

CNAC CANNON BALL

ASSOCIATION



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MAY 15, 2004

This is the 50th anniversary of the founding of the CNAC Association. It all started at the House of Chan in New York City. What it grew into was an enduring association which still goes on even though so many of us have gone to Hogy Taw.

There have been meetings every two years in Miami, Las Vegas, San Francisco, San Diego and Orlando.

We have published several books, a newsletter, has been able to establish exhibits at National Aviation Museum, The Oshkosh Museum and the San Diego Air Museum.

Over the years the importance of this airline in inaugurating the Hump flying with its profound effect on the Chinese war effort. It was the first massive air lift in history, and the only commercial airline to exist in a zone of war.

Finally, this service was recognized by the U.S. Air force and we were given "Honorable Discharge" with the appropriate medals.

At the present CNAC Association has a web site WWW.CNAC.ORG, and its history has been recorded on tapes.

In this issue Roy Farrell's manuscript is continued. Unfortunately it was not published so it has been serialized here.

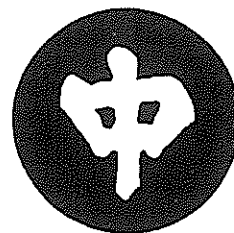
EDITORIAL

As I think back to Christmas 1953 (with tongue in cheek) I mailed the initial notices. I could not believe the response. The formation of the Association took place May 15, 1954. It seems impossible that 50 years later we would exist and have accomplished so much. the credit goes to Mac, Bill and so many others. It has been a mutual effort. I am so happy to have played a small part.

~~generally speaking, over 80.~~

THE CNAC STORY

THE CHINA NATIONAL AVIATION CORPORATION



The China National Aviation Corporation played a significant role in the history of modern China. Originally a partnership between the Chinese government and the Curtiss-Wright corporation, the airline became a part of the Pan American Airways empire in 1933.

Surmounting massive technical problems, CNAC established the first air routes in China, connecting the commercial center of Shanghai with Canton, Peking, and the cities along the Yangtze River.

Following the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war in 1937, CNAC remained China's sole means of speedy communications with outside world. Operating conditions were extremely hazardous because the airline was forced to fly under the worst possible circumstances to avoid Japanese attack.

Before America's entry into the Pacific war, CNAC pioneered the famous route over the Hump between China and India. When the Burma Road was cut off by the Japanese Army during WWII, this route became the only source of outside supply for China. CNAC's operation of an air-lift over the Hump became the most glorious chapter in a notable history.

It was the world's first major airlift, and it was a pilot's nightmare.

The 500-mile route traversed some of the most treacherous country in the world. Flying with few or no radio aids over inadequately charted areas, under constant harassment from enemy fighters, CNAC pilots had not even the satisfaction of being able to shoot back. Their C-47s and later C-46s were unarmed.

In the early days of WWII, CNAC also provided airlift for the AVG, transporting personnel and supplies to and from the various Flying Tiger bases. To fly pilots to India on their way to pick up new planes for the AVG and CAF, CNAC provided the service. General Jimmy Doolittle and his Raiders who landed in China,

were flown across the Hump on the beginning of their journey home.

In addition to its regular commercial operations, CNAC carried military supplies between India and China under a Chinese Government contract arranged in 1942 with the U.S. Army, which supplied Douglas C-47 and C-53 planes and, later, Curtiss C-46 transports. During the war, CNAC and the U.S. Army Air Transport Command carried approximately 10 and 90 percent, respectively, of the total lend-lease supplies flown across the Hump. From April 1942, when the Burma Road was lost, to April 1945, CNAC made more than 35,000 trips over the Hump. In 1944 it flew almost 9,000 round trips, or 10,000,000 miles, over this route, transporting approximately 35,000 tons of lend-lease, and also strategic materials. During the war it also transported to Northwest China considerable amounts of strategic materials destined for Russia. Carrying 38 percent of all strategic air cargoes on world routes in 1944, CNAC ranked second only to the Air Transport Command, which carried 57 percent. CNAC also played an important role in the Burma campaign by dropping food to Chinese expeditionary forces, evacuating besieged Chinese and British troops, and supplying the Ledo Road project with men, equipment, medical supplies, and food. Between October 22, 1944, and January 21, 1945, it made 523 trips, dropping 1,836,970 pounds of rice to roadbuilders.

To fill their ranks, CNAC added many Tiger pilots to their number when the AVG was disbanded, as well as other commercial pilots recruited in the United States and China. Some of the new pilots never had flown anything bigger than a Cub. Most of them never had been at the controls of multi-engine equipment nor were they familiar with instrument flying.

Now they were called upon to fly day and night over the world's roughest and highest terrain in all kinds of weather 16 to 20 hours daily.

THE BIRTH OF THE CNAC ASSOCIATION

I visited Natalie Mickelson. I guess it began on the way to Maine. Early in 1952, she and her husband owned the Cascio Day Trading Post in Freeport, Maine.

Each visit we asked of anyone we had known. I thought someone should get the group together. To me almost anyone else would be more appropriate. On one visit, she commented that why not you... I, at last agreed. We contacted Howard Dean and pooled our lists. The Christmas Day 1952 I mailed letters to each name. The response was astounding. We got back over 100 names and addresses. The letter told me of a reunion of the AVG in May 1953. I suggested we meet with them. My idea was rejected by their president but was told there was no reason we could not meet at another hotel down the street. I wrote the list we had suggesting that anyone who wanted to come was welcome.

