



# 1987 AVG-CNAC REUNION

AMERICAN VOLUNTEER GROUP • CHINA NATIONAL AVIATION CORPORATION

**SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA — JULY 2, 3, 4**



AMERICAN VOLUNTEER GROUP • CHINESE AIR FORCE  
INCORPORATED

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**IN MEMORIAM**

*Since Our Last Reunion*

Carl F. Bugler — AVG

Doreen Reynolds — AVG

R. S. "Red" Holmes — CNAC

Robert W. Rogers — AVG

Charles D. Kenner — AVG

Loy F. Seamster — AVG

*We extend our deepest sympathy*



# 1987 AVG-CNAC REUNION PROGRAM



## THURSDAY JULY 2

**10:30 AM**

Registration in  
Hospitality Room

DAY FREE

**8:00 PM**

Leave hotel for short  
walk to waterfront to  
board Showboat  
for Harbor Dinner  
Cruise

Casual Dress

## FRIDAY JULY 3

**8:00 AM**

Board bus for golf  
at Miramar NAS

DAY FREE

**3:30 PM**

CNAC business meeting

**6:00 PM**

Board bus for trip  
to Aero Space Museum  
for cocktails and  
buffet dinner

Cocktails courtesy of  
Magi Corporation

Jim Hurst, host

Casual Dress

## SATURDAY JULY 4

DAY FREE

**3:30 PM**

AVG business meeting

**7:00 PM**

Cocktail Party

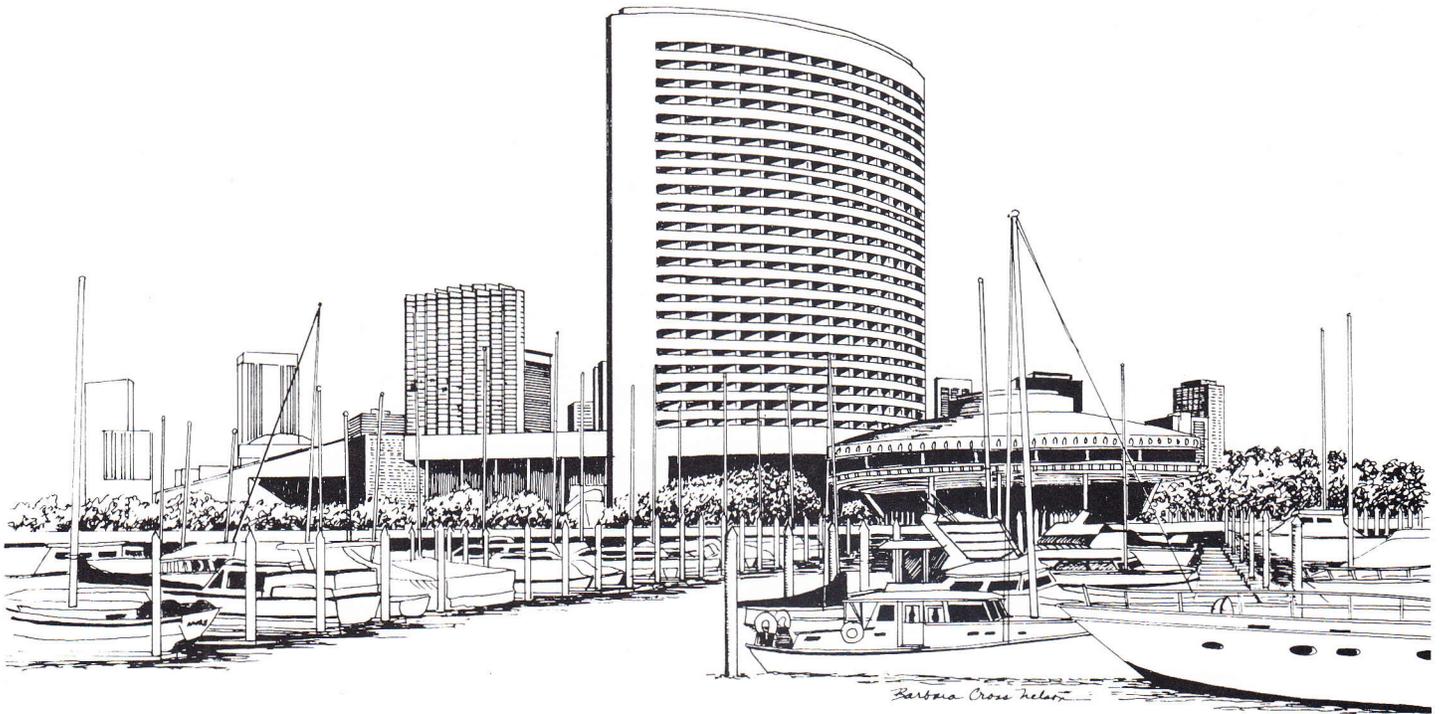
Hotel Intr-Continental

**8:00 PM**

AWARD Banquet

Presentation of  
Flying Tiger Pilot Award  
to Donald L. Rodewald

Coat & Tie





# FLYING TIGER PILOT AWARD WINNER

DONALD L. RODEWALD

Donald L. Rodewald was born on a farm near Baraboo, Wisconsin on September 7, 1918. He attended county school for three years, and then to Baraboo schools through high school.

He first soloed an airplane on skis in 1935. He managed to scrounge enough time in various winged machines to get his private license before joining the GHQ Air Corps at Selfridge Field, MI. He graduated from Armament School in 1939 at Lowry Field, CO.

Rodewald was discharged from the Air Corps in May of 1941, for the convenience of the government. With a contract from CAMCO (contracting company for the Flying Tigers) in his pocket, he traveled to the Jonathon Club in Los Angeles, where he met others with the same contract. They were all bussed to San Francisco and departed for Rangoon on the Dutch ship Jagersfontein.

