

SACO NEWS



Veterans of the Sino-American Cooperative Organization, World War II China
aka The Rice Paddy Navy
Perpetual Skipper VAdm. Milton E. "Mary" Miles

April 2014

WHAT THE HELL?

Issue No. 44

Reunion 2014: The Fine Print

In February, you should have received a mailing about the 2014 Reunion. If not, please write to Lynn Grabenstein (see below), or email her at wondermere@hotmail.com. The reunion packet included a dues envelope. Please use it to send a separate check for dues to Judy Barbieri (see p. 2).

Please register for the reunion as soon as you can to help hosts Richard Terpstra and Lynn Grabenstein make plans. Mail your registration to:

Lynn Grabenstein
3846 Thomas Road
Oxford, MI 48371

Complete a separate registration form for each member of your party. Each attendee must pay a registration fee. At least one member of your group, whether SACO veteran, associate, or friend, must have paid their SACO Veterans dues for 2014 to attend.

Note: If you plan to attend only the banquet, the registration fee is not required, just the cost of the banquet. You need not pay dues to attend the banquet, but we hope all members will keep their dues current.

Hotel:

DoubleTree Hilton
5810 Southfield Expressway
Dearborn, MI 48228
1-800-222-TREE
313-336-3340
SACO rate \$106 per night
Online reservations: www.saconavy.com.
Click Reunion Info.

Registration: \$100.00 per person
Banquet: \$45.00 per person
Additional charge for tours. See your registration form for more details.

60th Reunion: Dearborn, Mich.

The 60th SACO Veterans Reunion will be in Dearborn, Mich., August 13 through August 16, 2014. The host hotel is Dearborn's DoubleTree Hilton. The manager once worked with the Navy SEALs and is delighted to be hosting SACO. Hosts Richard Terpstra and Lynn Grabenstein have planned four memorable days of activities.

The reunion kicks off with a wine, cheese, and fruit reception Wednesday evening.

Thursday begins with a Diamond Jack's River Cruise on the Detroit River steeped in history and scenery. Next, baseball fans can take in a Detroit Tigers game with lunch at Comerica Park. Or enjoy lunch at Pegasus Taverna followed by an afternoon at Greektown Casino, the Detroit Institute of the Arts, or at the hotel.

Friday we tour the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village. Explore an antique car exhibit, a gigantic steam engine, old Main Street, Thomas Edison's laboratory, the Wright Brothers' Shop, and a 19th-century working farm. Ride a steam train, Ford Model T, horse-drawn carriages, and an antique carousel. Lunch is at Eagle Tavern, an old stagecoach stop, where period-costumed wait staff will serve a meal adapted from the 1800s.

The Trustees Meeting and Membership Meeting are Saturday morning. Saturday afternoon is free, followed by the banquet Saturday night.

Full breakfast is free each day at the hotel, and we will gather at the hospitality room late afternoons and evenings.

SACOs have come together each year since the first reunion in 1955 on Cape Cod. Don't miss the 60th in Dearborn! —Linda Kush



Top: SACO veterans at the 2013 Reunion
Bottom: Greenfield Village, Michigan (by Michelle Andonian)

SACO Officers 2013-2014

President: Jack Petersen
Vice President: Jim Kelly
Membership Chairman: Jack Coyle
Assistant Membership Chairman: Jodi Petersen
Treasurer: Judy Barbieri
Assistant Treasurer: Mel Goguey
Legal Counsel: Robert Dormer
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Assistant Secretary: Judy Maurice
Historian: Jack Coyle
Assistant Historian: Jodi Petersen
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Assistant Reunion Coordinator: Jodi Petersen
Editor-in-Chief SACO News: Richard Rutan
Assistant Editor SACO News: Linda Kush

Trustees:

Richard Maurice
Richard Rutan
Kenneth Brown
Mel Goguey
Frances Reynnet
Jack Petersen

SPECIAL THANKS

Richard Rutan, Editor in Chief of SACO News, and Linda Kush, Assistant Editor, thank these volunteers for contributing to this issue of SACO News:

Carolyn Inman Arnold
Judy Barbieri
Jack Coyle
Lilma Huntley
Charles Miles
Jodi Petersen
Jack Shearer
Mary Lou Visosky

SACO Annual Dues

Payment is due January 1 each year.

Annual dues: \$35.00

Please remit to:

Judy Barbieri
244 Silver Creek Circle
Santa Rosa, CA 95409

SACO News

is a periodical published by and for WWII veterans of SACO (Sino-American Cooperative Organization), aka U.S. Naval Group China as well as the Rice Paddy Navy. The publication is funded by annual dues of members, their families, and friends.

Please send your comments, news, and memories (along with clear, sharp pictures, if available) to the

Assistant Editor:

Linda Kush
57 Brighton Ave. #9
Boston MA 02134
linda.kush@verizon.net

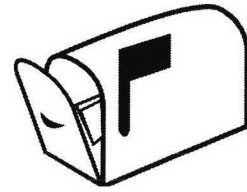
Keep your SACO News coming!

If it has been more than two years since you paid your dues, this is the last issue you will receive, as voted by the Trustees in June 2013. Please keep your dues current to stay on the mailing list.

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SACO News Mailbox



Thanks Richard for your publication of SACO NEWS. What a great newsletter that brings past and present news of one of the Navy's elite units of WWII. Bless you for an outstanding job. Thank you for publishing my article about my father after his passing. Take care.

Sincerely,

—William I. Sheffer

son of SACO veteran Irvin H. Sheffer



Dear Linda,

Received your first new SACO News. Well done.

—Mel Goguey



Dear Judy:

Just received the new SACO News. A search of my records shows that I didn't pay my dues for 2012 and 2013. Enclosed is my check to make me current. I'll do better hereafter. My problem might be old age—although at only 87+, I might be one of the younger SACO Tigers, since I was only 18 and 19 while at Happy Valley and Shanghai.

Joyce and I are doing great. She still volunteers at the local hospital two days per week. I just take care of other business.

One of the lines in Glenn Miller's "Chattanooga Choo Choo" says it all: "Nothing could be finer than a morning in Carolina."

A huge thanks, shoutout, kudos, bravos to Richard Rutan for his exemplary service to SACO.

Regards to all SACO Tigers. You will always be held in high esteem!

—Wayne Goodson

4101 Windlestraw Lane

Greensboro, NC 27410

Hello Linda Kush:

Welcome to the SACO News staff. Since you asked for letters, here's a response from a Camp 4 veteran. The enclosed will provide a few details, most of which are familiar to you. It's the result of a recent profile of a Four Seasons resident by Caroly Smith.

