

Air America to cover the sum due for that unidentified Grumman Goose. The date is given as March 65, believed to be the date of Promissory note no. 10. Nevertheless, such a Grumman Goose does not appear in any of the Company's Flight Operations Circulars and not even on Air Asia's Statement of Property dated 31 March 65 (in: UTD/CIA/B26F5), which also mentions aircraft that were no longer current at that date like Bell 47 B-803. The other thing that surprises in that deal is the extremely low price paid for that Grumman Goose: As can be seen in the "Analysis of donated capital" mentioned above (in: UTD/Herd/B2), it was only a fifth of what the Company would have paid for a Helio Courier at that time, although a Goose is much bigger than a Helio.

The explanation seems to be that that Grumman Goose was no longer airworthy, but just a hull. And this point allows identifying the aircraft. For in 1952, Western Enterprises Inc., the CIA front working on Taiwan, acquired a Grumman OA-9 Goose, appropriately marked as "OA9-0002". In his book about the Republic of China Air Force 34th Squadron, published in Chinese by *Masterbooks*, Taipei, Taiwan in 2006, Clarence Fu reproduces a photo of a Goose serialled "OA9-0002" on p.23, copied here with kind permission from Clarence Fu.



Western Enterprises Goose OA9-0002 at Tainan, Taiwan in the early fifties
(submitted by Leon Callaghan (†) to Clarence Fu)

In his e-mail dated 22 October 2006, kindly sent to the author, Clarence Fu explains: "My Australian friend Leon Callaghan's father was a CAT employee. He took the photo of the Goose in CAT's maintenance shop in Tainan. It had no markings except under the left wing something that looked like OA9-0002. It occasionally showed up in Taoyuan AFB where the special missions of CIA-RoCAF started from. The aircraft was later planned to be used by the VIP squadron of RoCAF as President Chiang's personal aircraft, but two RoCAF pilots crashed it while they tried to land on water in a training flight at Tongkang, Pingtung, so it did not go into real service." This Goose already existed in 1952: "My friend Col. Huang (ret.) saw the Goose in 1952. He worked in a small depot just next to the apron where the B-17 usually parked in Taoyuan AFB. [...] He remembers the C-54 and Goose would come to the base occasionally." (e-mail dated 23 October 2006, kindly sent to the author by Clarence Fu).

This Goose was flown by CAT personnel. Connie Seigris recalls: “The PBY’s main function was for flying to the Mainland Chinese off shore islands of Kinmen, Matsu, and Tachens as an air support for Western Enterprise Incorporated’s outlying stations on those islands. [...] WEI owned an amphibian aircraft called the Grumman Goose, which is less than half the size of the PBY. CAT maintained and crewed the Goose for WEI as required. I flew it at various times while it was stationed on Taiwan from 1952 until 1954. It was flown to the usual PBY destinations mostly for VIP. [...] Don [Teeters] and I were the only two CAT captains checked out on the PBY for a period of about seven years. During that time we were almost always on standby for the boats as most called the PBY. [...] We had two PBYs and later the Company added a Grumman Goose to their inventory we also flew. On occasion Don and I would have flights on the same day. Sometimes we would be scheduled out during the same period of the day. [...] I had an early flight one morning and was returning from one of the islands south of Taipei. As I was approaching the coast of Taiwan Island about 20 miles west of Taipei, the Goose shot past me having come down from behind. I immediately knew it was Don, but wasn’t aware he was supposed to be flying. I later learned he had been called from standby while I was out on my flight. [...] The Goose was faster than the PBY and he was happy with the prospect he was really going to do me in [...]. He made a sharp turn to the left still pulling away with his higher speed. [...] He tightened up his turn and I couldn’t believe what I saw. His Goose flipped to the right in a violent maneuver. I knew Don was a smoother pilot than to treat his aircraft that roughly. [...] When he returned from his flight later in the day he said the Goose flipped out from under him when he tightened up his left turn. We found out later thru some research the Goose was notorious for the flip at excessive speed in a tight left turn.” (Connie Seigris, *Memoirs*, pp. 26/7 + 36/7, at: UTD/Leary/B21F11). In his log book, Connie Seigris noted this Goose as “002” (e-mail dated 12 January 2008, kindly sent to the author by Steve Seigris). Based on this log book, his son Steve observes (E-mail dated 18 January 2008, kindly sent to the author by Steve Seigris): “On the first flight that I’ve found, on 21 Nov 1952, he flew from ‘TAIPEI - PT. Z - TAIPEI.’ On the last flight that I found, 14 Jul 1953, he flew it from ‘TAIPEI - BS - TAIPEI.’ On some PBY flights, BS is also called PT.BS. I notice that there are places called Point M, Point DC, Point X, etc. Maybe these are different regions or islands along coastal mainland China.”

