonball.

Arnold Schilperoot passed away on June 21, 2001. His granddaughter Beth Zandstra said, "It's very sad for our family, but he did live for 91 good years. We are so fortunate that we made the trip to San Francisco when we did as he talked so much these last few years about the trip, China, seeing Bill and all his wonderful friends. If anyone would like to reach out to my grandma or mail a card that would be appreciated." Her address: Maxine Schilperoot, 412 W. Lutz Road, Archbold, Ohio 43502

Corinne Powell Colthorpe, wife of Captain Ken Colthorpe, died on June 13, 2011. Their son Chris wrote, "I guess we are reaching that time in our lives when we will be saying a lot of goodbyes. Never easy, but I am thankful for what we have had, not bitter over what is gone." You can send a note to Ken Colthorpe, Swan Creek, 5916 Cresthaven Lane, Bldg. A 302, Toledo, Ohio 43615

Mary Lee Harper Maher, born in Paducah KY September 28, 1920 to Samuel and Myrtle Harper, passed away at home in her sleep April 27, 2011. Mary Lee moved to Jackson with her family in 1937, where she met her future **husband William J. Maher**, while he was working at the Virginia Lunch. They married after a long courtship in November 1944 and remained married for 66 years. She obtained work at the Hayes Hotel first working as a waitress in the Drum Room, later managed the coffee shop, and as Hostess in the Dining Room. During WWII she worked in the Payroll Department at Goodyear Tire and Rubber along with her special friend Helen Hitch. Mary Lee enjoyed dancing, and camping out with her girls in Northern Michigan, extensive world travel, cruises in Caribbean and trips back to Kentucky. She also enjoyed cooking gourmet meals for her family and friends at the family farm in Liberty and in her dream kitchen in her home at Grass Lake. (contact information for Bill Maher and daughter Peggy is on the previous page)





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It's time to make your reservations for the 2011 CNAC Reunion!!

It will be held September 7-10, departing after breakfast on September 11, at the Embassy Suites, Burlingame, CA. Again this year they are giving us the \$109 a night rate, which includes a two room suite with kitchenette, full breakfast and cocktail hour daily. This is an extraordinarily generous deal!

We continue to get new members each year who come to our reunion. This is a great time for us all to socialize, see old friends, and meet new ones, and to learn more about the history of CNAC. Greg Crouch has finished his book *China Wings: War, Intrigue, Romance, and Adventure in the Middle Kingdom During the Golden Age of Flight*. Greg plans to attend and share facts that should be new and informative. He says. "This book is such a great story!"

Dolly Wang, reporter for World Journal Chinese Daily News, has been in Taiwan doing research on CNAC and working with retired Air Force officials there. She will have some interesting things to report.

Renee Robertson has written a book about her father Art Lym, founder of the Chinese Air Force. She will also update us on what is going on in China during the 100 Years of Aviation celebration. Moon Chin has graciously invited us to his home for dinner on Friday, September 9th. Valerie is going to prepare her wonderful CNAC Curry. An event not to be missed!

So be sure to make your hotel reservations and send in your registration form today!

COME JOIN US AS WE SHARE OLD MEMORIES AND MAKE NEW ONES!

Peggy Maher

Peggy Maher
President, CNAC

Embassy Suites (near San Francisco Airport)
150 Anza Boulevard, Burlingame, CA
contact: Jon Macias or Rachel Fuller, Sales
650 292-7381

See last page of this newsletter for details and registration form

CEDRIC MAH

June 16, 1922-April 29, 2011

On June 16th 1922 Cedric was born in Prince Rupert to Sea Gee and Bon Quen Mah. His father Bon Quen was a wealthy land speculator who ran a grocery store, a bakery and a restaurant.

Ced loved to tell the story that when he was 3 years old, after hearing a loud noise, he ran out of the family house and was amazed by the sight of a plane flying at a very low altitude. He waved to the plane and saw the white glove of the pilot waving back at him from the cockpit. From that day onwards, young Cedric aspired to become a pilot. After having saved up his money he was able to take his first plane ride at the age of 13.



