

July 2003

SACO VETERANS

OF
THE RICE PADDY NAVY
CHINA

WHAT

Perpetual Skipper

THE

WELL?

VAdm. Milton E. "Mary" Miles



Sino American Cooperative Organization

Issue No. 26

Special Memorial Edition

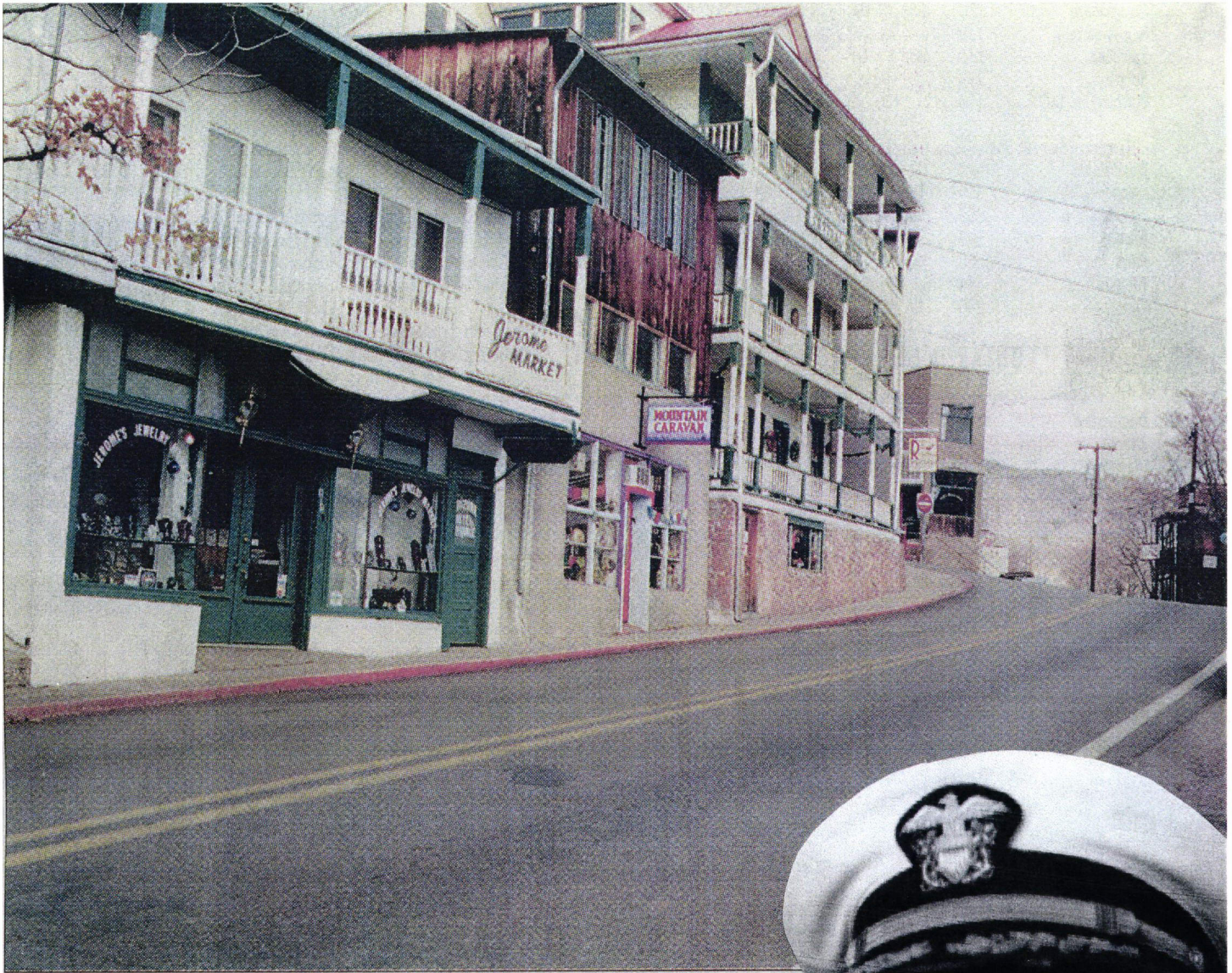
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The Sweetheart of SACO

Erma L. Rutan

19 July 1909 - 18 May 2003

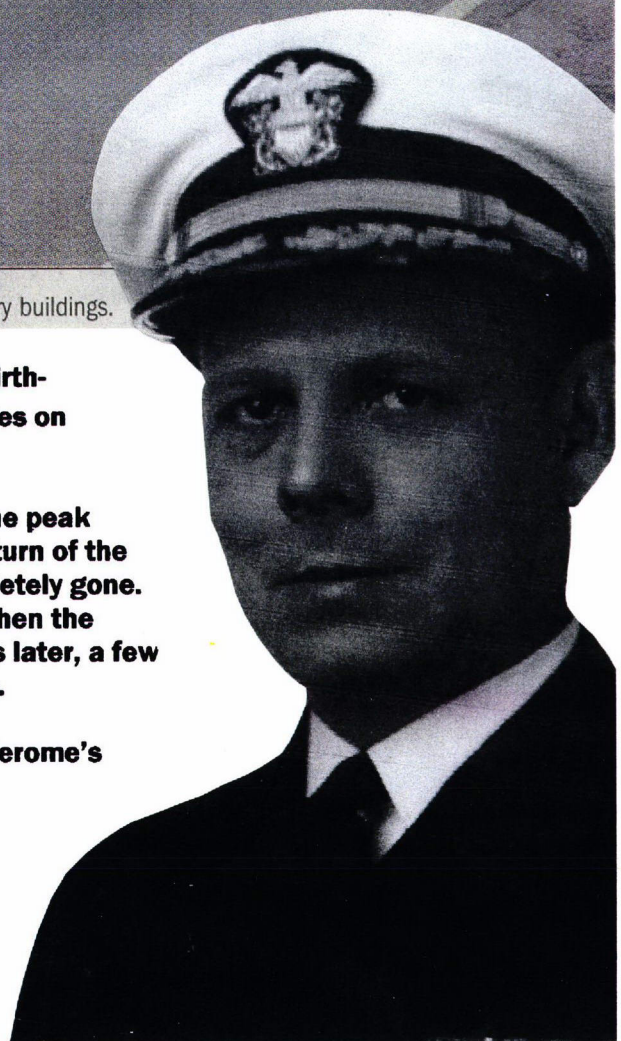


The residents of Jerome, Ariz., are interested in preserving their turn-of-the-century buildings.

Jerome, Arizona – popular Ghost Town and birthplace of our “Skipper,” Rear Admiral Milton E. “Mary” Miles on 6 April 1900.

Columnist Bill Norton of *THE KANSAS CITY STAR* states the peak population of the mile-high town was 15,000 around the turn of the century. But the mining – copper, gold & silver – is completely gone. Historians think Native Americans first mined this area. Then the Spanish Conquistadors in the 1580s. Three hundred years later, a few American industrialists proved the Indians knew their ore.

Local legend, fed by press releases and such, holds that Jerome’s populace leaked to a low of 50, qualifying for ghost town status and that’s how it began its comeback.





Erma takes over the helm of a sail boat for half-an-hour in the Pacific between Long Beach and Santa Catalina about 1987



Catching up on the news in the Grand Hotel in Taipei. possibly 1985



Erma relaxes in our patio (actually a casita) at our home of 44 yrs in San Fernando Valley. She & I had it remodeled in the early '80's. Contracting the framework and roof, we did all inside and outside paneling & décor with dining area, kitchen, 8-foot wet bar and bath. Actually was my pad for years.



**Hollis, Erma, Richard
"The Plantations"
Captiva Is., Sanibel Fl
1978
Hosts Buck & Ellie Dormer**

From the Editor's Desk



I don't think I ever really accepted the fact that this day might come – no other thought but what she'd always be at my side – but in reality, I did wonder more what would happen to Erma if I was taken first. I've prayed so many times these late years that He would let me outlive her so I could take care of her and I know that was her fervent desire for she knew she could not handle business affairs, know what medicine to take, couldn't go anyplace being prohibited from driving account her bad hip, etc., and she put her complete trust in me to do what was best for the both of us. Up until the last three weeks of her life, the car was never started that she wasn't ready for a ride. On days like this when at the computer working on SACO NEWS until late afternoon, she'd often

come and ask "Don't we need something from the store?" And I would quit and go someplace so she could get out of the house. She was happy as long as she got to take a ride each day. It might be to the market, it might be for me to go buy her some new clothes and shoes which I've done most of these years we've lived in the desert, yes even the lingerie department was on my list. But she got to watch people or sat in the car and read – especially editions of SACO NEWS. Nothing in this world was hers or mine, it was ours. We both had bank accounts – both in both names as was every thing we owned - we tried my account for household living, bills, etc. and endeavored to hold hers in reserve for "fun" money. We never took each other for granted – always remembered "thank you" even for a cup of coffee or an evening cocktail.

She never wanted to be a burden and had said, "Why don't you put me in a home so you can have some life?" That would disturb me no end and assure her that I would never consider that – that she was my life, my companion, my choice of the life I wanted. That would usually end in an embrace and expression of love.

She hoped she would never have to be a permanent resident in a rest home and so did I. I would do anything while alive to prevent that. She always said as she awoke each morning she would say, "Thank you, God, for another day."

One morning she awakened and called me. "Richard, my hip hurts so bad I can't get up." I lifted her into the wheelchair, got her in the shower, dressed her and took her to the doctor who made hospital arrangements. Unfortunately, in emergency they found conditions of which we were unaware, bronchitis, severe dehydration, urine infection, anemia requiring 2 pts of blood, and failing kidneys. A cortisone injection into the hip bone done under x-ray almost immediately erased the pain. In five days, they transferred her to a skilled nursing facility for physical therapy that she might get back home. After two weeks, it was felt best to have her home with visiting nurses daily and physical therapy at home. I had promised time after time that I would get her home and I would if we had to forcibly

remove her (my cousin agreed to help) Most of those days until the last week, she was sedated, hallucinating, disoriented, etc. Since she wasn't in pain after cortisone, I demanded they stop all sedatives in the nursing facility (on advice of our family physician). She was more rational then. She wouldn't eat except a couple bites if I would feed her and then shove it away. I spent the better part of 12 hours a day with her and every night I left, I kissed her and said, "See you in the morning" and she would reply, "I'll look forward to it," and putting her hands to my cheeks, would pull my face down for a second kiss. At times she couldn't understand why I couldn't stay all night or since I was going home, "Take me with you." Not an easy time to leave her.

I got her home Friday, 16th of May. I put her to bed at 9:30pm and an hour later, she softly cried, "Help me! Help me!" I said, "What do you need?," and she replied, "I don't know." Thinking she was lost and confused, I told her, "You're in your own bed now, you're at home." She replied, "Oh, ok." And she slept all night.

Saturday, she was rational but very tired. Sunday, she was comatose - never communicated, no response as I talked with her.

At 3:40P.M. she quit breathing as she slept in her living room chair.