The first day I sat at the table in the hotel, registering each who came. I could not believe those who came. They came from Texas, California, Michigan, Florida. That movement which I had wistfully started induced so many to come. These added to the AVG members. We all attended the AVG banquet and then May 15 at the House of Chan. This was the most exciting meeting we have ever had. I was elected the first President. Fifteen minutes later I resigned and Red Holmes was elected President.

We chose Mac as the honorary president. Red Holmes called on each one for a story of those days. We tried to duplicate this but never quite made it. We set the pattern of reunions every two years. The next was at the Fountainbleu in Miami Beach. This brought out the many who were local. Zack Mosley of Flying Jack Comic Strip. In the meantime, we found Pappy who was working in Newark. He came to Florida and appears in the photo as he usually stood in the front row in the middle. George Hamel, Mr. Bond, Mac ~~Allen~~ were there. Ray Allen made in only one appearance. Rocky Roncaglione invited us to his restaurant the Tail of the Tiger in Fort Lauderdale. Ray Farrel was elected our third President.

WILLIAM MAHER

The Association can never honor this captain enough. He is our current President. He has contacted so many to keep the Reunion successful; mostly through his efforts we are represented at the San Diego Air Museum. His undying efforts secured Honorable Discharge from the U.S. Aircorps. This was a tough battle in Michigan and Washington, D.C.. The last miracle wass to secure recognition and a large exhibit at the U.S. Air Museum at Wright Field in Dayton, Ohio. As an association has headed to its final years. He has carried us to heights never imagined.

CNAC PHYSICIANS

There were four American physicians in CNAC and one Indian physician hired in Calcutta. Dr. Richards was the head physician. He had been the flight surgeon for the AVG in Burma in 1941 and 1942. He was employed by CNAC when it became necessary to expand the airline with the Hump operation. Doc Richards was a general practitioner and a very credible flight surgeon. On one of his trips home on leave he wrote a letter to Charity Hospital in Louisiana offering a job in India and China.

At that time a young physician Reginald Farrar was interning at Charity Hospital. He was a native of Maine, graduated from the University of Buffalo that year. At Charity Hospital he took courses in Parasitology and Tropical Diseases at Tulane Medical School. As he was already in the Army he applied for the job was accepted and in 1944 proceeded to Calcutta. There he met Dr. Paul Laube a surgeon already there.

Dr. Laube had worked in Liberia and then CNAC. He shortly left to teach in China. Dr. Hoey was recruited just before the end of the war. He and Doc Rich went to China with the company. Reg Farrar left the country also went to China before returning to the United States.

PAUL J. LAUBE, M.D.

* Job with CNAC - Medical Officer

Dates of Service - June 1943 - June 1944 - Calcutta

Wife's Name - Lavon

Children's Names - David (stockbroker). Douglas - born in Calcutta - University of Iowa Staff Doctor in OB-Gyn. Edgar - born in Chengtu - China Scholar.

Paula born in Tsinan - Medical Technologist. Sara - born in Dubuque
How he got there (early life) Native Dubuquer. Surgical Training Yale University. He heard of PAA need for medical officers in Africa. Served 1 year Fish Lake, Liberia; 1 year Calcutta; transferred with full agreement PAA to Chengtu to join West China and Cheeloo University Medical Staff 1944, under mission suspices. 2 years Chengtu, 2 years Tsinan. 1 year Foochow. 1 year back to Boston for further surgical training Lahey Clinic and since 1950 practicing Dubuque, general surgery. Still going. President Dubuque Area Chamber of Commerce 1968. Serve on Board of Directors, University of Dubuque (Liberal Arts College and Seminary); Board of Directors Bethany Home (founded by my Father, 1920). Am summer time river rat on Mississippi, winter time ski bum at local ski area (honest, have great ski area here in eastern Iowa with ski buses coming from Wisconsin!) Enjoy reading Cannonball, Anyone from former days passing through please stop. (Kusaks have done it 4 times).

Kentucky Aviation Hall of Fame Class of 2003

October 28, 2003 / Contact Alice McCormick (859-271-5600) or Ray Holbrook (859-873-3372)

Hugh Lee Grundy, Springfield

Hugh Lee Grundy, born in 1916 at Valley Hill, Kentucky, earned his pilot's license at Louisville's Bowman Field. He attended Curtis Wright Institute of Aeronautics and Plosser Flying School, and occasionally helped Howard Hughes with his Boeing 307 and his famous Speed Holder.

In 1941 Grundy went to Africa with Pan American, supposedly to establish a commercial air route but actually to build an Allied supply route. After service in the Army Air Corps, he worked with China National Aviation Corporation in Shanghai and was chief engineer when CNAC's Chinese management fled before the Communists.

American officials encouraged Grundy to remain with CNAC, but he joined Chennault's Civil Air Transport. From 1954 to 1976 he served simultaneously as president of CAT, of the CIA's Air America and of Air Asia. He also managed Pacific operations of Southern Air Transport. He commanded over 10,000 men and women who served America's objectives (either openly or covertly) in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Taiwan, Japan and Korea. He served 27 years in China, retiring from Air America in 1976.

For 40 years, Hugh Grundy served America with dedication and discretion. Only when he was honored by the Congress and the CIA in 2001 did his wife, Frankie, realize his true role. She had accompanied him throughout his career, enduring war and rebellion, thinking he was simply an aviation executive. In fact, he was an invaluable – but secret – asset to America.

