

LST & BARGE

Civil Air Transport first chartered "the LST" (for Landing Ship Tank) in February, 1949, in Shanghai, China. It was chartered from China Merchants Steam Navigation Co. of Shanghai and was designated "Chung 118."

Reason for acquiring the LST was that, due to the unsettled political situation on the China Mainland at the time, Company Management decided that any kind of unmovable land installation of Company facilities would be impractical since it would be impossible to move such a facility at a moment's notice.

Mr. Whiting Willauer, one of the two original co-partners of the Company (the other being General Claire I. Chennault) first spotted an LST in Shanghai which, he thought, might serve the purpose of having something mobile to house Company equipment. He asked Mr. Mervyn A. Garrold, then Chief of Shops, to look over the LST; Mr. Garrold did so and agreed that it was the answer to the Company's mobility problem. So the LST was duly chartered from C.M.S.N.C.

When first acquired by CAT, the LST was just as the U.S. Navy had had her built: she was a Navy-gray painted, 327-foot long, 50-foot beam, 2,400 ton craft. It was not until May, 1949, that she was repainted with a white superstructure and black hull and that the shops began coming on board.

The craft made its maiden voyage under CAT colors on March 14, 1949, from Shanghai, down the South China coast to Canton. Skipper of the LST on this trip was Captain (airplane Captain) Felix Smith --- presumably he was the only person in the Company with enough nautical expertise to command the LST on this voyage.

On September 2, 1949, "Chung 118" made the short cruise from Canton to Hong Kong where the ship served as a secondary Base to the Company Base at Kunning.

On October 11, 1949, the LST was purchased by CAT from John Manners & Co. Ltd., Merchants in Hong Kong for HK\$29,500.

Later, the LST continued her odyssey when, on December 15, 1949, she sailed from Hong Kong to Sanya, a southern port on Hainan Island -- off the southernmost tip of the Chinese mainland.

Finally, on January 15, 1950, "Chung 118" made her last trip sailing from Sanya, across the South China Sea, to the southern Taiwan port of Kaohsiung.

Up to this point, the LST had served primarily as a means of transportation of people and equipment, spares and parts, and the endless array of hardware necessary to keep the LST itself in operating condition.

Soon after she was permanently docked at Kaohsiung harbor, "Chung 118" rapidly acquired such non-nautical trappings as a double row of Quonset huts, stoutly secured bow-to-stern on her main deck, and a parachute loft went straight through her bridge; she was undergoing the metamorphosis of becoming an aircraft maintenance support vessel for Company and other planes being maintained or overhauled at CAT's newly-established Aircraft Maintenance and Overhaul base at Tainan, some 26 miles to the north of Kaohsiung.

The shops aboard the LST were impressive in their engineering modernity and in their completeness. Within the ship and in the twin Quonset huts, each 120 feet long, running parallel along almost the whole length of the LST's main top deck, were a variety of shops that would impress any engineer. There were spotless machine shops, operating with fine precision, instrument shops, a propeller shop (and balancing a propeller on a sometimes swaying ship was quite a trick in itself); departments devoted to woodworking, painting and fabrics, communications, accessories, sheet metal, sand blasting, electroplating, engine build-up, hydraulics, electrical components, various types of inspection -- such as zygo and magnaflux --

a parachute packing room and a 37-foot high air-conditioned parachute drying tower, a photographic darkroom and a utilities department. In addition to these facilities, the LST also included an infirmary, a mess hall and a wardroom.

The actual operation of the ship after it reached Kaohsiung was handled by a marine crew under the command of Captain Charles Crossman, Chief Engineer H. J. Parke, and Second Engineer N. S. Brough. The Company's Marine Division, with a crew of 33 men, was headed by Mr. R. E. Kluber. There were approximately 250 men working on board the LST; most were already experienced in aircraft maintenance.

Probably the most interesting feature of the LST itself was the ability to make what was needed. Members of the Marine staff had the know-how to modify the LST as required, and the Company's Engineering Division followed the same principle. When a machine was needed, and the cost, if bought from the outside, were prohibitive, the shops would build one. In some cases, time was the important factor. If the machine needed had to be ordered from the States, it might arrive too late for the work at hand. Therefore, equipment such as magneto test stands, heater test stands, power oil cooler flushing units, etc. were built in CAT's own machine shops. By incorporating the better points of many machines, the shops often came up with equipment whose performance was superior to commercially available equipment designed to do the same job.