In 1935 after the death of his father the Mah family went back to China to bury him in accordance with his wishes.

Thereafter in 1936, Al Mah, along with two of the sisters returned to Canada.

In 1937, the Japanese invaded China. Only Cedric was able to gain passage on the CPR's Empress of Russia and Cedric's mother and sisters remained trapped in China.

In 1940 Al and Ced left Prince Rupert to study flying in the United States.

In 1942 the boys became training instructors in the Commonwealth Air Training Plan in Edmonton and Winnipeg under famous northern bush pilot Wop May.

In 1944 Al and Ced were released to fly the aerial Burma Road – the "Hump".

It was on one of these flights from India into China that Ced found himself throwing five tons of US dollars into the mountains. Icing had knocked out one engine of the two engine C46. The choice of dumping the cargo vs. jumping (which they contemplated) saved their lives as they managed to circle at 10,000 feet long enough for the engine to de-ice and return to Calcutta.

During the war, later in 1944, Al travelled through the Japanese line to rescue their thirteen year old sister, bringing her to the coast though the Himalayas.

In 1946, the family was eventually re-united when Cedric got his mother and other sister through Hong Kong and back to Canada.

In 1950, Ced arrived in Vancouver and in partnership with his brother Al, founded Palladium Recreation, an 8-lane bowling alley on Hastings Street.

In 1953, a mountain in the Coast Range was named Mount Ced Mah recognizing him for outstanding service transporting and supplying a government survey party under difficult flying conditions.

In 1960 he was flying for the Geological of Canada in what is now Kluane National Park and ended up spending the summer fighting forest fires throughout the Smithers district.

In 1964, Ced sold Palladium Recreation and moved to Edmonton.

In 1967 on a routine trip with Gateway aviation, Ced's flight didn't arrive as regularly scheduled. After two days missing and several search and rescue attempts by over 15 aircraft, Ced's brother Al joined the search. 10 days later, a little hungry but none the worse for wear, Ced and Pat Parker, of Yellowknife, were found. It was a heartfelt reunion, as the brothers had not seen each other for nearly 10 years.

At the end of the 1970s, thoughts of retirement entered his mind and he met and married Ruth Gronlund of Edmonton. He adopted her daughter Cheryll who was two at the time and shortly thereafter had a son Jonathan in 1974.

While 'retired' from flying, Ced spent his time working out of his home in Edmonton cutting precious stones and then designing and casting rings to set them in.

In 1980, Ced took to the skies again and joined North Coast Air, back in Prince Rupert.

In the summer of 1985, Ced flew for a tourist lodge at Great Bear Lake. And then in 1986 flew for Rae-Com Air out of Yellowknife.

In 1987, at 65 years of age, he began a full-time project of writing the Mah Family History in manuscript titled *Clan Horse: One Hundred Generations of the Mah Family*.

In 1997, Cedric is belated recognized by the United States Government for his service in China during the Second World War.

For the past twenty years, Ced has been a committed and very popular volunteer at the Albert Air Museum.

-Provided by Cheryll Watson, Ced's daughter

WHO HAD HIM WHEN HE FELL

By Captain Bert Coulson, June 1944

Upon returning to Calcutta for a short leave I discovered my lady had up and married a sturdy New Zealander in my absence. They were already in Bombay awaiting a ship, so I was spared the necessity of taking my gift and well wishes around in person. Further, the swimming club was closed for medical inspection, I don't like movies, down-country poker is dull, and I had been to the Burning Ghats. What to do?

Naturally, there is always something to do, but I'm lazy and want to leave my mind alone. A well-worn but apt aphorism suggests having a drink when in doubt, so I bounced over to Wally Wirth's to tap his Carew's *Fine Old Brandy*. This is no plug for that vintage; on the contrary, it is intended as a warning, being as awful as it is. But Wally, who as our Link Trainer Instructor, lived in Calcutta all the time, was always full of ideas, and he thought we ought to check a GI benefit carnival being held on the Maidan. The Maidan was the inevitable park to be found in the center of any city in India. The Romans used to give their slaves circuses, but the English get by with parks.