You might say our prayers were all answered, she died in her sleep at home as she wanted, I got her home as promised, I lived to take care of her to the very end - with all our wishes coming true - how do you mend a heart that is broken? I know. . . time. I try to find solace from Abraham Lincoln who said, ". . . perfect relief is not possible except with time. You cannot now realize that you will ever feel better. . . and yet this is a mistake. You are sure to be happy again. To know this, which is certainly true, will make you some less miserable now. I have had experience enough to know what I say."

I must now reveal this most unbelievable anecdote:

When I was a little boy in Indiana, a bird flew into our house and Erma told me an old belief of superstition that such an incident was an indication that you would hear of a death.

I have discussed this story with several and some have and some have not heard this old tale.

The week before Erma came home from the skilled nursing facility, I had some correspondence to catch up on and I told Erma I'd go home for a couple of hours and see her later at dinner time.

While at the computer, I heard a strange noise and investigating, I found a large brown thrush (I have a bird book) trying to get out at the window above the front door. (It was a nice day and I had the door open) I looked at the bird, and knowing of the superstition I said aloud, "Damn you, I don't need this!" After a long race chasing the bird throughout the house, he became so fatigued that I caught him in the kitchen. I took him to the front door, placed his feet on my forefinger and he sat still until he got his strength back and then flew away.

It wasn't until two or three days after Erma left us that I recalled that bird and I thought, "My God! Her story came true - an omen of her own death. Eerie? Unbelievable! Believe It Or Not!

I almost wish I had never heard the story!



???!!!***

SACO HISTORY

SACO (pronounced "SOCKO" stands for Sino-American Cooperative Organization) and was established during WWII by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. Highly secret, originally known as U.S. Naval Group, China, it was placed under the joint command of General Tai Li (Head of BIS (Bureau of Investigation and Statistics, i.e., *Intelligence*) as Director of SACO and VAdm. Milton Edward "Mary" Miles as Deputy Director. The Chinese and American members of SACO joined in combined effort to perform intelligence and guerrilla operations. We soon became known by the sobriquet "*THE RICE PADDY NAVY.*" "*SACO TIGERS,*" as they were, and *are*, popularly known, served hundreds of miles behind enemy lines, establishing vital weather stations, coast-watching to report on enemy shipping, intercepting Japanese code, rescuing downed allied airmen and being involved in numerous other military, medical and humanitarian endeavors. The American personnel numbering in excess of 2,500, were *each and everyone a volunteer* from several branches of service, but for the most part, Navy and Marine men.

(Another note of interest: It has been noted that this group may have the unique distinction of being the first American Military Group to ever serve under a foreign leader in time of war????!***

PLEASE NOTE

Have you paid your dues for 2003?

Payment is due 1 January each year
For Regular, Associate and Auxiliary
members as follows:

REGULAR & ASSOCIATES

Treas. H. W. Weskamp
3034 Larkwood
West Covina, CA 91791-2928

LADIES AUXILIARY

Treas. Laura Sellers
1291 Eastern Parkway
Louisville, KY 40204-2440

IF YOU PLAN TO ATTEND THIS
YEAR'S REUNION IN PHILADELPHIA
in SEPTEMBER, OR WANT FUTURE
ISSUES OF SACO NEWS BE SURE TO
PAY YOUR DUES (\$20).

SACO NEWS

*Is published by World War II veterans of
the SINO AMERICAN COOPERATIVE
ORGANIZATION (SACO) aka U.S.
Naval Group China and ultimately "THE
RICE PADDY NAVY."*

We're always searching for SACO stories
and pictures (no 35mm size prints or
photo copies accepted). Send your
comments and newsworthy items for
future issues to the editor:

Richard L. Rutan, Editor
45-480 Desert Fox Drive

La Quinta, CA 92253-4214
(760) 360-3800

Letters



To the editor 20 May 2003

Many thanks for the March 2003 SACO NEWS copy that you sent along with your reminder as to the status of my dues.

I had intended to remit same before now and just hadn't done so when your communiqué arrived. I am enclosing my check for 2003 dues with extra for contribution or 2002 dues, whichever applies and my apologies.

I read with interest your comments concerning the move to "repair" our by-laws. I do think your comments are well stated and I totally agree with them – let common sense prevail!

Also, Richard, concerning my summer and winter addresses, I'd like to request that any future mailings to me be sent to my Johnson City address as it is my "base" or home address.

When I am in Tallahassee for lengthy stays, it will be forwarded. Tallahassee is my "native" home where I grew up and I do miss not being there year-round anymore. With the circumstances of age, immediate family, medical ties, etc., it's best I live in Johnson City, which by the way, has provided us with a wonderful second home for many years now. It's a beautiful area in Northeast Tennessee in

the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains and the Smokies.

Thank you again, Richard, you're a champion.

Guy M Maddox

Guy M. Maddox

????!!***

To the editor

20 February 2003

Thank you so much to writing this article about my father, Eddie Liu. The day we received the newsletter, just happened my 3 siblings (my 2 older sisters and my brother) were at my mother's house, so we all read the article together and then translated to my mom. We enjoyed the article very much and we all had a smile on our face; my mother said, "Your dad now is in heaven, knowing that SACO even remembered him in their newsletter; he must be very pleased."

Thank you again, we appreciated your effort and each one of us have our copy of the newsletter, too!

Helen

Sincerely, Helen Chang

????!!***

To the editor

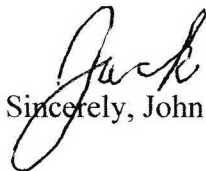
24 April 2003

The latest SACO NEWS had an article about an interpreter, which brought to mind our guy, Jackson H. S. Shen.

When we left Camp 3 at Xian to go to our Guerrilla Camp, we traveled through the mountains as far as we could in trucks. When we ran out of road, we had to walk over mountains to get to the camp. Jackson was our interpreter. He would try to converse occasionally with a traveler we

would come upon about our location. In that wilderness, not every dialogue was the same and he would become very frustrated when he wasn't understood. He was very valuable to us.

When the war ended, I was assigned to the Navy Enlisted Manager's Club in Shanghai as Officer-in-Charge. One day, who should appear but Jackson asking if I could help him to get home to Peking. I wrote a letter to the Army Air Force in Shanghai telling them about his experience with us and asking them to help him if they could. His letter explains the rest.


Sincerely, John E. Demmer

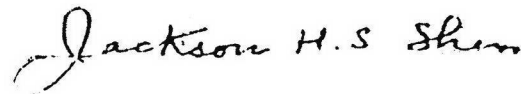
To Ensign John E. Demmer
US Navy Club
722 Bubbling Wells Rd
Shanghai, China

20 Feb 1936

First, I shall thank your kindness of the best favor you have done for me, because I could get home conveniently, by the aid of your letter. At 1 P.M. 14 Inst, I arrived at Peiping where I've left for about 4 years. The first scene came in my eye in the ship was the outline of the old city with the beautiful Wan Show Hill and Yi Ho Lake beside it. After the 4-engine plane landed, I got into town by truck and felt everything is quiet and plain; it's much different with Shanghai. Then I was told my family recently had moved to Tung Koo, about 100 miles east of*

Peiping - near the coast because my father was working there. So, the next day, I came here by train, my parents were delighted so much that they were almost tearing since they were just longing to me. Now in my home, I am staying and reading. Maybe to get some job or get back school later., but anyway, I should go to Tiensin to see my grandmother and other relatives for awhile.

I hope you write to me at anytime when you aren't busy and with my best regard to Mr. Carter and Mr. Hazelett



Sincerely yours, Jackson H. S. Shen

(*Sorry, couldn't decipher meaning of "Inst." Ed)

???!?!***

To Paul Casamajor

28 Feb 2003

I accept with pleasure your kind invitation to join SACO and am beholden to your "bright-eyed" member. Calcutta, Kunming, Burma Road and Shanghai do indeed bring back a flood of memories never to be forgotten. I am your man. (From 1942 until about 1959, stemming from a rather unpleasant divorce between my parents, I used the name Charles C. rather than Charles L., the name I was given at birth.)

You have read "between the lines" correctly. I was part of your "famous Navy convey over the Burma Road in August 1945." In fact, I was that lonely guy in a jeep who scouted several miles ahead of

the convoy with a Tommy gun beside me. But why "famous?" As I remember it, the only thing that was "famous" about that trip was being hip-deep in mud because we started before the monsoons had come to a full stop. Infamous might be more apt.

I guess that one could say that I entered SACO through the back door. Soon after I arrived in Ft. Pierce for Scouts and Raiders training, S&R to my dismay was transformed into Transport Scout Intelligence. Not wishing to be a briefing officer on a troopship, I walked over to another group that seemed to be continuing the S&R training, a mysterious outfit called Roger 2. The CO, a Navy Lieutenant whose name I have forgotten but to whom I will always be grateful, happened to be looking for a fresh young Ensign and took me on board. I climbed happily into a rubber boat, started lifting logs, and the rest is history.

I thank you very much for the two issues of SACO NEWS. They are arguably the most adroitly written and edited pieces of veterans' news I have ever seen. Congratulations to whomever is responsible. Herewith, for the copies or my dues or whatever, is my check for \$40.

Unfortunately, my beloved wife, Betsey, died in 1997, but I thank you for your thoughtful suggestion to add her name to mine. It would have been nice for both of us.

Best wishes and thanks for the warm welcome.



Chuck Miller

???!***

ANOTHER LUCKY THIRTEEN STORY

(From "Kilobytes" publication of Computer Club of Rossmoor -submitted by community resident Paul Casamajor)

Have you ever taken the time to look at the reverse side of a one-dollar bill? Two circles, together, comprise the Great Seal of the United States. Benjamin Franklin was part of the group that designed the Seal which took four years to design and two years to be approved.

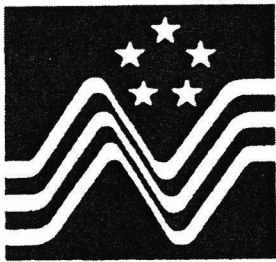
On one side is the uncapped pyramid. The Latin above the pyramid, "ANNUIT COEPTIS," Means "God has favored our undertaking." This term has 13 letters, representing the original 13 colonies. The Latin below the pyramid, "NOVUS ORDO SECLORUM," means "a new order has begun." At the base of the pyramid is the Roman Numeral for 1776. There are 13 steps on the pyramid.

The bald eagle is on the right side. In the eagle's beak a banner reads, "E PLURIBUS UNUM" 13 letters meaning one nation from many people. Above the eagle you have 13 stars, 13 plumes of feathers on each span of the eagle's wing, 13 bars on the shield.

The eagle holds an olive branch and arrows, and the eagle faces the olive branch. This signifies that the country wants peace, but will not be afraid to fight to preserve the peace. There are 13 leaves on the olive branch and 13 arrows in the eagle's talon.

???!***

LATE NEWS: Had a call from Sal Ciaccio's son, Jim, that his dad had a heart attack and had heart by-pass surgery and said Sal wanted us to know he was doing ok. Also, heard from Doc and Peg Felmy and Peg had fallen and broken her arm. Hope all is well with Sal & Peg by the time they get this. Ed.



**ADMIRAL
NIMITZ
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Japanese Garden of Peace

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March 10, 2003

Mr. H.W. Weskamp
Sino American Cooperative Org, Inc.
3034 E. Larkwood Street
West Covina CA 91791-2928

Dear Mr. Weskamp:

We have received SACO's generous contribution of \$500, and on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Admiral Nimitz Foundation I want to thank you.

