



AIR AMERICA FOUNDATION

THE Provider Weekly



Greetings! It has been a busy week since the airshow. On Monday after the airshow we had to finish the break down and get 674 back to her temporary home on the west taxiway.

We were short a crew member so Flea from the Valiant Air Command gave us a hand. We helped Flea move his Huey, and then we got to the business of moving the C123. This was my first time moving the aircraft with the tug, so I was a bit nervous. She is a big girl and does not exactly stop on a dime!

With Cal on one side and Flea on the other, I was well guided to move and park the aircraft. We got her back to our digs safe and sound. I even got a couple of attaboys from Cal and Flea, so that made me feel pretty good.

This past Saturday we had a small but dedicated crew to work on the plane. In attendance were Ed Bloom, Cal Crocker, Lyle Barney, myself, Paul Hedtke showed up from parts up north and a special visitor Cheryl Towle.

We did a bit of work. Paul was able to get a panel on top of the port wing by the flaps re-installed. We had to take it off to fix a leak in one of the hydraulic valves for the flaps. It is good to see it back on the plane.

The next project was a general straightening up of the aircraft. We were able to get some large totes to store things in. We now have specific totes for supplies and we can keep them labeled and know what is in them and where our supplies are.

Lyle got the Buda started, gave it a bit of a workout, and assisted by Paul, got the radiator drained and flushed and some new anti-freeze and water mix in. We of course don't need the anti-freeze in Florida but it has some anti corrosion properties in it.

We had a bit of trouble with the ramp after airshow, but Cal found out that an incorrect switch had been pushed at the airshow. I was relieved that was all it was!

We had a great lunch with everyone at Kelsey's in Port St. John. Since the Outer Marker closed, we have once again been forced to leave the airport property for lunch. I have been thinking of getting a cheap propane grill and bringing hotdogs, sausage or burgers to the plane and cooking there. Maybe we could put a few tables in and serve lunch in the plane as a fundraiser.

Cal literally took off early as he flew his plane down from Edgewater and had to get back for an important date with Mrs. Cal.

Continued...

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What's

NEW This

Week

- ◆ Message from the editor
- ◆ Airshow's over for another year
- ◆ Work update
- ◆ CAT Article
- ◆ Flickr link
- ◆ New photos
- ◆ New website soon!

*The Air America Foundation
is a 501 (c) 3 organization.*

THE Provider Weekly



We also wish Brad B. a speedy recovery as he is under the weather.

That is all to report this week. We met some new folks at the airshow. Hopefully we can turn them in to recruits. We can sure use the extra hands.

We have been invited to have a table at the Special Forces Association National Convention in Orlando in June. We are hoping to attend to talk to people about the foundation and what we do. Hopefully we will meet some new people and make some contacts. If you are interested in going with us, let me know and we can work out the details.

I am also happy to report that all of our board members have been updated on all foundation business to date. This is no small accomplishment with members in four different states! We have a good group that I am pleased to say is working together and has the foundation's best interests at heart. The board is making things easier through this difficult time of transition. I would like to say thank you to all of our board members for all they are doing.

Well I think that is all I have for this edition of The Provider Weekly. Welcome to our newest subscribers and we hope you will enjoy the upcoming updates and progress notes on the Foundation. Until next time,

Historically Yours,



Last Saturday's gang at Kelsey's Paul H & Cheryl (left)
Cal, Lyle & Ed B. (right)

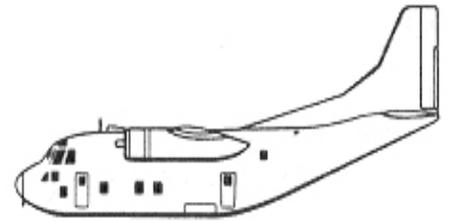


Moving the C123 for the first time. Glad this is not my daily driver! Need a tug with power steering!

We will soon have our new website up and running! Stay tuned for the special announcement when we go live!

Air America stuff online to check out!

http://www.flickr.com/photos/ed_kindle/sets/72157624712147513/



Cal requesting take off clearance in the Mooney!