David Lee "Tex" Hill, Louisville

David Lee "Tex" Hill was born in Kwang Ju, Korea, on July 13, 1915. His missionary family returned to the US in 1916 and lived in Louisville, Kentucky, while his father was pastor of the First Presbyterian Church. The family moved to Texas, and following college David entered Naval flight training at Pensacola. He earned his wings in November 1939 and flew carrier-based dive-bombers over the Atlantic.

In 1941, FDR secretly authorized Col. Claire Chennault to recruit US military pilots to serve a six-month civilian tour in combat in China. Hill joined this American Volunteer Group, 110 pilots who became the legend known as the Flying Tigers.

Chennault developed combat rules that turned the P-40's strengths against the Zeroes' weaknesses. Even with supply and logistical problems, by July 1942 they had destroyed 299 aircraft (with an additional 300 probables) while losing only eight pilots. Eventually, however, enemy ground forces closed the Burma Road, the supply route from India, and the AVG was disbanded at the end of the tour.

Hill accepted a commission in the new 23rd Fighter Group. Flying P-51 Mustangs and P-38 Lightnings, by November '44 they had virtually cleared the China skies of Japanese aircraft. Following discharge, he joined the Texas Air National Guard; at 30, he was the youngest brigadier general in Guard history.

Tex Hill accumulated 2,400 flying hours, including 700 combat hours. He had a total of 18-1/4 victories. His military honors include American, British and Chinese decorations. In 2002, he received our nation's second-highest award, the Distinguished Service Cross, for valor in battle over enemy-held territory in China 60 years earlier.

A courageous leader against great odds, Tex Hill went to war before our American war was declared. Six months prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor, he fought the Japanese air force – and became the second-leading Ace of the legendary Flying Tigers.

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From the New York Times

DEAN-Howard B. Died August 23rd in Southampton Hospital of respiratory failure. He was 80 years of age and a resident of East Hampton, New York. Mr. Dean attended the Browning School in New York City, Pomfret School and Yale University. During World War II, he served with Pan Am Africa and the Chinese National Aviation Corp AVG in India and China. He received commendations from the Chinese National Government and the United States Air Force for his service in the Asia Pacific Theatre. An active member of the Wall Street community for forty years, Mr. Dean was a partner at Harris Upham before becoming a Senior Vice President of Dean Witter Reynolds, Inc. He served on the Board of Governors of the Investment Bankers Association, the American Stock Exchange and the Association of Stock Exchange Firms. He was a member of the Vestry of St. Luke's Church, East Hampton, New York, and served for a number of years as Senior Warden. He served as a member of the Board of Trustees of Browning School, of Pomfret School and as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of St. George's School, Newport, Rhode Island. He was a member of the Board of Directors of the Hospital for Special Surgery and the Freedom Institute, both of New York City. He is survived by his wife of 54 years, Andree Maitland Dean, three sons, Howard B. M.D. (Judy) Governor of Vermont, James H. (Virginia) of Fairfield, Connecticut, and William G. (Beth) of Dover, Mass. and ten grandchildren; two sisters, Marianne Hill of Cold Spring Harbor, New York and Nancy Felch and her husband, William C. Felch M.D. of Carmel, California. He was pre-deceased by a son Charles, who died in Laos in 1974. Above all, his memory is defined by his friendship, humanity, integrity, and humor which will be missed by all of us. Funeral Services will be held on Thursday, August 30th, 2001 at 11 A.M. at St. Luke's Church, James Lane, East Hampton, NY 11937. Interment will be private. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to St. Luke's Church Endowment Fund.

ROBERT HEILIG

Job with CNAC - Pilot

Dates of Service - 1943 44

Wife's Name - Lee

Childrens Names Linda Lee, Judy Lou, Leslie Ann

How he got there (early life) He was in the U.S. Army Reserve on inactive duty. At time of hiring to CNAC he was a Glenn L. Martin Test Pilot. Test flew the Martin B26 Maurauder mostly for a three year period. Previous to this time I had received an engineering degree in aeronautics and a mechanics degree from what is now known as the Northrop Aviation Institute. He was also a flight instructor and taught for the Army as a civilian instructor. Joined CNAC in New York and flew over with Snell and Reg Farrar. He was the Co-pilot on the flight.

CHINA NATIONAL AVIATION CORPORATION
ASSOCIATION



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Jean Chang.
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February 3, 2004

Dear Mr. Jean Chang

Allow me to introduce myself since I believe we have some important history to share with you. My name is William J Maher President of CNAC Association CNAC Captain during and after WW II.

CNAC Association commissioned and produced a video history of CNAC covering the years from 1929 to 1949. This documentary contain pictures and interviews with CNAC personnel who where with the airline during this period.

Several Chinese television stations have expressed an interest in the documentary but have not had the funding required to help us offset the cost of the production.

We are very proud of the resurgence of CNAC and believe that the documentaries distribution would be an asset for the current CNAC Corporation. Any assistance from your organization would be greatly appreciated.

The producer Mr. Arthur Lindgren of Monumental Production Company, Everett, Washington (E-MAIL Address ONGRAND@AOL.COM) is handling the sale and distribution of this Three Part Documentary.

WJ Maher
President
CNAC Association

Bill Maher is attempting to connect with the new CNAC in Hong Kong. The following letter is his first attempt.

Christie Hanks single handedly on his own initiative found Jim Fox's plane Number 53 an engineered its removal to Kunming where it has become a memorial.