After arriving at Rangoon and proceeding to Toungoo, he was assigned as armorer in the First Pursuit Squadron of the American Volunteer Group. He also had a temporary assignment working for the Chief Armorer.

At the completion of his contract with CAMCO, and with the disbanding of the AVG, he was sworn into the Army Air Corps as Armament Officer. He served in the newly formed 75th Fighter Squadron of the China Air Task Force, commanded by "Tex" Hill.

Rodewald returned to the USA in December, 1941, and was assigned to the Air Corps flying school, graduating in August, 1943. He was then assigned to Eglin Field, Florida, as flying armament test officer in the test group commanded by "Tex" Hill.

In the spring of 1945, Rodewald was sent back to China, where he was again in the 75th Fighter Squadron, now part of the 14th Air Force. From then to the end of the war he took part in bombing, strafing and rocket delivery.

After the war ended, Rodewald was attached to the Military Mission in Nanking. This duty was cut short in 1946, when he returned to the USA, because of the death of his wife. He was then ordered to duty at Eglin AFB, Florida, as Chief of Armament Test in Proof Test Division.

After attending Staff School from January to June, Rodewald was transferred to HQ CONAC Mitchel AFB, New York, in July, 1949, as Fighter Requirement Officer. There he participated in the development and test flying of Air Defense interceptors. In December, 1950 he was sent to

Colorado Springs with the initial contingent to establish the Air Defense Command. There followed duty at HQ USAF, in Washington, D.C., with Fighter Aircraft R & D. During this tour at the Pentagon, he flew combat missions in Korea, in F-86 Sabrejets, on TDY on R & D projects.

Back in the States, Rodewald crashed in a jet fighter in 1954. After being released from the hospital, and now confined to a wheelchair, he was retired from the Air Force on a medical. For the next nineteen years, he worked for Lockheed Aircraft Corporation. During this time, he had his flying license renewed, and with hand control, he was back in the air, in 1969. In 1975, he bought a single engine Comanche 260.

