

Lucky Lady Crew

Fort Worth, April 8 (P). — A non-stop banquet for the non-stop flyers.

Fort Worth really put it on big last night for Capt. James G. Gallagher and his crewmen who girdled the globe in a single 94-hour and one minute hop.

For three hours the fliers—and airforce officials — soaked up compliments and accepted gifts.

After the choice sirloins, mushrooms, remouladed shrimp, whipped cream and strawberries and other extras had gone down the hatch, Mr. Fort Worth took over.

Mr. Fort Worth is Amon G. Carter, fabled publisher, a big, strapping man, grey-headed and bright-eyed.

Carter was in rare form — even for Carter. His was a roaring, applauding, untiring audience of 500. He reminisced, rambled and never ran out of humor — but through it all he brought the sincere thanks of a warm, friendly city.

As he told the airmen:

“Your gallant flight has been written into time — and with it has been written the fact that the flight started in Fort Worth and ended in Fort Worth. Fort Worth will not forget that — nor will it let anyone else forget it.”

It was a plushy, top-drawer affair, sponsored by Fort Worth's hard-hitting chamber of commerce. Menus cost a dollar each to produce. The swank hotel ballroom was full of flags, flowers and beautiful gowns and the soft music of a smooth orchestra tantalized the air. The young fliers lolled happily at the head table.

At a reserved front table were their wives — the guests of Fort Worth. Each wife wore a gardenia corsage.

“We surely appreciate all this,” said Lt. Earl L. Rigor of Corvallis, Ore. “This is the first time our wives have had a chance to see us in action.”

“I'm getting more of a kick out of this than I did out of making the big trip,” said Staff Sgt. Robert R. McLeroy of Alvarado, Texas. “And my dad — W. R. McLeroy of Alvarado — is out there in the audience, getting a bigger kick out of it than I am.”

“This is Texas,” Capt. James H. Morris of San Antonio said blissfully.

Carter presented the world-fliers and airforce officials present with expensive, leather-bound scrolls, conferring lifetime citizenship in Fort Worth; fine wallets; and 14-karat gold medals commemorating the epic flight. In addition he promised them broad-brimmed western hats: “Just be careful where you leave those hats, boys.”

Lt. Gen. Curtis E. Lemay, chief of the Strategic Air Command and boss of the nation's global bomber training, said: “Our gratitude for the honor you have shown Captain Gallagher and his crew will never be forgotten. In return we'll give you an air force that will give you the security we all desire so much.”

And Gallagher said: “Whenever we come back to Fort Worth, it'll always look as good to us as it did after 94 hours and one minute.”

Earlier the fliers had been paraded through the city and had attended the presentation of a bronze plaque at Carswell Air Base, marking the spot where the flight began Feb. 26 and ended March 2.

A reporter asked Carter: “When the Army launches its first rocket to the moon, do you suppose they'll launch it from Fort Dorth?”

“If they don't,” Carter replied briskly, “they'll be missing an opportunity.”