**Got an idea?
Let us know!**

**Got a question?
Ask us!**



Hey Cal! What's up with that crazy prop?!
Actually this is what happens when you don't have a real shutter in your digital camera.



Paul installing the missing panel over the hydraulic valve. Thanks Paul!



Your Officers & Board Members

- President - Edmund M. Kindle
- Vice President - George Simon
- Secretary - John Plotnicky
- Treasurer - Cal Crocker
- Lead Mechanic - Rod McIntyre
- Air Crew Supervisor - Paul Hedtke
- Board Member - Ed Bloom

Nothing great has been accomplished in the world without passion
~ George Hegel

Gold in the **Sky**

FLYING



FEBRUARY 1954 • 35 CENTS In Canada 40¢



RILEY TWIN NAVION

Twin Navion Check Pilot



RUSSIAN DELTA

This historic wartime photo shows Maj. Gen. Claire L. Chennault (second from left) at a Chinese air field with Sir John Dill, British Field Marshal; Gen. George H. H. "Hap" Arnold, Chief of the U.S. Army Air Forces, and Lt. Gen. James Stilwell of the U.S. Army. At that time, 1943, Chennault was in command of United States Air Forces in China.



Below is a view from the bridge of the LST used by CAT as its floating maintenance base. Quonset huts on the deck house working areas including the modern machine shop shown in the bottom picture.



THE standout feature of Maj. Gen. Claire L. Chennault's long and brilliant career has been success against seemingly overwhelming opposition. Chennault's command of the gallant and outnumbered "Flying Tigers" and his later service in China during World War II have been written into the annals of U.S. military history and mark the man as one of America's honored, fighting sons.

Unlike many of the last war's distinguished military leaders, Chennault did not mellow into retirement at the signing of the peace. The history of his Civil Air Trans-

Chennault's CAT

Civil Air Transport, "The Orient Express", owes its fame and prosperity to its remarkable chief.

By VICTOR BLACK

port, the Orient's famous CAT—its shaky beginning, its slow withdrawal before the surge of Communist armies, and finally its headlong retreat with Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist armies—is a story that might well have ended in failure rather than success had it not been for the general's genius for snatching victory out of almost certain defeat.

The Civil Air Transport was one of the three Chinese airlines operating on the China mainland before the Communist seizure. Since the defection of CNAC (China National Aviation Corporation) (Continued on page 45)

Chennault's CAT

(Continued from page 15)

and CATC (Central Air Transport Corporation) to the Communists at the end of 1949, CAT has been Free China's only flag carrier on international routes.

Originally known as CNRRA (the Chinese counterpart of UNRRA) Air Transport, when it came into being in 1946, the airline's first job was airlifting relief and rehabilitation supplies from the seaports of Shanghai and Canton to the small cities and villages of the interior where they were desperately needed. The carriers consisted of war surplus C-46 and C-47 transports.

During the first year of operation, the airline carried everything from New Zealand sheep and cattle to penicillin, with a few miscellaneous passengers thrown in for good measure. Any resemblance to CAT's plush passenger airliners of today was strictly accidental. Flight stewards were unheard-of luxuries. Crews and passengers alike brought their own chow if they wanted any.

Fleeing Before Reds

In the latter months of 1947, CAT began its historic flights against time—that is, the time left before the entry of Communist armies—in one town after another. First it was Weih sien in Shantung Province where the airline kept a Communist-surrounded city in food and essentials for many weeks while evacuating essential personnel to safety before the city finally fell. This pattern was followed in city after city as CAT planes flew in and out steadily on evacuation missions even while shells burst on the runways, sometimes damaging the planes. Bill Severt, in charge of the evacuation from China's World War II capital, tells the following story:

"Evacuation day for Chungking was November 29, 1949. Although we had known for several days that Chungking could not last much longer, that afternoon of the 29th we had no idea the end was to come so soon. In fact, the worst part of the old evacuation story, aside from cold and fatigue and sometimes downright misery, was the continual uncertainty. Our information on military events was invariably contradictory and just as invariably incorrect.