After retiring from Lockheed, Rodewald needed something to use up his excess energy, so he planned a solo flight around the world. He left the USA, eastbound, from Washington, D.C. in his Comanche, on August 3rd, 1984. The trip included 34 landings in 24 countries. The first landings were in Goose Bay, Reykjavik, Glasgow, London, Germany, Italy and on the Saudi Arabia, visiting friends along the way. He was ordered to land in Pakistan, so they could collect some exorbitant fees from him, probably the most unpleasant experience of the trip. He then flew over India to Bangladesh, over Burma to Bangkok and on to Singapore. After checking out the cocktail hour at the Raffles Hotel, he proceeded on to Australia, where he spent two weeks, including five days in the hospital and his birthday celebration, making stops in Adelaide, Sydney, Brisbane, and Townsville, then on to Port Moresby, Biak, Manila and Taipei.

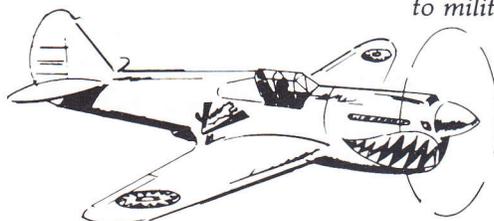
The Flying Tiger Association had a reunion in Taipei at this time, followed by a trip to Hong Kong and Tokyo. Rodewald joined the group for these festivities, and then returned from Tokyo to Taipei, and continued his flight, with stops at Manila, Guam, Panape, Majuro and a 14 hour and 25 minute hop to Honolulu. After a week of visiting there, he had a 13 hour and 20 minute hop to Oakland. There he was met by his daughters, a group of his Flying Tiger buddies, friends and members of the Wheelchair Pilots Association. After recuperating from this encounter, he took off for Tucson, to join his Mother's 93rd birthday party. Rodewald then took off for San Antonio, where "Tex" Hill hosted the festivities, then on to Washington, D.C. where Ed Rector saw to a happy ending on 29th of November, 1984.

# PREVIOUS AWARD WINNERS

- 1952 — Capt. Russell J. Brown  
*First American pilot to down a MiG—Korea*
- 1954 — William B. Bridgeman  
*Pioneer pilot on the X3*
- 1946 — George F. Smith  
*First pilot to survive supersonic bailout*
- 1957 — A.M. "Tex" Johnson  
*First pilot to fly the 707*
- 1958 — Lt. Gen. Claire Lee Chennault  
*Pioneer in developing Fighter Pilot Tactics and  
Commander of the Flying Tigers and also the  
WWII 14AF*
- 1959 — Maj. Walter W. Irwin  
*World speed record in F-104—1404 mph*
- 1962 — Maj. Robert M. White  
*First pilot to qualify as an astronaut in an air-  
plane — X-15*
- 1964 — Col. Lee, Chinese Air Force  
*For distinguished classified mission*
- 1965 — Col. Robert L. Stephens  
Lt.Col. Daniel Andre  
*Pilots of the YF-12A to new world speed and  
altitude records*
- 1967 — Maj. Gen. Charles R. Bond, Jr.  
*35-year career in military aviation from fighter  
pilot to Commanding General*
- 1969 — Col. Thomas P. Stafford  
*Apollo 10 Commander*
- 1971 — William P. Lear, Sr.  
*Aircraft and Electronics Pioneer*
- 1973 — Lt. Gen. Samuel C. Phillips, USAF  
*Director, Apollo Manned Lunar Landing Pro-  
gram*
- 1975 — Neil A. Armstrong, Astronaut  
*First man on the moon, Commander of Apollo  
XI, the moon ship*
- 1977 — Gen. Chas. E. Yeager, USAF  
*First man to break the sound barrier and first to  
fly at twice the speed of sound*



- 1979 — Robt. W. Prescott  
*Distinguished combat career and pioneer in com-  
mercial air freight*
- 1981 — Robert A. "Bob" Hoover  
*Foremost precision pilot, WWII combat pilot  
with more than 35 years of outstanding aviation  
achievements.*
- 1983 — Gen. James H. Doolittle, USAF  
*A lifetime of pioneer contributions to aviation  
progress and innovations, including the Doolittle  
Tokyo Raid.*
- 1985 — Barry M. Goldwater, USAF Gen. & U.S. Senator  
*Devoted a lifetime of service to his country and  
to military aviation*



