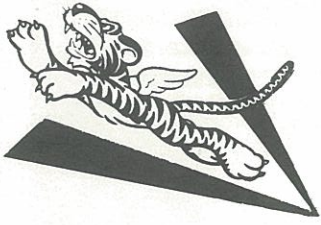


FLYING TIGERS

American Volunteer Group — Chinese Air Force



THE TIGER RAG

FALLBROOK, CALIFORNIA

OCTOBER, 1978

Return to TAIPEI

TAIPEI REPORT
Len Kimball

In 1952, in Hollywood, the AVG held its first reunion. Twelve years later, in 1964, the group flew to Taiwan for its first reunion abroad among the people for whom they had fought in World War II.



Fourteen years later, in 1978, the AVG returned to Taiwan for its second reunion in that lush island of the South Pacific. Over the 26 years that have passed since the original reunion in Hollywood, it would be difficult to single out one time that surpassed any other for treasured memories. Each had its own distinctive events and its own flavor of unforgettable camaraderie but surely, among all of them, the second trip to Taiwan this last June has to be one that none who were there will ever forget.

It is not too much to say that for warmth of reception, for generosity of feeling, for painstaking care that a host takes for the guests, the Chinese of Taiwan are among the earth's most exceptional and delightful people. Theirs is a friendship that knows no bonds. It is now nearly 40 years since the AVG came to



their aid in World War II but all those passing years have only served to brighten their memories of the AVG and to increase the depth of their appreciation for what Madame Chiang Kai-Shek always affectionately called her "boys".

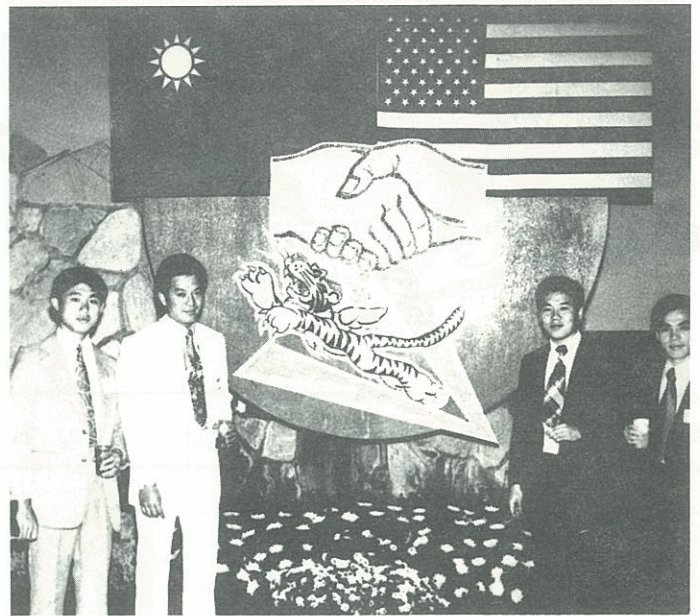
Link Laughlin has more than adequately related the events of that memorable June week in Taiwan. Hopefully, what comes now might add a little to the color of that week.

As before, a welcoming group met the two airplanes that brought the AVG members to Taipei. There was a banner proclaiming our arrival and that was nice. We had no realization of what was to come.



On the arrival at the Taipei Hilton, we were given our room keys. There was no need to register. All had been arranged. Miraculously, in these days of baggage mix-ups, none occurred. In a few minutes, all your baggage suddenly appeared at your room door. How they found out whose baggage belonged to whom is one of those minor mysteries I never solved but here it was.

In your room, you found welcoming souvenirs such as a medallion from the Air Force, a mounted piece of Taroko Gorge marble inlaid with a tiger in color. Inside the packet handed to you as you came into the hotel was everything you needed for your week in Taiwan--a colorful



name badge, a glossy paper booklet showing the events scheduled for each day of your visit, a booklet and map of Taipei showing or listing places of interest from shops to scenes, a list of the AVG members and their room numbers and another listing contacts for information. It was all there, everything you needed to get you around such as special invitations inviting you to each days events and even cards giving you your table numbers!

Downstairs, in the lobby, was an information desk to answer your questions staffed with people who really tried to help. I often thought to myself in the days that followed how much I wished some of our so-called U. S. experts could learn from these people about such things as courtesy, helpfulness and genuine interest in those little but aggravating problems that always beset a traveler.

We had two tour buses, each staffed with military personnel who told us where we were and where we were going and were ready each day and night to answer our questions. Indeed, a special room in the hotel served as an information center through which you could contact people or get information about Taipei.

The Chinese are prompt people. They run on a schedule and they only asked us to be on time as they always



were. If you needed to go some place on your own, they wrote out instructions in Chinese to taxi drivers so you wouldn't get lost. They advised as to shops and stores.

The trips about Taipei in our cavalcade of limousines with flags flying, leading our buses and preceded by an open touring car with four white helmeted military police who cleared our way through the traffic jams of Taipei with as much ease as a knife slicing butter, with the sidewalks lined with wide-eyed pedestrians and the building windows bulging with people staring at what was passing by made you feel as important as any celebrity, about whom I am sure many of the natives wondered probably "who the hell are they?". Be that as it may, they all took it with the utmost friendliness, waving gaily as we passed by. We all know what "fierce" traffic is and it is fierce in Taipei so it was a fun-filled game each day to watch our bus drivers, horns honking, keep their places in the processions and ward off any driver who tried to compete--and they all do--by sliding in between the buses. The car drivers didn't bother with the leading limousines; they looked too important, but the buses--that was fair game. Only a few succeeded. The bus drivers plowed ahead with reckless abandon, horns honking as loudly as a flight of screeching geese.

The receptions, as the luncheons and dinners had to be seen to be believed. The planning and thought which went into them was obviously something on which a great deal of time had been spent, so elaborate were the arrangements. Your table-setting was entirely arranged and at one event, there was a panel at the entrance showing every table and its number and your name.

But it was the decorations that caught everyone's eye. The AVG insignia was panelled on the walls--not one but literally dozens of beautiful designs in full color. There were entire walls depicting



AVG combat scenes with the P-40 in its war dress shooting down the Japanese Zeros. There was an enormous ice-carving, in color, of the AVG at one dinner entrance.

Everywhere we went, on the bus tours through the Taroko Gorge, truly one of the world's most scenic spots, as we stopped at viewpoints; at every entrance and within every reception area, in dining rooms, over cocktail buffets, at building entrances, in our hotel lobby, at entertainment spots such as the dance hall where the beautiful Aborigine dancers entertained us, at the marble factory we toured and where artifacts of Taroko Gorge

marble are produced, at Air Force bases where we embarked on flights to the Gorge, at the magnificent resort where we were hosted at luncheon---at every spot we visited there hung banners reading "Welcome AVG" or "Welcome American Volunteer Group". Some of those banners were 30 to 40 feet in length.



The following men played leading roles in the planning for the AVG reunion. Known as the Taipei Committee Members, they are:

Local Committee Chairman;
Gen. Y. T. Loh (Ret. CAF)

Committee Chairman;
Konsin Shah, President,
Asia Tourism Development Corp.