Rumors say that the Goose was operated to about 1955, when Western Enterprises was dissolved, and that it was then put up for sale. It was probably then that it was intended to become a VIP aircraft for Chiang Kai-shek. “Gen. I’s book mentioned that the RoCAF wanted to introduce this Goose to become a VIP aircraft especially for Chiang Kai-shek’s use. Two pilots from the VIP squadron test flew this aircraft in Sun-Moon Lake. They misjudged the height above water and plunged the Goose into the water. The two pilots escaped. I cannot find the time of this accident, but I guess it might be between 1955 and 1957 when they wanted to sell it” (e-mail dated 6 August 2007, kindly sent to the author by Clarence Fu). This comment could fit with two more entries in the log book of Connie Seigris. As his son Steve Seigris notes (e-mail dated 12 January 2008, kindly sent to the author by Steve Seigris), the log book notes 2 flights in an aircraft serialised “002”: They were: “16 Jul 1955; points from and to entry states: ‘TAINAN - TEST’ and 28 Dec 1955; ‘PO - WS’”. But both aircraft are marked as PBY in the log book, and although it is likely that the entries refer to our Grumman Goose “002”, perhaps test flown in July 55 before being demonstrated to the RoCAF and then in December 55 recovered after the accident, there was also a RoCAF PBY serialised “50002” (see the photo in: Legg, *Consolidated PBY Catalina*, p.147), which would probably also appear as “002” in a log book.

It is unknown what damage that accident did to the Goose, but even an aircraft that was only slightly damaged will probably deteriorate if it has to wait for a buyer for several years.

This may explain the extremely low price. All documents known up to now seem to suggest that the purchaser that was found at the end was CAT Inc, which became Air America Inc in March 59, and that the aircraft ended up as a hull serving only to train Air Asia's mechanics. New evidence makes clear, however, that the aircraft was finally sold on an "as-is-where-is-basis", that is as a wreck to an unknown US customer in May 1957, but was apparently rebuilt, sold in Japan in 1960 and eventually survived in Canada until 1999. For a Memo sent by CAT's Director of Operations Joe Rosbert to CAT's Vice Chairman of the Board on 5 September 56 (mentioned in: Leary, Manuscript, note 469a, in: UTD/Leary/B18F16) refers to the intended sale of Grumman Goose "serial no. 1153" – apparently the msn of our Goose OA9-0002. As Connie Seigrist had stated (see above) and as CAT's fleet list of July 1953 (in: Leary, Manuscript, p.343, in: UTD/B19F2) confirms, the Goose had been owned by Western Enterprises Inc, which was dissolved in 1955 and so did no longer exist, when the aircraft was finally sold in May 1957. In the case of the Goose, CAT had only acted as a broker. So the problem was how to credit the money received. It seems that all those documents quoted in the beginning of this article only show that for many years, the money apparently remained on the account of CAT Inc, then Air America, and then Air Asia as an Account Payable, until it was shown as owed to the Pacific Corporation, that is to – as CAT people called them – the CIA's "bankers".

Now identified as msn 1153, former US Navy JRF-6B-1A BuA 0209B, then Royal Navy FP503, then again US Navy BuA 66327, we know that this Goose was acquired by Western Enterprises Inc in July 52, sold to an unknown customer as a wreck in May 1957 (Leary, Manuscript, pp.362/3, in: UTD/B19F2), rebuilt and registered as N1376V, sold in Japan as JA5063 in the spring of 1960, cancelled on 24 March 65 on sale as N93010 to an unknown owner, then was CF-SBS (later C-FSBS) with Rainy Lakes Airlines, Fort Frances, Ontario, between 1966 and 1977, then N143DF with Dean H. Franklin Aviation Florida in February 1978, then N848HP with Heinz Peier Inc, Waterloo, Iowa, regd. 18 January 1994, cancelled on 22 May 1998 on sale to Almon Landair Ltd, Whitehorse, Yukon, as C-GDAO, featured in the Arnold Schwarzenegger movie *Commando*, and was destroyed in a hangar fire in January 1999 (Burnett/Slack/Davis, *South-East Asia Civil Aircraft Registers*, p.50, under "JA5063"; "Goose Central" at: <http://goosecentral.web.officelive.com/1153.aspx>).



Grumman Goose N1376V in the late fifties, photo kindly submitted by Clarence Fu.

The man in the photo is Tian-Pong Hu who was one of the nine Army parachutists assigned to WEI as kickers in 1951.