# MISS FLYING TIGER



*Best  
Kay Aslesen-  
Warneke*

Kay Aslesen-Warneke was hired by Flying Tigers in 1978 to fly second officer on the DC-8. Nine months later she was able to move up to S/O on the B-747 when she became the first female S/O-crewmember on the aircraft. "On one of my first trips, I remember asking Capt. Ray Allen if he had any feelings one way or the other on my being on the crew. As I recall, he shrugged his shoulders and simply said that there were women flying transports in WW II so what difference does it make now? I agreed with him." Kay's been flying F/O on the 727 for the last year. She and her husband Jeff Warneke, also a Flying Tiger pilot, will both be based in newly opened San Diego as first officers in October.

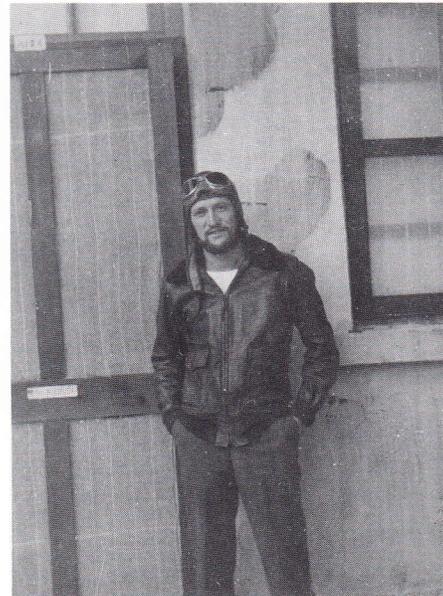
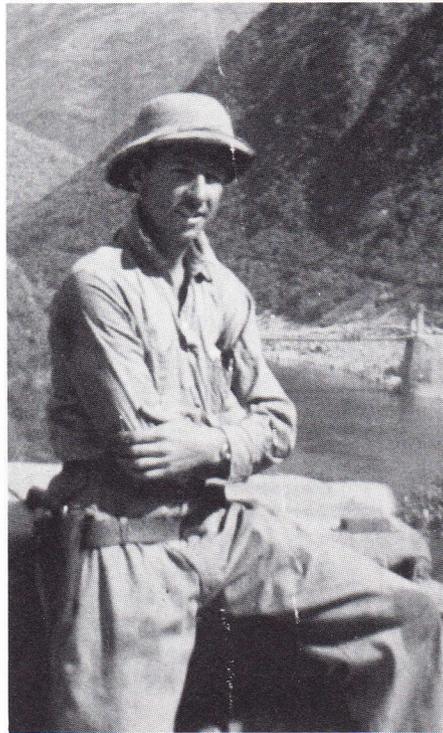
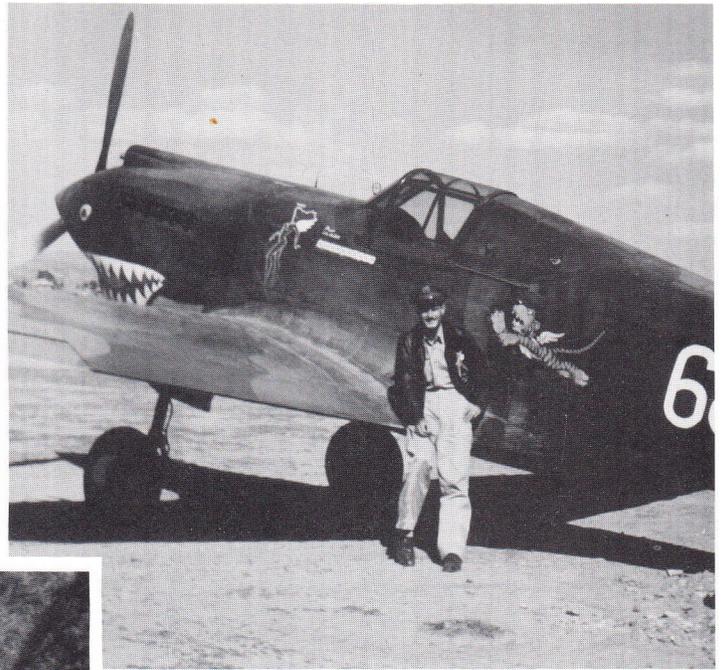
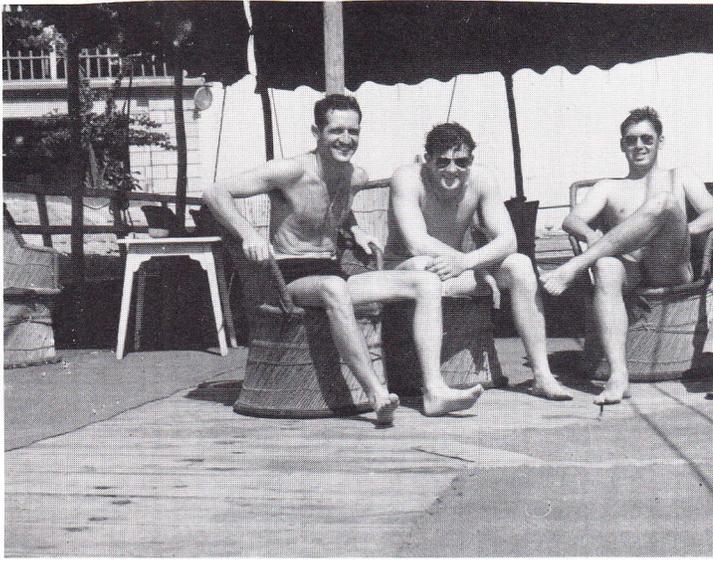
She started her flying career in general aviation after graduating from UCLA in 1974, working as a flight instructor and charter pilot out of Palomar Airport in Carlsbad. In fact, she met her husband on her second fly-