So we walked over to the Maidan through the muggy heat and recalled to each other all the carnivals we had attended as kids at home. Our recollections were quite similar, in spite of the fact that Wally was from Chicago and you could spit across my hometown on a clear day. We recalled with enthusiasm the hamburgers and hula girls, the games of chance and the freaks, and best of all, the rowdy fights and the times we sneaked in. We got ourselves so homesick that we were not only perfectly happy about it, but also willing to be serious about it. By the time we reached the Maidan and the carnival, we had agreed to a number of things Americans find themselves saying every day during this war: "Gawd damn, but it's good to be an American!" "Jesus, but we're the world's biggest suckers—look at this reverse land-lease baloney! But we can afford it and still be the best damn nation of them all!" "We may have to fight the limies in another generation, but when did we lose a war? We whipped 'em in 1776 and 1812, and we can do it again!" "The Russians? Who knows? We can get along with them if they don't push us; they started the first front, anyhow." "If we get it tomorrow, we've still had a better life than any other citizen of any other nation on the globe!" "Hell, yes; lots of things wrong with the United States, but we can fix that; no one expects a Ntopia in only one hundred and fifty years!" "Capital and labor and the veterans? Of course they'll battle it out—that's what a democracy's for, ain't it?" And so on.

But if many of our memories and opinions were alike, that night, our clothing certainly was not. Clothes may not make the man, but they mark him. I was still wearing the comic-opera uniform designed to impress the rank-conscious Chinese, while Wally had decided to pamper his homesickness by dressing like

the proud owner of a new South Side nightclub on opening night. So we arrived at the carnival full of that noisy gaiety common to all Americans on pleasure bent, and in the same spirit, we "didn't give a damn for nuthin."

All the birds and beasts were there. The hula show featured Indian Nautch girls who could burn the top off an asbestos stage and Burmese bumpers hotter than blowtorches. The Chamber of Horrors was full of sly digs at the noble British. There was a "Thin Man" who was obviously the victim of the recent rice famine during which millions of tons of rice rotted away while British and Indian speculators waited for higher prices. The "Elephant Man" had nothing to do with elephants; his limbs were ten times normal size, but nothing strange to us since the streets were full of such men. And yet another "horror" was a jovial English major who was engaged in imitating the "pukka probah British Sahib" representative of the empire-builder at his detestable worst. The Englishman who caricatured the overseas tea-drinker was one of many in the Far East who are beginning to criticize the empire system and its dependence on a combination of absentee—ownership and cheap native labor.

The Chamber of Horrors reminded us briefly of the war and the futility of the Atlantic Charter, but the carnival spirit had us, and we moved along. Here was Milk-Bottle Baseball, and there was a Jeep Roller-Coaster. You could "Duck the G-I" if you could hit an effigy of Tojo with a baseball—a grinning American private sat on a spring-board above a tank and periodically took a wetting. Rupees were flowing into Bingo-games, Pitch-the-Anna booths, and assorted lotteries. But wonder of all, over the way was an honest-to-God crap game run by the genuine bone-rollin' fadin' fools: none other than two real live American Negro sergeants!

"Hi-Yah! Hi-Yah! Come one, come all, you crapshooters and tinhorn gamblers! Put your money on the line and buy two rolls with no coffee! It's the king of sports, and the sport of kings! Hi-Yah! Hi-Yah! Step right up, gentlemen, and win a thousand rupees or go home with the blues!"

"God save us all! There are the two men who invented the game," Wally shouted. "Dig out your dirty money and let's get in—we'll break that game or go home broke!"

There were twenty or more crapshooters gathered about the table, while around them were gathered fifty or so British and Indian spectators. These onlookers were obviously baffled by the rapidity of the game and were awed at the amount of money changing hands so indifferently. How, they wondered, could these men, most of whom were enlisted, have so much money? Or how could these "O. R.'s" (other ranks than officers) afford to lose the equivalent of fifty or a hundred dollars a throw? Too, in their caste-conscious way, they were bewildered by the easy banter between the Negro dice men and the white officers and men around the board. But while the tent-flaps snapped in the

spring wind and the canvas overhead bellied out, we knew there was not prejudice here—how can you resent a man's accidental color in a friendly crap game?

