



Deephaven Historical Society Newsletter *Spring Report 2007*

HISTORY MATTERS — DEEPHAVEN'S OWN! DICK BROWN

This quarter's featured article is a republication of an article first published in the "History Matters" a newsletter publication of the NWA History Center. The article features Deephaven's own, Dick Brown. Dick first joined NWA in 1941 as a ticket agent in Fargo, N.D. Soon thereafter Dick joined the Army Air Corp and found himself in England, where he piloted B-26 Martin Marauders.



Dick flew six missions while in the service. In September of 1945, Dick continued his flying career by joining NWA where he flew various props and jets for over thirty-six years. Dick has been in Deephaven since shortly after joining NWA.

The following story told by Dick is about his early years with NWA when he became the flight instructor for the Chinese Air Force. Enjoy...

Northwest Captain Dick Brown at the time was a supervisor of the airline's 707 pilot training program and he and his group also trained the new crews for the 720s—ground school, simulator time and then actual flight training, at Wold Chamberlain Field, Minneapolis-St. Paul. Dick tells the story.

Chiang sent over two colonels, three lieutenant colonels and two majors for flight training—pilots, copilots and flight engineers. The two pilots were Col. Change, Chinese Air Force, Deputy Commissioner of Sungshan Air Force Base, Taiwan, his personal pilot, and Col. Wu-Hung, chief of the Air Force Presidential Flight Section.



They brought along an entourage of mechanics—Northwest trained them, too—and others. For living quarters they rented a generous amount of space in a multi-story apartment building off Freeway 494 near the airport. Among the group were some cooks, I know that because when I stopped by there now and then I was always greeted by the pungent fragrance of soya sauce.

Dick Brown....continued....

These men were friendly, capable, intelligent men. They were easy to work with, no tensions, no problems. No problems but one. We never knew when they would show up for training. A culture gap, I guess. We're mostly on time folks. The Chinese tradition, as some interpret it, is patience, no hurry, there's plenty of time out there. Other crews were trained in a month or so. With the Chinese it was four or five months. Actually, I wasn't slated to do much of the training but I ended up working with them personally most of the time because I was always there. Along with Don Abbot and Bob Mielke we were always "on call". Because they had purchased only so many training hours, I had to concentrate my effort on Col. Chang and one of his co-pilots.

One problem was that when Col. Chang was in the left seat he didn't want his copilot with him. Normally we train the pilot and copilot together. I guess he was afraid they'd see him make a mistake.

I'm not sure what they did in their spare time but I think they did a lot of traveling. One day Col. Chang came in and said he wanted to take the plane and fly to Florida for a few days. I said no way, not without me, you're not qualified to fly the plane yet. He was insistent and I said if you do I'll call the State Department and have you grounded. He backed off. He knew darn well I meant it. They went someplace, but not in the airplane.



One day I took two copilots and the two flight engineers up to Fargo for touch-and-go takeoffs and landings. Fargo is a good place because it has a long runway and not much traffic. We did several in succession where you take off, pull the gear up for the right sensation, and put the gear down again as you go around to cool off the tires.

They get pretty hot on multiple touch-and-goes. Well, in this instance the tires didn't cool off enough and we blew all four left gear tires on a landing.

So we were in Fargo awhile. They didn't have any 720 tires; they had to be flown up from the Twin Cities. I called my dad and my brother, I'm from Fargo, and said where can we eat? The Fargo Country Club, they said, we'll pick you up. You can imagine walking in there with four uniformed Chinese officers turned some heads. What's going on?

One of the people there was a reporter for our newspaper, the Fargo Forum. She interviewed us. We took her to the airport for a look-see at the plane. It had been refurbished down in Texas and the Chinese Nationalist flag on the vertical fin and Chinese characters on its nose. The interior was pretty plush and it had a separate forward compartment for the Generalissimo and Madame Chang. The result was a story in the Fargo paper.

Col. Chang was not in Fargo with us, as I mentioned, he didn't want to train with his copilots. The next day he walked in my office and said I understand you bought dinner. How much was it? I said no problem. He then quoted Confucius—"the teacher brings knowledge to the student, the student brings food to the teacher." How much was dinner? He asked again. I didn't know because my dad and brother had paid for it. Twenty-five dollars, I said. He peeled off twenty-five dollars. I sent it to Fargo.

D i c k B r o w n – C o n t i n u e d . . .

The day finally came when it was time to say farewell. Before takeoff, our Northwest people wanted to check the cargo hold. Col. Chang said no way. He had a padlock on it and wouldn't open it. A stalemate occurred and I told him he had an hour. If he didn't open the cargo hold I was going home. I guess there were some other factors to consider though and 45 minutes later we took off for San Francisco and Honolulu, the cargo hold still sealed. I'm sure it was full of purchases and more than likely their mechanics had stashed a collection of our Northwest tools. They're probably still out there in Taiwan someplace.

Jerry Fredrickson and I flew with them to Honolulu, I as safety pilot — a final check of their skills to make sure in my own mind that they were qualified to fly the aircraft and Jerry monitoring the navigators. We overnighted at a military base in San Francisco, then on to Hickham field. Some farewell handshakes, they took off, we returned to the Twin Cities.