[Editor's Note: See p. 10 for the story.]

Rather timely with the recent issue of the SACO News. If you want to share it with Richard R., it would be well to do so, as he has published 2 or 3 columns in previous issues.

Two years ago, I spotted the WWII Magazine in my urologists waiting room and asked him if I could borrow it. He said, "It's yours."

Since then it has been passed around this community to several vets and non-vets. Now this latest issue of the Times makes me somewhat of a celebrity among the 400 residents here. I know of only two other WWII residents.

Your address if of interest. We moved here [New Hope, Pa.] on Dec. 31, 2006, after residing in Burlington, Mass. for 42 years. The age factor forced the move. Hated to leave my beloved Red Sox and Patriots. The bearded ones success this year engendered great joy at this address! Pats also so far.

My bride and I of 64 years have been to several SACO reunions, including Taiwan. Alas Mother Nature has intervened to my dismay.

Would be glad to hear from you if you desire to write.

—Jack and June Shearer

P.S. No longer walk five miles a day, more like two after two bouts this year with bronchitis.



Dear SACOs:

Alan Casamajor, son of our late, beloved Membership Chairman Paul, writes that his mother Martha has moved to assisted living and thinks of her SACO friends often. She would love to hear from you. Please drop her a card:

Martha Casamajor

1228 Rossmoor Parkway

Walnut Creek, CA 94595

Dear Linda:

Just a note to thank you for the SACO newsletter. You did a great job!

I am sure the vets appreciate it as well. Communication is so important to this group.

Thanks again, and God willing, will see you in Dearborn, MI.

—Dick and Judy Maurice



A message to SACO Veterans through the website:

Elbert Nitcher, Radioman 1st Class, who served in Calcutta, Kunming, and Happy Valley, writes: I would like to hear from any person that was in China with me 1944 to 1946.

13430 E. 50th Drive
Yuma, AZ 85367
nitcherwe@yahoo.com



Thanks for the SACO News! All of you did a great job. It was a hard act to follow—Richard's excellence and creativity—and love.

Just a note: Our son's name is spelled Dairus.

Again—so glad to get the SACO News and hope to make the 60th Reunion.

—Francis and Caroline Reynnet

[Editor's Note: Our apologies for misspelling Dairus's first name in the Oct. 2013 issue.]



Linda,

I just received latest SACO NEWS and wish to thank you with my best wishes for a fine job. If I think of any news I shall send it on.

—Bob Thomas



Lilma Huntley, Carolyn Arnold, Mary Tanner, and Penny Coates at Lambeau Field, SACO Veterans Reunion 2013. Photo from Lilma Huntley.

How to Obtain Military Records

SACO veterans or their next of kin can request the veteran's military records with a letter or by filling out an online form at the following website:

www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/
One still has to send a form to the address below, but most of it can be sent on line.

The records can also be requested by sending a letter asking for the military records and providing this information:

- state whether from veteran or next of kin
- service number, if known
- social security number
- branch of service
- enlisted or officer
- dates of service

One can also print a Standard Form 180 on the web at: www.archives.gov/research/order/standard-form-180.pdf and send it in to below address. That way all the needed information may be sent. Make sure you ask for a list of the awards the veteran is eligible for.

Many veterans do not know they are entitled to these awards such as the China Service Medal, World War II Victory Medal, American Campaign Medal, Combat Action Ribbon and others. Foreign awards should be listed also such as the China War Memorial Medal (CWM) awarded to those serving in China for more than 60 days. Paul Casamajor gave me a list of those eligible if you need assistance determining if the veteran is eligible. The navy should send the medals to you. The China War Memorial will not be sent by the navy as it was awarded by China. The following website has the CWM medal: www.usamilitarymedals.com/republic-of-china-world-war-ii-service-medal.html but they call it the Republic of China WW-II service Medal. The China Service Medal for the navy should be sent to you by the navy. Another site, <http://www.medalsofamerica.com/Item-i-M180> has the CWM in a mini version. If you need any assistance, please call me (770) 788-2454.

Address to request records:

National Personnel Records Center
(Military Personnel Records)
1 Archives Dr.
St Louis, MO 63138-1002

—Jack Coyle, Membership Chairman

Couple Discovers Shared SACO Roots

By Linda Kush

After 20 years together, Wayne and Gerry Gregersen of Mt. Desert, Maine, knew just about everything about each other. They had a lot in common. They both grew up in large families in the Chicago suburbs. They loved hiking, music, books, Chicago sports teams, and taking active roles in their church.

Three years ago, they were astonished to discover something else in common: both of their fathers served in SACO.

On a lazy afternoon, just for fun, Gerry did a Google search of her name: Gerry Kush Gregersen. One of the top hits was the SACO website, saconavy.com, which contained the words Kush and Gregersen. There she found her father, C.L. Kush, Chief Shipper, who served at Camp Two, and her father-in-law, Paul Gregersen, Motor Machinist's Mate 1/c, Calcutta.

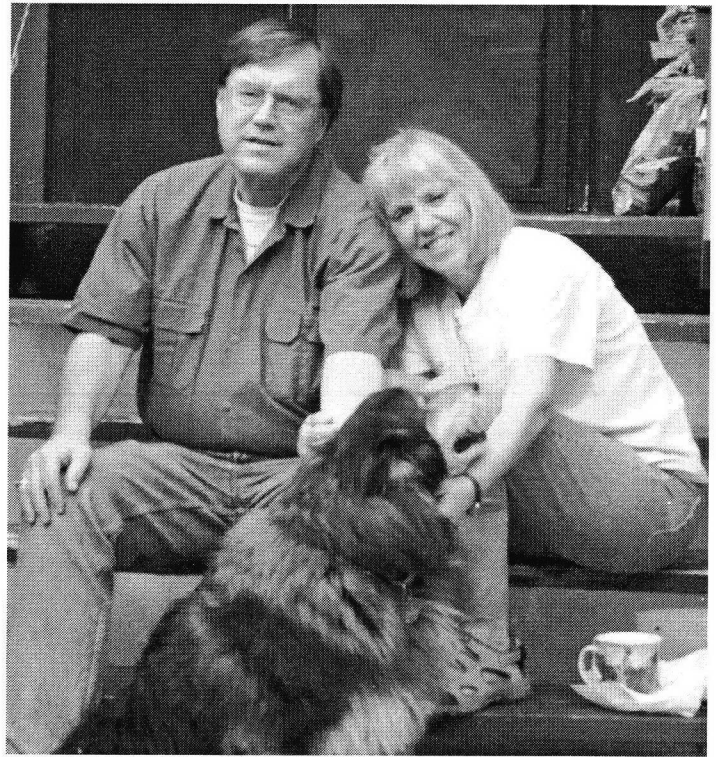
Until that moment, she had no idea that she and Wayne had this shared history. When she revealed her discovery to Wayne, it brought back long-forgotten memories for him.