Talk at the Oxford Scribes program on November 16, 2003

I am Fletcher Hanks. I wish to clear up two misconceptions about my World War II activities. I was not a Flying Tiger. The license plate on my car refers to my wife, Jane Hanks, who was the only registered nurse of the American Volunteer Group, the real Flying Tigers. Jane went to war in 1941 to defend the Burma Road. She fell in love with John Petach, an AVG pilot, married him and got pregnant in that order. John was killed in China.

I have not served in the U.S. Armed Forces but I have an honorable discharge from the Navy for special flights I made for them in Alaska flying the wounded out of Attu and Kiska. I also have an honorable discharge from the Air Force by flying 347 round trips over the Hump. I am a card-carrying-veteran with veteran status. (Here is my card.) There are less than 100 veterans qualified as I did. There are two of them at 104 North Morris Street. How this happened is another story. I am here to sell you my book.

“Saga of CNAC #53”, written in the first person, about a military operation of World War II and particularly about an airplane that crashed in the Himalaya Mountains, March 11, 1943. After I located this airplane 53 years later and brought it off the mountain, it made history by revealing to the Chinese in 1997 that the Japanese invaded their country during World War II and America was instrumental in saving them from certain defeat. The Chinese lost these historical facts when their recorded history was destroyed by the “Gang of Four”. I was instrumental in restoring it. An American piloted CNAC #53 a freight airplane and both his crewmembers were Chinese. That was undeniable proof to the Communist rulers six years ago that Americans came to China’s aid in their darkest hour. It was the biggest news in China for a long time.

This historic airplane CNAC #53 owned by China National Aviation Corporation, CNAC, pronounced C-knack and flown by Jim Fox a civilian pilot, a soldier of fortune, one of the highest paid pilots of the world.

His route was flying from India to China, which crossed over a spur of the Himalaya Mountains that forms a natural border between China and Burma. The CNAC pilots who flew it first named it the Hump. During good weather the Japanese fighters gunned for them and during the monsoon season they experienced the most violent turbulence and icing conditions known to aviators. It was the only place then and since then where planes

lost their wings in flight. It is now considered the most dangerous transport flying in the history of aviation.

CNAC pilots flew the Hump along side of the Air Transport Command, ATC, part of the U.S. Air Force. The ATC developed their own ignominious name for the Hump; that was the Aluminum Trail as they destroyed 1556 airplanes while CNAC only lost 39. Although they delivered seven times the amount of freight into China, their losses were staggering, equal to the rate of losses of the Eighth Air Force bombing Germany.

“Saga of CNAC #53” is not just about the blood and guts of airplane crashes; it relates what CNAC pilots did for amusement when they were at their apartments in Calcutta, India for two weeks a month. It was the time when sex was safe and flying airplanes was dangerous. Both required a degree of nerve. Any one who dared to regularly fly the Hump route certainly had enough nerve for the other, especially after he had a few brushes with death and he realized that his life expectancy was suddenly contracted.

“Saga of CNAC #53” is scheduled to be published the first week in January by 1st Book Publishers. It contains 65 pictures and maps most of them have never been published before, many were made especially for this book.

Fletcher Hanks

RAY E. GILLILAND

Job with CNAC - Pilot

Dates of Service - October 1943 to January 1945

Wife's Name - Joanne

Childrens Names Ron, 33 yrs, Scott, 28 yrs, Chris 25 yrs.

How he got there (early life) He had a student at Purdue who had a sister working for Pan Am in the New York Office. This is how he found out about CNAC.

HENRY R. JOHNSTON

Job with CNAC - DC-4 Instructor Captain

Dates of Service - April 1946 to October 1947

Wife's Name - Allaire G.

Children - None

How he got there (early life) - He came to CNAC with DC-4's after leaving the Air Force in 1946.

ANDY
ANDY ANDERSON

PAGE 1 OF MY "TURBINLIGHT" FERRY TRIP TO SCOTLAND:

ACTUALLY, (FINALLY), I REMEMBERED THAT TIME WHEN I FLEW INTO GANDER, NEWFOUNDLAND AND HAD PROBLEMS WITH WEATHER AND AN ENGINE OF MY B/25 (TURBINLIGHT) AIRPLANE, THAT I WAS FERRYING FROM MONTREAL, CANADA TO PRESTWICK, SCOTLAND (VIA THE NORTH ATLANTIC OCEAN):

THE AIRPLANE HAD A BIG AND LONG BARREL (HOLDING ELECTRIC WIREING)? IT EXTENDED THE LENGTH OF THE PLANE, UNDER THE FLOORBOARDS TO THE ENORMOUS LIGHT AT THE TIP OF THE NOSE, FOR GUIDANCE OF THE PURSUITS, TRYING TO LOCATE THE ENEMY PLANES AT NIGHT (I SUPPOSE), TOO, THERE WERE "FINGER STACKS" AS AN EXHAUST SYSTEM IN EACH ENGINE, TO GIVE LITTLE OR NO LIGHT (INSTEAD OF THE USUAL "COLLECTOR RING" EXHAUST, IN MOST AIRPLANES' ENGINES).

WELL, I HAD NO CO-PILOT (ONLY A RADIO OPERATOR, WAY IN THE BACK-END). MY RIGHT ENGINE CAUGHT AFIRE, (AND, OF COURSE, THAT WAS A WORRISOME PROBLEM. I BELIEVE THAT THE FIRE HAD GONE OUT (RATHER QUICKLY, AS I REMEMBER, BECAUSE THAT PART OF THAT FLIGHT HADN'T STUCK IN MY MIND. I SUPPOSE THAT I FEATHERED THAT RIGHT ENGINE'S PROPELLER, TOO).