Committee Members;
Commander Robert Greathouse,
Taiwan Defense Command

Mr. Al Hicks, General Manager,
Flying Tiger Line, Taipei

Mr. Dale Holmgren, President,
Oakwood International Corp.

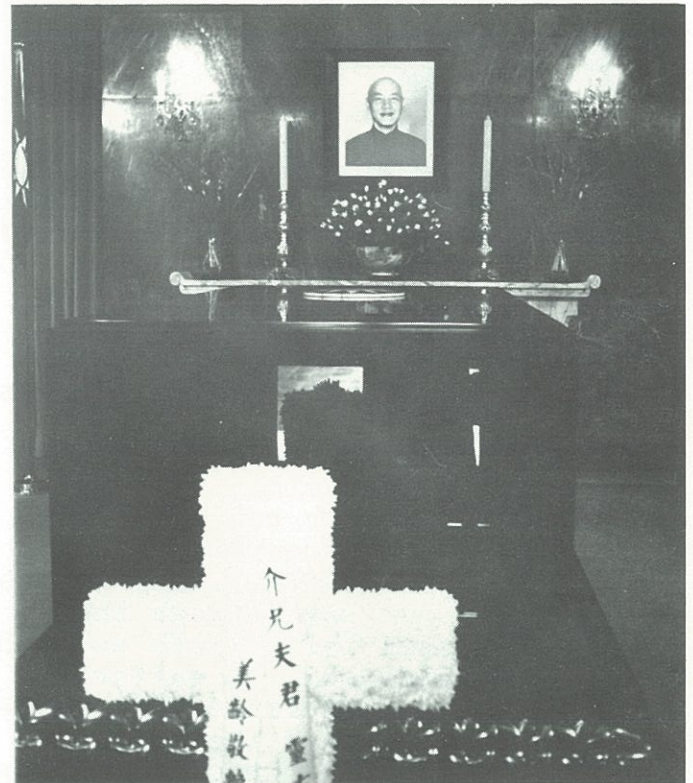
Mr. Daniel Darnell,
Northrop Corp.

Dr. Richard Lee
Country Hospital

Mr. Henry Lee, President
Taiwan China Fine Enterprises
Co. Ltd.

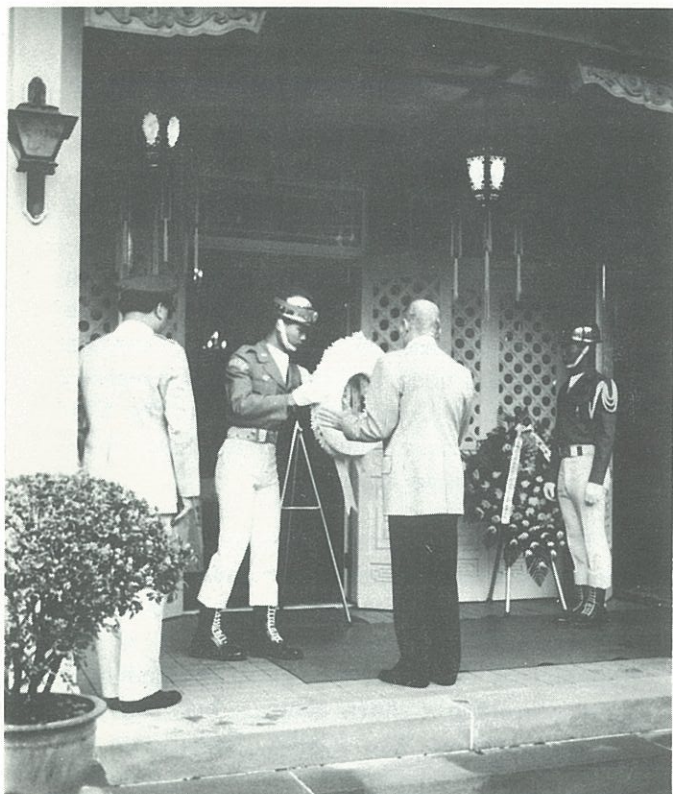
Col. Abilio Y. M. Chang, Chief,
Liason/Protocal Office, CAF, HQs.

As we toured such places as the Generalissimo's shrine, or passed through Air Force bases, each of us received small lapel-sized medallions as a souvenir of our trip. When you had them all fastened to your name badge, it looked like the miniature of the back of a well-traveled trailer boasting those colorful decals of places you've visited.



And now we were ready to leave that lovely island and take-off for Hong Kong. It was Saturday morning. As we assembled in the hotel lobby to board the buses for the airport, military messengers circulated among us. The final gift they had to give us was just about unbelievable. In a packet bearing your name was a complete set of photographs in color showing you and your wife at almost every function during the week, including, of all things, the final dinner on Friday night 12 hours before you were to leave Taiwan. Ask any photo shop that I ever heard of to provide such service and they would call you crazy. Such was the depth of planning and thought that went into this fabulous week, truly one never to be forgotten.

But our story would not be complete without at least a word of the people who made all of this possible. Tex Hill's idea to revisit Taiwan was the spark that set all this in motion. He spent a lot of time in Taiwan in contact with the people there who would plan these great receptions. No one gave more time or effort than Dick Rossi in lining



up plane and hotel reservations and getting out the poop bulletins. He did the U. S. side of the job. Moon Chen was Dick's liason with the people in Taipei who had to get the job done and he spared no time or effort to do it. And then there was General Loh, who visited us at Ojai at several reunions and who opened the door for us in Taipei. And, as usual, the Flying Tiger Line people, both in Taiwan and the United States, such as Nissen Davis and Al Hicks, gave us unlimited support. But this has always been typical of our reunions. As ever, it is the undying spirit of "Can Do" that makes the Tigers live. And, gratefully, it grows ever stronger with the passing years. ♦

Since our two contributors were golf bugs, there was no report of the tour to Wu-Lai. This was such an interesting day, and such a pretty spot that it deserves mention.



The group left the hotel, and had a drive of about an hour and a half through the Taiwan countryside to Wu-lai. There, high in the hills, was a beautiful resort hotel. In addition to a small lake with row boats, there were a small zoo and rides if you needed a few thrills.

This was not really necessary since one had to negotiate a set of steep stairs, ride an overhead cable car, and then climb a steep path to arrive at the hotel. We were all proud of the way Rode made the trip. He may have a hidden jet on that wheel chair.

After a tour of the hotel and grounds, with a stop at the bar, the group rode the tramway to the bottom, where we had lunch in a restaurant overlooking the river. We sure depleted their supply of beer. Then back to Taipei and the Hilton to get ready for the nights festivities. It was another memorable day.

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Thursday, June 8, 1978

Flying Tigers' Reunion

The reunion of the Flying Tigers led by Brig. Gen. David L. Hill in Taipei is a significant event. The 78-member group arrived here Monday to hold a reunion to show their friendship and support of the Republic of China.

These former members of the American Volunteers Group headed by the late General Claire L. Chennault all risked their lives in defense of China's freedom and independence against Japanese aggression. Their valiant and heroic deeds prevented the Japanese militarists from dominating the Chinese skies four decades ago. Turning the tables, they wrested supremacy in the air from the hands of the Japanese flyers and shattered the Japanese air force over China. They literally turned the tide of the war in the allies' favor.