Wayne's father had owned a round, leather patch with strange markings: a string of punctuation marks and the inscription, "What the hell?" Wayne remembered seeing it as a kid and wondering what it was. And he had always wondered why his father spent WWII in India—in the navy, no less—when most kids' dads had been in Europe and the Pacific.

While both these things were curious, Wayne had never connected them until Gerry showed him the website. He instantly recognized the insignia as his father's patch, now lost.

Paul Gregersen and Chuck Kush had died years before their children met in 1989—Gregersen in 1971 and Kush in 1979. Gerry was aware that her father had been in the navy in China, although she never knew the name of the unit until this writer (Gerry's sister) wrote an article about it in 2010. We Kush kids grew up knowing how important the China experience was for him, though he rarely discussed it. Wayne's father was quiet by nature and said nothing at all about his military service.

Wayne, the oldest of five children, couldn't wait to tell his four sisters about the discovery, which had a big impact on the Gregersen family. His two older sisters, Lauren and Sharon, were deeply involved in



The Gregersens (by Spencer Morrow)

genealogy research and had even gone to Denmark to trace the family's roots. Learning about SACO opened a new chapter in the Gregersen story.

For his younger sisters, SACO was a window into the life of the father they could barely remember. At age 17, he joined the navy, became a diesel engine mechanic, and volunteered for dangerous and distant duty. The story gave them new appreciation for his character, talent, and courage.

Perhaps the elder Kush and Gregersen met in Calcutta; they were both there in February 1945. Kush flew over the hump in March, while Gregersen spent the rest of the war in India repairing diesel engines.

Wayne and Gerry still marvel that four decades before they met, both their fathers somehow landed in the same small, secret military operation, and they celebrate their new-found, shared history.

The SACO Veterans website, www.saconavy.com, includes a complete roster of SACO members, reunion information, SACO history, photos, videos, and other features.

The Final Tacks of SACO

By Charles H. Miles, PhD

July 21, 2011



The above map of SACO (Sino-American Cooperative Organization) operations in the spring of 1945 is modified after the map following page 126 in Miles, 1967.

In May 1945 we [SACO] heard by way of our usually excellent sources that General Yamashita had the Emperor's orders "to conclude the war quickly and at little cost."
(Miles, 1967, p 492)

Standing orders for SACO were to capture ports and key facilities; hasten the departure of the retreating Japanese; and reduce their sabotage efforts.

In the Middle of May 1945, Gen. Lin and LT Swartz with 500 Chinese Army regulars and 12 Americans from Unit Seven captured both Foochow, a major port 20 miles up the Min River, and its airfield. The attack was planned as a surprise but spies erroneously reported over 1,000 invaders when they forewarned the Japanese, who fled with hardly a shot fired. The buildings, bridges, utilities, and food supplies were abandoned intact.

By the end of July, Unit Seven had cleared the Japanese from the areas downstream to and including the islands at the mouth of the Min River as well as from Matsu Island, 20 miles further to the east.

In July Unit Six gained control of the coastal stretch between Amoy and Swatow, 120 miles to the southwest. In the process they killed about 1,500 of the 3,700 Japanese troops who had evacuated the Quemoy and Amoy Islands. The unit already had captured Changchow, 25 miles west of Amoy, during September of the preceding year.

By the end of July 1945, SACO was in control of three seaports – major parts of Amoy Harbor, Changchow, and Foochow – and important airfields at Changchow and Foochow as well as almost 600 miles of coast between Swatow and Hangchow. Navy planes from the Philippines were airdropping 3,000 pounds

of supplies per day into Changchow and Foochow. This effort was the brainchild of LT Stan McCaffrey and code named Operation Ding How, Chinese for "very good."

General Tai's intelligence network had received the word that, "the Japanese had already worked out plans for the destruction of Shanghai—that they intended to wreck it as they had Manila." (Miles, 1967, p 508) The first SACO man to reach Shanghai and initiate the end-of-war plans to protect that city was RM1c Bill Bartee; he arrived on August 2 during the dark of night and was smuggled from his sampan into the home of the police chief. Bill was joined the next day by RM1c W.E. Earle, and the two set up a CW (continuous wave, not voice) radio station. These two manned that station in that home 24-7 for several months; they transmitted to Chungking in the clear, received back the coded version that they broadcasted to the Fleet and the Fleet answered in the clear. Code protocols were being ignored; all understood that the war was over.

The atomic bombs were dropped on the 6th and 9th of August, and on the 14th the Japanese formally sued for peace.

Commodore Miles sent the following message while he and Gen. Tai were surrounded by about 7,000 Japanese troops in northern Chekiang Province. The two had just been notified by Gen. Chiang Kai-shek that the Japanese surrender was impending.

August 12—All SACO: General Tai Li has ordered Commando Army, Loyal Patriotic Army, and other miscellaneous forces under his command to proceed to major cities in occupational zones to establish order for Central Government. This is in accordance with directives from Gimo. SACO Americans will proceed with their authorized Chinese unit commanders. Carry with you complete radio equipment and go fully armed. . .
(Miles, 1967, p 520)

Miles was spot promoted to the rank of Rear Admiral on the 13th.

Foul weather associated with a typhoon grounded air transport, and Chinese troops could not be flown to the Shanghai area. On August 19 two SACO men, intelligence officers LCDR Henry Shoemaker and LCDR David Fairbrother, who were assigned to AGAS (Air Ground Aid Statistics), entered Shanghai. The Japanese refused to yield control of the city

and threatened the Americans. The two officers were rescued by the Swiss consul and given sanctuary in the consulate for a few days.

The next SACO hands to arrive in Shanghai were eight Americans and 25 Chinese from Unit Eight. At Haimen they commandeered two Ningpo junks with Chinese fishermen crews; LT Swentzel commanded one and he assigned 2nd Lt. Pittman (USMCR) to the other. During the morning of August 19 they sighted a northbound junk that appeared to be under Japanese control just north of Chungming Island. Captain Swede Swentzel ordered his men to hoist an American flag. The Japanese fired on them with a 75-millimeter field piece lashed to their foredeck. One shot took away the rudder from Swentzel's craft; a second round cleared one mast from Pittman's junk.

