



August 11, 1990  
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DEDICATED TO MAC

Most of knew Mac well. If not over there, over here at the Reunions. He knew China, and had a colorful/full history before he came to China, China before CNAC, and CNAC. He came back and became a business man. He lived out his days in Birmingham. He left Peggy Spain McDonald behind. They were married in Calcutta and she was a part of everything thereafter. The material reprinted here came from various sources but were written by him and, give a glimpse of a pioneer in Aviation, in U.S. and especially in China.

We discussed reunions with the C A T Association and they agreed to a joint reunion. After all there are so many that belong to the CAT and CNAC. Now that we will not meet with AVG this will be very compatible. Your editor looks forward to October 1990 in San Francisco. The Ojai Valley Inn was great especially in the old days when we could afford it. At this hotel the price is good. The location is good and the company good. We will miss the golf course but really we are meeting for each other.

I would like to make a special appeal. Most of us have completed our 6th cycle. All of us are beyond or approaching 72. Since we are not immortal we cannot look forward to countless reunions. As in the September song, the days dwindle down to a precious few. How many of us will be able to hobble to a reunion when we are 80. Three or four more reunions may decimate our ranks and that will be it. Some of you I remember so well and never see, Allen, Petach, Kusak, West, Laube, Ray Haupman, Gibby and Kenehan, Farrell, Bussart, Hugh Chin, Donald Wong, Mangun, Van Cleve, Bus Armstrong, Lester Chin, Tommy Wong and Al Mah. Come and joint us again. Drag your arthritic bones to San Francisco. Some of our number have done better, some didn't have the luck. Remember the bottom line. You were and still are CNAC. We knew you when. A scruffy bunch in a foreign land, an amazing bunch, a wonderful, colorful youngsters, some who had never been away from home. Whatever our motives were then we have now turned from adventurers to dreamers; dreaming dreams of long ago. Remember you were CNAC and nothing more need be added.

Many of our number have gone on to Hogy Taw leaving children and wives behind. I beseech those of you who can, come and fill those empty chairs. My biggest criticism with the July '89 reunion in Ojai was its briefness. It was over before we started. This reunion is scheduled for 3 days but I propose that we arrive a day or two early. Some of us will be traveling a long way.

"THE ORIENT'S OWN AIRLINE"



CIVIL AIR TRANSPORT

JUNE 1990

CAT ASSOCIATION REUNION RESERVATIONS  
HOTEL SOFITEL SAN FRANCISCO BAY  
223 Twin Dolphin Drive  
Redwood City, Ca. 94065  
Reservations: 1-800-221-4542

DATES: OCTOBER 26 - 28, 1990

ROOM RATES: \$75.00 SINGLE OR DOUBLE

PLEASE COMPLETE AND MAIL THE ENCLOSED RESERVATION FORM TO THE HOTEL SOFITEL FOR YOUR ROOM RESERVATION BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1, 1990, OR YOU MAY PHONE RESERVATIONS IF YOU PREFER.

REUNION FUNCTIONS - RESERVATIONS:

Please complete and return the form below along with your check to:

Mrs. Sue Hacker  
151 W. South Street  
Boulder Creek, Ca. 95006  
Phone: 408-338-9277

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

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		NO. PERSONS	TOTAL
REGISTRATION FEE	\$20.00 per person	_____	_____
FRIDAY BANQUET	\$29.75 per person	_____	_____
FRIDAY LADIES TEA	\$ 6.00 per person	_____	_____
SATURDAY CHINESE DINNER	\$18.75 per person	_____	_____
SUNDAY FAREWELL BREAK-FAST	\$15.00 per person	_____	_____
BUS TO & FROM CHINESE RESTAURANT	\$ 4.50 per person	_____	_____

CHARGES INCLUDE ALL GRATUITIES & TAX.

**CAT ASSOCIATION MEMBERS WELCOME THE ATTENDANCE OF ALL CNAC AND CATC MEMBERS AT THIS REUNION.**

I

OUT OF THE BLUE

Wm. 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, Ala. 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. It was bounded on the East by a creek and a steel mill and on the North and South by wooded hills and residential areas.