The government and people of the Republic of China indeed owe a debt of gratitude to these heroic Flying Tigers. In the short span of two years, the 300 Flying Tigers under General Chennault's guidance shot down 300 Japanese planes. They proved that air war was not only feasible against the Japanese but also indispensable. In 1942, the AVG was amalgamated into the U.S. 14th Air Force under General Chennault's command. They scored even greater victories by destroying some 2,300 Japanese fighters and sinking three Japanese warships. Although General Chennault was transferred to Washington shortly before the Japanese surrender, he had laid the ground work for the Japanese defeated by the allied forces of the republic of China and the United States.

The glorious victory scored by the Flying Tigers and the Chinese and U.S. armed forces showed what could be achieved by close cooperation between the Chinese and American people. Unfortunately, the victory was short-lived because of the insidious influence of the Chinese Communists who turned the hard-won victory of the Chinese and American people to their advantage with Communist infiltration, subversion and expansion in cooperation with the Soviets which culminated in the Chinese Communist occupation of the mainland.

As the Flying Tigers hold their reunion, their thoughts must inevitably turn to the deplorable conditions on the Chinese mainland where the people are groaning under the oppression of the Chinese Communists' inhuman regime. The hard-won victory of our war-time friends in defense of democracy, freedom and peace has been undermined and reversed by the Chinese Communists. Today, the Chinese mainland is a living hell as many freedom seekers have testified.

Fortunately, all free institutions have been in existence on this anti-Communist bastion of Taiwan which has become a model province of democracy, freedom and prosperity of the Republic of China. Once again, freedom and slavery provide a sharp contrast between Taipei and Peiping. The Flying Tigers can see for themselves what a contrast exists between the two. As the Chinese Communists threaten to "liberate" Taiwan by force, the free people of the Republic of China are dedicated and ready to defend their freedom, security and independence just as their forefathers defended those institutions back on the Chinese mainland against the Japanese aggressors.

In this respect, the famous motto of "united we stand, divided we fall" will find a new application in Sino-American relations.

We hope the Flying Tigers will urge the U.S. administration not to make the mistake of falling into Chinese Communist traps of betraying its war-time and present-day ally thereby paving the way for the Chinese Communist conquest of the Far East and the Pacific region. Let us rededicate our efforts to repel Chinese Communist aggression as the late General Chennault would have done. Let us carry on the unfinished task of making the world safe for democracy, freedom and peace.

REPORT FROM THE ODD COUPLE
3 July 1978

Dear Dick and Lydia,

First of all we want to thank everyone involved who made our recent trip to Taiwan possible. It was fascinating, exciting and unforgettable from the beginning and Willa and I will be forever grateful for the opportunity to participate.

We want to share briefly some of the high lights of our Japan trip as everyone else went the other way. I guess by just saying that it was part of another fantastic adventure would best describe it. From the moment of arrival when we were met at the airport (complete with a dozen red roses) until we tearfully said "Sayonara" six nights later, Masaaki Inoue and his wife Sadako in Tokyo and Renzo Aoki and his wife Yutaka in Shiga, had our days planned to the minute and neither an earthquake or a 4 alarm fire delayed the itinerary. Touring Tokyo, Hakoni, Kyoto and Biwa Lake, we covered around 1400 miles. Our hosts and their relatives, with whom we stayed, made the trip most interesting. From sleeping in Japanese beds, eating Japanese foods and even enjoying their famous hot baths. I did find the loss of certain abilities after soaking in a hot bath for an hour or so. One being the lack of locomotive power and will let your imagination figure out the other.

Among many Japanese that we met, I must mention Mr. Kony Ueda as he was our direct opposite in those early days in Burma. He gave me their version of the Loiwing attack and it bears repeating. It seems that some of the best pilots in the Japanese Army were based out of Chengmei and after the AVG worked them over they decided to pay us a visit at Loiwing. This was in April of 42, and Lt. Ueda was ordered to fly a weather reconn of our area and that of Lashio. With his weather okay they took off from Chengmei and flew to Lashio, taking off from there early the next morning to catch us at Loiwing with our pants down. They flew directly back to Chengmei to refuel and rearm and came back again that afternoon to finish us off. History proved different and they lost three of their most famous pilots amongst a number of others. I told Mr. Ueda that it was through the foresight of General Chennault that our planes were waiting for them that afternoon.

As our unbelievable five days drew to a close, we realized that these people who had opened their hearts to us, seem to find it very important to be considered friends and perhaps this can be explained as Masaaki's wife, with tears in her eyes, told us that when her husband and Renzo returned from Ojai last year, they went directly to the Yasukni Shrine (Veteran Shrine). There they prayed and told their fallen comrades that they had met with and talked to the Great Flying Tigers and they could rest easy as we are friends once more.

Yours in comradeship,

Chuck & Willa Baisden

Chuck and Willa Baisden

ORIENTAL ODYSSEY

by
Link Laughlin

The Flying Tiger reunion of 1978 got under way on the 4th of June with a tank full of kerosene for China Airlines luxury 747s and a truckload of brew for the membership. From then on - out of LAX and SFO - it was all downhill. The passengers on Air Force One never had it better. The initial hot towel treatment removed the California smog deposit, and the brew excised the traffic nerves. The stewardesses, all movie extras with 500 watt smiles, figures like nobody's business and complexions of alabaster and roses created some dissent from the over-the-hill-gang. Wives curtailed the action.

Approximately a dozen snacks and dinners were served enroute. Interspersed with drinks. Taipei showed up in about 14 hours and the Chinese Airlines crews slid the 747s in landing like a fat bird with bunions. Bus Keeton allowed as the piloting was eminently professional.

The Taipei Airport reception engineered by Colonel Abilio Y.M. Chang, Chinese Air Force, featured a 20 foot red and white banner to direct and identify the early arriving LAX group. They included the AVG association officials which qualified them for an official group picture. The photography was excellent. The subjects looked like refugees from Nam. Some hours later, 1800, the SFO group arrived and the ritual was repeated. They did not rate a banner. They got AVG President Dick Rossi and a one foot square placard on a stick labeled, Welcome AVG. President Rossi looked better in this one.

Jesse Crookshanks was petulant-ly questioning the hour. Somewhere along the way he had lost most of Monday. "Goddammit, here we leave San Francisco at 1400 on the 4th, we fly for 14 hours, and here in Taipei it's 1800 hours on the 5th!" Bernadine told him to shut up. She'd buy him a drink at the Taipei Hilton.

The Hilton was pure luxury. Marble, teak and polyester. Room and bath the size of Candlestick Park. Jim Cross got tired walking from his bed to the bathroom. Chuck Older admitted he'd presided over major litigation in smaller courtrooms. Bob Layher estimated the expanse sufficient to support an average farm family.

Reunion formalities got under way early the next morning, the 6th. As a matter of rank discrimination and convenience the AVGs were partitioned off into Group "A", Officers and super-guests (They wore neckties - Anne Marie wore a slinky dress), and Group "B", PFCs, blue collars and camp followers (Sports shirts and slacks). Group "A", hot in business attire, was chauffeured off at 0730 for prerequisite formalities with the Ministry of National Defense, The Chief of the General Staff and the Chairman of the National Reconstruction Research Committee. The temperature was 95°F. Group "B" was not envious.