The Americans put out sweeps to replace the rudder; jury rigged a replacement mast; and mounted an attack. Each junk carried one .50-caliber machine gun mounted in the bow on a homemade swivel, two short-range .30-caliber Lewis guns, and one bazooka with five rounds; they needed to close the distance to be effective with their own weapons. The Japanese 75 was disabled by a .50-caliber machine gun fired by Gunner's Mate Rose. The Americans crossed the bow of the Japanese junk and raked her fore and aft with machine gun fire. Gunner's Mate Reid hit the enemy with four bazooka rounds. The Japanese junk surrendered; of the 78 on board, 39 had been killed and 35 were wounded.

Lieutenant Swentzel commanded the last U.S. Naval battle of record between ships under sail. Arguably it was the last battle of WWII.

Lieutenant Don Wilcox and 1st Lt. Jim Jordan (USMCR), a fluent speaker of Chinese, were ordered to proceed immediately from Camp Four in Shempa to Peiping (or Peking) and secure the city. The distance is 1,100 miles as the crow flies but the two were turned back 170 miles from Peiping and the trip became a three-week ordeal. By the time the two entered Peiping, LT Carl Divelbiss, of the Intelligence Group, was on site with an operating communications center.

In mid-August, Unit Six, Chinese and Americans together, landed on Amoy Island and went straight to the Japanese headquarters at the Sea View Hotel. The national flags of China and the United States as well the SACO "What-the-Hell?" pennant were raised. No shots were fired.

Unit Five with Columns 1 and 3 traveled east and on August 26 hoisted the Chinese flag over Wuchow.

Six days later they had moved 60 miles further east and met Unit Robby, a demolition group commanded by LT Charles Robinson. These SACO units entered and occupied Canton.

On August 24, Unit Seven – a complement of 23 men – left Tung Feng and arrived September 1 a few miles upstream of Hangchow, 60 miles southwest of Shanghai. They joined Maj. Gus Bruggeman from Kienyang and his squad of 50 Americans. The town was occupied by about 30,000 Japanese led by an officer who did not believe the surrender was official. After two days of serious negotiations, Maj. Bruggeman gained entrance to Hangchow and met Lt. John Masterson with two other SACO Americans. These three had moved into the city from the opposite side of town and already were operating their radio station.

In September the men of the Tungting Lake Unit began clearing the mines out of the Yangtze River. They started at Ichang, and continued 800 miles downstream to the sea at Shanghai.

Admiral Miles was both the senior U.S. officer and the senior Chinese officer in Shanghai when he arrived the evening of September 4; it was his 20th wedding anniversary.

. . . Army Major Jimmy Googe, my "Navy personnel officer," had arrived to arrange for the quartering we needed, and Webb Heagy and Si Morris had come by train from Hangchow. "Swede" Swentzel was also there with his crew. Even Joe Champe and Ed Martin had arrived by plane a few hours earlier, but they and everyone else admitted having the creeps when they found themselves sharing the crowded elevators of the Park Hotel with Japanese officers.

(Miles, 1967, p 531)

Nerves were further strained by the joyful, persistent, and frequent detonations of firecrackers.

Without electricity to pump sewage, Shanghai – at sea level and without drainage – would face severe hardships and probably deadly epidemics. Lieutenant Commander Joe Champe took charge of Shanghai's public utilities. He secured one of the steam-powered plants just minutes before Japanese-rigged demolition charges could be detonated. Joe Champe repaired one plant and restored the run-down 33,000-kilowatt output to the full 175,000 capacity.

The Glen Line Building was cleared of Japanese

occupants and became SACO headquarters; the location overlooked the waterfront and was ideal for both watching the river traffic and communicating with ships. Within a few days Fleet Weather Central was up and operating. The building's metal accessories – radiators, water pipes, and even doorknobs – had been scavenged by the Japanese; fortunately these parts were located in a go-down. During the refitting, some operations were situated in a building borrowed from the North China Daily News.

Six junks filled with Japanese soldiers tried to escape Shanghai; LCDR Ed Martin with four men commandeered a tugboat and gave chase. A Japanese major, armed with a 75-millimeter field piece, threatened to kill Martin who nevertheless jumped aboard the junk and talked the Japanese into surrendering. Asked what convincing words he had used, Ed Martin told this writer that he took out a hand grenade, pulled the pin, and ordered them to surrender or else. The major laughed and pointed out that he too would die if it exploded. Martin said, "My Admiral ordered me to bring you back; if I fail I will lose face." The major drew his sword, broke it in half, and presented it to Martin.

During the end of August, Maj. Dutch Kramer, commander of Camp Three, was ordered to prepare for the arrival of the U.S. Navy at Tsingtao, 350 miles north of Shanghai. He traveled from Sian by plane, private passenger car, and a hijacked Japanese locomotive. Tsingtao still was under Japanese control. He went to the airfield and showed a copy of his orders to the Japanese commander, who assigned him a Japanese "Betty" – a heavy bomber made by Mitsubishi – with Japanese markings and a Japanese crew. They flew to Shanghai through a major rainstorm; the Betty was so full of bullet holes that all the occupants arrived soaking wet.

Admiral Miles assigned Maj. Kramer the additional task of freeing the British pilots who had experience with the Taku Bar and the river to Tientsin, 50 miles southeast of Peiping. Some of these pilots were imprisoned at Tsinan 220 miles west-southwest of Tsingtao. Major Kramer returned to his now-impounded Betty; found and freed the Japanese crew; and took off without authorization. By the time that ADM Thomas G. Settle arrived to accept the Japanese surrender at Tsingtao Maj. Kramer had arranged for the billeting of the Americans and for the return of the British river pilots to Tientsin.

Our men who had arrived all besieged the tailors to make them uniforms and, by mail, they even got caps and insignia. Consequently, they made up a very impressive reception committee when the Marines landed in Tientsin on September 30. The first major ashore arrived in battle dress and was met by my SACO men in new, well-pressed Navy dress blue and Marine green.

"Well where the hell," the major asked, "did you come from?"

(Miles, 1967, p 536)

The Second World War officially ended on September 2, 1945 when Japan unconditionally surrendered aboard the U.S.S. *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay. And on September 9, 1945 – on the ninth hour of the ninth day of the ninth month – the Sino-Japanese war concluded when the Japanese signed their surrender to the Chinese in Nanking.