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 tree tops 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 sideslipped 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 to the lowest "yardbird" 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 Col. Sumpter Smith, smiling and waving graciously, strode to the pilot, shook his hand, patted him on the back and turned toward the crowd.

"Gentle", he said, "I would like you to know Captain Melvin Asp, U.S. Army Air Corps".

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

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military pilot and I swore on the faith of my Scots forebearers 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 U.S. Army Air Corps Flying Cadet School, Brooks Field, Texas.

It was an awesome feeling. William C. MacDonald, Jr., a scrawny kid from Fairfield, Alabama, hardby 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".

'Oh, by the way...'

by Wm. McDonald, Jr.

I was taking a shower when I heard a knock on my door at the hotel in Rangoon. Opening the door I found a travel agent for C.N.A.C. lounging against the woodwork with a copy of the morning paper in his hand.

"What's going on", I asked.

"Not much", he said. "Things are about as usual".

After accepting a Scotch and water, he said, in typical Oriental fashion: "Oh, by the way, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor this morning".

I nearly wet my pants.

I grabbed for the paper expecting to see black headlines but saw no mention of the attack. Finally, after a long search, I found a two paragraph item on Page 4 at the bottom of the page.

Jumping into my clothes I raced to the lobby and found Mr. Pauley. He, too, was in a state of shock. We decided the best thing to do was get the hell out of Rangoon and head for Kunming.

Arriving at Kunming several hours later we were instructed to fly to Hong Kong and begin evacuating Chinese VIP's and diplomatic personnel to the Chinese Mainland. 5

DC-3's carry a crew of four and 21 passengers. We "deadheaded" to Hong Kong and despite lack of radio contact most of the way we finally began picking up coded signals about 100 miles from the landing field.

After landing we found things in a complete state of flux. No one knew from one minute or the other whether the Japanese would be attacking the port. We did know that it seemed every warm body in Hong Kong wanted to get the hell out as soon as possible. The American newspaperman, Joseph Alsop was particularly insistent that he be among the first to leave.

We began screening prospective passengers and on the first of four flights we left with DC-3 fully loaded. Alsop was not aboard.

Each time we came back for more people, Alsop raised his ugly head demanding that he be among those flying out. We ignored his demands.

The last flight our one-plane airline made was the "hairiest" of all. We packed 120 men, women and children into the aircraft. We had the kids in the baggage racks, people in the toilet and other bodies crammed into any space wide enough.

The runway was 7000 yards in length and Chuck Sharpe, flying in the left seat, took every inch for takeoff. Just as the plane reached the water at the end of the runway I pulled the landing gear up and we were in the air.

Despite flying fully lighted we drew anti-aircraft greetings from our British friends but managed to escape being hit.

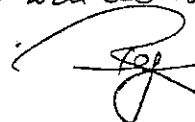
Sharpe and I wondered how Alsop was making out.

Editor:

This issue isn't up to last in quality. I did it on my own ~~verof~~. It didn't cost 600<sup>00</sup> either. Please excuse, the next one will be better. I hope to have it ready for the Reunion. Come and get your advanced copy there. I can't find an author like Waller for every issue, so someone write a good article for us. How about:

"Flying the pines,  
"A flight to Urumchi,  
"Christmas '46,  
"The last hours of CINAAC."

These will do to start.