The **National Museum of the Pacific War** is truly a world-class facility – one of which you can be proud to be a part. It is a treasure that tells the story of how our armed forces fought and our home front supported them in the world's most devastating event. Your generous support helps to insure the lessons learned in World War II will be taught to our future generations.

Your continued support is deeply appreciated.

Sincerely,

C.D. Grojean
Rear Admiral U.S.N. (Ret)
Executive Director

cc: Robert Sinks

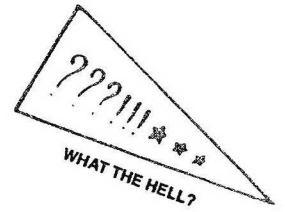
The Admiral Nimitz Foundation has received a determination letter from the Internal Revenue Services stating that it is a tax exempt organization as described in 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and is not a private foundation according to 509(a). No goods or services have been provided for this donation.



SACO

SINO AMERICAN COOPERATIVE ORGANIZATION

U. S. NAVAL GROUP CHINA VETERANS



Vice Admiral Milton E. Miles
Perpetual Skipper

March 23, 2003

Mrs. Helen Soong
4FL, Lane 31, Wo-Lung St.
Taipei, Taiwan, R.O.C.

Dear Madame Soong.

On behalf of the Officers, Trustees and Membership of SACO, I would like to extend to you and your family our deep and profound sympathy for the loss of you husband and our beloved Admiral Soong.

I was deeply moved when I received your Christmas and New Years card along with your note on his passing. I'm sure that some solace can be achieved by knowing that he has joined that Great Naval Armada in the sky where he will experience fair winds and a following sea.

Having known Admiral Soong since 1972, when he was Taiwans Chief of Naval operations, I can personally attest to the fact that he was a great Naval Officer, Diplomat and when required a politician. He will always be remembered as a close and dear friend of SACO.

I too apologize for the tardiness of this response to you, however I have experienced some health problems also. Please know that our prayers are with you and your family in this very personal loss. We also hope that your sight improves.

Thank you so much for notifying me of your loss. If you need anything from here please let me know.

Sincerely,



Bill Bartee
SACO Secretary

CC: SACO Officers and Trustee's.

CONRAD A. BRADSHAW

Home 3261 Lake Dr. SE Grand Rapids MI 49506 Tel 616 949 4427 Fax 616 977 0361 Email cabrad@att.net
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April 25, 2003

Mr. Richard L. Rutan
Editor, SACO News
45-480 Desert Fox Drive
La Quinta, CA 92253-4214

Dear Richard;

Thank you for another fine issue of SACO NEWS. I see that you are acquiring more technical proficiency in computerized publication as you go along. I know it must intrigue you, as it does me.

I note that the Trustees at the last annual meeting considered the problem of where the Organization goes as the sickle swings wider, and the obituaries become a greater part of each succeeding issue of the News.

I have the beginnings of a suggestion for the consideration of the trustees and, if it meets with the approval of the trustees, the members, and if you think it worthy, I would hope you would pass copies of this letter along to the officers and to Bill Sager, legal counsel for their consideration.

My suggestion is that we take the SACO member list, recently published, as the basis for surviving members. When the number of surviving members dwindles to fifty, then, at the next annual meeting, there would be presented to the membership a proposal that the Organization disband at such time as the number of surviving members has reduced to ten, who are to be designated "The Last Ten Tigers", who shall be the subject of a Press Release, hopefully to be prepared much in advance, and hopefully to be picked up by major media, and that all funds remaining on hand in the Organization's treasury be paid over to the Republic of China, or, in the alternative to the ROC Military Intelligence Bureau.

I recognize the difficulties in keeping the list, but I hope that Paul Casamajor, in his will, can specify a method..

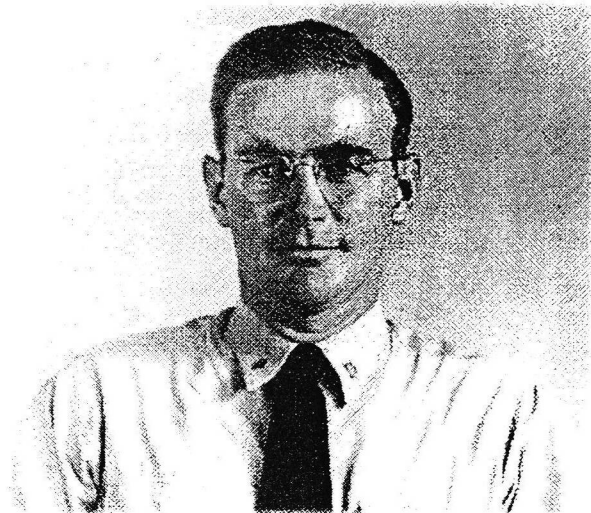
Sincerely,



Conrad A. Bradshaw

Third & Final Installment

IMAGES AND MEMORIES



Lt. Jean E. Neighbor (MC) USN #199488

BY JEAN E. NEIGHBOR M.D.

Editor's note:

Due to length of this autobiographical manuscript, I will endeavor to publish this in three installments – this being No.1. In my opinion, Dr. Neighbor's talent for storytelling was in a style too interesting for edification and I leave it entirely as he wrote it. I hope you'll agree and enjoy. His SACO experience will be forthcoming.

CRASH LANDING IN NO-MANS LAND

We were still climbing ever so slightly, but at least seemed well away from the imminent danger of the 20mm fire. I yelled to the group to wrap their heads with whatever they had on hand; towel, jacket, socks, whatever, and to lie down in a knee-chest position on their sides, cover their heads with their arms and position themselves as near the boxes and duffel bags at the center of the plane. As the plane droned on for a few more minutes, with the crew chief giving us a few quick looks to see if we were in correct position and then assuming the same for himself, we proceeded in what I was told later was a direction 'just as far west as we could manage'. All of a sudden there was a short fit of coughing by our engines and then a silence descended upon us. Silence only in terms of the steady and comforting roar of the two engines, replaced now by a loud swishing, rushing sound of just the air through which we were rapidly descending.

It seemed interminable, that long descent into whatever our fate was going to be, with only our individual thoughts or prayers to comfort us and not being able to do a damn thing more than to count those moments that might remain for our lives. I don't believe that the phrase 'life flashing before your eyes' at such last moments applied as much although I can't speak for the others of our group. I only remember the increasing crescendo of screaming airflow as we plunged downward. I have heard that sound reverberating over a great many years now, indelibly etched in my memory along with the ultimate crashing, scraping, rending sound of the planes underbelly as it plowed into what fortuitously was a dry corn field, surrounded by dirt embankments.

The pilot, (our life-saver no doubt), had very skillfully bellied into the field with his left wing down and dragging so that we skidded in almost sideways, sliding and scraping our way across the full width of the paddy to come to rest with a resounding thud against the far embankment. That noise too was a horrendous one, but I must say, gratefully heard, since it meant when it stopped that we were still alive and able to listen. There were a few moments of utter silence while we gingerly felt of ourselves to see if we were still all there. I yelled out, "Anyone hurt??", but heard no response other than a few minor groans from those who had bounced around on the deck as we skidded in. I took a quick check of the gang, as the crew chief was speedily sliding open the hatch door that almost instantly disgorged us as a group, with a Commando-like yell, as we reached the ground. We had each grabbed our weapons at this point, and under the direction of the Ensign had several of the guys put up a perimeter guard to watch for whatever might be lurking in the area. Meantime the plane crew was following orders to destroy the critical papers we might be carrying, and they even made an attempt to destroy the plane by firing signal rockets into the gas tanks. To no avail, there weren't even enough fumes left to catch anything on fire.

THE LONELY GUERILLA

At about this moment one of our perimeter guards called out that he had spotted two soldiers off in the distance, two figures dressed in the typical Chinese style, conical straw hat, ragged blouses, and knee length worn out short pants. Schreiber came over to

the embankment to take a closer look through his binoculars, "...Can't tell what they are, Doc, but they're armed but not moving yet. --No, wait a minute, one of them is coming toward us." The men near at hand noted this at the same time and were ready to blast him but Schreiber sharply ordered them to hold their fire. "We've got them outnumbered and we don't want to attract anymore attention to us with gun fire." The approaching man carried a rifle, which, most fortunately for him, he kept slung over his left shoulder, for as he slowly walked toward us there were at least ten weapons trained upon him from those of us who were hiding behind the dirt barricades. He approached us very slowly and carefully, recognizing that he was out-numbered considerably, but feeling, I guess, that it was his duty as an outer guard post to investigate what must have been for him a first in his military career as a guerrilla. It was clear to him and to us that if he had unlimbered his gun he could have been mowed down by the weapons trained on him.

As he came closer he waved in a friendly fashion, and we could see that he appeared to be Chinese, dressed in the haphazard uniform that the guerrillas often wore. He wisely stopped a short distance from us and called to us in the classical greeting of "Hao bu hao". Under cover from the men, Schreiber and I approached him and began a conversation of a most tortured sort, showing him our small American flags on the flight jackets, and also a small Chinese Nationalist flag, to which he pointed grinning broadly and putting his thumb up.

Although a few of us had studied some brief Chinese phrases on our trip on the troop ship, we could barely indicate that we were Americans, and that we wanted to get out of the area as fast as possible. By this time sunset was approaching, and our Chinese guard gestured to us to follow him as he wended his way across the paddies, going toward some low foothills to the west in the distance. We watched him like a hawk, and kept a close lookout for any other humans that might suddenly appear. We seemed to be following a foot-path along the embankments and finally into the low hills, well-traveled apparently, but in any case moving us away from our wrecked C-47. We were able to elicit some other information such as the fact that the Japanese were 'over there', about a half mile, pointing to the rear of our trail, and indicating that they were 'very strong'. Secondly, he indicated that the safe direction to go was away from the river, toward the mountains where there were 'more Chinese soldiers'. It appeared that he and his companion, who was still a good distance away, were the outermost perimeter guards in what was a no-man's land between the guerrilla forces in the mountains and the entrenched Japanese in the large village on the river.

After a hurried consultation with the pilots we decided to risk following the soldier to what he indicated was their field headquarters in the foothills. We made another last-minute attempt to destroy the plane but without success. Then we loaded ourselves with ammunition, K-rations, and first-aid kits, but had to leave all of our other cargo behind.

Our guide led us quickly toward the low-lying hills. It was rapidly approaching dusk by now. The crash had taken place at about 1715 and by 1750 we were threading our way through the fields toward a distant cluster of ramshackle clay brick buildings that

comprised another one of the hundreds of little hamlets throughout China that are nameless and consist only of a dozen or so dwellings in the center of extended agricultural development. A group of the residents had gathered alongside of the trail. There was much hand-clapping, thumb-raising and 'hao bu hao"s, but we also noted a few stony-faced individuals in the crowds that we immediately imagined represented Japanese infiltrators or at least sympathizers. As a matter of fact, we were probably right for we learned later that this area was constantly changing hands in terms of military control, and there was a brisk trade going on between the local inhabitants and the Japanese which alternated with whatever dealings might be profitable with the guerrillas.