The two groups convened at 10:00 for a wreath-laying ceremony at the General Chennault memorial in Taipei Municipal New Park. Dick Rossi and General Wu Yueh, CAF Commander-in-Chief did the honors. A quiet and impressive tribute to a great leader.

The next stop was Tsu-hu where a brief ceremony was conducted for the late President Chiang Kai-shek. The black marble tomb housed in a modest temple in a wooded area exemplified the esteem of a great nation for the leader the AVG knew as the Generalissimo.

From Tsu-hu the group bused to the Shih-men (Stone gate) Sesame Hotel for a China Airlines sponsored buffet. The hotel located on a mountainside overlooks the spectacular Shi-men reservoir in Lungshan Hsiang, north Taiwan. The luncheon included a dozen courses of obscure gourmet dishes enthusiastically ingested by the appreciative AVGs. China Airlines was an excellent host.

Group "A" then waddled out on another protocol visit. The duty tour included a visit to Mr. Chao Tsu yu, Chairman of the Vocational Assistance Commission for Retired Servicemen, and then to the office of General Szeto Fu, CAF Board Chairman. Group "B" hoped group "A" expressed "Bs" thanks for the luncheon.



Dick Rossi

Group "B" toiled off to the National Palace Museum where a platoon of nervous security guards trailed the guests through a priceless exhibit of antique jade. The AVGs were drooling.

Back at the Taipei Hilton the group had an hour to relax, shower and don (You think Taiwan isn't hot?) dry clothing for a dinner at the Chinese Air Force Officer's Club.

General and Mrs. Wu Yueh welcomed the refreshed group. Dinner was an EIGHTEEN course variety of gourmet cuisine. Chopsticks were mandatory. Table hosts guided the uninitiated. Wine was in oversupply, obviously to relax the novice chopstick diners.

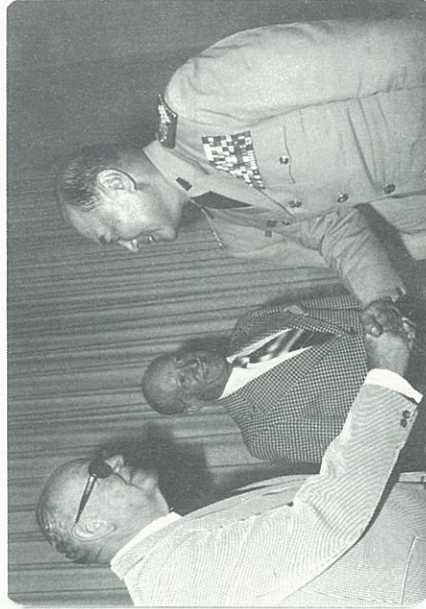
Then came the speakers, and interpreters, and more wine. "Gombay!" was the magic word, a universal invitation, and not to be ignored. Dick Rossi responded with an accolade that warmed the house and united the Chinese and their American guests into a back-slapping mutual admiration society. Table hosts Admiral Shen Lin, Colonel Heinz Ouyang and Colonel Abilio Chang called for toasts and more wine. Pete Wright finally figured out what "Gombay" meant. Fritz Wolf was benevolent in approval. He thought up a few original toasts on his own. Wine disappeared by the gallon.

Anne Marie Prescott (How does she keep that model's figure?) gave a brief address and contributed a \$12,000. check to the Peter Prescott Memorial Hospital. The gift, one of many over the years, is a tribute and memorial to a young son and an unforgettable Bob Prescott. The audience response was warm and emotional.

The stage show following was a musical, dramatic and symbolic. Fourteen doll faced dancers and a talented vocalist interpreted the Chinese Air Force spirit in



GEN. CHOW, C-IN-C OF THE CAF DURING AVG DAYS



ADM. SOONG, CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF



AND THE AFTERNOON ARRIVEES



GEN. WU SOLVES RODE'S TRANSPORTATION PROBLEM



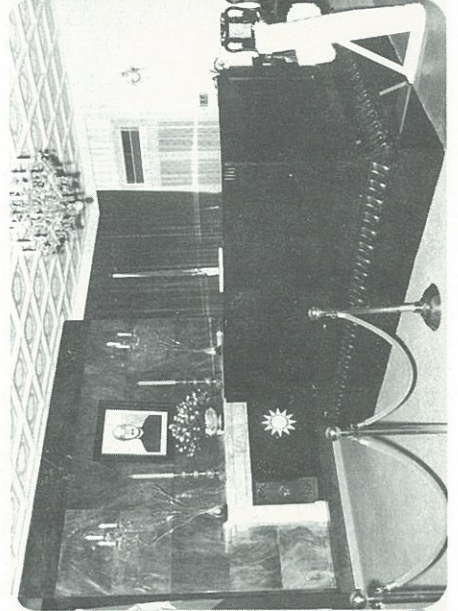
THE MORNING ARRIVEES....



GEN. WU, PRESENT C-IN-C OF THE CAF



THE GANG AT GENERAL CHENNAULT'S MEMORIAL



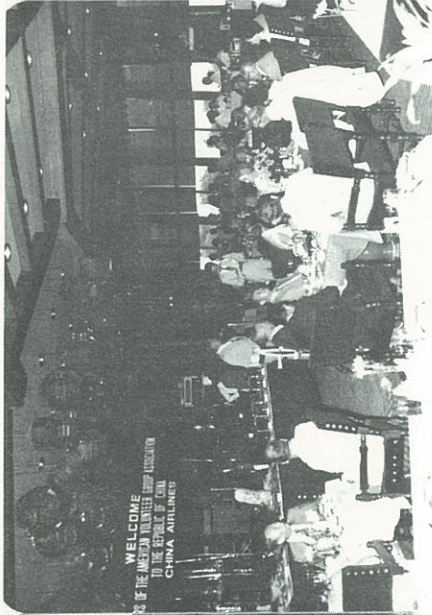
THE GENERALISSIMO'S FINAL RESTING PLACE



WE PAY OUR RESPECTS



MR. CHAO, CHAIRMAN VACRS



CHINA AIRLINES LUNCHEON AT SHIHMEN



GEN. AND MRS. SZETO, OUR HOST AND HOSTESS



THE CAF BANQUET



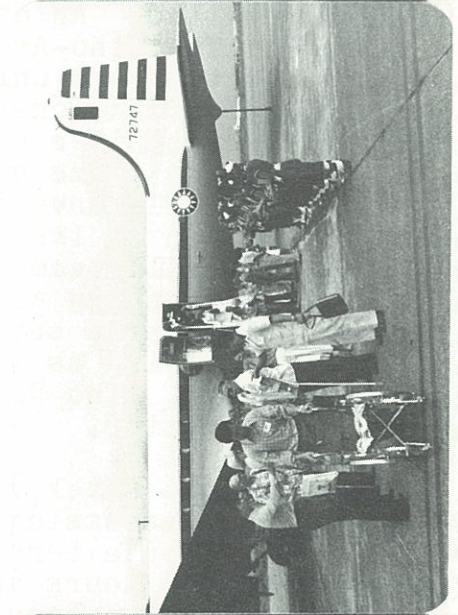
THE MND BANQUET



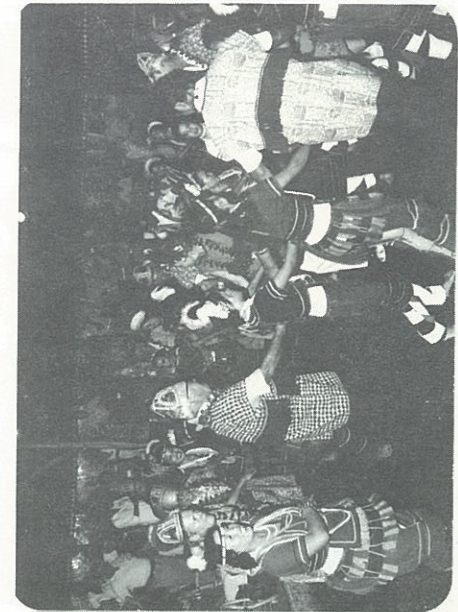
REUNION CALESTHENICS BY TEX AND GEN. CHOW