Know this guy? This was the back cover of this week's *Collier's* (also on the *Life*) of October 28, 1944



CAPT. CHARLES SHARKEY, pilot of Pan American World Airway's C. N. A. C. route, has the record of 1900 hours flying the life-line to China from India over the Himalaya Mountains — *swarmed!*

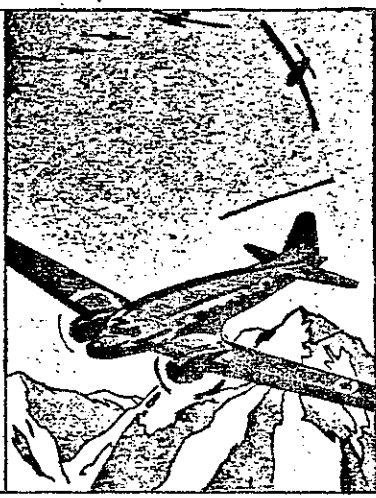


THEY'RE DESPERATE FOR THIS GAS IN CHINA, CHARLIE. JAP INTELLIGENCE MUST KNOW IT TOO... THE AIR'S CRAWLING WITH ZEROS. DO OUR BEST, CHIEF



ZEROS! A FLOCK OF 'EM. ONE TRACER BULLET'LL EXPLODE THIS CARGO FROM HERE TO CHINA!

The Zeros start to dive. "I was a piggyback" Sharkey said later. Visibility unlimited... no cloud-cover to hide in. He could not try to shoot it out with the Nips, because the transport carries no guns for fighting back. It's dive—or else! And transports aren't built for diving.



I'VE GOT TO TAKE THE CHANCE!

What's that on the horizon? A forest fire?—and Sharkey spots it. A smoke-screen to hide in... but leaping flame too. Bad place to fly with a cargo of 100 octane gasoline.



SHARKEY TO BASE. FLYING BLIND IN FOREST FIRE... AUNT NELLIE'S ON TOP!

\*PILOT SLANG FOR JAP FLIERS

Into the inferno. Flying blind! Fire all around him. Mountain walls on each side. The Japs above—with itchy trigger fingers.



I NEVER THOUGHT YOU'D MAKE IT, CHARLIE. TERRIFIC!

TERRIFIC ENOUGH TO REMIND ME I WANT A CIGARETTE NOW. BOY, GIVE ME A CAMEL, QUICK!

The back of his jacket isn't just fancy decoration. That's a message in Chinese—very useful if he's forced down—telling the natives to aid him.

**Camels** First in the Service  
The favorite cigarette with men in the Army, Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard is Camel. (Based on actual sales records.)



Try Camels on Your Own "T-ZONE"  
—that's T for Taste and T for Throat. Try Camel's mildness, coolness, and kindness on your throat. And the full, rich flavor of its wonderful blend of smoother tobaccos on your taste. Who knows?... Camels may suit your "T-Zone" so a T. You'll never know—till you try them! Now?

REMEMBERED

The following is an excuse to remember some of us. These are recollection of several of us including Potty.

OLIVER GLENN, pilot, May 15, 1946 to May 30, 1949.  
He and John Vivian arrived same day, same plane.

HOMER ANDERSON, pilot. His oxygen mask caught on fire trying to start cigarette lighter. He panicked and bailed out over Salween Valley.

CARL WISS, pilot. He had an accident on take off at Mudden<sup>K</sup> in 1947 or '48. He left CNAC and went to Indonesia.<sup>A</sup>

SAM WESTBROOK. When George Hiller left in '47 he was in charge of morning maintenance and Departures until December '49.

GUY TOMBERLIN, pilot of DC4s. He came out about 1947 but didn't stay long.

C. THORWALDSON, pilot killed January 14, 1945. He had been on rice dropping mission.

JOEY THOM, pilot before 1936. He was killed in 1940 or '41. He said "I don't want to be a hot pilot just an old pilot".

CHARLES "CHILI" VAUGHN. He said "I was 12 years old before I knew that "Goddamn Yankee" wasn't one word. He had a bottle of buzzard brandy. He declared he would drink before he left China. He dived in to save a drowning Chinese woman. His socks came off and 26 people dived in to get his socks. To add irony to the story, the woman was with child. He took her to the hospital and they billed him for the delivery of the child.

ARTHUR CHIN, pilot. He was Chinese air force pilot. He was an Ace, shot down many Jap planes. Badly burned in the face. His wife was killed at his bedside by shrapnel from a bomb in Kweilin.