It might have been 30 or 40 minutes of walking with no other signs of habitation before we finally took a small pathway off the beaten track and approached a couple of small low block buildings that were partially hidden by some bushes and low trees. Our guerrilla guide gestured to enter the buildings, and once our own perimeter guards were in place we went into the larger of the huts, there to be met by another guerrilla who appeared to be an officer. We later determined he had the equivalent rank of a major. There was considerable excitable palaver and sign language between him and us, with he not seeming to understand what we needed to do, namely to get the hell out of there into the safety that we felt the mountains held for us. We had observed that there were perhaps three or four other soldier types lurking about outside the buildings. We tried as best we could to indicate that we wanted to get out of the area and that we needed to reach some forces that were American or allied with our own personnel. It became clear that the major was not about to take us anywhere at the moment, indicating, quite realistically that it was now very close to dark and that there was no place to go in the dark. They insisted on giving us tea and we used the waiting time to snack on some of our K-rations. We were herded into a larger room in an adjacent building and told to get some sleep, and that 'very soon now ' we could look into where we might head. We finally reluctantly agreed to this arrangement, after posting our own guards, and arranging ourselves as comfortably as possible. However, we were quite certain that the Japanese would be sending out patrols to try to locate us and to investigate the crashed plane. We felt the guerrillas were stalling, and the more of this that took place, the more we were certain that we needed to move on.

It was not longer after we had settled down that we began hearing what sounded like a rather heated discussion going on among the guerrilla personnel, emanating from an adjacent small hut, and what with our limited Chinese language understanding, it appeared that the discussion centered about what they were going to do with us--aid our escape into the hills, or turn us over--i.e. 'sell us' to the nearest Japanese detachment, or hold us for ransom from our own forces,--or whatever. We had been informed that there was a very high price on any Air Force or Navy personnel that were captured. We realized that we had better take matters into our own hands, and since we outnumbered their forces about two to one, and we were more heavily armed apparently than they were, that maybe some prompt action was in order. It was fortunate that they were not aware that this was practically the first time many of us had ever held one of these weapons let alone ever fired one.

Accordingly, within about two hours of our arrival at this guerrilla outpost headquarters, we sent a delegation of our armed group and pointedly made it clear that we wanted to leave—‘right now’-and that they needed to guide us out of there, away from the vicinity of our crash and what we presumed must be a Japanese detachment nearby.

It took some urgent persuasion and not a few gestures with our armament aimed at them, to finally get the point across that we meant “Now!”, and not ‘after breakfast and tea’ the next morning. The ‘Major’ apparently designated himself as our guide, and after some more dilatory movements, directed us to follow him up the trail that we had originally been on, we making sure that the direction was *away* from our crash scene. We stumbled after him in the pitch dark in a single file, with our own rear guard on the watch for any potential followers. We had only our own compasses to give us some indication that we were heading in a direction to the west of our crash site. The major had shown us a map that was largely incomprehensible to us other than to have it indicated that the nearest American forces were hundreds of miles away, while the Japanese forces were a scant couple of miles in back of us.

A LONG, LONG, TRAIL A-WINDING

It was probably about two or three AM before we found ourselves well underway, following the trail in a steady climb up into the hills in back of the guerrilla encampment. It was not an easy walk, unfamiliar terrain, the trail made of packed earth between large flat rocks that often served as steps upward, with us staggering along carrying our weapons, our rucksacks, our few K-rations, often falling, cursing, and constantly on the alert for what we feared might be a trap ahead.

LONG SHOT MOUNTAIN ARTILLERY.

Our guide seemed to know where he was going and we recognized that our fate was really in his hands, but we were not going to take any chances with his tricks and we would stop him periodically and try to get him to indicate where we were, particularly in relationship to the enemy. We had been going at what seemed like a very slow pace, endlessly, and finally it began to lighten up in the heavens behind us, the first signs of morning.

We seemed to be climbing up into a low range of mountains along the spine of a ridge that was covered with low scrub- type bushes among outcroppings of rocks. At one point, while resting a moment, we were gazing across a narrow valley to a similar ridge, and at this point our guide pointed to the ridge uttering the single word, “Japanese!” By this we took it to mean that the enemy were holding that particular portion of the mountains, and this was enough to end our brief rest period and we continued our somewhat faster climb up the tortuous, moderately steep trail.

Very soon after that halt we heard a distant booming sound followed by a whining high sound and a definitely and clearly identified blast coming from in back of us by what we estimated to be only about a quarter- mile distance. "My Gawd!", someone shouted, "The bastards are shooting at us!!" No sooner spoken than another repeated whine and blast was heard, again to our rear in what seemed to us at the time to be at closer distance than before. By this time we were scrambling and running as fast as our legs could take us up the trail. It was our surmise later when we reflected back upon what had happened, that the Japanese had either spotted us from the ridge location across the valley, and had transmitted our position to the battery of mountain artillery that were apparently located to our rear at the beginning of our ridge trail, perhaps not far at all from the location of our guerrilla overnight trailside lodging. In any case the word was given to lob shells up the trail at regular intervals of time and space, in the hopes that they could reach us with shrapnel and successfully interrupt our escape. This bombardment continued for some minutes with the closest blasts landing still less than a quarter of a mile behind us. We were making tracks however, that seemed to be keeping the distance from the shell blasts at about the same distance, and also the frequency of the firing seemed to have slowed down somewhat, finally ceasing altogether. We were acutely aware that we were still most vulnerable to further attack, even that there was the possibility of aircraft strafing and we took that opportunity of the cease fire to spread ourselves out on the trail so that there was at least several hundred feet between each of us.

It was probably about 1000 the next day of September 14, 1944, that we began descending from the mountainous ridges along which we had been following a trail of well-worn slabs of stone, going ever higher at times, then dipping down into rugged valleys, but now finally moving into an area that clearly was a base camp for the Chinese military. As it turned out it was an advanced headquarters base for a Nationalist army unit where at least they had some field telephones which were used to call a higher echelon to report that we had been found and were safe in their hands. In turn this higher level of the Nationalist force were going to notify our command at Kunming., We found, some two weeks later, our command did not get that message until five days after it was sent, and had assumed that our plane and all personnel had either crashed or had been captured by the enemy. When they did get the word it was so garbled as to what had actually happened, or where it happened, that they were uncertain as to our fate for some weeks after the fact.

We had had our first stop and rest and a little light sleep at the advanced guard post of the guerrilla unit, but our subsequent urgency to get out of there and into safer areas had required a great deal of effort and exertion, and the toll was beginning to tell on us. By time we reached the headquarters of Major-General Shu Wen Yu, commander of the 27th division, the next day, the 15th, we were a tired, hot, thirsty and hungry lot. There we were greeted with hot water (to drink), red wine, white wine, the latter of which seemed very potent and burned our throats as we drank, as well as some food. Our clothes had been taken, washed and sun dried as we lounged and rested. And then we were told we would be escorted by a military guard to the next echelon of command, and they were told that we were on our way. This trail involved climbing almost straight up

out of the valley through several passes in the mountains. It was a long hike and the men were very tired. Around four in the afternoon we had our first case of total exhaustion, the radio operator-crew chief, who was just unable to go on. Several of us stayed behind with him while the Chinese sent off somewhere for chair bearers, several of who miraculously appeared and carried our man up the steep hills. A few others of us took turns riding one or another of the several chairs. This all slowed our progress considerably but at least we felt we were in safe territory. We arrived at a military police unit in Loh Boo Tong by around 1700, with many of the guys on the verge of collapse. There was an English-speaking officer there who explained to us we would be taken to a place on the Yangtze River where we could be transported further to Chungking. We did sleep very soundly that night. Early the next day, with Lt. Colonel Eu still acting as our guide, we left the police guard unit and continued our trip through the picturesque, mountainous countryside, with many small villages along the way. We rested often, refilling our water bottles along with Halazon tablets or drinking the hot tea that was proffered. It was continuous travel, up one hill, down another, with our guide indicating on several occasions that there were Japanese garrisons 'over there', pointing to an adjacent ridge of hills. However we saw no other signs of them. In the valley areas we made fairly rapid progress, but as the evening began, it appeared that we might be lost for Eu couldn't seem to identify the proper trail that led to our next headquarters destination. It was only after dark, and by aid of lantern and some candles, that we finally stumbled onto a broad expanse of water, the Yangtze River. After a rest in the village of Santoping on the river's edge we continued a short distance downstream to what appeared to be a larger camp where we were picked up by other soldiers and taken to the commanders building. We flopped exhaustedly at this point waiting to be fed, but were offered a chance to bathe in really hot water. Several of us chose the bath and some to sleep, over the food, although we heard later that those who ate found the meal to be delicious. We were to meet the Commanding General in the morning.

The next day, rested but sore, we were taken to meet Lt. General Chih Fung Cheng, Commander of the 30th Army. His secretary, a Lt. Col. Chow Yu Cheng acted as interpreter. He was a very pleasant fellow, a former teacher, educated in a Christian school near Hankow. There was a long conversation in which the General asked many questions. He told us that our plane had been partially damaged by Japanese gunfire and bombs, as had also the guerrilla guard unit. We were then taken to a banquet and served a huge meal of many courses, it seemed close to twenty. After lunch we four officers were taken to the Generals living quarters, where he broke out a can of Hills Brothers coffee which was opened in our honor. We needed this after the many toasts of hot white wine that had been served so generously at the banquet. The General then showed us Chinese paintings, some said to be hundreds of years old. He also showed us his medicine kit which contained a large variety of medicines, including sulfa drugs, some penicillin, diasone, and others, and he promised us he would provide quinine for us and all of the men to control malaria. We in turn demonstrated our weapons, the Tommy-guns, the carbines, and the '45's, all of which we still kept under personal control.

By evening we were rather exhausted with all of the feasting and attention they were pouring on us, but it was far from over for we were then subjected to another huge

banquet at which we met several other high ranking officers, including the Chief of Staff, all Major-Generals. Much tea was served. When one particularly large dish of what appeared to be a whole roasted duck or goose appeared we viewed it with great anticipation and were in the process of plucking pieces of the meat off the side of the bird, only to discover that this bird was truly cooked 'in the whole,' including the 'innards'. I noted that many of us drank several large gulps of the hot white wine quickly on this discovery. The General also delivered at dinner, as promised, the quinine, 500 tabs in a large bottle.

There was then entertainment of Chinese opera, interpreted for us by Colonel Chow, and intermittently throughout the next four or five hours large contingents of Chinese soldiers would come in to also watch the program, with great enthusiasm and applause and cheers both for us and for the actors.

I recorded the program in notes as follows: "The Magician Fights with Robbers-which includes much acrobatics, and sham-fighting with sticks and swords; Second, "Try The Wife's Faith', which turned out to be a sex-play. A man returns home after 18 years in the army and wants to know if the wife is faithful to him. So he disguises himself and tries to 'make' the wife. He indicates that he will kill the wife if she is unfaithful. She seems interested at times but finally resists him and he is very happy. The wife is true! Number three, (and these were each quite long shows), seemed pretty vague to us and being more than surfeited with wine, tea, and sunflower seeds, The plot was a "Plan to Capture the City by Cheating", and there was the death of Mu Shu. Lastly, finally, "Ma Choo and Cheng Feh Fight in the Night", which meant much more acrobatics, fast and agile movements, all in beautiful costumes.