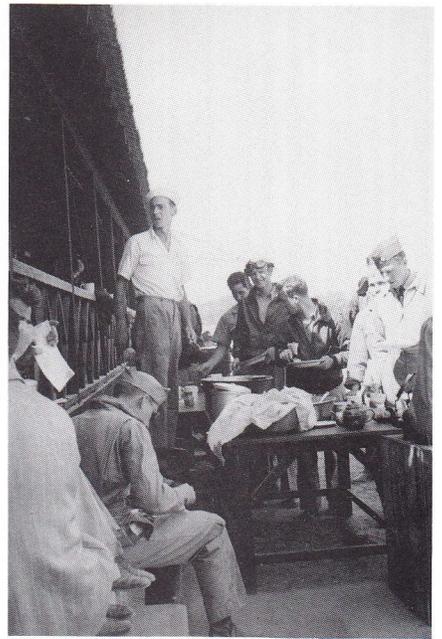
ing lesson when he became her "permanent" instructor, giving her all her ratings through ATP. "I feel Jeff's flying and teaching ability instilled the confidence I feel in the airplane today. He's a natural," she said.

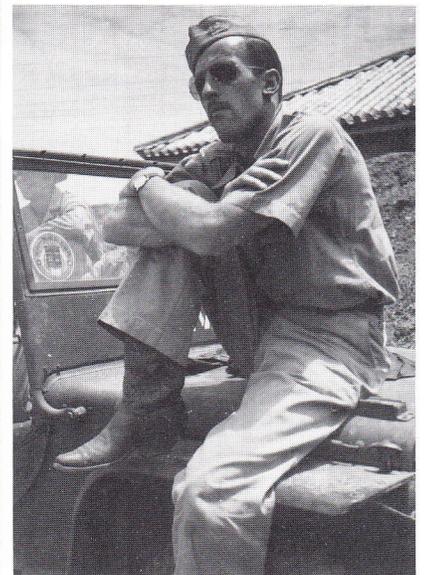
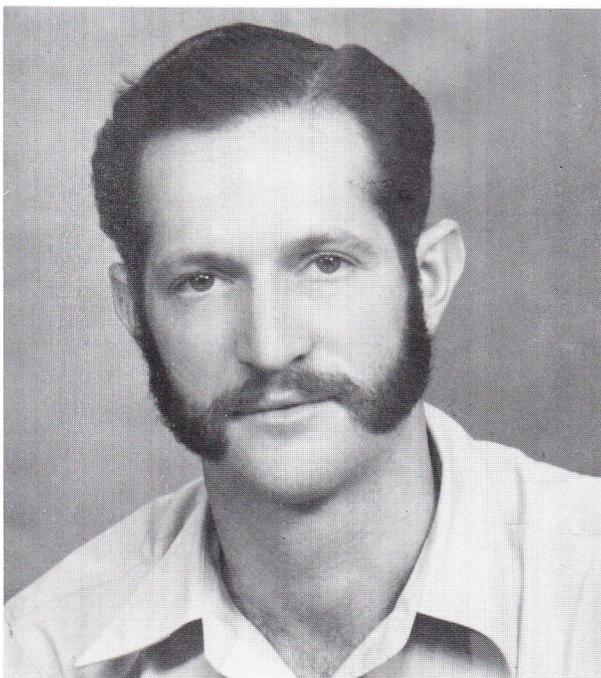
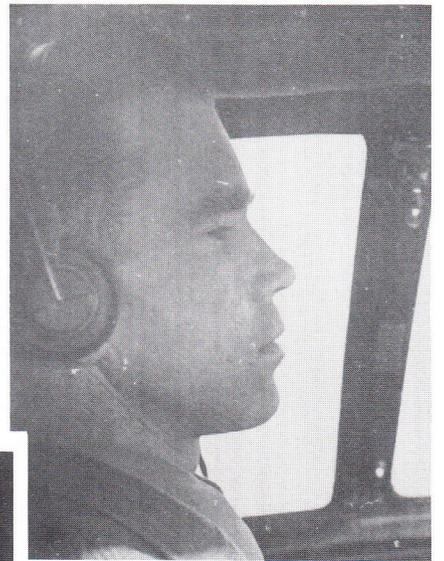