RUSSEL A. "GIBBY" GIBSON, pilot. He went with Korean airline then with CAT, then Air America, later J A L.

FRANK HIGGS, PILOT. From Ohio, Classmate of Milton Caniff at Ohio State. Was Randolph graduate. He was an instructor for Chennault - joined CNAC 1944 killed October 20, 1945.

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BOB GAST, EARLY. He was never CNAC always PAA. He was k coastal run from Shanghai to Canton. His widow married Floyd

RALPH DU VZE, pilot from March '44 to January '46. He ca Pan Am and went back. He later became Airport Director at Erie International Airport, Erie, Pa.

BERT COULSON, pilot - He made up words to CNAC Cannonball He had an ability to sling the bull.

BOB ANGLE, pilot. He was an instructor under Chennault 1 He joined CNAC for a short time and joined PAA.

JOHN CORY, pilot. He was killed out of Hongkong. He was CNAC at the time.

HAROLD BROWN, pilot 1936-37. He didn't stay long. Flew

FUZZY BALL, pilot. He killed a tiger not far from Balyan He was killed January 7, 1945.

CHARLES COOK. He was killed in Suifu December 18, 1943. Wright's co-pilot.

RUSSELL ARMSTRONG, June '45 to October '46. Was "Line St supply supervisor in that capacity, and often flew "shot-gun between stations. He became president of CNAC American Employ they threatened to strike unless cost of living increase were forthcoming.

JOE BROWER 1947 to the end. Al Beorge and Frank Letts ca PAA as flight navigators. Later went with Lufthansen.

DONALD WONG came before 1936. He was flying Fords in 193 Came back to states and went back in 1941 for a while. Frieda was his sister.

HUGH CHEN, pilot, early to late. Originally a boat pilot back to states with PAA. He raised his 2 nephews. His nephew radio operator with George Huang when he crashed.

RIDGE HAMMELL. Hit mountain with Joe Rosbert, walked out after 1 month. Killed at Dinjan May 9, 1945.

MIKE SCHROEDER - shot down by Japs, killed October 13, 19

JIMMY SCOFF - Bailed out or crashed a C47. Potty refused check him out but Mac did it over his head. While flying over he saw a mountain top village whose name he thought sounded like Hogy Taw. He thought it was like heaven to go to when he died He is the Mayor and awaits all CNAC on his mountain top. He w to Hogy Taw October 7, 1944.



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Emil Scott, pilot, graduated from Randolph Field. He was an instructor with Chennault up country near Kunming, Married Betty - killed at Kunming 1941.

CECIL SELLERS, EARLY, killed - was with PAA all the time as was Bob East.

JOE SHEN, pilot, China born. Died of shrapnel wounds suffered in Chungking August 1939.

GERALD SHRAUDER, pilot post war. After leaving CNAC he went back in air force in Alaska Command 1956-60, 'Squadron Commander, Dobbins Air Base, Atlanta till 1970. Retired to California. Married Angela.

Chuck Sims, August '45 to December '47. Worked with Bill Newport and Fred Pittenger. Served in Maintenance in Calcutta Hankow and Shanghai. Became a PAA 747 Flight Engineer in LAX.

RICHARD SIMONS, early 1935 or so. He was a colonel in U.A. Air Force. He flew Stinsons with CNAC

HARRY SMITH, early and middle period. He died of disease carried by ticks in Chingking. He left China before 1936 then back as operations manager in late 1937 or 1938.

OAKLEY SMITH, JR. pilot, Dec. '47 to Dec. '49

V. EDWARD SMITH, pilot, was there before 1936. He married Hewlet Mitchels wife Dorothy. He left in 1937 and came back to Hongkong in 1940 for a short while.

W.J. SMITH, pilot, killed April 10, 1945.

HAL SWEET, pilot, 1937-42 died of a heart attack. He was the pilot of the DC 2½. He left wife Mable and 7 children.

