UP A RIVER, UP A PEAK

AIR-INDIA Leads The Way

SIR EDMUND HILLARY, who made mountaineering history by being the first to scale Mount Everest with Tensing Norgay, was back in India recently to successfully complete the Air-India sponsored Indo-New Zealand expedition up the river Ganga (see August issue).

On return to Bombay after the success of the expedition, speaking to Air-India employees and members of the city press, Sir Edmund spoke of his re-discovery of India, "as a land not just of ancient temples, religions and beautiful buildings", but of the "warm nature, kindness and goodness of the people and their life".

He recalled his effort "as a discovery in a different sort of way", up from the Ganga Sagir to Nand Prayag. The expedition covered a distance of 5,330 km.

The jet boat 'Air-India' carried Sir Edmund Hillary and the lead-members of his expedition, while the other two boats formed the rest of the group.

The adventure was a tremendous experience. He recalled the landing at Ganga Sagir beach when the sea was strong.

He remembered the excitement while fording the raging waters of the Alakananda. "There were many occasions when we were not quite sure of whether we could move up any more but we did get pretty high". The expedition pulled out of the river when it reached a tall waterfall at Nand Prayag, 59 kms short of its destination. Sir Edmund said it was possible for the boats to be carried around the waterfall, but that was considered "rather unfair" and they did not want to cheat the river.

From there they walked to Joshimath, Badrinath and beyond, where three members of his team reached the summit of Nar Parbat.

Sir Hillary and his team mates were amazed at the tremendous response they got all along their journey. Thousands of bright, shining faces lined the shores as the expedition travelled up the river and through the small villages that dotted the hillsides.

He hoped the film and book that would be prepared on the expedition would be of advantage to the tourist industry in India and to Air-India in particular.

Asked by a questioner if this was the most difficult adventure he had taken, Sir Edmund said he thought it was a "unique" adventure.
RANDOM JOTTINGS

It is always hard to say goodbye to a colleague who retires. It is even harder to say goodbye to a guy who insists on hanging around after retirement. But, to be fair to him, it is Air-India who insists on having him—and against his wishes, he insists on staying. Rumour has it that he will quit only after he outlives everyone else in the airline. Even his best friends will tell you that he looks like a bawdonclown plumplunging (with spectacles and moustache superimposed), that he has a caustic tongue and the constitution of ox, and a painful sense of humour (it gives you a pain in the you-know-where). He does not drink, he does not smoke, he doesn't even buy you a drink or offer you a cigarette. And he has a bank balance to prove it.

I refer, of course, to that institution-within-an-institution—the one-and-only Jai Cawasji who recently retired but has been retained as a consultant. When I used the expression 'ox' I should nearly have said an 'artful foal', for Jai has been the chief architect behind Air-India’s famed art collection which today is spread out all over the world, he has designed looking offices in five continents, he has entangled himself with sard, chutney kawasji's and other intricacies of hostess's uniforms, he has changed the interior decor of our aircraft from the antiseptic white of other carriers (specifically designed to allow weary passengers to sleep) to intricate, artistic and eye-catching marvels (which keep you awake all night). To continue the litany, he has for long years headed the Publicity Department, which includes the art studio; assisted by his team, he has for over two decades churned out calendars, posters, diaries, menu-cards, playing-cards, post-cards and a host of other publicity material which have won for our flag-carrier prizes and plaudits all over the globe and have helped put the Mahanarain on the world map. The gradual expansion of his department over the years is due less to an empire building desire than a more rigorous need for more space to store the various plagues, prizes, cups and other numeraeities of his triumphant march through the portals of international aviation publicity—trophies that Air-India has been winning as consistently as Don Bradman piled up centuries.

And since I have unwillingly referred to the fabulous Don', I may as well tell my readers that Jai also has a reputation as a Don Juan. True, he has that instinctive eye for a beautiful chandelion, an ancient clock or objet d'art. To acquire many of these, he spent hours scouring Chow Bazaar. But he had an equally instinctive eye for beautiful girls. However, neither were they ancient nor did he have to do any scouring. They gravitated towards him as naturally as mice towards cheese—or should I say young mice towards an old bank of Gonazoda? But the fact remains that you always found a stickly young damsel draped across him in the 10th surrounded by a bevy of beautiful beauties. Do I sound jealous? You’re damn right. I am jealous! And now that he is a consultant, I’m going to do some consulting.