Then at last to bed. The operas had lasted four to five hours!

The next day which was, by my notes, the 17th of September when we started the whole gang on 10 grains of quinine after a meal, as prophylactic for malaria. The General was not at lunch this time but we met several more which we were told now included *all* of the generals in the 30th Army. There was more news of the plane. The Japanese had been attacking the area of the crash constantly with artillery fire and plane strafing. The Chinese claimed to be defending the area with all that they had. We had a mutual photo session with the General's secretary taking pictures of us and we of them. He had a very nice Contax 35mm camera. We were then visited by the mayor of Santoping and all of his council who had traveled all the way up from the river to greet us. There were many speeches of praise of our cooperation with them in fighting the enemy. They presented us with a large red silk flag that had the names of many prominent officials written in script on it. We were invited to a reception to be given in our honor which we accepted with pleasure, but then we were told that a boat from Chungking would be coming soon, though no details were given as to when this might happen.

The Rescue of the Duffel Bags

It was shortly before evening when we were called to witness a most unusual sight. A long line of coolies were coming into camp, there must have been twenty or more, each carrying slung at the ends of their yo-yo poles the luggage that we had left so hastily in the crashed plane, It was an amazing sight, our duffel bags, and many of the numerous pieces of our luggage, all apparently intact and still identifiable by each of us with our name tags still attached. We each took our duffel to our quarters and opened them up to find out what may or may not have survived the long trip. Everything I had put into my bag was still there, even the bottle of Black Label Johnnie Walker Scotch, that my wife had given to me before we left Norfolk on the long train ride to San Pedro. There was one exception- my 'dress blues' uniform was gone! Where? How? When? Or even Why?? I often speculated in later months, which of the guerrilla soldiers was resplendently wearing my regulation Navy Blues, complete with Medical Corps insignia and my brand new Full Lieutenant stripes, just acquired. Does it still grace the crude closet of some proud guerrilla's home?? The Chinese had rescued all of this despite the incessant artillery and strafing fire that the Japanese had dumped on the crash scene.

The evening had in store for us *another* banquet, and *more* opera, which included 1. "Not Recognize Father in the Night at Loo Hu Kung", which all resulted in another fight. 2. "The Devil Plays with the Wife and Husband at Wo Hu Can" which was mighty confusing for all because the devil imitated both people, and a lawyer had difficulty straightening it all out. 3. "Yang Yuan Choa Kills his Son", or at least suggests it in that his son married the daughter of his enemy; the son and daughter shove the old man off and leave together. 4. "Wu Han Kills His Wife"; this seemed to be a case of mother domination, for Wu's mother insists that he kill his wife because her father killed his father. So he dutifully goes about this but doesn't like the idea. After many attempts and much weeping he tells his wife what he has to do--so she kills herself instead. Then when he takes the wife's head back to the mother to show he has done the deed, the mother, before seeing the head, says, 'never mind-you can forgive her!' Too late! So when mother finds this out, she hangs herself. The poor fellow is so angry about all of this he straps the head to his belt and the body of his mother to his back and he goes out to fight the father-in-law. Some fight!

To bed, finally, but to a very restless night for we were awakened by loud cries of anguish and much moaning and groaning. Unfortunately someone next door had just died. There seem to have been many deaths around here, mostly from malaria especially in the civilian population. The army seemed to be in better shape. We were taking all precautions, using nets and taking quinine when it was available.

On September 18th we are taken to the village of Santoping for the reception which turns out to be a most eventful day. We were met at the edge of the village by the Major General who is the political leader of the area, and by the president (Mayor?), and many other officials. We walked part way and were ferried in sampans over to the main part of the village. At the foot of the large stone stairs that led up from the river, we were met by another delegation to greet us, plus thousands of civilians lined up on each side,

waving both U.S. and Chinese Nationalist flags, with Boy and Girl Scouts, and soldiers at attention, all waving and clapping. Then two little girls presented us each with bouquets of flowers. All of this accompanied by many curious glances as we marched all the way through the village. Outside the local bank there were banners saying, 'Down with the Axis Aggressors'. We were all asked to sign the large silk flag as we entered the building. We had by this time gotten the impression that somehow or other we, and we alone, *must* have won the war, and we were being accorded veritable heroes' honors. More banners inside declared, "Long Live the Republic of China", and "Long Live the U.S.", all surrounding large pictures of Sun Yat Sen, Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin, and Chiang, with their respective national flags. We four officers were seated at the speaker's table, with an interpreter (a local customs official). Our men and other officials were arraigned on each side of the room. We were amazed, confused, and bewildered by this extravagant show.

The following is the program and notes on each event as I recorded them in my on-going diary:

1. Short introductory remarks
2. The Chinese National Anthem-sung by all assembled.
3. The Star Spangled Banner-as sung by us at their request
4. Speech by the Chairman-to the effect that they were honored to have the brave U.S. soldiers and sailors with them. That together, with the great resources of the U.S. and the great leadership of men like Roosevelt, Churchill and Chiang (no mention of Stalin at all), the United Nations could soon defeat the common enemy, and so on.
5. Presentation of flags-two to the Air Force and two to the Navy, beautiful silk flags with the signatures of all of the officials.
6. Girl Scout student speech--to the effect that we are very brave to have come such a long distance to aid China, and China is grateful, and they want us to know they wish us lots of luck.

They ask at this point that one of us make a speech, much to our consternation. I am finally chosen, reluctantly, to speak for us:

7. Dr. Neighbor gives a short reply to the effect that we are extremely honored by this magnificent display, we are filled with emotion at the honors showered upon us, and we are grateful to the utmost at their saving our lives and helping us to escape, and that together with the great Chinese Republic we will soon defeat the common enemy, etc. etc.
8. Students then sing two songs: the Chinese Air Force Song, and "Up to the Sky", also about the Air Force.

We then adjourned to the outside to rest, with much picture taking, more talking with the local officials in charge of the local canton, and another Major-General who was the local political representative.

The banquet, again consisted of dozens of courses of strange (to us) food, all of it very good-tasting, with many kinds of meat, beef, pork, chicken, eggs and vegetables of

all sorts, cooked in a variety of ways, and, of course the ever-present hot white wine with which they toasted us every few minutes with shouts of "Gom Bei". The frequent toasting produced rapid and near disastrous results, with many of us getting 'bombed' before the meal was any where near over. We eventually finished up the meal and began strolling, back through the village, stopping at the behest of the various officials at small shops where they bought souvenirs, while the rest of us staggered along to the pier at riverside. They had to pour us onto the sampan that took us to the headquarters, loaded now with baskets of fruit and pastries. It was near 1800 before we reached our quarters, and most of us hit the sack early. It had been a long and exciting day.

The next day was the 19th of September, my fourth wedding anniversary, and as I awoke around 0630 I couldn't help but ponder what the twists of fate had played with my life up to this point. Here I was gazing at a picture of my wife that I had carried in my duffel bag, through all of these adventures, a half a world from where she was, with no remote way of letting her know I was even alive, or of what had happened to me. It was weeks later when she finally heard from me and at that it was only by means of letter I had written while still in India. She later told me it was another very long period of six weeks before she heard again. She had puzzled about the strange allusions in the letter that never could mention any details as to what my adventures had involved. We had been de-briefed after our return to Kunming and warned by Naval Intelligence officers that we were 'to *never* indicate in any way, by name or indirection, where or how we had crashed or how we escaped.' This was to apply to a time frame that included even after the *end* of the war!

Our general exhaustion was indicated by the fact that most of us had slept the clock around for twelve and a half hours, despite the fact that the funeral that had been going on for several days and was still resounding throughout the whole night with the clashing of cymbals and bells and drums.

By noon that day we were being inveigled into a basketball game against a local team from Santoping, to be held at 1500 complete with game officials and regular rules and regulations. Our boys made a pretty good showing despite their fatigue and no practice. We were observed by a large contingent of soldiers and kids, as China beat the U.S., 46 to 36.

That evening one of our enlisted men developed severe epigastric pain and some nausea and vomiting. I could detect little localization or rebound tenderness and I simply prayed that it wouldn't be another case of appendicitis. I put him on nothing by mouth and tried some hot compresses over the area and complete bed rest.

By the next A.M., the 20th, the young man's belly had begun to clear up and he felt a lot better. To my relief it was apparently not a hot appendix, but more likely the result of the over-indulgence of food and liquor over the previous several days.

We were supposed to leave this camp by 1400 but it was close to 1500 before we finally got underway, by sedan chair, being carried by two stalwart coolies, including all

of our newfound luggage. We were to go up-river a total of about twelve miles where a river steamer was to pick us up. We walked part way, were carried part way, taking all the rest of the day and well into the night before we finally reach the steamer. Our luggage was already there, and they quartered us in the salon of the steamer, a large boat of up to two or three hundred tons. A P-40 pilot, a Lt. Daggett, who had been downed about three weeks before behind Japanese lines, and had also walked out, joined us. He seemed like a very nice guy but was rather mum about his adventures.

On the 21st about 0300 we took off, with Colonel Chow bidding us a nearly tearful farewell. The steamer went upstream against heavy currents, tying up at a small village in the depths of a very deep and sheer-walled canyon. We were to stay there until late afternoon before proceeding. We were invited to dinner with the General who it turns out was also on his way to Chungking, along with his wife and two other generals from the 10th Army Group and the 94th Army. Along with the Master of the ship we were served in European style without nearly as much lifting of cups in toasting as before, Thank God! We also met a Major Farberg who came down from the hills to see us. He and five other Americans were training a battalion of Chinese artillery at a nearby mountain camp.

It was 1530 before we got underway again, proceeding up stream through the very narrow gorges surrounded on all sides with beautiful brush covered hills. It was fascinating to watch the techniques for the sampans that were also trying to make their way up stream. They were being towed by hand, - dozens of hands-, coolies dressed in ragged short-shorts, with a typical conical straw hat on their head, grasping a large rope sling in the form of a loop, that was over one shoulder and under the other, with the slings attached to what appeared to be a large thick rope extending as much as a hundred yards behind them attached to the prow of a sampan. These were of varying size ranging from 20 to 30 feet or in some cases as long as 50 or 60 feet, often with a crude stubby mast from which hung a slatternly - appearing square sail, canted to either port or starboard, trying to catch whatever slight breeze that might be coming upriver. The towing coolies often with nothing on their feet except flat thongs, were leaning so far forward in their constant rhythmical stride, and moving barely a short step at a time, with the trunks of their bodies nearly parallel to the earth. One could hear their mid-pitched chant as they strained and tugged against the current that swept by them only a matter of eight or ten feet away, from the very narrow rock-hewn path that had been carved out of the very face of the canyon wall. In places it appeared to be no more than a foot or two in width. The sampan was manned by a very few men, sometimes, it appeared, there were women or relatively young children aboard, with one or more of the men handling a very large wooden tiller, while another one or two were handling the sail or shore lines or using long poles to push the craft away from the looming banks. It was a painful sight and seemed so excruciatingly difficult that one could not help but wonder how long could these tow-hands survive without collapsing in utter fatigue or drop dead or fall into the on-rushing river.