Wally and I had commanded our way to the table, the jovial sergeant eyed us casually, tossed the dice to me, and said, "Yo' all's the big dawg, Son—roll 'em fast so that swift slickah by yo' can lose his wad!"

I made a pass, a point, and crapped out.

"Who had 'im when 'e fell? Pass th' dice! Pas me them fickle wondahs! They's wicked as wild wimmen an' twice as hahd-hahted!" The sergeant flourished a beef-like hand, and slid the dice across to Wally. "It's all youah's, She-cawgo slickah! All gamblahs will give 'im room and keep youah hands off th' table—don't git dice-bit, men 'cause it's bad luck to touch 'em! Shoot, She-cawgo, or drop you' pistol!"

"My pistol is loaded, Big Boy—gimme those hot rocks and stand aside." But Wally's pistol must have been filled with blanks, in spite of a couple of hot licks, which fizzled out just short of a run on the bank. He grinned ruefully and turned away from the table. "These boys play rough, I can see that. They went through me like high octane through a carburetor!"

"Beg your poddon, gentlemen. Could you explain to me the prim'ry essentials of this game of chawnce?"

Could we? Brother, could we! The speaker was a rather stiff British colonel, complete with brush mustache, gloves and riding crop. He had a suspicion of a twinkle in his eye to offset his rigidly pressed Khaki, but seemed guileless enough. We hurriedly borrowed a pair of dice from the sergeant, and hustled our student into a corner of the tent before we remembered neither of us had a rupee to our names. But the old boy did have a noble desire to learn the 'prim'ry essentials', so we gave him the word on how to shoot, fade, ride, and pass the dice.

Suitably, although vaguely impressed, our student plunged into the big game like a water buffalo charging a locomotive, and with the same bewildering results. Under our watchful eyes the colonel got hot and fell off, passed the dice, and took side bets until the dice hit his end of the baize-covered table again. But once more he was cold, and the game was slow by now, with no one getting fat and no one losing his cuff links. Our protégé lost his last rupees to the jovial query of "Who had 'im when he fell?" and turned to us rather abruptly.

"I say, old chaps, isn't it normal for one to win occasionally? I mean to say, how does one go about 'making a killing', as you put it?"

We explained that we too had lost, but would come back the next night with more rupees and hopes for better luck. The colonel rather imagined he might give it a go with us, and left us with the observation that it would be well if we all changed our luck.

Our second night of carnival found the bones cold toward us, but they were rolling over backwards to win for the colonel. He couldn't lose—he made Little Joes and Big Dicks come through for him, and bucked the odds like an old timer. Too, he knew when to quit. Turning from the table with a thousand rupees tucked away, he invited us to have a drink with him.

After an appropriate number of toasts to this and that, we wandered over to the tank where the G. I. was being ducked by accurate baseball pitches. A large crowd had gathered, and was split into two groups, one of which was American and one of which was mainly composed of British troops.

We discovered that there was trouble in the air. An American captain, a British officer, both of whom were burning alcohol in their boilers, had begun a competition to determine who the better pitcher was. Both were pitching accurately in spite of their limber state, but had started to argue about the relative merits of baseball and cricket. It had started when the American had begun to razz the Britisher about his "hop, skip, and jump" form of pitching, or bowling, as the Britisher called it. The crowd had taken sides, and a breach in Anglo- American relations seemed imminent.

The colonel, Wally, and I went into a huddle to decide how to prevent a riot. We agreed to buy up enough tickets to last an hour, ease the disputing pitchers out of the way, and stage what we hoped would be a friendly competition. Why call the M.P.'s when no heads had as yet been broken?

We were one too many for such a meet, so matched coins for odd man, it falling to his lot to replace the cheerful G.I. on the springboard over the tank. My usual luck held, and I took over the place on the board, clothes and all, over the tank.