VIEW OF THE MND SPREAD



IT'S NOT REALLY A 747



YOU CAN'T TELL THE ABORIGINES WITHOUT A PROGRAM



rhythm and ballad. An accolade to the AVG. The Sino-American audience reaction was universal sniffing and affectionate camaraderie. If a recruiter had distributed enlistment forms among the AVGs the CAF would have had a bunch of old men on its hands. A snappy rifle drill team of 16 men concluded the evening with a precise and complicated set of maneuvers as inspiring as a bugle call at sundown. The U.S. Marines never did it better.

Back at the hotel vivacious Jean Loane was assessing credits. "Hasn't this been a terrific reunion? Yesterday was 18 hours and 7,000 miles. Today we've been toured, wined, dined and entertained for 14 hours. Now, whatever happened to Monday...or was it Sunday? I think I've been running for a week. Is it time to go home?"



Burly Joe Poshefko looked down from wherever his head was up in the lobby chandeliers. He had no tolerance for irrelevant thinking. "Haw!" he grumped, "This is only the first day. Let's get in shape for tomorrow. Is the bar still open?"

The Wednesday schedule started at 0700 with a number of bleary eyed golfers busing off for the Linkou International Golf Club. The remainder of the group broke up for a tour of Wu-lai, the China Pottery Arts Company and some miscellaneous shopping. Len Kinball was adjudged the winner of the golf tournament. The circumstances were suspicious inasmuch as none of the competitors complained. Golfers are not like that.



At 1900 hours the group reconvened at the Armed Forces Officer's Club for a dinner hosted by Minister of National Defense and Mrs. Kao Luei-yuan, and Chief of the General Staff and Mrs. Soong Chang-chih. An initial warm-up was held in a reception room the size of the Aragon Ballroom with an acre sized table of hors d'oeuvres, two bars and no chairs. Chinese hosts and

AVGs milled, conversed and swapped compliments in broken Americanese and English.

Thursday, the 8th dawned hot and humid with a high overcast - as usual. But, unbeknownst to the happy chortling groups, "A" and "B", high adventure was just around the corner. At 0800 the buses toiled out after the Cadillac convertible, two limousine escort. Siren blowing, red light flashing, the five unit caravan howled through the clutter of morning traffic to Sungshan Air Force Base. It became obvious to the enervated AVGs that the Taiwan cab drivers were ex-Kamikaze pilots in training.

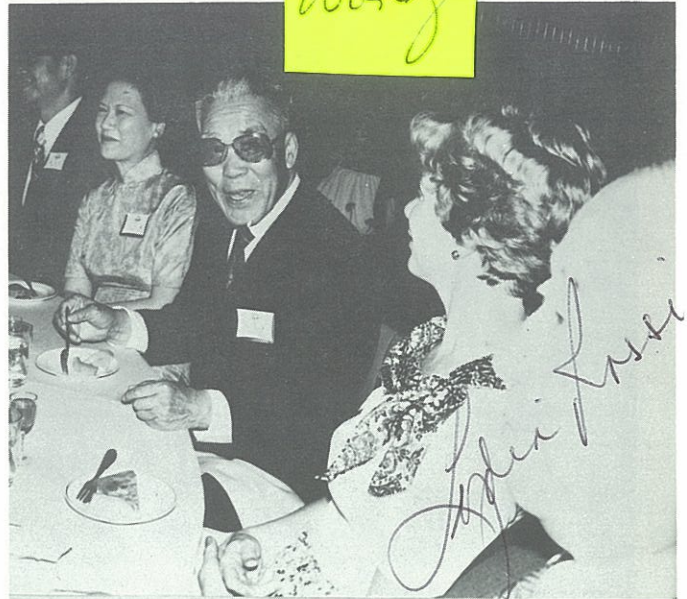
A pair of C-54s awaited the group at the ramp. Bill Schaper



and John Uebele turned pale at the sight. "Goddalmighty!" muttered Schaper, "I haven't seen one of them things since 1946."

Uebele recovered first. "Yeah, I thought I delivered the last one to the Air Force museum thirty years ago. I was just a kid then. But, what th'hell, are you going to chicken out?"

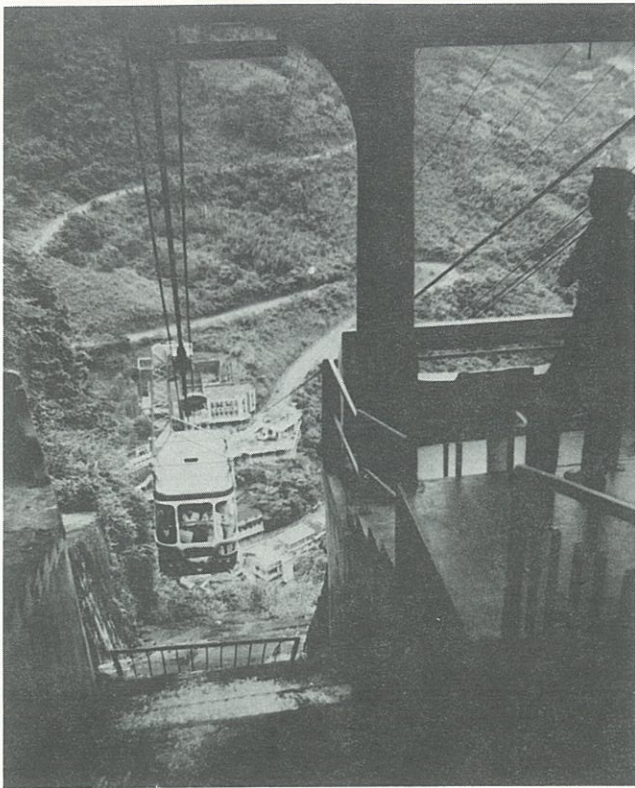
Tiger
Woody



The C-54s toiled off to Hualien Airport, 120 kilometers to the south. The landings were professional. Problems came when the second C54 began to taxi off the active runway. The nose wheel locked left 45 degrees giving the passengers a sweeping view of the Hualien terrain. Rice paddies, assorted buildings and distant mountains. The flight crew terminated the trip and disembarked the curious passengers who walked to the buses skirting a four gallon oil spill under the number one engine.