JOHNNY TAI, pilot. Defected and returned to Hongkong and went with Malayan Airline. He was Malaysian Chinese.

ROBERT JENKINS, pilot August '43 to October '47 about same time as Casey Boyd and Mike Schroeder. He left Mia with Frank Higgs August 22, 1943. His last flight was 9-20-47 in a DC4 Sha to Shai via TAO and PPG. 20 war/time round trips over the Hung.

STEVE KAUFMAN, pilot. He was first pilot with CNAC - perhaps 1929.

DENNIS KELLY WAS A FERRY PILOT. Killed in Cuba March 8, 1944 on take off. He never got to China.

WALTER "FOX" KENT, pilot. He was an instructor at Hang Chow and then worked for Bill Hunt. He joined CNAC in 1939 and was killed near Kunming by Jap. Fighters strafing military Airport also passengers and crew of CNAC plane in 1940. He had a son Peter and wife was Marie Brown

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POP KESSLER, pilot, was a ferry pilot over the Pacific.

ARTHUR KIDDER, early pilot. He went to Boeing School for training 1937. He went with UAL until retirement in 1970.

FRANK KNAPKE, pilot mid and late. He went to Indonesia and married there.

BERNARD KUHLMEIER, pilot, late. He was killed in Beirut in 1957. He had been in Indonesia.

K.L. MAH, pilot, killed at Kunming August 1944.

JIM NORRIS - early - Chinese called him Da Fung (Big Wind)

JOHN OAKES - January '44 to January '46. He was the supervisor of Accessory overhaul shop. Worked with Martin Garrott, Frank Micka and King Clouse.

AL WRIGHT, pilot, killed December 15, 1943.

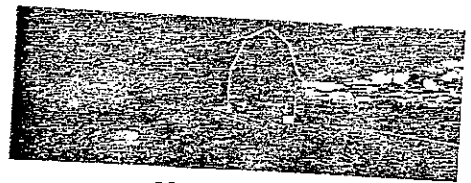
EDDIE QUINN - Brother of Babs Huang, married in Calcutta. He stayed in India and formed his own airline.

J.R. McCLESKEY, pilot. On August 13, 1937 on a check out and up with Allison - Hkg to Shanghai the last scheduled flight of CNAC into Shanghai from Hongkong. He stayed on CNAC payroll until he transferred to Panagra in November.

HERBERT McWILLIAMS, pilot, went to Indonesia and came back to states in 1954. Died in Portland, Oregon.

FRED PITTINGER, June '45 to August '47. He was with Bill Newport, Chuck Sims and Bill Sanford in South Pacific with PAA but part of the Naval Reserve in NATS. Newport came with CNAC first and through him the others followed. He was engineering officer of a little Rock called Funa Futi in the Ellice Islands 700 miles south of Tarawa in October 1944. He went to Honolulu, San Francisco and New York. In July '45 he came to Calcutta via North Africa and ended up in Kunming and later Shanghai. He was one of Frank Micka's line "chiefs" and finally chief inspector. He left August '47.

ROYAL LEONARD, pilot. He flew for TV Soong and the Generalissimo. He had been with TWA. He had all kinds of experience. Blind flying was his specialty. He flew T.V. to get Chiang when kidnapped by Commies in 1936. He was very inventive. Died in U.S. 1962.



JOHN OAKES  
P.O. Box 163, Valley Springs, CA 95252

JUNE 3/90.

MR. BILL MAHER - PRES., CNAC ASSOCIATION.

DEAR MR MAHER:

I WANT YOU TO KNOW HOW MUCH I APPRECIATE RECEIVING THE CNAC ASSO. BULLETIN, TELLING OF THE REUNION LAST JULY.

I AM SURE YOU DONT KNOW WHO I AM, BUT YOU MAY BE FAMILIAR WITH MY NAME - ON THE CNAC MAILING LISTS FOR MANY YEARS.