That's not quite the end of the story. Three weeks later I received a letter from Col. Wu-Hung asking me to bring Mrs. Brown and come to Taiwan for awhile to continue his training. As I said earlier it had become necessary for us to concentrate our Minneapolis training on Col. Chang and one of his copilots. Col. Wu-Hung said Col. Chang is no longer with us. No explanation.

I couldn't go, of course. I wrote him back thanking him for his invitation, complimenting him on his abilities, and urging him to keep flying, takeoffs, landings and instrument time with a good copilot. I never heard anything more so I guess it worked out all right. As I said, they were good men and I still think of them often.

Dick's Northwest career spanned 36 years with about 24,000 flying hours. He flew 12 different types of planes, seven props and five jets. Retired in Deephaven, Minnesota, Dick stays busy with a variety of endeavors. One of his favorite pastimes is co-hosting a B-26 Martin Marauder booth at the annual "Air Expo" extravaganza sponsored by Wings of the North



at Flying Cloud Airport in nearby Eden Prairie. "We talk about the Marauder to anybody who'll listen," says Dick.

DHS Meeting Schedule

Deephaven Historical Society meetings are held **the last Saturday of each month at 8:30 AM at City Hall Council Chambers**. All members are welcome.

These meetings involve planning and reporting by the committee chairs, the board, and the President.

Plans for the upcoming year are discussed as well as decisions regarding the gathering and distribution of funds.

Please look for our third excerpt continuing Barb Sykoras' article, A History of St. Louis Bay, Deephaven, in our next newsletter.

DHS

**Acknowledgements –
Current members**

Thank You!

John Ahern	Donald Davis	Walter & Constance Linder	Gary & Susan Rappaport
Tim & Pat Alt	Maxine Dickson	Tom & Barbara Maple	Mark A. Read
Tom & Nancy Anderson	John Dupont	Robert & Siri Marshall	Dorothy C. Robb
Nancy Bach	Paige & Ruth Eldridge	Tom & Carol McGoldrick	Bill & Donna Robinson
Steven & Leah Barnacle	Robert & Judith Evans	Doug McNaught	Robert Schmitt
Marty Baskerville	M.J. Florance, Jr.	Leo & Marcia Meloche	Mary Scholer
John & Nan Beard	Rosemary Fruehling	William, Wright, & Kathleen Messerli	Romaine & Ben Z. Shank, Jr.
Mary Lou Bennis	Furst Foundation	Nancy Middleton	Craig & Maureen Shaver
David & Marion Bickford	Rob & Ann Furst	Tyler Middleton	Clinton & Lois Shaw
Patricia Blanch	Jerry & Pam Gens	Mark & Michelle Mitchell	Karen & Marcella Nord Shoemaker
Don & Moonyeen Bon- gaards	Bob Gerlicher	Edgar & Elizabeth Morsman	Fred Simon
Dianne H. Brackett	Paul & Ann Gesme	Kimberly Ann Murphy	Lewis Sopko
Tom & Sue Brakke	Marty Gilbert	Susan Neff	Dennis & Nancy Stanga
Richard & Jean Brown	Rosemary Gluek	Dan & Joan Nelson	Peggy Stefan
Beth Burgan	James & Jean Haverstock	Nan Nicolle	Tom Sween
Barbara Burgum	Louise Heffelfinger	Jim & Lisa Nielsen	Bryan & Barbara Sykora
John & Janette Burton	Barbara & Leslie Hexum	Alan & Rosemary Norton	Michael & Laurel Traxler
Mildred L. Carbonneau	Gordon & Betty Huber	Mr. & Mrs. Harry Peters	Brad Warner & Lisa Tirner
Kevin & Maristel Conry	John, Rudy, Allyson Jaffray	Judd Peterson	Paula Winter
Kim Crockett	Kathleen Jewett	Julia Cole Peterson	Jim & Leigh Woodburn
Alan & Sara Dale	Burton Johnson	Tom Pokonosky	Robert & Nancy Woodburn
Sarah & Alan Dale	James & Camilla Johnson	Ronald Poole	Dr. Gary & Vicki Wyard
	Mr. & Mrs. Mark Jones II	David Pratt	George & Cynthia Yared
	Barbara Krig	William & Patricia Priesmeyer	
	Frederick & Caden Ladner		
	Sheila Laughlin		

Take advantage of the books that are available for sale at City Hall!

Picturesque Deephaven	\$15.95
The Excelsior Amusement Park	\$10.95
Life in the Early Days of Cottagewood	\$ 6.25
A Post Card History	\$25.00
Sunsets	\$50.00
Lake Minnetonka 1850 – 2000	\$32.00
Lake Minnetonka 1905	\$20.00
The 1893 Handbook & Souvenir	\$10.00
Minnetonka Yacht Club Centennial 1882 – 1982	\$15.95
Tales of the Steamboat Minnehaha 1906—2006	\$20.00
Minnesota Vacation Days	\$34.95

DHS Committee

Finance

Tom Anderson 952-474-3515

Publicity / Publ.

Bob Gerlicher 952-474-7248

Museum Development

Tim Alt 952-470-8889

Mark Read 952-474-4091

Newsletter

Bill Robinson 952-473-3130

**DEEPHAVEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
20225 COTTAGEWOOD ROAD
DEEPHAVEN, MN 55331**