The Americans of SACO were ordered to proceed to Shanghai for processing; a few exited from Calcutta and some had to fly back over the Hump to get there. A point system that took into account both time in service and time overseas determined one's eligibility to be discharged as well as his priority for transportation. Those returning stateside mostly went by ship. The U.S.S. *Cambria* (APA-36, operated by the U.S. Coast Guard) sailed October 24 and arrived in Seattle the evening of November 12. Transport *Kenmore* left the first week of December, stopped in Hong Kong and then Manila Bay, and landed in San Francisco around Christmas. Bill Sager remembered that there were many SACO men aboard the *Kenmore* and that Doc Coggins played the piano during happy hours. One transport that left China in February 1946 discovered a freighter dead in the water and escorted her back stateside. Because of the damage, the convoy speed was limited to a maximum of six knots; the crossing took 40 long days.

U.S. Naval Group China – SACO – was dissolved September 30, 1946. A few SACO hands remained in China for some time; the following list probably is not complete. Bill Bartee manned the Shanghai radio shack in the Glen Line Building and briefly was assigned to graves registration. He searched for U.S. pilots downed and buried in the area south of Shanghai; Bill said, "Worst duty I ever had." Herman Weskamp assumed the duties of the Shanghai harbormaster. Both Bill and Wes left China in 1947. Joe Champe

managed the steam-powered generating plants of Shanghai Power And Light for several years. Norman Gordon was selected by General Chiang Kai-shek to advise the Chinese Ministry of the Interior in ways to rebuild China. Joe Osterman became the radioman in the U.S. Consulate in Canton. He married locally and did not return stateside until the early 1950s.

It is true, of course, that they [the Americans of SACO] have the inner satisfaction of having done their job and—for what it is worth to them—they also have my own deeply felt "Very well done!"

(Miles, 1967, p 574)

Cited reference:

Miles, M. E., 1967, *A Different Kind of War*: Doubleday & Co, Garden City, NY. 629 p.

BIS VETS HONOR TAI LI

Veterans of the Republic of China's former Bureau of Investigation and Statistics (BIS) gathered in Taipei on March 17, 2014, to remember General Tai Li, who died in a plane crash on that date in 1946.

The Jongyi Comrade Commission, an organization of retired BIS agents who served until 1955, holds a reunion on March 17 each year. Tai Li headed the BIS and teamed up with the U.S. Navy's Vice Admiral Milton Miles to form the Sino-American Cooperative Organization during World War II.

Veteran Chang Pei-teh, a BIS agent who spied on the Japanese and the Communist Chinese in Shanghai in the 1940s, attended the event. He said he was one of the last surviving men left from the era of SACO and the Japanese occupation.

From the perspective of the retired secret police veterans and guerrilla fighters from the Jongyi Comrade Commission, the untimely death of Tai Li was a tragedy for the Republic of China. Many of them still believe that the Communist Party of China would not have won the civil war against the Nationalists had Tai Li lived.

Adapted from a story by Samuel Hui in *Want China Times*, English-language website of the Taiwan-based China Times News Group, March 18, 2014.

Meet Your Neighbor, Jack Shearer

By Carolyn Smith

Reprinted from the *Four Seasons Community Times*, December 2013, official publication of the Four Seasons Community, New Hope, Pa.

A few days ago was Veterans Day when we honored those men and women who have so bravely served our country. One of those veterans from World War II lives in Four Seasons. Jack Shearer and his wife, June, live with their daughter and son-in-law, Phil and Gail Nelson, on Emerson Drive, but over 71 years ago, Jack was living in Buffalo, N.Y. On his 21st birthday, he received his draft notice, but he decided that rather than be drafted, he would enlist in the navy.

His first stop was at the Naval Training Station in Newport, R.I., where he stayed for three weeks before being sent to Radio School in Bedford Springs, Pa. for six months. His next stop was Norfolk, Va., to an Amphibious Training Base for five months. While he was there, he saw a poster asking for volunteers for “prolonged and hazardous assignments” where the destination was unknown. Jack volunteered and was sent for briefings to the Naval Department in Washington, D.C., where he was told he would be going to China.

He left San Pedro, Calif., in October 1943, on a liberty ship, and 10 weeks later, after stops in Tasmania and Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), he arrived in Calcutta, India, on New Year’s Eve. A few days later, he flew in a C-47 over “the Hump,” climbing to 17,000 feet to get over the mountains. Jack says it was a bumpy, harrowing ride, and the other passengers had “barf bags” with them—which they all used. He was the only one without a bag so he says he did a lot of swallowing on that trip!

He arrived in Chungking and was assigned with 12 other men to an outpost bordering on the Gobi Desert on one side and Inner Mongolia on the other side. To get there, the group had to depend on transportation from the Chinese. The trucks, however, were old, unreliable, and constantly breaking down. As a result, it took eight weeks to arrive at their destination.

The purpose of their unit was to set up weather and radio stations. A pact called SACO (Sino-American Cooperative Organization) between the Chinese Nationalist government of Chiang Kai-shek and the navy allowed the U.S. to get weather information, intelligence information, and aid in direction finding. That weather information was radioed to Chung-

king from the camp and then relayed to U.S. ships in the Pacific enabling the navy to plan their assaults on Japan.

Jack’s camp had no running water, and no electricity. The men got their water from a well, and radio messages were sent by a small generator. The diet was chicken, eggs, and rice, and vegetables were eaten at everyone’s own peril. The fertilizer was human waste, and diarrhea was a constant companion. Jack says that the biggest enemies were cockroaches, lice, and bedbugs. He remembers cockroaches in his hair, lice in his clothes, and bedbugs in his bedding.

“There was no way to get rid of them. They were always with us,” he says. “I lived with them for the two years I was there.”

There was also no transportation—each man was



Jack Shearer astride his Mongolian steed, Camp Four

assigned a horse—but Jack says the closest town was Shempa in Suiyan Province, and there was really nothing there to see.

“It was a small, very primitive area built in an adobe style,” he says.

(An interesting side note to Jack’s two years in the camp is the fact that one of the doctors in the camp was Henry Heimlich who later became famous for developing the Heimlich maneuver.)