These narrow gorges of the Yangtze were apparently famous for their grandeur and represented one of the most dangerous stretches of this mighty river. The thought frequently crossed our minds as to what would happen if this beat-up rusty wreck of a

boat that we were on finally blew it's last stack and became a victim of the five or six knot current that swept remorsefully through the rocky straits. We had seen the skeletal remains of a few sampans that had not made it, and had ended up on some rock-strewn promontory downstream.

By around 1700 we arrived at Patung where to our consternation we were again greeted by another mammoth demonstration. Hundreds of Boy and Girl Scouts, all of the city officials, and thousands of civilians were lining the edges of the pier area, and the adjacent streets that led to the river's edge. There was much cheering and hand clapping as we climbed the steep hill that led into the city, with endless chains of firecrackers set off as we marched along for more than a mile through town. The roar and general noise was overwhelming. We were again set up with a huge banquet (though we had just eaten a meal aboard the boat!) but they did allow us to rest for awhile before facing the multi-course meal. More speeches, more food, more wine, then we were shown to our solid board beds with the admonition to get a rest for we would be leaving early in the morning.

It was the 22d of September, 0500, and we were up and ready to go, but we must have breakfast first. It was 0715 before we were again on our way, this time by jeep, which carried three officers and one Chinese general (they were everywhere). Then there was a truck carrying two more officers and the rest of our Navy crew plus the baggage. Flight Officer Jones and I rode the truck. The road again was rugged, steeply climbing, going through many hills, on a very narrow track with room for only one car, no room to pass but to follow wherever the road leads, with precipitous cliffs on either side. We occasionally came upon another broken down truck, usually abandoned at roadside. We stopped frequently to clean out the carburetor. It was said that the fuel we burned was the white wine that we had been drinking at these banquets. I believed this. The climb was slow and treacherous, but our driver seemed better than most and took some care and interest in surviving this trip himself. Hairpin turns were frequent and often so sharp that we had to edge ourselves around them by much backing and filling. At every opportunity whenever there was a chance he would turn the engine off and coast down the slight or steep hill, all in order to save fuel.

Around 1430 we stopped at a small village for some food, the usual conglomerate of vegetables and perhaps a stirred-in egg, never any meat. We did not waste any time, but would keep driving on and on through the dust, up and down, never seeming to end anywhere, through hamlets and farm areas, until it began to become dusk. We often passed many troops slogging along in either direction, only about one in ten of them appearing to be armed at all.

Fortunately the truck had good lights that actually worked but it was long after dark, about twelve hours after our start that we arrived at Enehi, an American airfield, a P-40 advanced strip, nestled in a valley in the midst of the mountains. How good it was to get back to some semblance of American living. We were welcomed there with good quarters, good food, and hot water showers.

The next day, the 23d, after a great night's rest we just loafed around most of the day, having been informed that word had been sent to Chungking about us, and that a plane was to be sent to pick us up. What joyful news! A delegation from the local village near the base came over to greet us and again presented us with cakes, wine and only a few speeches, all short and snappy, thank goodness. In classical military style it was going to be a case of watch and wait for 'the word' as to when we were to leave.

The next day was a Sunday, the 24th, -a day of rest for us, but not for the crew at the base. Their fighter planes were buzzing in and out almost continuously, while we enjoyed the rest and the good chow. I had the opportunity during these hours to catch up with my notes, and to figure out where I was going to stash them before we got back to our home base, knowing full well that I was breaking every commandment in the book as far as military secrecy was concerned. As I've already mentioned we were very strictly restricted at our de-briefing in ever revealing details of our adventures, and I respected those orders--but I did have my personal notes hidden from all scrutiny, and never showed them to anyone until many years had passed after the war was over.

On the 24th around noon word came down to us that a plane was here and available to take us out. This brought about a great deal of scurrying around in preparation to leave. Our plane was to be a C-46, a larger and heavier transport type plane than our poor crashed C-47. This fighter field was not designed for such aircraft, and as we loaded ourselves on the plane we found it to be totally filled with a large assortment of Chinese civilians, presumably officials, quite a few officer-types, but none of our own Air Force crew nor the people we had picked up along the way who were escapees also. They were apparently scheduled for other flight plans. We squeezed ourselves into whatever available space remained, mainly some bucket benches and on the deck between large bundles of baggage, baskets, and other assorted parcels. Their crew chief urged us to 'make yourselves comfortable'. We taxied to the absolute farthest end of the field where we sat for some time with blocks under our wheels as they revved engines up to almost full force before we finally began moving all too slowly down the field.

It would be no exaggeration to state that as far as our gang was concerned we were a very nervous bunch. We were now down to our original eleven enlisted men, and Ensign Schreiber and myself as officers. I gazed out the gun-ports of the windows, noting that we were not gaining as much speed as one might expect, but then saying to myself that with such a load, an excess I was sure, it was no wonder we were slow.

The plane charged down the field, and past the ramshackle buildings that represented the field command post and communication and operations center, with the end of the field in sight, marked by a low wooden rail fence across the end of the tarmac. As we were later told by one of the pilots, as the plane approached the end, he recognized that we did not yet have enough ground speed to lift off and become airborne. His only alternative was to abort and plow through the fence, or, as he so eloquently put it, "Jump the sonofabitch and sweat blood", hoping to gain air speed, and this is exactly what he did. The plane lurched into the air, bounced on the other side, and with the engines roaring at full throttle, laboriously flew from the bounce in as steep a climb as he could

manage over the brush, rice paddies, and low trees, barely skirting the narrow valley hills that closed in the air base to the south. Our cheers of relief filled the cabin, much to the amusement of most of the other passengers who seemed to stoically accept that this was just another death-defying facet of their lives, courtesy U.S. Air Force.

We settled ourselves as best we could in our cramped locations, flying steadily now at a reasonably safe altitude, finally after an hour or so finally reaching another larger base at Liangshan. We landed and were immediately transferred to a C47, the same type in which we had started weeks before. This leg took us back to Kunming and the same field we had left a fortnight before.

We were bunked together in another several-storied mud and bamboo building, fed and allowed to rest, but individually interviewed and de-briefed by several Air Force and Navy intelligence officers. It was at this time we were told that we were to *never* talk about or reveal any details of our trip, its origins, its destination, and above all, where we had crashed or how we had gotten out. When I raised the question of “Never??”, the officer in charge said in a very stern voice, “We mean ‘Never’, when we say that, even *after* the war is over!!” ‘Wow!’, tough talk, which at the time seemed to be somewhat ridiculous in view of the fact the Japanese had an absolute fix on the location of our crash, and most certainly knew all about us. And one of them might even be wearing my dress blues! Be that as it may, I did in fact restrain myself from discussing this information except for telling some of the Naval Attachés’ command that later interviewed me when I joined their staff in Chungking. They had already heard about our adventures, as it turned out

CHINA BRANCH-BURMA ROAD

It must have been about a week after our de-briefing and a relatively lazy period of time in the transient personnel quarters in Kunming when new orders were issued for me to report to the U.S. Embassy, Office of the Naval Attaché, in Chungking. “Transportation will be provided”, it was stated, almost as an afterthought, it seemed. I was relieved but again puzzled as to why it was to be another one of those ambiguous assignments, unexplained by anyone, just told “ here are the orders, don’t lose them or burn them up this time!!”. The rest of our crew from the crashed plane had been dissipated into the general Navy personnel roster, six of the eleven enlisted were briefly hospitalized for check ups, and treated for the “clap”, which I thought ironically was one of those ‘leave it to a sailor to find a piece of tail even when he’s on the run from the enemy’. I never could figure where they found the time or the opportunity for this form of recreation. I later heard that a couple of the guys also were treated for active malaria, despite the quinine we had ingested on our way out. Atabrine was the treatment of choice at this point. Aside from some mild diarrhea that several of us endured we came out of this adventure remarkably free of serious damage of any sort.

My ‘transportation’ was to be a ‘six-by’ truck, this time Navy issue, driven by two rated men plus a load of boxes and cartons of various sizes, and our gear. It took us

about three days to negotiate the narrow and extremely winding road that was the Chinese extension of the famous Burma Road. As roads went in China it was in pretty good condition, graveled, few ruts or pot-holes, but slow as hell to get over in that it wound back and forth in innumerable switch-backs through a varied terrain that included many hills and valleys, and not a few rickety bridges that crossed moderate sized streams. We often held our breath as we slowly crawled across these structures, for they looked (and were), very flimsy, to say the least. We seldom met any other traffic, but passed by a number of worn out and abandoned trucks that clearly hadn't made it. Many were being worked on by their drivers, always Chinese uniformed men, who were trying to restore some life to these usually alcohol fueled vehicles. We seldom saw any armed forces, which was a kind of relief in that we were a bit on the sensitive side as to what were regulars in their army, and what were 'irregulars', i.e. guerrilla, or just 'civilian' help. We had the usual K- or C-rations plus canteens for water, and we would frequently stop by some roadside food stand or try a small food outlet in one of the tiny villages along the way. We knew enough to eat only well heated food, or to fill our canteens only with hot tea or hot water.

At one point in our trip we came upon much heavier traffic, mostly on foot, going in our same direction begging for rides or even attempting to hop into the covered bed of the truck, only to be chased away by the show of our evident armament. Finally off to our left in the distance we saw what appeared to be a group of buildings surrounded on all sides by a very large wall with what were apparently parapets and an occasional tower, upon which there were flying many highly colored pennants and flags. The streams of pedestrians and the sprinkling of carts, hand drawn or by scrawny horses, were turning into this walled city having come from both the south and the north, and going through a large semi-gated entryway into a very crowded street scene of thousands of Chinese civilians, men, women and children, milling about, carrying their wares or their possessions, often calling or crying out the name of the particular item they wanted to sell or trade. The cacophony of sound was almost overwhelming, and although we were barely able to squeeze our large truck through the gate, it took some careful and slow maneuvering to finally find a place we could park it in front of what seemed to be a much larger eating establishment. There were the usual curious throngs of people, mostly kids, who followed us and jabbered at us constantly, offering food or items for sale. There were very few signs of any of the military around, and no one at all made any attempt to speak to us in English.

We did get a very fine meal there after much gesticulating and the universal sign language of hand to mouth and rubbing of belly to indicate our wish for food. It was interesting to us to find that the food that we were finally served was more like the typical Chinese restaurant food that we had all had back in the States. Thus far at least none of us had found that kind of food in any of our forays into local cuisine on the road or in the villages. I never did find out what the name of this small city was, but it was evident that it was a festival day for them and they were all living it up for all they were worth. Various entertainers were on the street, juggling, or doing tricks, or chanting or playing of a variety of flutes and whistles or even a stringed instrument of sorts. We were sorry to have to leave this festive scene, and it was one of only a very few that I ever saw that

was a truly walled town. But 'on our way' we had to go, and we were waved good-by, and given the usual thumbs-up and 'ding hao' ('very good!') sign over and over.

Our fuel was carried in the typical 'jerry-cans' that we guarded zealously all the way up. The scenery in places was grand and awesome, with the roads corkscrewing up and down the hills, necessitating in many instances more backing and filling techniques of getting around the corners. There was one concrete bridge across a very deep canyon that must have been engineered by really expert builders, perhaps even by our own military for all we knew. That bridge was guarded by outposts at each end where there were soldiers armed with what appeared to be heavier machine guns of a caliber much like those that were fired at us in our attempted landing during our flight. They were intended, I suppose, for use against low flying enemy aircraft. They were apparently indifferent to us and signaled us to pass without further incident as we climbed up and up again into the hills surrounding.