Schaper nodded knowingly at Uebele. "Well, we were lucky Jim Cross wasn't flying this leg. He'd have muscled that nose wheel around and stripped all the gears outa it..."





The buses move off north to the scenic Taroka Gorge with an occasional stop for hiking and picture taking. The Shrine of Eternal Spring, the Tunnel of Nine Turns and the Bridge of Motherly Devotion were recorded for posterity along with a few billion tons of expensive Tiger-striped marble. Lunch at the Tien-hsiang Lodge was hosted by the VACRS (Vocational Assistance Commission for Retired Servicemen) with Lt. Gen. Tien, Vice Chairman, representing VACRS.

The South Sea Garden and the Aborigines Village where the girls of the Ami tribe entertained with a ceremonial dance were warmly appreciated. The dance numbers in Ami costume took the viewers back to a period - maybe 2,000 years when the dancers performed before the tribal chiefs of the era. The symbolism was not lost on the AVGs who participated in the demonstration. Utilizing a two-pole sling the dainty entertainers hoisted Paul Clouthier and Walt Dolan around the arena with a minimal amount of effort. They erred badly when an optimistic foursome selected Joe Poshefko. Joe had a short ride. He was abandoned in mid-arena.

From the Aborigines Village the group transported to the VACRS marble factory. Chairman Chao welcomed the assemblage and invited them for an inspection of the working area and the showroom. Craftsmanship included miniature figurines, statuary, tables and vases, miniature and enormous. The group reacted like weekend bargain hunters in a Klien's basement closeout. The values were there. The Neals knew it, Bob 'n Jo. So did Lydia Rossi and Edith Sawyer. They bought out about thirty percent of the display. A ton of crystalized limestone was scheduled for shipment. The conservative element struggled to the buses with thirty pound packages.

China Air Forces super C-54 tooled back to Sungshan on schedule. The ride from the air base back to the Taipei Hilton was SOP (Standard operating procedure), with sirens, red flashers, horns honking, and lead footed drivers attempting to score on the evasive taxis.

Back at the Taipei Hilton CAF Captain Liu Pei insisted the group reassemble at the loading area promptly at 1840. Any stragglers just may lose out on a savoury Chinese barbecue. Captain Liu Pei is an affable and very personable character with an instinct and timing for humor that will get him appointed to the State Department. An unidentified number of the mem-sahibs seriously discussed adopting the young captain.

The barbecue served cafeteria style was a riotous success. Scheduled as a "Dutch" affair, it became a Flying Tiger Line sponsorship subsequent to some lobbying action by the sparkling Anne Marie Prescott. Al Hicks formalized the decision with an announcement. The Flying Tiger Line was going to pick up the tab. The diners were noisy in thanks. The decibel count went to 140 along with more requests for beer. Anne Marie and Al were nominated for chairpersonships with the Joint Chiefs. The restaurant

management was glad to see the group go home.

Friday the 9th was a day for recuperation. The hangover sufferers remained abed. The bargain hunters were concluding purchases. "Tex" Hill and Don "Rode" Rodewald were discussing mini-reunion strategy. Jesse Crookshanks was soaking his feet.

The Flying Tiger Line hosted a final reception at the American Officer's Club, and the AVG Association engineered the final banquet. It was thanks and good bye to the Republic of China, the Chinese Air Force, the Veterans and China Airlines. The intimate fellowship and warm camaraderie of a military alliance formed back in 1941 was reaffirmed.

Peggy (Chennault) Lee had the last word. As she walked out with the crowd to board the second bus, she remarked, to no one in particular, "Here come the "B" girls..!"

"Duke" Hedman's eyes expanded in pleasant surprise. "'B" girls?" he asked, "Where..er...whazzat?" Mary Ann took him by the elbow. "No, no," she said. "The "B" bus. It's over there, you#*!@%*!!"

The AVGs, their wives and guests, were vocal and demonstrative in sincere appreciation for the thoughtful and generous hospitality of their Chinese hosts. It was an outstanding and unforgettable week in Taiwan.

On the 10th most of the group took off on their own. Pacific Leisure Travel Service booked them into the Mandarin Hotel in Hong Kong, the Oriental in Bangkok and the Mandarin in Singapore. Thai International Airlines flew the conglomerate with normal Oriental expertise. A number of unforeseen catastrophes such as non-existent reservations and wayward baggage were the basis for some emotional drama and dirty language. Thai, however, was unflappable, and performed a few miracles to appease

the aggrieved. It was concluded that last minute changes in itinerary created the problems. And some woolgathering.

For example: Emma Jane and Christy Hanks checked in to the Mandarin Hotel in Bangkok. The room clerk looks at them suspiciously. "You got a reservation?" he asks.

"Certainly," barks Christy with a scowl that intimidates the hostel staff like a 12 gage sawed-off.

"Er...yessir. I can give you our superlative flea-bag suite on the second floor..."

Emma Jane looks around for some friendly faces. Orientals can be an impassive lot where irascible round-eye foreigners are concerned. There are no AVGs. "Where are the AVGs?" she asks querulously.

"Damfino," snaps Christy. "Whadd'ya think I am, a crystal ball expert?" It is plainly obvious that Christy doesn't waffle when it comes to an opinion.



He scowls around at the lobby decour. "This here is the Mandarin Hotel, and we dang well booked Mandarin Hotels with Clemencia Cardoza way back before we left the oyster beds."

TWO DAYS later they're booked on a river tour. And there's a dozen assorted AVGs including Bernadine and Jesse Crookshanks. "GOOD GRAVY and MY GOODNESS SAKES ALIVE!!!" (Herein, in deference to family publication limitations, substitutions have been incorporated for direct quotes) hollers Christy, "WHERE have YOU been?"

Of course, it turns out that the AVGs are residing at the elaborate Oriental Hotel as scheduled, same being of no relationship to the Mandarin which same took the Hanks under protest anyhow. The Hanks promptly moved over to the Oriental.

The next incident of record involves a couple who seek anonymity under the fifth. Call them Clarence and Susie Bell. They, like many others, had made last minute reservation changes. They were booked out of Bangkok on Thai's flight 610 to connect with China Airlines 008 out of Taipei. The Thai flight schedule provides 35 minutes to transfer to CALs 008. A close connection.

Accompanied by Pacific Leisure tour guide Israsak Silpavichit (HONEST, that's his REAL NAME), Clarence plunks the tickets on the Thai counter.

The Thai clerk looks bored. "We have no reservations for you," she announces.

Clarence gets red in the face. He knows that CAL is booked solid into September. He does not want to stay in the Far East until September. "Er...ahem," he stutters. "Heh. Better look at that ticket again. It was reconfirmed a couple of days ago."

The clerk is adamant. "If you want a reservation, the office right back there will help you." She waves an indifferent hand off in the general direction of Calcutta.

Clarence's red face develops purple spots with orange dots. The paint on the adjacent walls begins an anticipatory peeling. The short fuse evaporates in a puff. Two baggage handlers collide in mid flight to the shelters. Israsak Silpavichit (HONEST) joins in the cause for right and justice. In stern Thaiandese he reviews the obscure parentage, intelligence and scurrrious motives behind this nefarious plat to deprive two AVGs of transport to Taipei.