J.B.C. joined Air-India very unobtrusively in 1955, when he was running his own concern, Aro Aro, and he brought along with him some of his colleagues who are today still the backbone of the studio, e.g., D.N. Ranggel, K.K. Saive and Khoshed Dosali. Jai has a special feeling of nostalgia for V.V. Statyu, former Chief Artist, who died of leukaemia while in harness a couple of years ago. And he has a special word of praise for the unassuming, unchartered yeomen behind the scenes—Masures. Hindustan Thompson who week in and week out have been responsible for Air-India’s advertising. And remembering, he leans with pride on his man Pradeep, Bhaskar; he talks with affection of Mr. Nari Dastur and his newest bons, Mr. Indar Sohli; and of his various ‘encounters’ with Bobby Kooks and J.R.D.

I use this opportunity of welcoming his successor, S.S. Dabholkar who (like Jai) has a penchant for vintage cars. To Jai I say, I trust we will meet often. To his predecessor, possibly the sincerest man in publicity in any airline in the world (and determined to stay that way), I say: See you tomorrow, Jai.

After a two-way sentiment, So I conclude these jottings with my own little ditty as I raise my glass (paid for by me) to:

That Great Old Man of Publicity
Who for honours cared two hoots,
But Jai, oh Jai (with your beautiful gletas),
I wish I were wearing your boots!

- J. R. M.

RAISING THE FLAG

Andy Shaw our District Sales Manager in Glasgow is an active member of the Skål Club of Scotland, which recently raised over £3,200 for charity. One of the activities of the Club was for a voyage on the ‘Waverley’ which is a sea-going paddle steamer and believed to be the last of its kind in the world, and the recent sailing of this vessel was organised by the Skål Club in Glasgow, to raise more money. The participants were allowed to fly their house flags and the Air-India flag is to be seen proudly flying on this interesting occasion.

Priority to Welfare Schemes

The Labour Relations Committee, at its 7th meeting held recently at the Technical Headquarters in Bombay, appointed Mr. V.M. Fernandes as Chairman and Mr. J.N. Mogrelia as Secretary.

Among the measures reviewed from the recommendations of the previous meeting were the improvement and expansion of the Medical Benefit Scheme and the provision of a Holiday Home at Deolali. The Committee also welcomed Mr. K.G. Appasamy, who addressed the gathering for the first time after taking over as Managing Director.

Deputy Managing Director, who was present at the meeting was also warmly welcomed.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr Appasamy emphasised the need for launching an intensive programme for such welfare schemes as medical benefits, housing loans, staff colonies, central hospital, dispensaries, etc. Mr Appasamy assured the members that the recommendations of the LRC have always been given prompt attention and he will continue to do so. Mr Dastur expressed the views expressed by the Managing Director.

R. K. Sattawala
LIFE OVER AGAIN

MANECK DALAL bids good-bye

WHEN asked to write my 'Swan Song' for the Magic Carpet, thoughts come rushing to my mind. It is not what I should write but what I should leave out, is the problem after nearly 32 years in Air-India. I can, therefore, only concentrate on a few individuals and a few incidents.

Let me start with my initial appointment with Mr Bobby Kooka, who at the time was Traffic Superintendent of Tata Airlines. I still remember vividly sitting in his large chair in Mahindra Mansions, international operations. Till then I had done 8 months in Bombay and 2 years as Manager of the Delhi office, and it was a frightening and overwhelming experience to think of the varied jobs that needed attention to start an international airline functioning within 6 months. When the plane landed at night on June 8, 1948 I remember keeping my fingers crossed as the lithe form of the Chairman in a black pin-stripe suit stepped down from the plane at Heathrow asking us all to set our watches as Air-India had arrived to the minute (which is frankly more than we do today).

At the same time my friend and colleague Gianni Bertoli was to start the Geneva office and Fali Nariman the Cairo office. I would particularly like to mention Mr Bertoli, a remarkable person, who, most tragically, lost his life in the crash in the Alps in 1966. I shall never forget the mental agony I underwent when I was informed from Geneva in the early hours of the morning that our plane had been long overdue and that among the passengers were Dr. Homi Bhabha (another dear friend and the very first house guest in Delhi) and Mr Bertoli. Gianni was a warm and generous man. When we were staying with the Bertolis in Geneva, he would quietly take our daughters out shopping and buy them the most expensive presents. I feel that people like Gianni Bertoli should be adequately recognised, not only because they gave their lives in the service of Air-India, but because people like them have been the true pioneers of Air-India. They have borne the brunt of establishing overseas offices when we, as an airline, had very little knowledge of international operations.