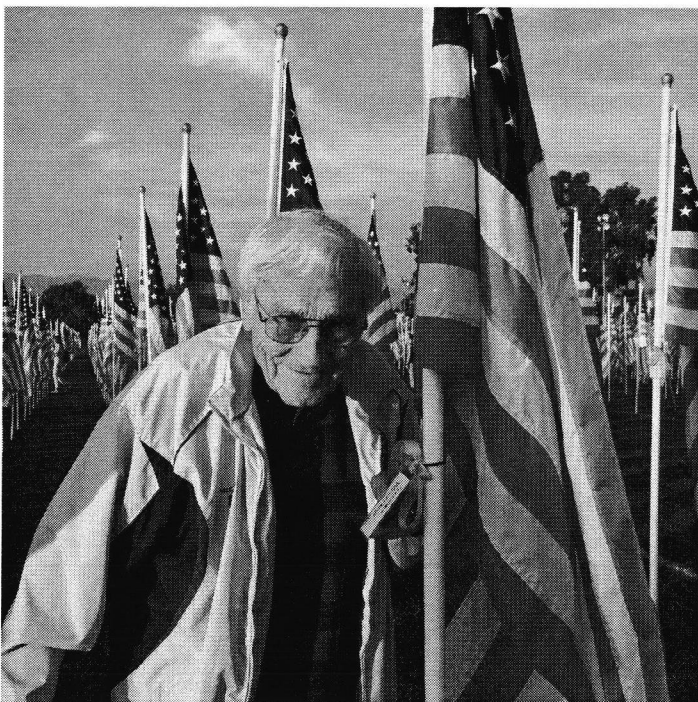
At the end of the war in August 1945, everyone left the camp except for Jack, who stayed to finalize details with the local Chinese officials for deactivating the camp. He left in November 1945, but was sent to other camps to help them close. He finally ended

up in Shanghai, caught a ship to San Francisco, and mustered out of the navy in March 1946, after having served 42 months in the U.S. Navy.

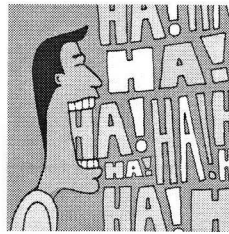
In an article entitled, "What Was the Navy Doing in China?" in the magazine *World War II*, author Linda Kush relates that Captain Milton Miles, who along with Chinese Nationalist General Dai Li created SACO, describes the ideal SACO man. He had to be "strong and fit, smart, and multi-talented, with at least two professional skills and one useful hobby. He had to be able to endure deprivation, work in secrecy, and be 'a little crazy.'"

The "be a little crazy" certainly doesn't fit the description of Jack Shearer, but he fits the rest of the description. At 92, he is amazingly fit, walks up to five miles every day and is a "newspaper angel" for many. His mind is incredible—he remembers dates, events, and names easily—and conversation with his is interesting. It is a pleasure and an honor to be able to interview him about his war experience. The Four Seasons community sends a grateful "thank you" to Jack for his service in World War II.

Greetings from Herman Weskamp



Herman Weskamp observing Veterans Day, Nov. 11, 2013, at the Field of Valor in Covina, Calif. His daughter, Mary Lou Visosky, contributed this photo. Herman and Mary Lou send best wishes to all the SACO veterans and their families.



Just for Laughs

A young ensign had nearly completed his first overseas tour of duty when he was given an opportunity to display his ability at getting the ship under way. With a stream of crisp commands, he had the decks buzzing with men.

The ship steamed out of the channel and soon the port was far behind.

The ensign's efficiency was remarkable. In fact, word was going around that he had set a new record for getting a destroyer under way. The ensign basked in the glory and was not at all surprised when another seaman approached him with a message from the captain.

He was, however, rather surprised to find that it was a radio message, and he was even more alarmed to read:

"My personal congratulations upon completing your underway preparation exercise according to the book and with amazing speed. In your haste, however, you have overlooked one of the unwritten rules: Make Sure The Captain Is Aboard Before Getting Under Way."

A navy psychiatrist was interviewing a sailor for a job. To ascertain how the young man might react to danger, the psychiatrist asked: "What would you do if you looked out of that window right now and saw a battleship coming down the street?"

The young man replied confidently: "I'd grab a torpedo and sink it."

"And where would you get the torpedo?"

"The same place you got your battleship!"

A navy Chief and an Admiral were sitting in the barbershop. They were both just getting finished with their shaves, when the barbers reached for some after-shave to slap on their faces.

The Admiral shouted, "Hey, don't put that stuff on me! My wife will think I've been in a whorehouse!"

The Chief turned to his barber and said, "Go ahead and put it on. My wife doesn't know what the inside of a whorehouse smells like."

DAY IS DONE ... GONE THE SUN...
FROM THE LAKES, FROM THE HILLS,
FROM THE SKIES.
ALL IS WELL ... SAFELY REST.
GOD IS NIGH.

Taps

Membership Chairman Jack Coyle regrets to report the following deaths recorded since SACO News Issue 43 in October 2013, as of April 1, 2014. Locations of service are in chronological order.

Charles G. Blackmore, 2009
Calcutta, Kunming, Camp 6, Hwaan, Shanghai

Conrad (Brad) Allan Bradshaw, 2013
Calcutta, Jorhat, Kunming, Jorhat

John Michael Conway, 2013
Calcutta, Chungking, Camp 4, Shenpa

Robert John Cross, 2013
Camp 1, Kweichow, Shanghai

Paul Gregersen, 1971
Calcutta

Richard E. Gump, 1995
Calcutta, Tung An, Camp 1, Pact Doc Hotien, Pact Doc Shunan

Walter Cobb Hamlin, 2013
Calcutta

Albert Hintzen, 2000
Kienyang, Kunming, 14th Air Force, Chungking, Canton

Earl Hunt, 2013
Calcutta, Liutung

Robert P. Larson, 2014
Chungking, Nanning

John E. Masterson, 1996
Chungking, Kunming, Chungking, Kunming, Shunan, Hangchow

James T. Nelson, 2014
Chungking, Kanchow, Kienyang, Foochow, Namping, Yung Tai, Hwaan, Camp 6, Foochow, Shanghai

Walter Cobb Hamlin

Walter C. Hamlin, 87, passed away Sunday, June 23, 2013 at his residence. He was the husband of Carol (Jones) Hamlin. Walter was born September 24, 1925, in Malden, Mass., son of the late Walter and Marie (Davis) Hamlin. He graduated from Malden High School and Hillyer College in Hartford, Conn.

During World War II Walter served in the United States Navy and was part of the amphibious forces in the Mediterranean. He was a member of the Disabled American Veterans, SACO Veterans of the Rice Paddy Navy, and the China Burma and India Veterans Association.

Walter spent his career in the field of finance and was the Credit and Loan Manager at Commercial Credit Corporation in New Haven. He then went on to become a Chief Bank Examiner for the State of Connecticut Banking Department, retiring in 1982.

When he and his wife Carol were married in 1975, they lived in Colorado before moving back east to Cheshire, Conn., in 2002.

Besides his wife he is survived by two sons, Ed and his wife Judy Hamlin of Manchester, Paul and his wife Debby Hamlin of Meriden; a daughter Patty and her husband Jeff Simpson of Aurora, Colo.; three stepsons, Drew Glover of Newtown, Conn., Tim and his wife Colleen Glover of Monroe, Conn., and Greg and his wife Sue Glover of Shelton, Conn.; a stepdaughter Joan and her husband Ron Donofrio of California; three grandchildren, John, Renee, Katie; and three great grandchildren. He was predeceased by two sisters.