ONE OF THE MAIN PROBLEMS, WAS, THAT I COULDN'T GET THE PLANE, HIGHER THAN 17,000 FEET ALTITUDE, IN ORDER TO TAKE A "BEARING" ON A STAR OR THE MOON. THE "OVERCAST" WAS VERY THICK, (PROBABLY, ENDED 1,000 TO 2,000 FEET HIGHER THAN WE COULD (THEN) CLIMB TO. UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES A BEARING WAS VERY IMPORTANT, IN ORDER TO REMAIN ON OUR (DESIRED COURSE) TO SCOTLAND (AS I DID NOT WANT TO LAND IN FRANCE OR GERMANY). TOO, SINCE I HAD THAT PROBLEM WITH THE RIGHT ENGINE, I HAD, IMMEDIATELY, THOUGHT THAT IT MIGHT BE NECESSARY TO "BAIL OUT", BUT I, SURE, DID NOT WISH FOR US TO BAIL-OUT AND GO INTO THAT COLD (MAYBE 50 DEGREES BELOW ZERO-CENTIGRADE), NORTH ATLANTIC WATER!

AT ONCE, THEN, WE TRIED TO GET PERMISSION (FROM THE GANDER RADIO-PEOPLE) TO GO TO GANDER AND LAND THERE, BUT THE RADIO-PERSON AT GANDER, TOLD US THAT GANDER AIRPORT HAD BEEN "CLOSED" TO ANY AIR-TRAFFIC ALL NIGHT, DUE TO THE "WINTER-STORM", AND HE SUGGESTED THAT WE GO TO STEPHENSVILLE, MAINE, WHICH WE JUDGED, WAS ABOUT THE SAME (OR A BIT MORE) DISTANCE AWAY.

PAGE 2 OF MY "TURBINLIGHT" FERRY TRIP TO SCOTLAND, CONT'D:

(IMMEDIATELY), I SAW A RED LIGHT (WHICH I HAD PRESUMED TO BE THE BACK LIGHT OF ANOTHER AIRPLANE) HEADING IN THE SAME DIRECTION OF THE GANDER AIRPORT. (WE WERE OVER THE OCEAN AND ABOUT PARALLEL OF THE GANDER AIRPORT, I FLEW MY PLANE SEVERAL HUNDRED FEET BACK OF THAT PLANE'S RED LIGHT, AND EVENTUALLY, HE FLEW OVER GANDER AIRPORT, WITH ME FOLLOWING HIM. AND, JUST THEN A "HOLE" IN THE "OVERCAST" DEVELOPED OVER THE "FIELD", AND WHAT I THOUGHT WAS ANOTHER PLANE THAT I HAD BEEN FOLLOWING, FLEW "ON". OF COURSE, I THOUGHT, FOR A MOMENT THAT IT WAS STRANGE FOR HIM TO DO THAT, BUT, I DOVE OUR PLANE THROUGH THAT "HOLE" AND LANDED ON A RUNWAY OF ICE, AND SKIDDED ON THE ICE OF THAT RUNWAY, CLEAR-BACK TO THE HANGER AT THE END OF THE FIELD, AND WE STOPPED THERE, AND WENT IN.

THE MECHANIC, THERE, CAME OVER TO MY SIDE OF MY PLANE, AND YELLED UP AT ME, AS TO WHAT THE MATTER WAS. I TOLD HIM THAT I "LOST MY RIGHT ENGINE" (MEANING I COULD NOT, OPERATE MY RIGHT ENGINE. THEN THE TELEPHONE OF THE HANGAR RANG, THAT MECHANIC WENT TO ANSWER IT. HE CAME BACK UNDER MY SIDE WINDOW, AND YELLED-UP AT ME, THAT IT WAS THE TOWER OPERATOR ON THE PHONE, AND WANTED TO TALK TO ME.

OF COURSE, I GOT DOWN AND WENT OVER TO THE PHONE. THE TOWER OPERATOR, ASKED ME, HOW I MANAGED TO FIND THE AIRPORT, AS NO "HOLE" HAD APPEARED OVER THE AIRPORT ALL NIGHT-LONG. AND THAT HOLE THAT I WENT DOWN THROUGH LASTED ONLY FOR ABOUT 3 MINUTES ALL NIGHT. I TOLD HIM, TOO, THAT I FOLLOWED A PLANE OVER THAT HOLE, AND HE SAID THAT WAS IMPOSSIBLE, FOR NO PLANE FLEW IN NEWFOUNDLAND ALL NIGHT. WELL, I WAS DUMNFOUNDED, AND TOO EXHAUSTED TO "PONDER" MUCH ABOUT THAT, SO BOTH OF US (CREW MEMBERS) WENT ON-UP TO BED!

THE FOLLOWING MORNING, I WENT TO THE HANGER, WHEN THE MECHANIC SAID TO ME, "CAPTAIN, HAVE YOU SEEN YOUR RIGHT ENGINE"? OF COURSE, I SAID "NO". WELL, HE THEN TOLD ME, THE TOP ENGINE-MOUNTS HAD BURNED AWAY, THE FIRE WALL HAD BURNED AWAY, AND ONE OF THE LOWER ENGINE MOUNTS WAS "GONE", AND IF THE OTHER ENGINE MOUNT HAD "GONE", YOU'D HAVE "LOST" THAT ENGINE, FOR SURE! GOSH, I HADN'T DREAMED WE HAD THAT MUCH OF A PROBLEM!! WOW!!