In London we started at Heathrow Airport and I collected waiting outside the office of Roger Pugh the Civil Aviation Authority Manager. I looked at a large framed cartoon of BOAC's Flying Boat over the Coast of Africa. Those who know Flying Boats would remember that they were extremely comfortable but very slow. In this particular cartoon, under the aircraft were some African beaters running in the shade of the big bird. The leader on the ground was looking back and saying "a little faster boys or we shall lose the khedive." Today, when one looks back, it is difficult to imagine the large strides which commercial aircraft have made over the last 30 years. In those days, London Airport was controlled by the Ministry of Civil Aviation and I received tremendous help from them as well as from the British Overseas Airways Corporation staff.

I have always felt that despite failings Air-India by and large has been a reasonably efficient operator. I have, from time to time been asked by people in London both inside and outside the airline Industry, why Air-India, unlike some other operators, has been commercially successful A number of reasons come to mind:

We have had dynamic leadership from Mr J.R.D. Tata, supported by a team of dedicated men.

Moreover, I feel that we have always managed to stay abreast by purchasing the latest and most commercially viable equipment. We have concentrated on one make of aircraft at a time. This has helped both in efficiency and economy in our line maintenance.

The most important point, however, is that we are prepared to give service. We have maintained high standards in running the airline and without a doubt, we have to thank Mr Tata for this. Right from the inception of the airline, till today this aviation giant has been uncompromising in demanding the highest standards. The airline owes him a great deal.

I feel I should mention the role my wife Kay has played in Air-India. I think many of you would agree with me that Air-India is most demanding in terms of time and energy. Air-India wives have to be extremely patient. I must say that my wife Kay has not only shown this patience over a number of years, but has taken a very positive part in helping me with my job in Air-India. In thanking her, I feel, I am also thanking all the other Air-India wives.

I would also like to thank most sincerely not only our Managing Director and Dy Managing Director, who have been very kind, but also many, many others, who, over the years, from being colleagues, have become good friends. I am deeply grateful for their friendship.

I would also take this opportunity of thanking all my Air-India colleagues in the U.K. for the conscientious and hard work which they have put in over many years; and particularly, for their support and loyalty. I could not have asked for a better team and sincerely appreciate all that they have done.

Before I bow out of Air-India, I would like to give a brief message to all my friends and colleagues: Do please remember that Air-India is truly a remarkable airline with tremendous achievements. Believe in your airline and take pride in working for it. It carries the flag of a great country, and, by its presence in all the major countries in the world, shows the level of excellence India can achieve in the commercial and technical field. God bless Air-India.
Sixth Aircraft

AIR-INDIA'S sixth Boeing 747, EMPIRE, has taken a year and a half to build and assemble. The aircraft comprises 4.5 million parts put into place by a large team of workers at the Boeing Company at Everett, 30 miles away. A world-wide network of subcontractors and suppliers and assembly teams that move through the production process according to a computer-controlled schedule.

The entire operation of the superjet is superintended by a representative who in the case of the sixth aircraft is Mr. J.D. Billimoria.

The aircraft sub-assemblies are completed at the plant and the final assembly of the 747s are joined to the final body stub, or wing cover, a single unit of three assemblies. This completed assembly and is joined to mid-section from this point the assembly resembles a giant elephant and becomes recognisable 747 when the nose, tail and wings, finally fall into place.

Termed in manufacturers' jargon as 'finishing', this is one of the most vital stages in the production of the aircraft where all systems are interconnected. Trailing-edge flaps are added to the wing, the engines are fitted, and from this point forward, the 747 moves towards final completion.

Other final assembly positions lie ahead but the superjet is not yet open for inspection by the public and the superjet makes its début at the exhibition early next year.

While frenetic activity goes on at the workshops, the body of the aircraft is painted and prepared for its first external display at the Air India exhibit at the Bombay Aerodrome. The Chairmanship of Mr. Om Sawhney is being actively participated in by the Planning Committee with the various aspects of the aircraft under due consideration. Action was taken into consideration and the various aspects of the aircraft under construction were initiated to ensure smooth progress.