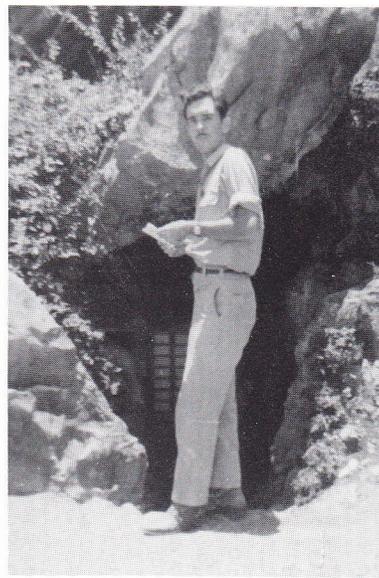
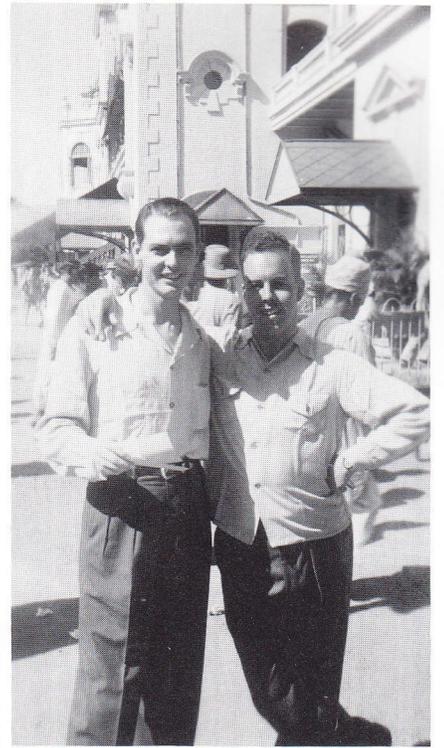
Kay grew up in Minnesota and moved to California in 1966 to attend a local high school. She taught her brother to fly but his job as a petroleum engineer for Standard Oil keeps him mostly on the ground. She has a sister in advertising in Chicago and another brother who works as a purchasing agent locally.