Donations in his name may be made to the Elim Park Resident Benevolent Fund, 150 Cook Hill Road, Cheshire, CT 06410 or to the Disabled American Veterans, 3725 Alexandria Pike, Cold Spring, KY 41076.

Lillie A. Brown

Lillie A. Brown, 89, of Laramie, Wy., was born Aug. 16, 1924, in Laramie to Dave and Zelphia (née McFadden) McLennan, the seventh of nine children. She died peacefully Sunday, Feb. 23, 2014, at Pathway Hospice in Loveland, Colo., after a short illness. She grew up in Laramie and married Kenneth Brown in Laramie July 29, 1945. She was a member of the Harmony Homemakers Club and the Harmony and Albany County Farm Bureau.

She is survived by her husband of 69 years, Kenneth U. Brown, a veteran of the Sino-American Cooperative Organization; a son Lyle; daughter Dixie; five grandchildren, Brendan Brazee, Michelle Brazee, Kenneth Brown, Timothy Brown and Tabetha Fisher; six great-grandchildren, Cameron and Raven Brazee, Arispa and Keegan Robinson and Loren and Joshua Fisher. Also surviving is one sister, Betty Wade, and numerous cousins, nieces and nephews.

John M. Conway

John M. Conway, 91, died Wednesday, October 16, 2013, in Libertyville, Ill. He was born June 22, 1922, in New York, N.Y. He served in the U.S. Navy in China in the Sino-American Cooperative Organization in World War II. He enjoyed mall walking with his family.

John is survived by his children Valerie (Charles) Jacob, Ellen (William) Bolt, Stacie Ford, Matthew (Colette) Ford, and Michael (Julie) Ford; son-in-law Jack Meere; sisters Margaret Brogan and Francis Agro; nephews John Byrne and Michael Brogan; eight grandchildren and one great grandchild. He was preceded in death by his wife Margaret and his daughter Adrienne. Donations in John's name to the Alzheimer's Association, 8430 W. Bryn Mawr, Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60631 are appreciated.

Robert P. Larson

Robert P. Larson, 96, died peacefully at home in Yarmouth Port, Mass., on February 23, 2014. Bob and his wife, Jessie, moved to Cape Cod 20 years ago from Glens Falls, N.Y., following Bob's retirement as president, CEO, and chairman of the board of directors of the Glens Falls National Bank and Trust Company.

Bob was president of the Glens Falls Rotary Club; director of the Tri-County United Way, the Glens Falls Chamber of Commerce, the Greater Glens Falls and many other service and professional organizations and served on the Warren County Planning Board.

Bob helped establish the Adirondack Community College Foundation. He was a trustee of Skidmore College and of the University of Rochester, where he graduated in 1939 as a member of Phi Beta Kappa.

In college, Bob majored in French and German and worked and studied abroad for two summers. Following graduation, Bob's fluency in Spanish led to a position in the International Division of the First National City Bank of New York in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

During World War II, Bob enlisted in the U.S. Navy. He was a member of the Sino-American Cooperative Organization (SACO). Like many other veterans who performed intelligence duties during World War II, Bob would reply "nothing" when asked what he had done in China.

Bob attained the rank of lieutenant commander and served from 1947 to 1952 in the Naval Reserve. He met Jessie Evaline Poole, also a naval officer, while stationed in Newport, R.I. They married in 1945. After two years in Puerto Rico and Medellín, Colombia, Bob became a vice-president with the Security Trust Company of Rochester, N.Y. In 1961, he joined the Glens Falls National Bank and Trust Company.

In retirement, Bob studied languages at Cape Cod Community College. He played golf year-round and continued to shoot his age well into his nineties, which impressed him less as his age increased.

Bob's wife, Jessie, predeceased him in 2009. He is survived by daughter Barbara Stoner of Rochester, N.Y., son Allen (Gloria) Larson of Yarmouth Port, Mass., three grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

from the *Rochester Democrat And Chronicle*,
March 16, 2014

James Thomas Nelson II

James Thomas Nelson II passed away January 19, 2014.

James was born to Katherine M. and Frank J. Nelson in Daytona Beach, Fla. His formative education was completed at St. Paul's School, Daytona Beach, Marion Military Institute, University of Alabama and graduation from Stetson University – School of Law. He then joined the United States Navy. He served as a Naval Intelligence officer in the Sino-American Co-operative Organization and was honorably discharged in 1946.

After the war he opened his law practice on Beach Street in Daytona Beach. Along with his law practice, he presided over Volusia's first small claims court for 12 years. He was appointed by then Florida Gov. Cecil Farris Bryant as a circuit court judge and served from 1964 until retiring in 1991.

In his earlier personal life he attained an Eagle Scout award from the Boy Scouts of America. He was a past member of the American Bar Association, Jaycees, Lions Club, Quarterback Club, Bath and Tennis Club, Oceans Dunes Club, Daytona Beach Golf Club, Oceanside Country Club, Halifax River Yacht Club, local Boy Scouts of America and later Little League Parents Association.

He married Virginia Lee Horsley and soon the sound of children filled their home. Family and friends were always very important to them. Happy pastimes included playing golf, bridge, handball, surfing, swimming, and boating. Of all his pastimes, golf was his favorite with his golfing buddies.

He is predeceased by his parents and sisters Mary Francis, Hazel Taurchini, and Claire Wagner. He is survived by his wife Virginia Nelson; sister Suzanne Hull; daughters, Linda (Robert) Rieck of Junction, Tex., and Kathy (Terry) Chick of Ormond Beach, Fla.; sons, Steve Nelson of Palm Coast, Fla., Frank (Judy) Nelson of Holly Hill, Fla., and Thomas Nelson of Eustis, Fla.; and many precious grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces, and nephews.

Donations may be made in his memory to the Worc Work Haven, Easter Seals or Halifax Health Hospice of Volusia/Flagler, 3800 Woodbriar Trail, Port Orange, FL 32129.