A number of steps were taken by the workshops to ensure optimum utilisation of the area. At most of the meetings checklists were prepared and the necessary action was taken and centralised.

At one stage the Committee felt that the space at the terminal area at Bombay was inadequate and a stampede action was taken up with the Government to increase the parking space for wide-bodied aircraft and to add more ground equipment and facilities. The decision was made to add two new outstations as well. It has been decided to add a new configuration of Air India's sixth aircraft with 24 first class and 358 in the economy class. All first class and front rows of economy class seats are armrest tables.

For inflight entertainment, Emperor Chandras, Transcom system, a cartridge-type movie built for showing films on board aircraft.

It has also been decided to change the radio equipment of the sixth aircraft, the 747's radio communication equipment was formerly being serviced by Radio Corporation Limited (RCL). The Committee decided that the first flight from Seattle to London and from London to New York will be serviced by the new Chandra Gupta.

With the addition in fleet strength, the airline is likely to be serviced by the new Chandra Gupta system.
EMPEROR CHANDRAGUPTA
Sweeps All Prizes

The Air-India team with the trophies

The following are the results of:


Capt. J. Joseph, Regional Director, Indian Airlines, Madras, inaugurated the Tournament, while Mr Polly Umrigar, former Test Cricketer distributed prizes to the winners and runner-up players.

Mind over Matter

SUGGESTION AWARD WINNERS

Mr. H.J. Modi, Senior Aircraft Technician and Mr. P.K. Pimple, Senior Aircraft Technician both in the Components Overhaul Division and Mr. P.V. Vasudevan, Aircraft Technician in the Accessories Overhaul Division were presented with awards of Rs.100/- each and Rs.200/- respectively for making significant suggestions. Mr. Modi was able to improve service life of food trays in the 747 first class section, while Mr. Pimple who is a three-time award winner suggested improvement on the food trays used on the 747L. He also suggested modification of the Aerotherm Standard chair back rest frame. Mr. Vasudevan suggested locking of the armature on the rod to prevent it from becoming loose. This is an attachment on the turbo-compressor regulator on the 727. While congratulating the three award winners, Mr. Om Sawhney, Director of Engineering, wrote that he hoped "you will continue to display the same interest and enthusiasm with a view to achieve better efficiency."
ON THE MOVE ...... UP

The following staff have been promoted:

Commercial Department:

Engineering Department:
Messrs R.N. Chuckarbutty and K.J. Bhandari as Asst Engineering Managers; Messrs K. Venkataraman and S.S. Gokhale as Asst Superintendents.

Finance & Accounts Department:
Mr. J.J. Rindani as Asst Financial Controller; Mr. C.K. Mirchandani as Asst Accounts Officer; Messrs O.P. Nangia, H.C. Shah, J.A. Shah and N.S. Shenoy as Sr. Accounts Officers.

Ground Handling Department:
Mr. N.V. Moghe as Transport Engineer.

Inflight Service Department:
Mr. N.A. Turner as Manager-Inflight Service; Mr. J.J. Naigamwalla as Manager-

Cabin Crew; Messrs P.P. Joshi and G.A. Naik Chodnikar as Station Superintendents; Messrs B. Fernandes, J.S. Joshi, R.R. Ganpati and S.S. Valsal as Asst Station Superintendents; Mr. B.G. Naik Chodnikar as Sr. Dy Director-Inflight Service.

Operations Department:
Mr. K.R. Karandikar as Asst Manager-Admin; Mr. S Venkataraman as Sr. Flight Dispatcher; Mr. T.C. Padmanabhan as Asst Admin. Officer; Messrs M. R. Boroke and R.V. Pai as Flight Dispatchers.

Stores Department:
Mr. M.V. Bichu as Manager Printing; Messrs B.N. Jawalekar and S.R. Deshmukh as Asst Superintendents; Stores; and Mr. G. Nagappan as P.A. to C.S.P.

Headquarters:
Capt. J.R. Martin, Public Relations Manager in the grade of Commercial-Manger; Mr. R.K. Sattawalla, Dy. Public Relations Manager as Station Manager; Mr. Naqcherwan Nalawala, Asst Public Relations Manager as Station Superintendent; Mr. S.S. Chakravarthy as P.A. to Controller of Communications, Mr. S.L. Bapat as P.A. to Dy Director, Management Information Services and Mr. R.S. Iyer as Office Assistant.

