

A few years ago my mother gave me two scrapbooks. In these books were all of the letters that I wrote to Mom while I was in Japan. Most of the information for this article is inspired by or taken from these scrapbooks. This information may jog some of our member's memories.

February and March 1966 were eventful months in the aviation department at Tachikawa and the surrounding area.

\* On February 4th a Boeing 727 from All Nippon Airways crashed into Tokyo Bay on approach to Haneda, killing 7 crew and 124 passengers.

\* On March 4th Canadian Pacific Airlines flight 402, a McDonald-Douglas DC-8 from Kai Tak to Tokyo crashed into the sea wall at Haneda. 64 people lost their lives.

\* On March 5th a BOAC Boeing 707 lost a wing in severe turbulence over Mount Fuji. All 124 on board were lost.

It wasn't too long after that that a MATS C-130E overran the runway at Tachi. I don't know the exact date of the incident. In a letter to my mother dated March 10, 1966, I had included a clipping from the Pacific Stars and Stripes about the incident. The C-130E was the last of the incidents that occurred during those two months. Also in that letter was the Pacific Stars and Stripes article and picture of the 707 going down over Mt. Fuji.

I was never part of MATS nor do I know their procedures. I understood that at the time MATS did not have the same procedures for a windmill taxi start that were in place in PACAF. I also understood that the Captain had heard of such an operation when there was not a replacement started available and decided to try the procedure, again as I understood, without authorization. We heard that the pilot became engrossed with the engine start and actually went airborne, realized what had happened, and got back on the runway.

There was not enough runway available to stop and the aircraft went through the little picket fence at the north end of the runway and stopped with the aircraft landing gear in the mud and the tail of the aircraft over the perimeter roadway.

Now MATS dropped the recovery of the aircraft onto the 815th. It was my day off and I was in the barracks. Someone came through the barracks getting everyone out to help with the recovery. It was one of our guys that was on duty for that shift. He had the flight line Ford pickup and we all loaded in the back and were transported to the incident site.

There was very little cargo on board and that was removed. The aircraft was also defueled since it had a full load on board.

While all of this was going on, the troops (10 or 12) that had come from the barracks were using shovels to dig trenches and laying planks for the landing gear to follow onto the runway. The belly of the aircraft was lying on the mud. As I recall it was raining lightly which made digging in the mud both messy and miserable. Again, good old American G.I.s get the job done.

The guys that were actually on duty that night were rigging the recovery tow cables to the main gears and had brought two of our large tugs to pull the aircraft out of the mud. One tug broke down and had to be towed back to the ramp area for repairs, which did not happen that night. The other tug was a big Euclid with a diesel engine. The guy operating the tug that was actually able to pull the aircraft back onto the runway was Parlon Shelton, one of our members, who did an outstanding job easing the aircraft back on the runway with no additional damage.

Later as we would see a MATS C-130 on the ramp we would know if it was the incident aircraft because it had a small wrinkle on the side of the fuselage below the flight deck. All in all, it was just another "CAN DO" operation.

Gary Glasscock

### C-130 Runs Off Tachi Runway

TACHIKAWA AB, Japan (O1)—A four-engine U.S. Air Force turbo-prop C-130 ran off the runway at Tachikawa AB at 6:25 p.m. Sunday following an attempt to "windmill start" (by air pressure on a high-speed taxi run) the number four engine.

The aircraft did not intend to take off. None of the five-man crew was injured.

The aircraft left the 6,625-foot runway at the north end of the airport and ran across a perimeter road 75 feet into an empty field.

The aircraft is assigned to the 48th Military Airlift Wing, Charleston AFB, S.C.

The aircraft commander was Capt. William A. Ingersoll, 55.

The co-pilot was Capt. William A. Phillips.