WELL, I DO NOT BELIEVE MUCH IN "MIRACLES", BUT MAYBE ALL THAT WAS A "MIRACLE".

THAT MECHANIC (PERHAPS, BECAUSE OF THE "FINGER STACKS" EXHAUST, AND THE MAJOR FIRE IN MY RIGHT ENGINE), ALL OF THE SQUADRONS OF THE WORLD "GROUNDED" THE "TURBINLITES", AT LEAST, TEMPORARILY. I GUESS WE CREW-MEMBERS WERE LUCKY!!!

“BAIL OUT”

BY ANDY ANDERSON

3/19/02 (AFTER READING THE HEADLINE ON THE COVER OF AN AMERICAN NATIONAL MAGAZINE RECENTLY, RE-THE “RATED” AND “UNDERRATED”, AIRCRAFT PILOTS, I DECIDED TO WRITE ABOUT ONE INCIDENT THAT HAPPENED TO ME, AS I WAS 15+ A YEARS YOUNG “YESTERYEAR” AND “UNDERRATED” (“UNHERALDED”) PILOT:

BEFORE WW II, I FERRIED MOSTLY “LEND LEASE” PLANES, FOR THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, THROUGHOUT ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, WALES AND NORTHERN IRELAND, WHERE I WAS WHEN PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT ANNOUNCED, OVER THE RADIO, RE-THE BOMBING OF “PEARL HARBOR” AND “THE DAY OF INFAMY,” AND THE START-UP OF WW II.

(AS A 2ND THOUGHT, I DECIDED TO NAME THE FLYING-JOBS THAT I HAD, SO IF THERE ARE OTHER PILOTS READING THIS, THEY MIGHT EMPATHIZE):

I FERRIED BRITISH AND AMERICAN PLANES FROM FACTORIES TO SQUADRONS, SQUADRONS TO MAINTENANCE UNITES, ACROSS THE NORTH ATLANTIC OCEAN FROM CANADA TO SCOTLAND. (I WAS THE CAPTAIN-PILOT WHO STOPPED-OVER IN GANDER, NEWFOUNDLAND, FOR FUEL, AND I WAS FERRYING A B-25 “TURBANLIGHT” PLANE TO SCOTLAND, AND WHO GROUNDED ALL THE “TURBANLIGHT” B-25s USED IN SQUADRONS ALL OVER THE WORLD, BECAUSE OF THE POOR JOB DONE ON THE PLANE’S EXHAUST (FINGER-STACKS) SYSTEMS. LATER, I TRANSFERRED TO THEIR NASSAU, BAHAMAS BASE AND FERRIED PLANES ACROSS THE SOUTH ATLANTIC OCEAN TO SCOTLAND VIA AFRICA.

(ONE TIME IN FLYING ALONG THE COAST OF AFRICA, I PASSED BY A MEETING OF THE HEADS OF COUNTRIES CALLED “YALTA” IN MARRAKESH, MOROCCO). (ROOSEVELT, CHURCHILL AND STALIN WERE AMONG THESE IN ATTENDANCE).

THEN, FOR AWHILE, I WAS A PRODUCTION-TEST-CO-PILOT FOR THE CONSOLIDATED VULTEE COMPANY, DOMINANTLY ON B-24s. LATER, I TRANSFERRED TO THEIR NEWLY ESTABLISHED AIRLINE (CONSAIRWAYS), FLYING AS A CO-PILOT ON THEIR B-24s, WHICH ONLY FLEW HI-PRIORITY PASSENGERS AND CARGO TO AND FROM THE FAIRFIELD, SUISUN AIRBASE IN CA., TO SAN FRANCISCO TO HAWAII, CANTON, FIGI, NEW CALEDONIA AND BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA, AND BACK VIA NANUMEA (A COUPLE HUNDRED MILES FROM THE ISLAND WHERE AMELIA EARHART WAS REPORTEDLY, RECENTLY, FOUND ALIVE). THE I FLEW THE “HUMP”. LATER, WAS CO-PILOT WITH NATIONAL AIRLINES AROUND FLORIDA, A VENEZUELAN RANCH’S MEAT HAULING PILOT. AN EXECUTIVE-PILOT A VENEZUELAN OIL COMPANY – TAKING THEIR PASSENGERS TO AND FROM THEIR OIL RIG. LASTLY, AERIAL PHOTO PILOT FOR THE

VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT.

ALL IN ALL, ABOUT 52 DIFFERENT TYPES AND MARKS OF PLANES WERE FLOWN (BRITISH MADE, AND AMERICAN MADE). ALL GAVE ME ABOUT 2000 HOURS OF FLYING-TIME. (NOT MANY HOURS-THESE DAYS REALLY).

IT SHOULD BE MENTIONED THAT THERE IS NO MORE "HUMP." AS THE MODERN AIRLINE PLANES, FLYING OVER THE SAME AREA FLY TOO HIGH.

I PROBABLY FIRST SHOULD WRITE ABOUT THE LIFE THAT WE "HUMP FLYERS" HAD: WE ALL LIVED IN A LARGE HUT ON A "TEA PLANTATION" NEAR WHAT WAS CALLED "DINJAN" (THE UPPER ASSAM VALLEY OF INDIA) AND WE FLEW FROM THE BASE TO AND FROM KUNMIN, CHINA MOSTLY VIA THE "NAGA HILLS" AND BURMA EVERY DAY AND INTO THE NIGHTS.