He wins. Another manifest turns up. The reservation is secure, and 610 barrels off an hour and a half late.

An interruption occurs at the Hong Kong stopover. Clarence and Susie Bell are to be offloaded on account of having no Taipei visa. The apopleptic Clarence shows his valid visa. "WHAZZAT?" he hollers. Customs approves. Sorry about that. Flight 610 continues on to Taipei. It is now only an hour behind schedule. Will CALs 008 be waiting? Clarence envisions three long months in Taipei. Maybe a job in Henry Lee's furniture factory.



At Taipei they're met by CALS Ellen Chu. "Hurry," she sings. "Your flight is loading." Clarence and Susie Bell are euphoric. They cover the 100 yard to CALS gate in ten flat.

Then, DISASTER! Susie Bell has left her bag on 610. Clarence and Ellen Chu race back to the Thai gate. And back with the bag. CALS operation manager, Louie H. C. Liu expedites the couple through customs. Efficient speed. "Have a nice trip home," he grins. ◇

MAGELLAN KEMPH

Another example of the Tiger "Can Do" spirit, was the effort made by Mr. and Mrs. Mel Kemph. Their home is in Alaska, so they had planned on going to Taipei on Northwest Airlines. However, the fates were against them, Northwest was on strike and reservations on other airlines were unavailable.

They were not able to go the great circle route, but by criss-crossing the South Pacific, they finally arrived in Taipei in time to join the gang for the reunion. Where there is a will the Tigers will find a way. If Columbus had to use that routing, America would still be undiscovered.



GUEST LIST

Mr. & Mrs. Charles N. Baisden
 Mr. Moon Chen
 Mr. & Mrs. Keith J. Christensen
 Mr. & Mrs. Paul Clouthier
 Mr. & Mrs. Jesse R. Crookshanks
 Mr. & Mrs. James D. Cross
 Mr. & Mrs. Herb Atwater, Lynne & James
 Mr. Nissen Davis
 Mr. Walter J. Dolan, Luann M. Dolan
 Mrs. Mary Lynn Elliott
 Ms. Colleen Ferguson
 Mr. & Mrs. Fletcher Hanks
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert P. Hedman
 Mr. & Mrs. David L. Hill
 Mr. & Mrs. Al Kaelin
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert B. Keeton
 Mr. & Mrs. Merlyn D. Kempf
 Mr. & Mrs. Leonard S. Kimball
 Mr. & Mrs. C. H. Laughlin
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert F. Layher
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert Lee
 Mrs. Jean Loane
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert P. Locke
 Vance E. Locke & Pauline Locke
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert J. Neal
 Mr. & Mrs. Charles H. Older
 Mr. & Mrs. Joseph A. Poshefko
 Mrs. Anne Marie Prescott
 Mrs. French Prescott Reill
 Mr. Donald Rodewald
 Mr. & Mrs. David V. Rossi
 Mr. & Mrs. J. R. Rossi
 Mr. & Mrs. Charles W. Sawyer
 Mr. & Mrs. Erling Johannesen
 Mr. & Mrs. Wilfred E. Schaper
 Mr. & Mrs. John J. Uebele
 Mr. & Mrs. Fritz E. Wolf
 Mr. & Mrs. Peter Wright

行政院國軍退除役官兵輔導委員會
VOCATIONAL ASSISTANCE COMMISSION
FOR RETIRED SERVICEMEN
EXECUTIVE YUAN
54 KUAN CHIEN ROAD. TEL. 3116911-5
TAIPEI, TAIWAN, CHINA

July 19, 1978

Mr. John Richard Rossi
Chairman
The American Volunteer Group
3038 E. Mission Road
Fallbrook, Calif. 92028
U. S. A.

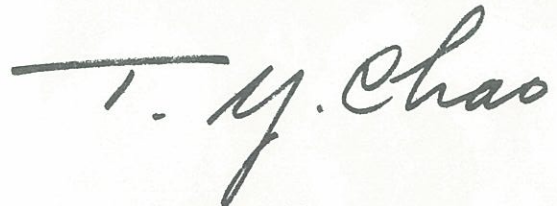
Dear Chairman Rossi:

Thank you so much for your thoughtfulness to send me your letter of July 4, 1978, mentioning the small courtesy we extended to the American Volunteer Group and their families during their recent reunion in the Republic of China.

It was our pleasure indeed to have the opportunity to associate again in Taipei with our friends who fought shoulder to shoulder with the Chinese Armed Forces in World War II. We cherish their friendship deeply and believe that your trip has helped to strengthen the traditional relationship between the United States and the Republic of China.

With best wishes and kindest regards,

Sincerely yours,



Chao Tsu-yu
Chairman



New York
June 18, 1978

Mr. John R. Rossi
President
Flying Tigers
American Volunteer Group - Chinese Air Force
P. O. Box 10817
Glendale, Calif. 91209

Dear Mr. Rossi,

Thank you for your letter just prior to your departure for Taiwan for an AVG reunion. I regret that I cannot be with all of you - the Flying Tigers.

I firmly believe that the bonds of the close ties of the past between the Flying Tigers and us are such that they cannot be really broken and transient ties of momentary interest predicated upon treachery and deceit of the Communists will not and cannot last without ultimately awakening the American public to its insidiousness.

Please extend my best wishes to each and every member who has attended the meeting in Taiwan and all of those who for some reason could not go.

Yours cordially,

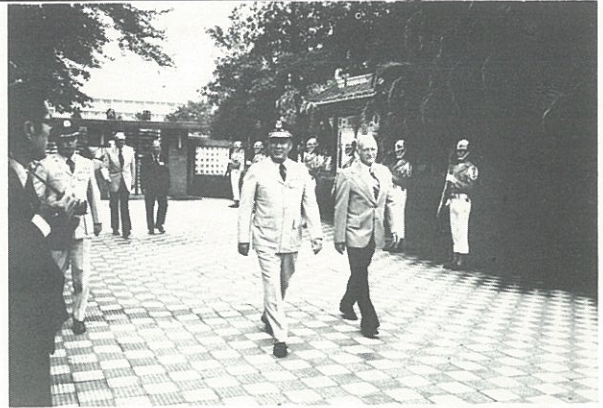
Mayling Soong Chiang

(Madame Chiang Kai-shek)