"It was Colonel Yang of the Chinese Air Force who told me during the afternoon that we should plan to vacate Peishiyi by nightfall. Peishiyi, a wartime 14th Air Force field, lies across a range of hills from Chungking and was the airfield CAT always used. Fortunately, we'd already gotten out three full plane loads—15 tons—of CAT equipment. When the final plane left, only two beat-up jeeps and a generator remained behind.

"During the afternoon, car after car of high officials appeared at the field. A number of Chinese Air Force planes took off loaded to the gunwales. The Generalissimo's plane was still on the field, as were around a dozen CAF transports.

"None of us had had any rest for 48 hours but we had to work harder than

FLYING—February 1954

PORTABLE DISPLAY

Developed for the U.S. Air Force this new portable display fixture acquaints young men with advantages of Air Force training and experience. Colleges, schools, or community groups can arrange for Aviation Cadet Selection meetings at which the unit will be used to explain phases of training. Or retail stores, banks and others can obtain display for windows. Requests should be sent six weeks prior to use to: 3500 Personnel Processing Group, F.T.A.F. Headquarters, Waco, Tex.



ever that afternoon. Before nightfall we had our three planes all loaded up and ready to go at the drop of a hat. As we were working we saw a terrific flash, followed by a big explosion, on the mountains between us and the city. We were told the Communists had blown up a tunnel on the road between Peishiyi and Chungking, hoping to trap the Generalissimo in the city. The Gimo, however, was staying at a place on the Peishiyi side of the tunnel, so the Red maneuver didn't work.

"Finally night fell. It was pitch dark and the cold of a Chungking winter was more penetrating than ever. Off over the hills we saw the frequent flash of guns and heard the rattle of fire. Then, at 8:30 p.m., we saw a whole stream of vehicles pouring onto the field from across the runway. It was the final exodus and we had a new worry: that the last-minute flood of refugees might try to rush the planes. If their government wouldn't evacuate them, they might try to evacuate themselves. It was our signal to get going.

Dollars Left Behind

"The only reason we hadn't left before this was because we still had no certain information that Peishiyi would not hold a day or two more. There were still two plane-loads of Nationalist silver dollars on the field and we were hoping to be able to get a couple of planes in to take the dollars out.

"We shut down the radio station in jig time, loaded the final items of gear aboard, then climbed in ourselves. Among our passengers was Spencer Moosa, Associated Press correspondent who had done an excellent job of covering Chungking's final days.

"The three CAT planes took off at 9:15 p.m., one right after the other. The city, that is the airfield, fell just 12 hours later. The Generalissimo didn't

get out, we heard, until 4 the next morning."

The evacuation of Chungking was paralleled throughout mainland China as CAT withdrew with the Nationalist armies before the onrushing Communists. The airline's main base and offices were moved first from Shanghai to Canton, then Canton to Kunming, then Kunming to Hainan Island, and finally from Hainan to Formosa.

Today, CAT has transformed itself into a new and somewhat different type of airline. While in 1950 the airline had no established commercial air routes, flying mostly on a chartered basis, CAT has now established service between Formosa, Hong Kong, Japan, Bangkok, Okinawa, Pusan and Manila.

One of the unique aspects of the present-day CAT is its adaptation of a World War II LST into a maintenance base. A 2,000-ton barge is the carrier's supply base. The use of the LST-barge combination means that CAT is probably the only airline in the world able to move itself intact within 48 hours and be ready to operate as soon as a new location is found. These floating bases will allow Chennault and his airliners to move back into mainland China as quickly as it retreated before the Communists.

One thing is certain. No other major airline has faced a fraction of the adversity that has dogged the path of CAT since its start. But then again, there is only one Chennault. His leadership has brought CAT from a hodgepodge of war-beaten old transports to one of the world's great airlines, known throughout Asia as the Orient Express. END

This nation's modern military plane weighs on the average more than twice as much as its World War II counterpart and takes four times as many man hours to build.