APPOINTMENTS

The Maharashtra Government has appointed Sales Officer D.R. Bhalerao (left) and Storekeeper A.S. Waghamare as Special Executive Magistrate.

AIR-INDIA QUIZ

Question to Nov. Quiz
1. This man looks familiar! Who is he?
2. When and where was this picture taken?
3. This man is a professional artiste. Which section of the arts does he represent?

Answers to Oct. Quiz
1. Mr Lal Bahadur Shastri.
2. In 1965.
3. He was the Prime Minister of India after Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

Mr Appusamy Felicitated

A IR-INDIA's Managing Director, Mr. K.G. Appusamy, was felicitated by members of the Aeronautical Society of India, Bombay Branch, at a function held recently at the Air-India Executive Club in Bombay.

Addressing the audience, Mr. Appusamy emphasised the need for a combined and co-ordinated effort of all sections of the aeronautical community. He hoped that institutions like the Aeronautical Society would provide the necessary lead in this direction since its members are drawn from various technical disciplines of aviation.

Earlier Mr. Om Sawhny, President of the Society while welcoming the Chief Guest paid rich tributes to Mr. Appusamy's contribution to the growth of aviation in India. On behalf of the members he wished Mr. Appusamy continued success in all his efforts to promote not only the image of Indian Aviation. Mr. P.S. Ganapathy, Hon. Secretary, proposed a vote of thanks.

Our Chef Recommends

LAMB CURRY

Ingredients:
Lamb : 1 Kg. (without fat and bones, cut into 3" cubes), splitpeas: 300 gms, onions : 300 gms, garlic : 15 pieces, ginger : 20 gms, red chilli powder: 1 teaspoon, coriander powder: 2 teaspoons, salt: to taste, ghee/butter clarified: 100 gms, tomatoes concasse: 100 gms and cardamom powder: 1 teaspoon for flavour.

Method:
Cut and boil spinach with little salt but without water and grind it or pass it through the machine to make a fine paste. While cooking do not cover the pan and ensure it does not get discoloured.

Pass the onions, garlic and ginger through the mincer/machine to make a fine paste. Heat ghee/clarified butter, add the paste of onion, garlic and ginger along with red chilli powder and cardamom powder. Keep on frying, stirring all the time, until the paste is brown on medium fire. This may take 10 to 15 minutes depending upon the fineness of the fire.

Add lamb pieces and salt and fry for 5 minutes, add tomato concasse and fry for another 10 minutes.

At this stage add the spinach paste and cardamom powder. Add enough mutton/chicken stock just to cover the meat pieces and let it cook uncovered until soft and there is some thick gravy.
AWARD FOR MR SHARMA

At a recent Departmental Heads Meeting, Mr. C. L. Sharma was presented with the “Distinguished Alumnus Award 1977” of the Railway Staff College, Baroda. The award was accompanied by a citation and a symbolic souvenir embossed with the Railway emblem. The Managing Director, Mr. K.G. Appasamy (photo above) complimented Mr. Sharma and said that he hoped he would reach even greater heights in the Corporation. The Heads of Departments joined the MD in felicitating Mr. Sharma.

MD ON IATA EXEC COMMITTEE

The Managing Director, Mr. K.G. Appasamy, has been elected member of the Executive Committee of the International Air Transport Association. The Executive Committee is a policy making body of the Association. Mr. Appasamy was a member of the IATA Technical Committee for over 10 years when he was the Director of Engineering before he became the Deputy Director of Air India in 1973. During this period he was Chairman of the Committee for a year.

FLAMING FLAMENCO

AIR-INDIA in association with the Embassy of Spain and Taj Mahal Inter-Continental organised Spanish nights in Delhi and Bombay. The star attraction at these evenings was Quieti Clavijo, the prima donna of the Flamenco. Quieti has successfully danced in sixty countries and recently she toured the USSR and gave a hundred concerts in 27 cities. She was awarded the Tchaikovsky gold medal in Moscow.

TASTE OF SUCCESS

AS articles and photo-features pour in to show what a tremendous success ‘Destination South India’ was, kudos go to the Department of Tourism under the stewardship of Ms Vatsala Pai and Ms S. Jagannathan and Air-India’s Tourism section under the leadership of Mr. J. Meher-Homji. Now their sights are trained on the 250th celebrations of the City of Jaipur, and with the spadework already done, they hope to make the celebrations a runaway success.