The road and the rest of the trip seemed to blur into a repeated pattern of u-curves and steep hills, with the terrain tilled into plots, mainly by women and children in the backbreaking position of weeding or hoeing endeavor to scratch out a product. There were occasional bullock-type cattle pulling or plowing with a small crude plow, or sometimes just grazing on these small farms. People often waved but many just stared at us without apparently much more than a passing interest for we gathered that on occasion there were much longer caravans of military trucks going this same route although we saw none this trip.

Our trip finally ended as we came to the major city of Chungking spread out in a seemingly haphazard pattern of mainly low buildings over a quite hilly promontory of land that was bounded on each side by the union of two very large rivers, one the Yangtze, with which we were already acquainted, and the other the Jiang. It took forever for our truck to make its way through the narrow streets and alleys that led to the Naval Attachés 'go-down' ('living quarters') on a quieter and more secluded hill on the outskirts of the city. There I was greeted in English by an elderly Chinese man who appeared to be the major-domo of the home, who took me to a small but clean room that was to be my quarters. I was told the mealtime would be at six-thirty, and was put through the usual red tape of having my orders examined, and re-typed, and by supper-time I had met several of the Attachés' staff of fellow officers. Captain Jarrett, a large handsome man, was the Naval Attaché to the U.S Embassy, and greeted me warmly. He briefed me succinctly as to my assignment, which was to replace Dr. Harrington who had been on the Embassy staff in Chungking for a long time and was due for relief to go home very soon. I was to have my own medical office and equipment not far from the Embassy itself, and would be shown 'the ropes' by two Pharmacist mates, one a Chief and the other a First-Class rating. These two men were invaluable to me in that they had been in Chungking a long time, and knew the city and the people who would be involved at the clinic that I was to run. They also, as it turned out, also knew all of the gossip that was endemic to the Embassy scene, and within a matter of a few days had enlightened me as to 'who was who, and what was what'. Dr. Harrington was flown out within a day or so of my arrival, and I soon learned that among those who were shedding a tear or two

about his departure was no less than Madame Chiang herself, the well-known wife of the Generalissimo. From what I could gather from the gossip line she had become almost the only patient whom the doctor was expected to care for and he apparently spent a great deal of time and no little effort, physical as well as emotional, in taking care of her 'needs'. I was told however, that this would no longer be necessary in terms of my services, for 'Madame' was about to take off for the States also for specialized treatment of her long standing dermatological condition. I never did meet her or the Generalissimo. I can't say I was sorry, for they were apparently very hard people to please no matter what the circumstances.

There was a constant ebb and flow of dignitaries to and from the Embassy, and there were numerous social obligations to be fulfilled and, as I was quietly informed, I was expected to attend most of these events, and told 'to keep your ears open and your mouth shut' and to be prepared to inform one or the other of the Attachés personal staff of any information at all that might seem the least bit significant, including the 'gossip' line. I only later recognized that this too was a primary function of personnel at the Embassy, and we were regularly de-briefed or reminded that there were certain people to whom we were to pay special attention in terms of listening to what they had to say.

The 'party scene' soon became a routine that involved all of us, and one of the first things the staff had to do was find me a 'dress blues' uniform for those occasions that required more formality. In that my own set of blues were probably adorning the body of some guerrilla soldier or even a Japanese raider, I had to be outfitted with the uniform of one of the staff who was approximately my size, complete with ribbons and stripes, but also with the line-officers designation of a 'star' on the sleeve. Totally not according to regulations, but 'who will know or care, doctor, just don't blow your cover', I was admonished.

The event of the year was soon to occur, according to the staff, for we were to host a cocktail party for no less than Mao Tse Tung and Chou En Lai to meet with General Albert Wedemeyer, the Ambassador-at-Large, representing the President of the United States. By this time I had endured a number of pre-lunch cocktail parties that often began around 1130 AM and lasted well into the early afternoon when I was expected to hold my daily clinic. Fortunately, my staff were well trained in these matters and would usually take care of the routine office calls and bed me down on the back room single cot until I could muster up enough energy from all of the 'gom bei-ing' ('bottoms-up' toasting), and multiple courses of rich food that always accompanied these events.

OUT OF UNIFORM, DOCTOR!!

I had made myself as inconspicuous as possible at this particular party for I didn't want to get involved with the political implications that were evidently going to be inherent in this meeting of the two most powerful Communist leaders of China with the President's representative. There may have been as many as thirty or forty guests at this shindig. I had managed to meet and bow respectfully to the guests of honor, but General

Wedemeyer had eluded this routine. While I was just standing by nursing a drink more or less by myself, suddenly Lieutenant Campbell, one of our regular staff, and an 'Old-China-Hand'. (In the vernacular-someone who had lived and / or worked in China for many years prior to the war) came up to me with a tall and imposing looking Army general, Ambassador Wedemeyer himself!! Campbell introduced me to the General with the remark, "This is our new doctor, Sir,--the one who had the adventure behind the lines and escaped, --the one I was telling you about." The General shook my hand warmly and said something to the effect that he'd heard of our crash and the subsequent flight to safety. I was momentarily at a loss to know what to say, after all I had been sworn to secrecy and here it was all laid out at a cocktail party. I managed to finally figure that if the President's Ambassador-at-Large already knew about the event that it must be O.K. to talk about it, at least with him. I chatted somewhat aimlessly for a moment, but then just as suddenly, the General grasped my arm and pointing to the line officer's star on the sleeve, said with a twinkle in his eye, "You are out of uniform, Doctor!" I gulped, and Lt. Campbell said laughingly, "We had to outfit him with another uniform for this occasion, Sir. His gear was lost in the plane crash." The General smiled and noted that he had been aware there was something different about my attire, wished me luck with my new assignment, saying, "Stay away from those damn airplanes", and wandered off to the rest of the guests.

I was relieved that the protocol of proper dress was not going to be followed at least for the moment, and spent the remaining moments at the party closely watching the circling and weaving about that the various officials were going through to gather information or get to talk to some of the Communist Chinese staff that were in attendance with the Generals Mao and Chou. Both of these men struck me as very strong and commanding personalities, indeed. Their mere presence seemed to have an aura of dignity and authority and self-security about them that clearly indicated their power and prestige in these circles, and, as much later circumstances in the post-war history of China showed, they represented very clearly the forces within China that were to guide her destiny for many years.

I was also amazed to meet among the many guests a very striking woman, slender, very blonde, dressed most lavishly, speaking English but with a strong Russian accent. She was the White Russian, former ballerina that I had heard about through the gossip chain who was reputed to be at the center of intrigue in Chungking, some going so far as to say that she was known to be a spy. I never did find out how valid this gossip was, but for sure she was as much a center of wandering eyes (and probably a few wandering fantasies) as were the Communist leaders.

My position at the Embassy carried with it a reputation of considerable weight as having the knowledge and prestige of the whole Naval Department of Medicine in back of me. As such I was frequently visited by many members of the local officialdom, or some of their family members, for care or evaluation or treatment. One family that I inherited from Dr. Harrington was that of the former Mayor of Hanchow, now residing in Chungking as a refugee, but apparently holding down an official position with the Nationalist government. One of his daughters, 'Rose', her English name, was a very

Erma, A Shining Light

By Lee Alverson

*I first met Erma sometime in the mid 1980's
Perhaps in Seattle at my first SACC annual meeting;
I think she was helping in behind the bar
Pouring drinks and passing along friendly greetings.*

*She had a smile that made you feel great inside;
It was a beacon that helped find the way
For shipmates that had drifted apart
Back to a friendly shore and familiar bay.*

*She had a quick and very funny wit
That turned depression into light,
And her conversation lifted your spirit,
Allowing it to soar into harmonious flight.*

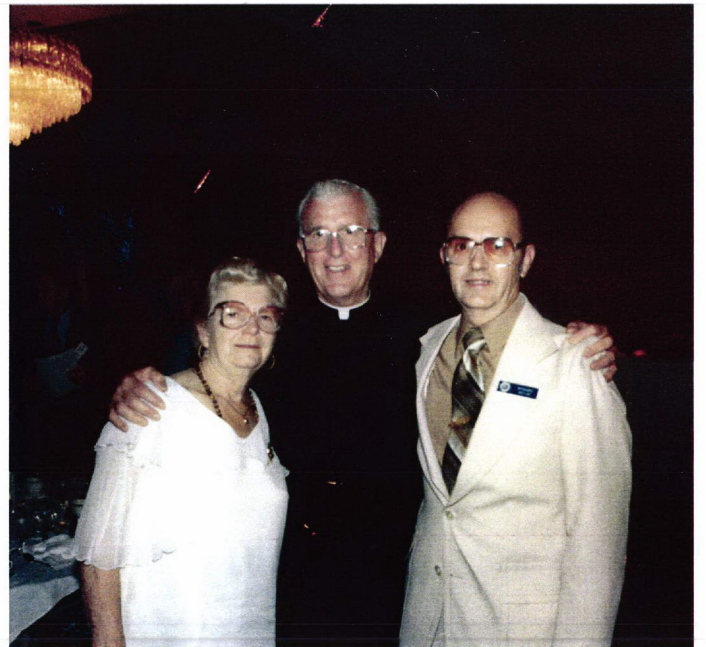
*Somehow she seemed to sense our moods
In all of its shades from black to white;
She had an intrinsic charm and laughter
Transferring wrong into what was right.*

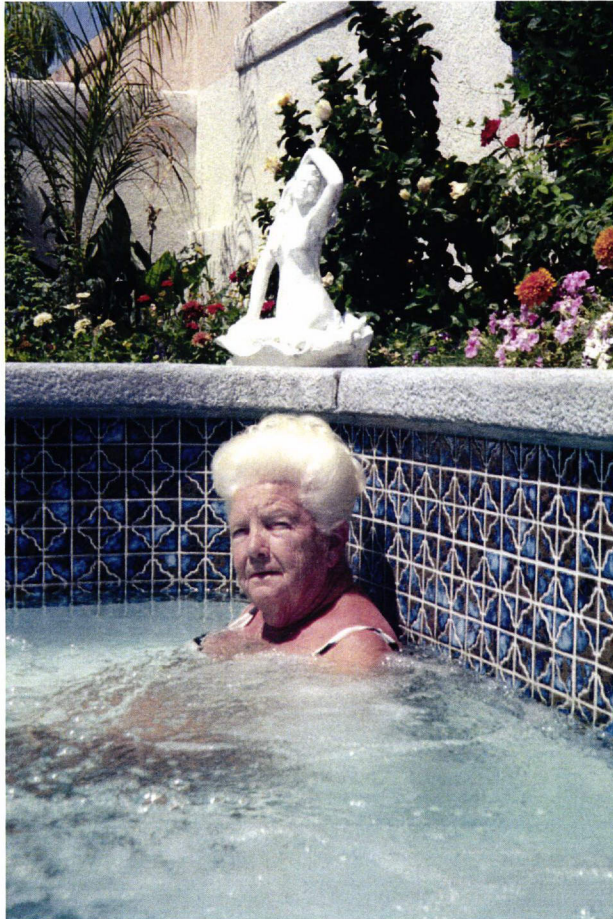
*All of SACC has been saddened by her death
Because it is her loss we will have to face;
But I have no doubts that up in heaven
A glorious celebration has already taken place.*

*You may feel a sense of real loss
As the next SACC meeting rolls around,
But her spirit will always be there;
She will be with us in Philadelphia town.*

Erma with SACO Friends

- T = Paul & Martha Casamajor – Erma
Where or when?
- M = Erma & Buck Dormer = Pat Chin
Billie Miles, Hollis & Erma
Cherry Hill, NJ 1976
- B = Erma is escorted by Willie Baker
(Perhaps San Diego 1980?)
Erma, Father Phil Shannon, Richard
San Diego, CA 1980





At Our Desert Home

L: What The Hell flies at our front gate.