GATHERING AT THE CHENNAULT MEMORIAL



TRIBUTE TO GEN. CHENNAULT AT NEW PARK



OUR CARAVAN GETS A LITTLE WET



BOB AND PEGGY CHENNAULT LEE AT TSU-HU



LUCKILY THE RAIN STOPPED ON OUR ARRIVAL



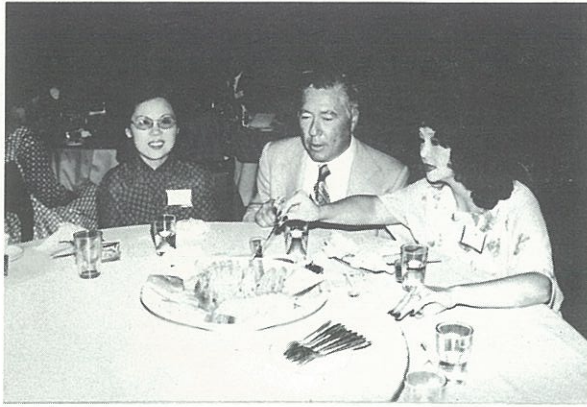
PART OF THE CAF SHOW



TIGER WONG AND GEN. TSANG WITH TEX



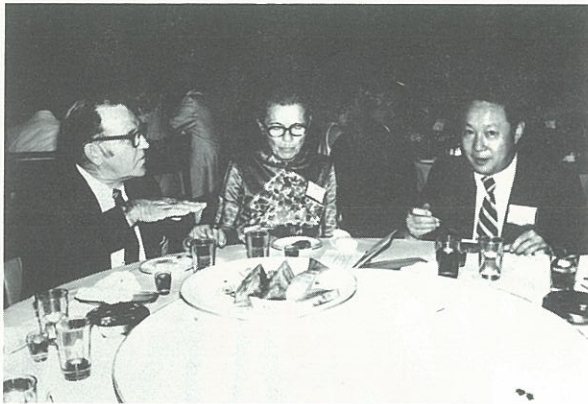
ONE OF THE ORIGINAL AVG'S MECHANICS' HELPERS



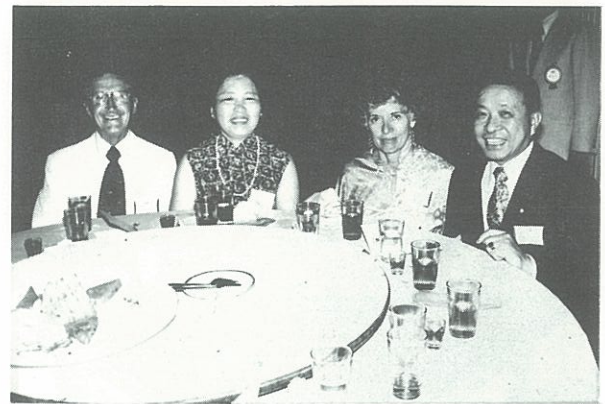
DUKE GETS A CHOPSTICK LESSON



METHA KEETON, LAYHER AND JEAN LOANE POSING



BOB LOCKE EXPLAINING.....



KAELIN AND MARIAN LAYHER ENJOYING....



KEETON, CROSS AND WRIGHT BOOZING...



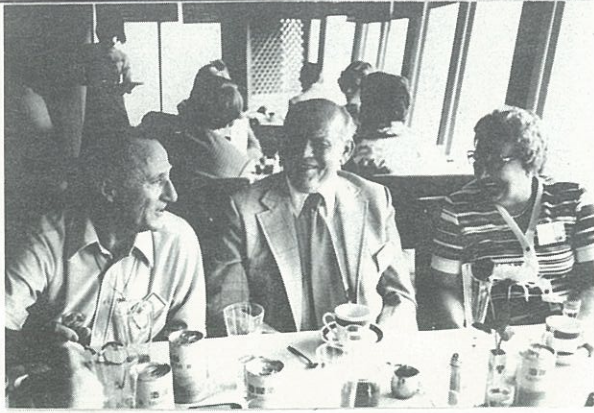
THE GANG AT WU-LAI WAITING....



THE CHOW HOUNDS POSITIONING....



OUR GUIDES AND MP ESCORTS RELAXING



REFRESHMENT STOP ON WU-LAI TRIP



IT'S A LITTLE STEEP GETTING UP THERE



HEALTH FOOD ADDICTS



HOW TO BREAK A CAMERA



MOON CHIN JOINS OUR PARTY



THIS PROVES THE KEMPHS MADE IT



IF YOU START IT.....



YOU GOTTA FINISH IT...



OOPS! SORRY, MUST BE THE CHINESE CHOW



BAISDEN GOES NATIVE



WAIT TIL CHRISTY SEES THIS!



THE MND RECEPTION AND BANQUET



THE CAF SHOW, IT WAS LONG AND GOOD



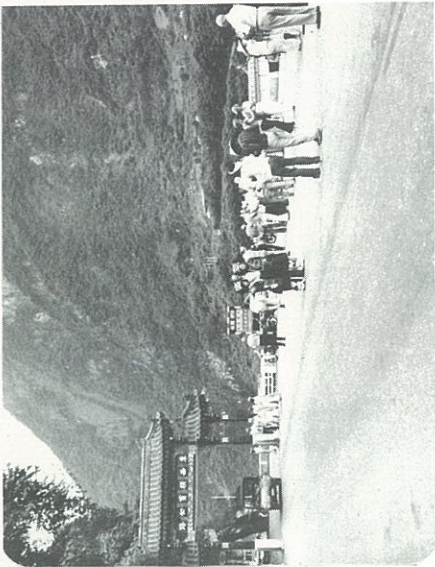
SCENE ALONG THE MARBLE GORGE



THE TRAMWAY AT WU-LAI



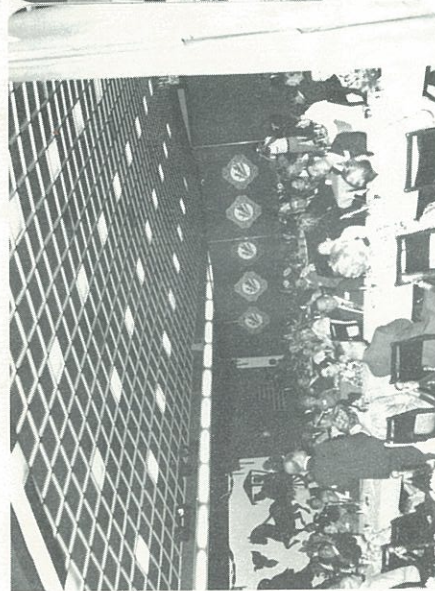
THESE ARE ABORIGINES?!?



ENTRANCE TO THE MARBLE GORGE



REMEMBER C-54's ? THEY'RE STILL FLYING!



THE MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE BANQUET



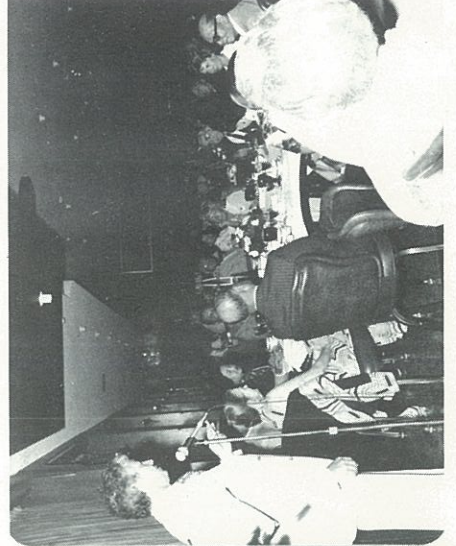
VISITING THE PETER PRESCOTT MEMORIAL WING



AND WELCOMING COMMITTEE



THE RECEPTION COMMITTEE



NISSEN DAVIS ADDRESSES THE AVG BANQUET



THE PRIME MINISTER DROPS IN FOR COCKTAILS



THE AVG BANQUET ICE CARVING