DURING THE YEARS I WORKED AT CNAC (CALCUTTA - 1944/45) I WAS A MECHANIC, ONE OF THE SEVERAL SENT BY PAN AM IN 1944. THIS WAS DURING THE HECTIC EXPANSION PERIOD. MY JOB WAS TO KEEP THE ENGINE ACCESSORIES OF THE C-47'S AND C-46'S REPAIRED AND WORKING UP TO PAN AM STANDARDS. SO I SPENT NEARLY ALL OF MY CNAC TIME AT THE CNAC MAJOR MAINTENANCE BASE AT DUM DUM, CALCUTTA.

EVEN THIS ACTIVITY WAS NOT WITHOUT IT'S FRUSTRATIONS AND UNPLEASANT CONDITIONS. BUT IT CANNOT MATCH THE UNEXPECTED THINGS THAT HAPPENED WHEN I WAS SENT ON AN INSPECTION AND FAMILIARIZATION TRIP TO ASSAM AND CHINA.

ON THE LEG FROM ASSAM (DINJAN) TO KUNMING, I WAS ASSIGNED AS EXTRA CREW, WITH PILOT CASEY BOYD.

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I WAS PARTICULARLY PLEASED TO BE FLYING WITH CASEY BOYD, AS HE HAD A REPUTATION OF BEING A SMART AND CAUTIOUS, AS WELL AS EXPERIENCED HUMP PILOT.

WE HAD A VERY HEAVY LOAD OF STEEL OIL DRUMS, ALL FULL AND SOME LEAKING BADLY. WE MUST HAVE BEEN OVER-CROSSED BY SEVERAL THOUSAND POUNDS.

OVER BURMA, AFTER ABOUT TWO HOURS IN THE AIR, COMING OUT OF HIGH CLOUDS, AND STILL CLIMBING, AN AIR FORCE C-46 NARROWLY MISSED US. THE C-46 WAS APPARENTLY IN CRUISE, TRAVELING VERY FAST. THIS WAS CLOSE; WE CROSSED THE C-46 TURBULENCE TRAIL INSTANTLY. I AM SURE THE C-46 CREW HAD NO IDEA. ON LET-DOWN, THERE WAS A MAGNIFICENT VIEW OF THE KUNMING VALLEY AND COUNTRYSIDE. I HAVE NEVER SEEN AN AREA AS IMPOVERISHED.

AFTER A FEW DAYS WITH THE CNAC MAINTENANCE PEOPLE AT KUNMING, I RETURNED TO DINJAN. THIS TIME I ROPE WITH ERIC SMILING, ALSO AN EXPERIENCED HUMP PILOT, WHO COMMANDED RESPECT AMOUNG HIS PEERS. IT WAS AN ALL NIGHT-TIME FLIGHT, TAKING OFF FROM KUNMING ABOUT 1 AM. OVER BURMA AGAIN, THE RADIO DIRECTIONAL SIGNALS OUT OF ASSAM WERE SUDDENLY CUT-OFF DUE TO AN EXPECTED JAP AIR RAID IN THE AREA. AT THE SAME TIME, WE WERE PICKING UP WING ICE AND LOSING ALTITUDE. ALL THIS ON

III

CIRCLE FOR AN HOUR. APPARENTLY THE EXPECTED RAID DIDN'T OCCUR. THE RADIO SIGNALS CAME BACK, WE HIT WARM AIR AND GOT RID OF THE ICE, WE REGAINED OUR ALTITUDE AND HEADED FOR DINJAN. WE LANDED WITH A FEW GALLONS.

WHAT AMAZED ME MOST, WAS THAT NEITHER BOYD, NOR SKILLING SEEMED EVEN SLIGHTLY SHAKEN OVER THESE EVENTS. I HAVE OFTEN WONDERED IF THEY ENTERED THE WORD "ROUNNE" IN THEIR FLIGHT LOG. OF COURSE, I'LL NEVER KNOW. BUT I DO KNOW THAT CNAC HAD SOME CALM, SHARP, AND BRAVE PILOTS ON THEIR PAYROLL. MUCH RESPECTED.