Robert John Cross

Robert John Cross, age 91, passed away at home in Bellingham, Wash., surrounded by his family, from Alzheimer's complications. He was born in Chicago, Ill., the elder son of Austin and Hannah Cross, attended Austin High School in Chicago, and was attending Carleton



Robert Cross on his 90th birthday with his SACO medal. (courtesy Elizabeth Cross)

College when he enlisted for Naval Officer's Training and was called to active duty July 1943. His World War II overseas duty was with Naval Group China from 1944 to 1946. He then finished his senior year at Carleton College where he met his future wife of 65 years, Elizabeth Thale of Chicago. They married in June 1948. Bob received the MLS degree from the Univ. of Washington in 1955 and became a librarian, mainly in northwest universities—the Univ. of Washington, Oregon State College, Boeing Scientific Research Library, Seattle Univ., Western Washington Univ.—and retired in 1987. Bob was a devoted family man and enjoyed sightseeing car trips throughout the U.S. to visit family and enjoyed summers at Betty's family summer cottage on Lake Michigan. In the 1980s he and Betty began foreign travel and spent three months with a student group from WWU in Greece. Bob was also a devoted dog lover and loved walking the family dogs. Bob was preceded in death by his parents and most of his cousins. He is survived by his loving wife Betty, children Thomas A. Cross and Thale (husband Eric) Jarvis, four grandchildren, and his brother Thomas C. Cross. Bob enjoyed friendships with WWU Retirement Assn. colleagues and at Adult Day Health Center, St. Joseph South Campus. Special family thanks are due to his compassionate caregiver, Lisa Parker, whose skills and care greatly helped Bob and his family during his last months. On November 14, 2013, Bob pulled up anchor, left worldly cares behind, and caught the wind for a final adventure.

from the *Bellingham Herald*

Conrad Allan Bradshaw

Conrad (Brad) Allan Bradshaw, age 90, of Grand Rapids, Mich., passed away on Sunday, May 5, 2013.

Brad was born December 22, 1922 in Campbell, Mo., to Clarence and Stella Bradshaw. He is survived by his wife, Margaret (Molly); sisters, Dorothy Tamke and Martha Manheim; sister-in-law Joan Kadler; cousin Ray Snider; daughters Dorothy, Lucy and Charlotte; stepson Miles Fredenburg; three grandchildren and numerous beloved nieces and nephews and their children. Brad was preceded in death by his brothers, James and Alfred Lynn.

Brad received a B.A. and J.D. from University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. He interrupted his studies to serve as a Lieutenant in the U.S. Navy from 1942-46. He was stationed in India and Burma serving in the Sino-American Cooperative Organization (SACO). He is reported to have made the inaugural jeep traverse of the Stilwell-Burma Road from Ledo, India, to China, a highly unauthorized journey.

Brad began his long professional career selling popcorn at age 10 in Sikeston, Mo. From 1948 to 1987, he was an attorney at Warner, Norcross and Judd in Grand Rapids, Mich. He continued to be Of Counsel for the firm after his retirement, until he was no longer able due to Lewy Body Disease. He served on the Grand Rapids and Michigan State Bar Associations, and was president of the Grand Rapids Bar Assoc. in 1971. He served on the boards of several companies, including Superior Furniture Co. and Associated Truck Lines, and was General Counsel to the American International Automobile Dealers Assoc. from 1970 to 1989. Amongst his many other skills, Brad was a licensed private pilot and apprentice bricklayer.

Brad was committed to Grand Rapids and supporting the community. He was a generous patron of the arts, and was instrumental in getting the Calder Mural on the rooftop of the Kent County Building.

The family wishes to thank all the many people who have provided care and support to Brad over the last few years, and to all the staff at Clark Home Oxford Manor.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Grand Rapids Bar Assoc. Foundation, 161 Ottawa Ave., NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503 or the Grand Rapids Community Foundation, 185 Oakes St., SW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503.

Earl Hunt

Earl Hunt, 93, of Stone Mountain, Ga., died peacefully at Hospice Atlanta, January 16, 2013. He is survived by his wife of 44 years, Daphne Amidon; sons Earl Jr. (Andrea) and Ted (Diane); six grandchildren, and five great grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his son Michael in 2009.

Born in St. Louis, Mo., in 1919, he attended Washington University. He enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1942, and participated in the invasions of North Africa, Sicily, Italy, Anzio, and the D-Day landings. In early 1945, he was assigned to the Office for Strategic Service. He served in the Sino-American Cooperative Organization from March to August 1945, training the army of Chiang Kai-shek.

After returning home, he worked for 3M, Marquette Corporation and Applied Power in sales, rising to National Sales Manager. He and his wife retired in Atlanta, Ga. As an avid golfer, he scored three holes in one! His often complimented fellow golfers, "that shot was awesome," gaining him the nickname, Awesome Earl. His neighbors called him the Birdman of Hidden Hills because he loved feeding the birds and squirrels.

Doris Huesing Barrett

Doris Huesing Barrett died August 15, 2011. Born April 6, 1918, in Indianapolis, Ind., to Roy and Addie Griffith, she graduated from Butler University in 1941. She was a member of Pi Beta Phi sorority. She enjoyed a career in journalism and public relations.

She and husband Homer Huesing helped bring the first reunion of USS *Indianapolis* survivors to Indianapolis. She received an honorary commission in the Sea Cadet Corps in the 9th Naval District and was active in the Naval Reserve Officers Wives Club. After 22 years as a widow, she married SACO veteran George Barrett. They enjoyed 18 years together, traveling to 13 countries until his death in 2009.

She was a member of many civic and volunteer organizations, including the Columbia Club, Salvation Army Women's Auxiliary, Indianapolis Press Club, Heslar Naval Armory Mess, many Republican organizations, and Second Presbyterian Church.

Survivors are her daughter Nancy (Dennis) Lawton, Indianapolis, and two grandchildren.

SACO NEWS

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SACO History

SACO (pronounced “Socko”), the Sino-American Cooperative Organization, officially started in May 1942 in a rice paddy near Pucheng, 130 miles from the China coast; the formal SACO agreement was approved by both the Chinese and United States governments April 15, 1943. The Directors of SACO were General Tai Li, head of the Chinese Secret Service, and Commander (later, Rear Admiral) Milton Edward “Mary” Miles. This was a land-locked U.S. Naval unit of almost 2,700 Americans who fought the Japanese in China during WWII. The men became known as “SACO Tigers” and the outfit, “The Rice Paddy Navy.”

The center of operations, named Happy Valley, was

built eight miles west of Chungking. Fourteen additional camps were established. All of these units trained Chinese troops and gathered intelligence. At war’s end SACO included 97,000 organized Chinese guerrillas and 20,000 saboteurs and pirates.

SACO set up weather stations throughout China as far north as the Gobi Desert and by the end of 1943 began producing weather reports for the Pacific Fleet. Coast-watchers reported on enemy shipping and furnished targets for U.S. submarines as well as the 14th Air Force and Naval aviators.

The activities of SACO remain little-known at home; but these men and their deeds continue to be remembered, studied, and honored in China.