Kay's father joined the Marine Corps during WW II and became a pilot in the Marine Air Transport System trained by the Navy in Pensacola. He flew PBV's, PBJ's, and C-46's domestically and out on the Pacific. He left as a Captain after the war to join his father in the grocery business.

Jeff and Kay now live in Carlsbad with their two-year old-son Brett.











# NOTES ON THE AMERICAN VOLUNTEER GROUP — THE REAL FLYING TIGERS

When the Army Air Corps' Flying Trapeze Unit put on their final formation aerobatic show at the Pan-American air maneuvers in Miami in January, 1936, one of the spectators was General P.T. Mow of the Chinese Air Force (CAF). He was impressed by what he saw, and especially with the leader, Claire Lee Chennault. He offered jobs in China to the three performing pilots, Claire Chennault, Bill McDonald and Luke Williamson.

McDonald and Williamson accepted, but Chennault declined. However, changing circumstances caused him to change his mind in early 1937, and accept a short term deal to make a confidential survey of the Chinese Air Force. The short term was to last for years.

By 1941, with the Japanese conquest of China gaining more and more ground, with the Chinese Air Force decimated by continual losses against superior numbers, and being practically out of planes, outside help was badly needed.

A supply of planes was finally arranged after much frantic negotiation. When France fell, it had 100 P-40B's on line at Curtiss-Wright. The order was then taken over by the British, who agreed to let them go to China, in lieu of 100 later versions of the P-40. The first P-40 was lost in the New York harbor when a cargo sling broke, but the rest were loaded aboard ship for Rangoon.

Pilots and support personnel were needed to man and service the planes. After much intense negotiating and lobbying, against heavy opposition from the Armed Forces leaders, President Roosevelt signed an unpublicized executive order on April 15, 1941, allowing members of the Army Air Corps and Navy and Marines to volunteer for work in China. The covering agency was the Central Aircraft Manufacturing Corporation (CAMCO), which had an aircraft factory in Loiwing. The group was called the First American Volunteer Group.

Originally, there were to be three groups, first a fighter group, then a light bomber group, and finally another fighter group. The advent of Pearl Harbor stopped all this, leaving only the first group recruited. The First American Volunteer Group became simply the American Volunteer Group.

The outstanding record of the AVG (Flying Tigers) became history, starting with the first combat in Kunming on December 20, 1941 and ending with the Group's disbandment on July 4, 1942.

The ground crews were a vital factor that most newspaper correspondents on the spot overlooked when reporting AVG victories. It was the speed with which the ground crews repaired, refueled and rearmed the P-40's that kept the AVG from being flooded by the Japanese one-

two punches. The ground crews displayed amazing ingenuity and energy in repairing battle damaged P-40's. Their performance at Rangoon was truly outstanding, and accomplished with a minimum of supplies and equipment.

To show how bad conditions became at times, consider the last two days in Rangoon before the evacuation. On February 25, 1942, the Japanese hit Rangoon with three attacks using 166 planes. The AVG and RAF had a total of 15 planes to put up against this onslaught. The AVG shot down 25 enemy planes that day.

On February 26, the AVG had only 6 flyable aircraft, and the Japanese put 200 planes over Rangoon. The AVG accounted for 18 fighters that day.

The following is a report made by Fritz Wolf to Claire Chennault near the end of February:

"Planes at Rangoon are almost unflyable. Tires are chewed up and baked hard. They blow out continually. We are short on them, and battery planes are thin. When we recharge them, they wear out within a day. There is no Prestone oil coolant in Rangoon. The British destroyed the battery-charging and oxygen-storage depots without any advance warning to us so we could stock up. We are completely out of auxiliary gear shifts and they are wearing out in the planes every day.

Fresh food of any kind is completely lacking. We are living out of cans. Water is hard to get. Most of the city water supply has been cut off.

Dust on the field fouls up the P-40's engines considerably. It clogs carburetion so much that it is dangerous to increase manifold pressure when the engine quits cold. Entire carburation systems are cleaned on the ground, but they are as bad as ever after a single day's operations. This tendency of engines to quit makes it hard to dogfight or strafe. Of the eight planes that took off for an air raid two days ago, only five got off the ground.