*Eric, come to the reunion and tell him*

HERE ARE SOME OF THE CNAC PILOTS NAMES, THE FEW I KNEW BEST FROM CARD GAMES AND FRIENDLY CESSIONS AT THE DUM DUM BUNK HOUSE:

DON BUSSART  
JIM MONAHAN  
NELSON PELL  
JIMMY SCOFF  
—: THORWALDSEN

HUBERT ANDERSON  
WM DIDDING  
"TEX" SMITH  
-MANY OTHERS WHOSE NAMES HAVE FADED

THANK YOU FOR MAILING THE CNAC BULLETINS. I LIVE NEAR SAN FRANCISCO (100 MILES), AND WILL TRY TO ATTEND THE MEETING SCHEDULED IN OCT/90.

MY KINDEST WISHES,  
*John Jones*

Feb. 8, 1990

Dear Dr. Farrar:

A note of thanks for the Dec. 15 edition of Cannonball. This sort of thing takes time, and I'm sure it is appreciated by all concerned.

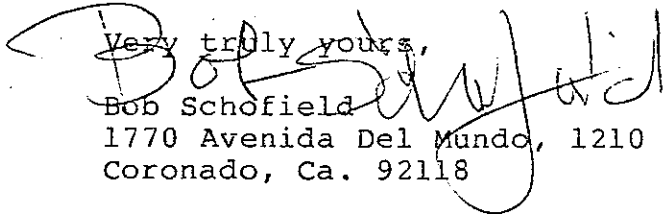
I thoroughly enjoyed the excerpt from Just Beyond the Firelight. I have been in the process of writing my memoirs of the flying years to leave behind for my daughter and her children, an effort that certainly wont compete with Mr. Waller's admirable style. However, it has been an interesting experience, and my brief time with CNAC resounds in memory quite out of proportion to the short six months involved.

I went to India in company with Joe Hardin, Vic Henry, Rich Krupke, Bill Odum along with others unremembered. Ridge Hammel joined us in New York heading back for his second and fatal tour. Ridge gave me my pre checkout ride about a week before his tragic accident.

I returned home after wars end to a dismal year as a partner in my father's furniture business, met my bride to be, and headed for Alaska before becoming captive of a business I despised. I was with Alaska Airlines for three and a half years during which time they went from a small Alaskan carrier to the world's largest non sched back to a small carrier. Maintainance had gone to hell, and the CAA mandated they get rid of the charter operation or lose their certificate. This period did take me to Hong Kong to pick up refugees for Tel Aviv, and I ran ito Rich Krupke on the ramp and also Frank Knapke at the Penninsular Hotel.

When AA fell apart I headed to Florida as the number three driver on a new DC 4 overseas operation that unfortunately(or perhaps fortunately)never got off the ground. Back to Alaska chasing the left seat and finally stabilized with Pacific Norther Airlines who subsequently merged with Western Airlines. Retired on DC 10s November of 1982, the beneficiary of a lot of good luck.

Given my short time with CNAC I've always felt somewhat of an impostor as a "Hump" pilot, but it remains the highlight of a forty year flying career. Again my thanks for your efforts in keeping the memory alive.

Very truly yours,  
  
Bob Schofield  
1770 Avenida Del Mundo, 1210  
Coronado, Ca. 92118

5 FEB 1990.

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DEAR REGINALD —

THANKS FOR THE CANNONBALL. YOU'RE DOING A GREAT JOB WITH IT — THE STORY ABOUT URBAN IS

SPLENDID — Well, I started to print this, but it seems to be taking up too much space, so I'm back on the good old Sierra. This is my Quentin Roosevelt story:

One day at Shanghai, I was delivered to Lungwa for the usual 0700 T/O for the North milk run up to Peiping. We flew a bucket-seat C-46 with passengers from Shanghai to Nanking, Tsingtao, Tsinan and finally, Peiping (now Beijing). In operations they advised me that Mr. Roosevelt and some Time Magazine people would be along on the trip. They all popped in, and after the usual introductions, I headed for the aircraft and started my walk-around. We loaded up soon after, and soon were able to start rolling. Of course, I invited the group to the cockpit after take-off and we had settled down in cruise. The weather was fine, and they all had a lot of questions about the progress of the struggle with the Communists. It was late 1948, as I recall (I can't find any notes in my log book, unfortunately). I had just returned from some air drops to one of the (usual) surrounded Nationalist Armies, and I was feeling pretty bitter about the lack of air support being given by the Chinese Air Force. They seemed to be a bunch of gutless wonders that were doing their best to see that the Reds could win the match. Well, we chatted about this and that, so I asked them, and with Roosevelt's permission, if they'd like to see the CAF in full battle array, doing their stupidest. They surely did, and with Quentin's O.K., we deviated from course after Tsinan and flew up along a branch of the Yellow River, and sure enough, there were four CAF B-24's dropping 500 lb. demolition bombs right into the middle of the rock-strewn dry bed of the Yellow. There must not have been a commie within 100 miles of the place, or anybody else. We never got very close, of course, but they probably wouldn't have seen us anyway. We went on to PPG, and I never did find out if a story was filed, but I did have the satisfaction of being able to show someone from the outside world one of the things that was going wrong over there.

Quentin Roosevelt was a good administrator, very likeable, and we all felt a tremendous loss when Sunny took the DC-4 into that rock near Hong Kong. Frank Chang, one of the best Chinese mechanics we had was also on board that final Sunny goof. One of the first things that Quentin wanted to do when he came over to run things in SHA was to ask to meet and talk to all, or as many as possible, of the Captains. He was very inspiring.

REGARDS,

G.V.  
(GORDON SMITH)

"THE MEN ON THE FLYING TRAPEZE"

by ME

In late 1931 the Commanding Officer of the Air Corp Tactical School at Maxwell Field was participating in an Armistice Day celebration at the Alabama Polytechnic Institute, Auburn, Alabama, and was very much chagrined to see the Air Corps formation flying over completely out-classed by the flashy formation flying of three pursuit planes from a rival service (Naval flyers from Pensacola, Florida). As soon as Colonel John F. Curry could get back to Maxwell Field he phoned Captain Chennault to come to see him at once. This was the beginning of the "Men on the Flying Trapeze". Colonel Curry told Capt. Chennault of his experience at Auburn Alabama, and asked him if it would be possible for the Captain to organize a demonstration unit and train them so that the air Corp could be properly and adequately represented on similar occasions. Capt. Chennault was thrilled to receive these instructions and promptly picked out two young pilots to train. One was John H. Williamson, a former Reserve Officer, who had enlisted and was serving as a Sargeant at Maxwell Field and Lt. Haywood S. Hansell. For one year the General set up a training program for each individual pilot to practice precision aerobatic maneuvers, and after each pilot had reached the point of perfection in every maneuver the Captain would take them into the skies above Montgomery, Alabama and go through the maneuvers in three ship Vee formation.

The team was organized to demonstrate to the officer students at the Air Corp Tactical School advanced pursuit (fighter) formation flying. Capt. Chennault believed that Air Corp pilots could be trained to go into combat in formation and the formation would be able to do any maneuver and stay in formation that a single plane could do.

In 1932 Capt. Chennault selected another young pilot, who also had served active duty time as a 2nd Lt., and enlisted at Maxwell Field in order to fly on this demonstration team. His name was William C. McDonald, Jr, from Birmingham, Alabama. Lt. Hansell dropped out after the first year and the next year, 1933, Mr. Roelif Loveland of the Cleveland Plane Dealer gave the team its name "The Men on the Flying Trapeze". This name was given because of the skillful way that General Chennault kept this three-plane team before and always in front of the spectators in the grand stand.

"The Men on the Flying Trapeze" succeeded two other famous demonstration teams. The "Three Musketeers" from the West Coast, and the second team was the "Three Mud Turtles", from Selfridge Field, Michi