WE PILOTS AND CREWS FLEW FOR (CNAC) CHINESE NATIONAL AIRCRAFT CORPORATION. CHANG KAI CHECK RAN THAT GOVERNMENT. THE CHINESE NATIONALIST WHICH OWNED 80% OF CNAC. PAA (WHICH PUT IN THE RADIO NAVIGATIONAL EQUIPMENT) ALL OVER THE "HUMP" OWNED THE 20% REMAINING.

WE FLEW, MOSTLY, C-47s AND C-46s AND, MOSTLY, WE FLEW CARGO OR WORKERS - OR BOTH. MUCH OF OUR CARGO WERE BALES OF PAPER CHINESE "YEN" MADE IN USA, FOR THE CHINESE, AS THEY HAD A TREMENDOUS MONEY PROBLEM THEN. AND UPON MANY OF OUR RETURN TRIPS, WE HAD "HOG BRISTLES" AS CARGO. THE HOG BRISTLES ARE THE "BRUSHES" PART OF PAINT BRUSHES.

IT MIGHT BE MENTIONED, THAT ANYTIME A PLANE DID NOT RETURN TO BASE, AFTER A TIME, THE PLANE AND CREW WERE FIGURED TO BE "GONE", CRASHED EITHER IN THE WILD CHINESE OR BURMESE "JUNGLE" OR IN THE MOUNTAINS, WHERE THERE WAS 6 TO 9 FEET DEEP SNOW, AND IT WAS DEEMED THAT NONE OF THE PLANES COULD BE FOUND, NOR COULD THE CREWS. APPARENTLY, THE MANAGEMENT HAD TRIED SEVERAL TIMES TO NO AVAIL, AND FINALLY, IT WAS DEEMED TO BE IMPOSSIBLE TO FIND ANYONE, ALIVE OR DEAD!

(MY WIFE AND OLDEST SON LIVED IN LIBERTY, MO. THEN, AND SINCE SHE GOT ONE OF HER LETTERS BACK - STAMPED "DECEASED" ON HER ENVELOPE - CAUSING HER TO GO TO BED FOR A DAY OR SO, BUT SHE GOT ON FROM ME, QUICKLY, THOUGH, AND REALIZED THAT I WAS NOT DECEASED!")

NOW! TO (FINALLY) WRITE ABOUT MY "BAIL OUT" INCIDENT OVER THE BURMESE JUNGLE, WHILE I WAS FLYING FOR (CNAC):

THIS IS ONE EPISODE THAT HAPPENED TO ME AND MY CREW, THAT I'D LIKE TO

SHARE:

MY PLANE (C-47) AND CREW OF A RADIO OPERATOR (ONLY) WERE ABOUT TO RETURN TO OUR BASE IN INDIA, FROM KUMING (EMPTY OF CARGO), WHEN A NEARBY (BASED) USA SERVICE MAN ASKED ME IF HE COULD GO ACK WITH US, AS HE WANTED TO GET, EVEN PART-WAY IN INDIA FROM SOME "R & R" IN CALCUTTA. WELL, I AGREED TO TAKE HIM BUT I TOLD HIM THAT MUST BORROW A PARACHUTE, AS WE HAD ONLY 2 ON BOARD OUR AIRPLANE, AND, IF WE HAD TO BAIL-OUT, I COULDN'T LEAVE HIM. AFTER A BIT OF CONVINCING, I TOLD HIM THAT I'D WAIT FOR AN HOUR FOR HIS RETURN. HE DID, AND WITH A PARACHUTE AND HE BECAME MY CO-PILOT.

WELL, WE TOOK OFF AND "LO AND BEHOLD" WE WERE ABOUT 60 MINUTES EN ROUTE TO INDIA, AND THE PLANE CAUGHT FIRE (NOT FROM GUN-FIRE), AND WE THREE BAILED-OUT OF THE PLANE, OVER THE BURMESE JUNGLE. ON THE WAY FLOATING DOWN, I YELLED AT THE OTHER TWO FLOATING DOWN, NEAR BY, "WE JUST PASSED OVER THE IRRAWADDY RIVER AND MEET ME AT THAT RIVER. LATER, WHEN WE MET, THEY TOLD ME THAT THEY DID NOT HEAR ME. (I FOUND OUT LATER THEN, THAT ALWAYS, ONE'S VOICE MUST BOUNCE OFF SOMETHING, FOR ANOTHER PERSON TO HEAR, NO MATTER HOW CLOSE.

WELL, I LANDED IN A TREE, RELEASED MY PARACHUTE, AND FELL TO THE GROUND (NOT A VERY FAR FALL). I SAW A PATH IN THE DISTANCE, HEADING TOWARD THE IRRAWADDY RIVER, WHICH FLOWED SOUTH, AND ON WHICH, AND FARTHER SOUTH, WAS THE U.S. AIRBASE AT A TOWN CALLED MYITKINA, BURMA). (WE ALWAYS CALLED IT "MITCHANAH").

I WALKED DOWN THAT PATH TO THE RIVER, WHERE I SAW AN ISLAND TO SLEEP – ON (AS I DID NOT CARE TO SLEEP IN THE – WILD ANIMAL JUNGLE –). I LAY DOWN AND WAS "DRIFTING-OFF", WHEN I SAW, WHAT I THOUGHT WAS A CROUCHING (SITTING) TIGER ABOUT 20 FEET FROM ME. WELL, I CONTINUED "DRIFTING-OFF", AND WENT TO SLEEP, AS I WAS EXHAUSTED. THE NEXT MORNING I AWAKENED AND LOOKED TOWARD THAT TIGER, IT TURNED-OUT TO BE JUST A BUSH!!!