The LST served CAT -- and later Air Asia Company Limited -- as a mobile, self-contained aircraft maintenance and repair facility for approximately 12 years; from 1950 to 1962. In 1962, the aircraft maintenance facilities were moved from the LST to a new Shops Building at the Company's Main Maintenance Base in Tainan. When the move was completed, the LST was no longer required and, on 29 May 1962, bids were sent out to sell the craft.

A companion vessel to "Chung 118" was a 210-foot long, 1,000 ton capacity barge, affectionately named "Buddha," which was used primarily for supply and material storage; she was moored alongside the LST during most of her useful lifetime.

"Buddha" was purchased in Canton in May, 1949, and was towed to Kaohsiung, since the ship was not self-propelled; she was, however, equipped with diesel-powered generators to supply her with electric power, and winches and booms for handling cargo; she also had her own water system.

With the relocation of the stores function from the barge to a new warehouse in Tainan, which was completed in December, 1960, "Buddha" had outlived her usefulness and was sold for scrap -- along with "Chung 118" -- to the Hwa Yung Metal Ind. Co. Ltd. of Kaohsiung; price paid to CAT was

CAT was probably one of the few airlines in the world to have a Marine Department within its organization. The Department started in 1949; it reached its manning peak in September, 1954, when it was authorized to have a total of 48 positions of which 44 were filled -- 33 on the LST, nine on the barge and two in the Marine Office. The Marine Department was disbanded on November 1, 1962, after the sale of the barge and the LST. Thus, a unique department of CAT -- or any other airline -- was phased into limbo.

- Attachments - A Research of OVP-L Files Re: LST "Chung 118."  
B Color photographs of models of the LST and Barge "Buddha" (negatives included).  
C Black-and-white photographs of the actual LST and the Barge "Buddha" at Kaohsiung including some interior shots (some negatives included).  
D Map of the evacuation route of the LST from Shanghai, China, to its eventual destination, Kaohsiung, Taiwan.

Attachment - A

Research of OVP-L Files Re: "Chung 118"

On 11 October 1949 Civil Air Transport paid to John Hanners & Co. Ltd., Merchants, Hong Kong and China, HK\$29,500.

LST was brought to Taiwan in 1950 by Civil Air Transport, CAA-MOC, who had chartered LST from CMSNC (quoted from draft memo prepared by VIGA) in January, 1951.

MOC Mailgram 40-00325, dated 11 January 1951, indicated that Civil Air Transport had negotiated to purchase LST from CMSNC.

Bill of Sale from CAT Incorporated in favor of AACL was executed on 23 February 1955.

On 4 April 1955 AACL submitted application for transfer of registration of LST from Civil Air Transport, CAA-MOC to AACL.

Application rejected by MOC on 26 April 1955 (Directive 44-03411).

CAT Incorporated applied to MOC on 12 October 1955 for deregistration and repossession.

On 29 November 1955 MOC again rejected application and suggested that Civil Air Transport Company Limited apply for transfer and ownership due to certain investment statutes.

Again on 19 March 1956 CAT Incorporated applied to MOC stating certain additional facts.

CAA Letter YEH-2-45-0591, dated 30 May 1956, advised of MOC's rejection.

MEMO SIC-59-1063, dated 6 November 1959, states that Air America, Inc.'s investment of LST in CATCL in exchange for a Note from CATCL "has been approved by MOEA."

Barckley Shaw's letter of 29 April 1960 gives certain important background info (copy attached).

Memo AVP-60-176, dated 3 August 1960, advises DGM that President has decided on LST sales project.

Former Civil Air Transport, CAA-MOC, represented by AACL, advised MOC on 24 January 1962 of planned disposal of LST.

On 3 February 1962 MOC approved foregoing.

On 2 April 1962 Civil Air Transport, CAA-MOC petitioned MOC to sell vessel or dismantle for scrap.

On 17 April 1962 MOC advised Civil Air Transport, CAA-MOC to discuss sale with CMSNC.

CMSNC advised AACI on 15 May 1962 that it had received instructions from MOC not to purchase.