Conditions in Rangoon are getting dangerous. Authorities have released criminals, lunatics, and lepers to fend for themselves. Natives have broken into unguarded liquor stocks and are in a dangerous state. There are continual knifings and killings. Three British were killed near the docks a few nights ago. Stores are all closed. At least twenty-five blocks of the city are burning furiously. All fire trucks were sent up the Prome Road to Mandalay several weeks ago.

Our only contact with British intelligence was a visit from one officer about ten days ago. There seems to be little co-operation between the R.A.F. and British Army and less between the R.A.F. and us. It seems certain that the Japanese have crossed the Sittang River (only eighty miles from Rangoon), but we have had no word on it."

# 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.

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 the CAF, CNAC provided the service. General Jimmy Doolittle and his Raider who landed in China, were flown across the Hump on the beginning of their journey home.

The eastbound leg of the Hump route was the last link in the world's longest military supply line. It was the world's

first major airlift, and 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 or weather conditions, CNAC pilots had not even the satisfaction of being able to shoot back.

With the wartime shortage of pilots, and new heavy demands on the Hump route, CNAC added many Tiger pilots to fill their ranks when the AVG was disbanded on July, 1942. To supplement this source of supply, CNAC recruited other pilots 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. Three Hump trips per day, running up to twenty hours time by a single crew was not unknown.

The record compiled by the CNAC crew and personnel of military tonnage and vital supplies in and out of China was most remarkable. Included were evacuations and air-drops, all in support of the war effort.

During this war operation, a considerable number of CNAC pilots flew over 500 trips across the Hump, and a few flew over 700 trips. It was a cruel and demanding operation, from which many CNAC crews and their planes never returned.

CNAC later became involved in the Chinese civil war, and frequently operated as a para military adjunct of the Chinese Air Force.





# AUTOGRAPHS

The AVG and CNAC Associations wish to acknowledge and thank their friends who have contributed to make this reunion possible. We are indebted to the following companies for their generous interest in our reunion:

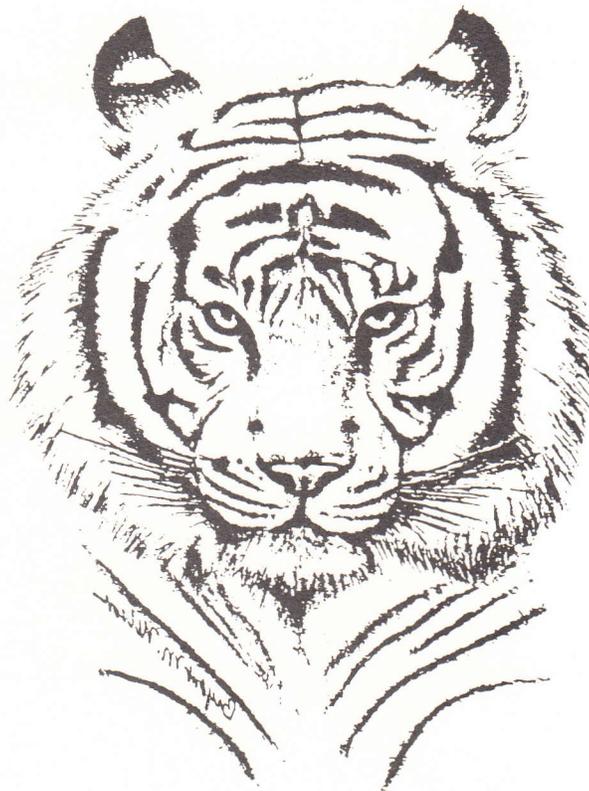
THE FLYING TIGER LINE  
THE GREENWICH WORK SHOP  
H M C  
THE MAJI CORPORATION  
SPECIALTY RESTAURANTS CORPORATION

We wish to express our appreciation to individuals who have contributed much time and talent to this reunion. Our thanks to Milton Caniff for his artwork and support, and to Barbara and Bryant Nelson for their artwork. We are especially thankful to Bob Andrade and his Palm Springs High School Graphic Arts class for the many printing projects they have done for us

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DIETZ