I WALKED BACK TO THAT PATH (AS IT VEERED SOUTH, TOO, ALONG AND NEAR THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE RIVER). I NOTICED A SMALL 2-MAN (BAMBOO) RAFT ON THE WATER'S EDGE, AND FAIRLY NEAR THE PATH THAT I WAS WALKING ON. I GOT THAT RAFT, AND STARTED TO FLOAT DOWN THAT RIVER, BUT IT WASN'T MANY HOURS WHEN THE RAFT HIT A "WHIRLPOOL," WHICH BADLY DAMAGED THAT RAFT, BUT, JUST THEN, I HAPPENED TO SEE ANOTHER 2-MAN (BAMBOO) RAFT ON THE RIGHT BANK, AND I PADDLED (WITH HANDS) TO IT AND GOT IT AND PLACED IT OVER MY DAMAGED ONE, AND CONTINUED MY FLOATING DOWN THAT RIVER.

A BIT LATER ON, I NOTICED, ON THE RIGHT SIDE PATH OF THAT RIVER (THAT I HAD STARTED WALKING DOWN ON), A GROUP OF COWS BEING DRIVEN BACK UP BY YOUNG FELLOWS. TWO OF THOSE FELLOWS SAW ME AND GOT A 2-MAN RAFT NEARBY AND PADDLED OUT TO ME. THEY, THEN, GUIDED ME AND MY RAFTS BACK TO THEIR SHORE AND THEN TOOK ME TO THEIR VILLAGE, NEARBY (AND TO WHERE THE COWS APPARENTLY WENT). WE STOPPED AT THE FIRST EDGE OF THEIR VILLAGE AND GAVE ME A BIG LEAF FULL OF RICE AND SOME OTHER FOOD TO EAT. I ATE IT ALL, AS I WAS FAMISHED.

WE, THEN, WENT TO THE CHIEF'S LARGE, THATCHED HUT ON THE OTHER EDGE OF THAT VILLAGE, HIGH (ON STILTS) – SO THE WILD ANIMALS COULDN'T COME, I GUESS. WELL, WE THREE, WENT UP THAT LADDER AND INTO THE THATCHED HUT.

THERE WAS A FIRE IN THE FIREPLACE UNDER THE FLOOR, AND IN THE MIDDLE OF THE BIG LIVING-ROOM (I GUESS), AND THE ENTIRE VILLAGE OF PEOPLE WITH SARONG SKIRTS ON SITTING ALONG THE WALLS (CURIOUS, I GUESS), AND MY 2 COMPANIONS AND I SAT IN THE MIDDLE OF THAT ROOM NEAR THE FIREPLACE.

SOMEONE HANDED ME A SKIRT-SARONG TO PUT ON. I WENT IN THE OTHER ROOM AND DID SO. THERE WAS NO BATHROOM, AND SINCE THE HUT HAD AN OUTSIDE (RAILED) WALKWAY SURROUNDING TH UT, I PRESUMED THAT WAS USED FOR BATHROOM PURPOSES, SINCE THERE DIDN'T SEEM TO BE ANY OTHER.

THE CHIEF OF THE VILLAGE RETURNED FROM "HUNTING" THEY HAD TOLD ME, AND HE, IMMEDIATELY, TOLD ME IN "ENGLISH" TO GO INTO THE NEXT ROOM AND PUT MY SARONG-SKIRT ON CORRECTLY, AS PEOPLE COULD SEE MY NAKEDNESS, AS I HAD PUT IT ON INCORRECTLY. WELL, I PUT IT ON CORRECTLY.

SOON, I ASKED A PER SON FOR A CIGARET (AS I HAD HEARD A LONG TIME AGO, THAT THE U.S. AIR FORCE PEOPLE HAD "CACHED" CIGARETS, ETC. IN FIELDS OF NEARBY VILLAGES FOR THE CRASHED SERVICE MEN TO USE.) NO ONE IN THE GROUP UNDERSTOOD MY LANGUAGE, SO GAVE ME MORE RICE TO EAT.

I DO NOT REMEMBER SLEEPING IN THE VILLAGE, BUT MY TWO COMPANIONS TOOK ME TO THE PATH, AT THE EDGE OF THAT RIVER, AND, WE 3 BEGAN WALKING TO THE AIR FORCE BASE, AND WHEN WE ARRIVED, I ARRANGED TO GIVE THEM BLANKETS, AS A GIFT, AND THEY DEPARTED.

THE ORDERLY, THEN ASKED ME, "CAPTAIN, WOULD YOU LIKE TO EAT?" THEN HE ASKED ME IF I'D LIKE TO WASH FIRST. WELL, ID DID, AND LOOKED IN THE MIRROR OF THE LATRINE, AND SAW MY HAIR STANDING UP LIKE A FIGI ISLANDER, AND MY SUMMER FLYING SUIT WITH BURN HOLES ALL OVER IT. WELL, I STRAIGHTENED MYSELF AS BEST AS I COULD.

HENNICK'S



Higgs went to college with Milton Caniff. He was the model for Dude Hennick, so named for a Columbus, Ohio hangout. Higgs crashed shortly after the war.