The Colonel missed with three balls, and so did Wally. The crowd had been diverted by this little by-play, but was howling for a splash. I felt that near misses at Tojo's ugly caricature were sufficient, but the crowd was getting restive again. But one of Wally's roundhouse pitches dumped me for the count, and the water was fine, thank you.

The Colonel had three balls coming, and scored a home run on the second, but I was accustomed to the chill by now. The audience had recovered its cheerful attitude, but wanted to see who the winner would be, since the score was tied up—one score for Wally, and one for the Colonel. The argumentative Britisher had been led away by his friends, but the American hurler was still spoiling for

trouble. At this point an arbiter appeared in the genial form of our crap-shooting sergeant, who had closed his game to come over and see the fun.

"Suh," he explained, "Ah'll teh you what we do—we put this thing on a sportin' basis. Ah got a thousan' ru-pees heah, so Ah'll bet five hundred on the She-caw-go boy, and then Ah turns right aroun' and bets five hundred on the Kuh-nel's pitchin'. You pitch agin 'em both, Ah'll stand way back, and half of all winnin's goes to charity! Now how 'bout that—fair 'nuf?"

Our drinking cousin agreed, and won the toss from Wally for the first three pitches. The sergeant had melted back into the crowd out of sight, and the contest was on. His first two balls were low and outside, but the third connected squarely with Tojo's face. That pitch should have tripped the lever to dump me again, but no such thing occurred. Someone explained that he hadn't hit it hard enough, and our weaving pitcher had to concede. On Wally's turn he clipped the inside corner with a sizzling curve, and I was breathing water again.

The Captain paid off manfully, and motioned the Colonel to take first pitch. The Colonel made the elaborate cricket wind-up, hop, skipped and jumped toward the target, and apparently missed the target completely, but I was in mid-air at the time and while still under water decided he must have had a lot of steam on that one after all. When I had again clambered to the spring board and the trigger had been set, the Captain, disdainingly any kind of a wind-up at all, missed the target by feet. His third ball, however, seemed to connect on Tojo's chin, but without sufficient force again, and the sergeant appeared to collect the second bet.

The G. I. had come out of the crowd to take his place on the springboard again, and seemed happy about the whole thing. "That was a good deal, Sir. Five hundred rupees for charity, a good lesson for the Captain, and we didn't have to call the M. P.'s to break up a fight. Too bad you had to get wet, though. You can go behind the Tojo canvas and put on that dry uniform of mine."

I thanked him, and shivered around the corner of the canvas, On doing so I bumped into the chuckling sergeant, who was busily engaged removing a piece of rope from the trigger-spring of the dumping apparatus.

"Glad tuh see you, Suh", he grinned, handing me one hundred and twenty-five rupees in bills. "Ah got five hundred ru-pees heah foah charity, but tell me this-- Ah wondah who had 'im when he didn't fall?"

**COME ONE, COME ALL!
CNAC ASSOCIATION REUNION 2011**

September 7-10, 2011
(Sunday, September 11—breakfast and goodbyes)

Where: Embassy Suites, 150 Anza Boulevard, Burlingame, CA 94010
(650) 342-4600

Reservations: Call 1-800-362-2779 today
ask for your special CNAC room rate of \$109.00 group code CNU
ANY problems, call Rachel Fuller directly 650-292-7371

What: Registration check in begins Wednesday, Sept. 7 at 1:30 PM
presentations, fun, socializing, Thursday, Friday, & Saturday

Friday: Cocktails by the Pool & Dinner at Moon's House,
reservation required for planning purposes; we are Moon's guests
Saturday Evening: CNAC Banquet (at hotel) Reservation (\$55 per person)
required by August 15th

CNAC Reunion 2011 Registration

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Registration Fee: \$55.00 per person Number of people ____ Total \$ _____

Yearly Dues* \$40.00 Number of people ____ Total \$ _____

*disregard if 2011 dues have been paid

Optional donation to support Cannonball publication costs _____

Saturday Banquet \$55.00 per person Number of people ____ Total \$ _____

Grand total \$ _____

Friday Dinner - Moon Chin Host Number of people ____ (we are Moon's guests)

(check payable to: CNAC Association)

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Somewhere over the Hump/B. Sherwood