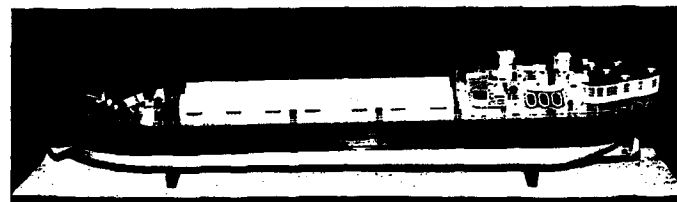
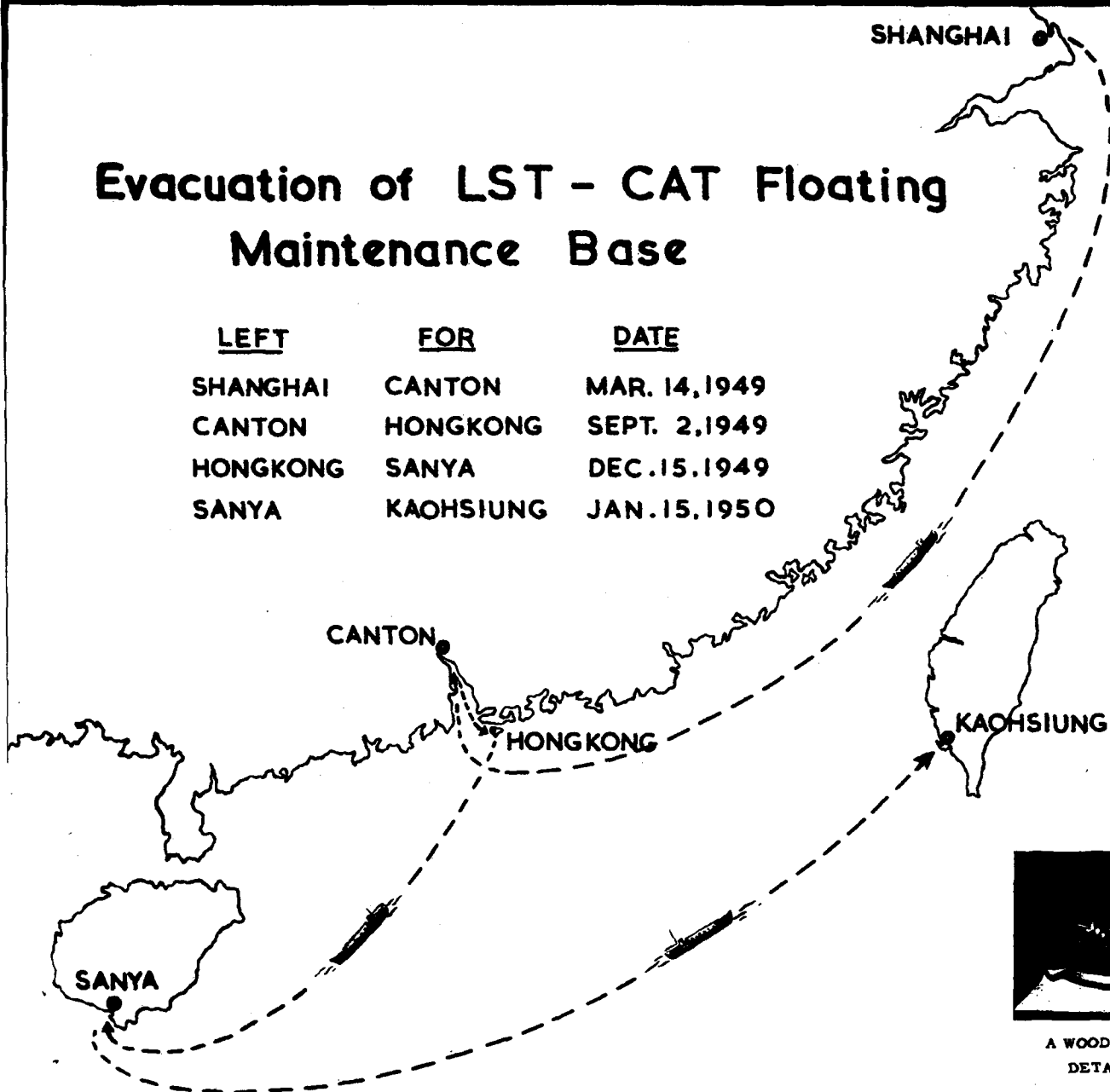
On 29 May 1962 bids were sent out to sell.

On 15 October 1962 CMSNC once again advised AACI that it did not intend to purchase LST.

Sale of LST and LCM Barge to Hwa Yung Metal Ind. Co. Ltd. of Kaohsiung was effected on 18 October 1962 for scrap purposes. Price:

## Evacuation of LST - CAT Floating Maintenance Base

<u>LEFT</u>	<u>FOR</u>	<u>DATE</u>
SHANGHAI	CANTON	MAR. 14, 1949
CANTON	HONGKONG	SEPT. 2, 1949
HONGKONG	SANYA	DEC. 15, 1949
SANYA	KAOSIUNG	JAN. 15, 1950



A WOODEN MODEL OF THE LST COMPLETE TO THE SMALLEST  
DETAIL AND BUILT TO A SCALE OF 1/8 INCH TO 1 FOOT