



Name in English: Moon Fun Chin
Name in Chinese: 陈文宽 [陳文寬]
Name in Pinyin: Chén Wénkuān
Gender: Male
Birth Year: 1913
Birth Place: Toisan, Guangtung, China

Rescue Pilot honored by Congress

Profession(s): Aircraft Mechanic, Pilot, Airline Executive

Education: 1930, Public School 18, Baltimore, MD; 1933, Commercial Pilot License, Curtis Wright Flying School, Baltimore, MD.

Award(s): 1995 Distinguished Flying Cross; 1995 Air Medal; Presidential Unit Award; World War II Victory Medal; Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with 1 silver star, United States Government.

Contributions: At the age of 20, Moon Chin went to Hong Kong and joined China National Aviation Corporation (CNAC). He was initially a copilot, then became a captain in 1936 and flew transport missions before and during WW II. He charted and flew many dangerous flights over 'the Hump,' the Himalayas, which are the highest mountain ranges in the world. In March 1942, he safely evacuated Lt Colonel James Doolittle from Kunming in China, transiting from Burma to Calcutta in India after the famous Doolittle bombing raid on Tokyo. Moon and the other brave Hump pilots, both civilian and military, took tremendous risks delivering the critical war materials that helped stop the Imperial Japanese military attempt to conquer China and South Asia. Flying in unarmed cargo planes with minimal communications, limited navigation tools, and flying missions in bad weather or at night to avoid Japanese fighters, many hundreds of flights disappeared, the only sign of their passing being the wreckage littering countless Himalayan mountainsides. Moon and his colleagues were truly brave heroes.

Moon Chin also rescued many US Army Air Corps, US Air Force, and Republic of China (Taiwan) Air Force crew members oftentimes during very dangerous periods of open war such as during WWII or the secret battles of the Cold War up until 1955. His most daring rescue occurred in 1954 when a US Air Force C-119 crew bailed out over the sea in bad weather between Guam and Taiwan. Chin, then the Chairman of the Board for Fu Hsing Airlines, personally flew a PBY Catalina flying boat, found the crew, landed in the water, and rescued 6 of them in stormy sea conditions. Two USAF amphibious aircraft at the scene had refused to land due to the turbulent waters, but Chin ignored the danger and

landed anyway. The rescue effort took over 5 hours because landing and taking off again was so difficult. One of the rescued air crew, Major A W Gristad, described Capt Chin's skill in landing and taking the seaplane off as "the best piece of flying I have ever seen. Captain Chin truly lived up to his reputation as the best 'water man' between the West Coast of America and the China coast." Joining in the praise of USAF aircrews, General William Chase, Chief of the Military Advisory Group at the US Embassy in Taipei added his own commendations to Chin.

Much later, by US Senate resolution, Capt Moon Chin and other Hump pilots received the Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal in 1995. As a sign of the tremendous respect felt by the US military for him, Moon was credited for US military service from 1941-1945, even though he never served in the military.

External Links:

www.cnac.org/moonfchino1.htm

New Horizon magazine, April 1943, p 20-23

Time Magazine, October 12, 1942, p 12

"2 American Airmen Relate Dramatic Rescue," Hong Kong Standard, March 24, 1954.

"Daring Taipei Pilot Praised by Chase for Rescuing Airmen," China Post, March 24, 1954.

Southern Flight Magazine, December 1943, p 50-52