In the spa at age 90.

About a year later she was no longer able to negotiate the steps account of her hip. It was a bitter disappointment for both of us as she so enjoyed the water and I missed her company in the pool. No fun to just sit out there in the desert heat and not enjoy the water.



**Her Bedroom
March 1997**



Clockwise top L:

Lake Louise, Banff Nat'l Park Canada July 1987 on trip with Paul & Martha Casamajor.

Huge hibiscus blossom at our cousin's home - Dandridge, TN about 1996

Richard & "Mama" Erma at reception prior to farewell banquet in Taipei, Taiwan 1995.

Erma holds baby sandpiper along Oregon Coast about 1977-78.

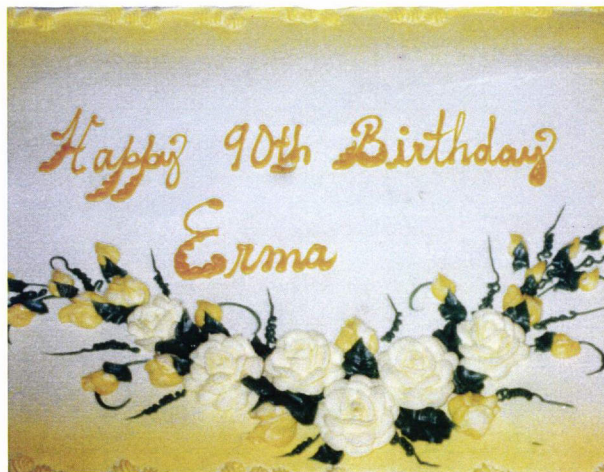




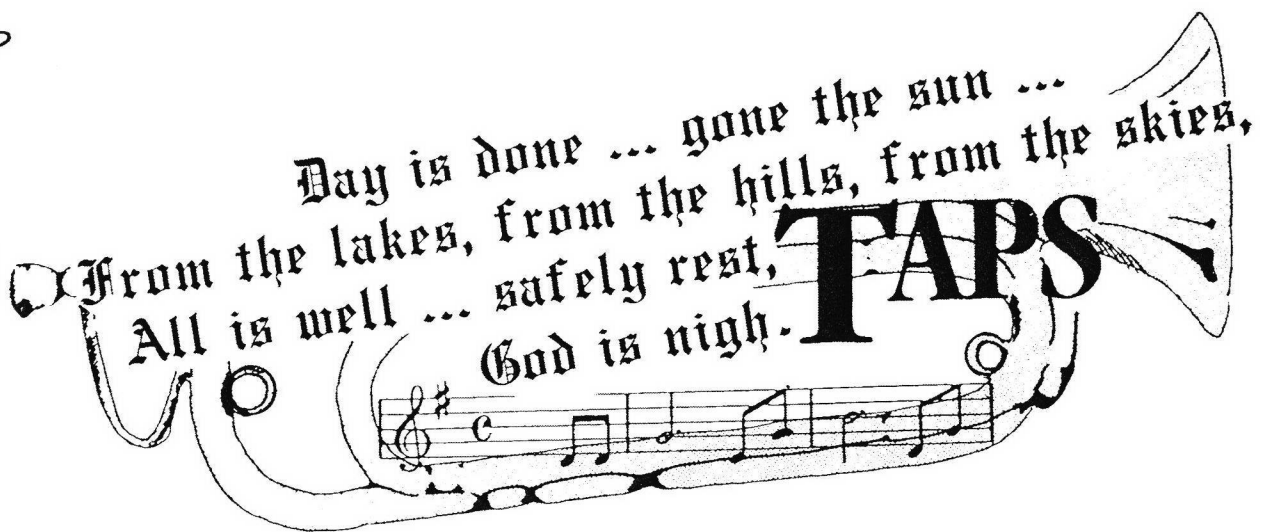
Lt. Gen Hu Cha-chi greets "Mama" Erma at the farewell banquet in Taipei 1995. (She was always affectionately known as "Mama" Erma by our Chinese friends.) She's wearing her rhinestone coolie pin which she never failed to wear at every SACO banquet.



Enjoying Cancun, Mexico 1981



Trying to smile away the tears from utter shock & complete surprise at her 90th birthday party I gave in Appleton, Wisconsin 1999



RUTH ELINORE MAYER DORMER



“Ellie” & “Buck”

(Taken a few years ago, but as most of us remember Ellie)

Ruth Elinore Mayer Dormer, 84, passed away Saturday, January 18, the daughter of the late Daisy Richards Mayer and J. Ross Mayer. One of the more beautiful young ladies of her time, Elinore reigned as a princess of the UNC, Chapel Hill, Homecoming Court in 1941, where she graduated with a BA in English. Shortly thereafter, she joined the U.S. Navy where, as an Ensign, she was part of the war effort as an intelligence code breaker, helping break the German and Japanese codes. She and her family retired to

Sanibel Island, FL in 1962. There she became a historian of Sanibel, founded the Island Museum and the Sanibel Historical Society. She wrote a definitive work of the history of Southwest Florida in the book, *“The Seashell Islands: A History of Sanibel and Captiva.”*

She is survived by her husband, Robert L. Dormer, Seneca, SC, formerly of Sanibel Island, FL, three sons, Robert R. Dormer and his wife, Cynthia, of Denver, CO; J. Michael Dormer and his fiancée, Cynthia Easter, of Cashiers, NC; and Patrick R. Dormer of Ft. Myers; grandson, Sean M. and Ross Dormer of Denver, CO; and a brother, Sherwin Mayer of Sarasota, FL.

A memorial service was held Sunday, February 16, 2003, which would have been Ellie’s 85th birthday, at St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church, 2304 Periwinkle Way, Sanibel Island, FL. The memorial service and interment of her ashes took place after the 10 A.M. Eucharist service followed by a simple reception.

In lieu of flowers, the family requested donations be made to the City of Sanibel Historical Fund, 800 Dunlop Road, Sanibel, FL 33957. Please specify that this is for the *Elinore Dormer Memorial Fund.*

????!***

SAMUEL ZITTER

Samuel Zitter, 80, died Sunday, March 9, at home.

Born in Manhattan, he lived in Cedar Grove (NJ) before moving to Monroe seven years ago. Prior to retiring in 1985, he was a Marketing Manager for Lightolier in Kearny. After retiring, he was a writer. Mr. Zitter received a bachelor's degree from Montclair State University at the age of 74. His political activism on behalf of human, civil and women's rights spanned over half a century. He served as State Chairman of Americans for Democratic Action for 40 years and was the prime mover in starting the Greenbriar at Whittingham chapter of the Middlesex County Jewish Federation.

He is survived by his wife, Sarai Golomb Zitter; a son, Mark Zitter and his wife, Jessica, of Maplewood; two daughters, Sherry Zitter and her life partner, Jasmine Benjoya, of Stow, Mass.; and Robin Zitter of Sherman, Conn.; and three grandchildren, Solomon, Tessa Rose and Sasha Zitter.

(Editor's note: Sam contributed an article on his return to China in Issue #11 of Oct 1994 in which I committed a grave error in sp his name).

The following eulogy by Sam's wife, Sarai was presented at the funeral:

"We are assembled today to mourn the death of a very special man, someone who was universally loved. Look around you; you've come from all over the country to honor him. Phone calls have come from around the world – from France, from Japan, from Israel. This is a man who has made a difference in the lives of almost everyone he touched. And though this is a funeral and a farewell, we'd like it also to be a celebration of his life, a life which has made a difference not only to us who love him, but to the world in which he lived.

"Sam's political activism on behalf of human

rights, of civil rights, of women's rights, spanned over half a century. When we met 50 years ago – appropriately enough at a political workshop – he was already deeply involved in liberal politics, and we spent our courtship on a sound-truck for Adlai Stevenson. He wore the liberal label proudly, and it was a perspective, which he applied to the many causes which he undertook. Whether it was as State Chairman of NJ Americans for Democratic Action; whether it was sharing the direction of the Cedar Grove Fair Housing Committee (which I started in our living room); whether it was speaking or writing or fund-raising on behalf of citizen action, anti-war protests, or equal rights for women, Sam was always there – with his energy, with his creativity, with his well-reasoned and intelligent philosophy – a philosophy always seasoned with compassion. He lent his efforts to political candidates and campaigns as well, not only in support, but with suggestions to help shape their functioning. Even during his recent illness, he rose from his sickbed to lend his ideas and fund-raising assistance to the Board of NJ Right To Choose.

"An unmet need served as a clarion call for Sam. When we moved here seven years ago, he noted that there was no UJA-Federation section in Greenbriar/Whittingham. Where others might have bemoaned this lack, Sam got to work developing one. With his history as fund-raising chairman for UJA in Essex County, the Middlesex UJA is now tens of thousands richer because of his efforts.

"Sam was a devoted family member. I don't just mean to his wife and children. I don't even mean to his adored grandchildren – though five years ago he embarked on a third career as full-time grandfather. And I don't just mean to those in his original family. My parents were as dear to him as his own, and my brother became his. In fact, he often put me on notice: "Treat him right," or he would go home to my mother! We had an astonishingly large number of elderly relatives for whom to care: mostly childless aunts and uncles. Whether they were in New York or in Miami Beach, he always found the time to visit, to call, to encourage, and to help. And when my own mother began to decline, and we brought her out to live with us, I could never have cared for her so freely were it not for Sam's loving and tender sharing of the task.

Sam's was a truly open mind, reading and listening and learning until the last months of his life. Some of you may know that he went back to college after retiring, earning his bachelor's degree in 1997 – at the age of 74. There was no important issue of the day on which he did not try to integrate his understanding into his own belief system. And how he stood up for what he believed! We were in the stands to hear Martin Luther King's "I have a dream" speech. We were at every liberal march on Washington, whether for civil rights, for jobs and freedom, for women's right, or to protest what we saw as an unjust war in Vietnam. Never pedantic or argumentative, he always spoke out for what he believed to be right, and his arguments were well-reasoned and persuasive.

When I was fifteen, and an early feminist, I wrote a song about him – eleven years before we met. It was a take-off on "The Girl That I Marry," and the central part about the man that I marry described him thus: "faithful and true as the stars above; loyal and tender, sincere and kind, with a generous heart and a searching mind."

I could not describe him better today. The world will be a poorer place without him.

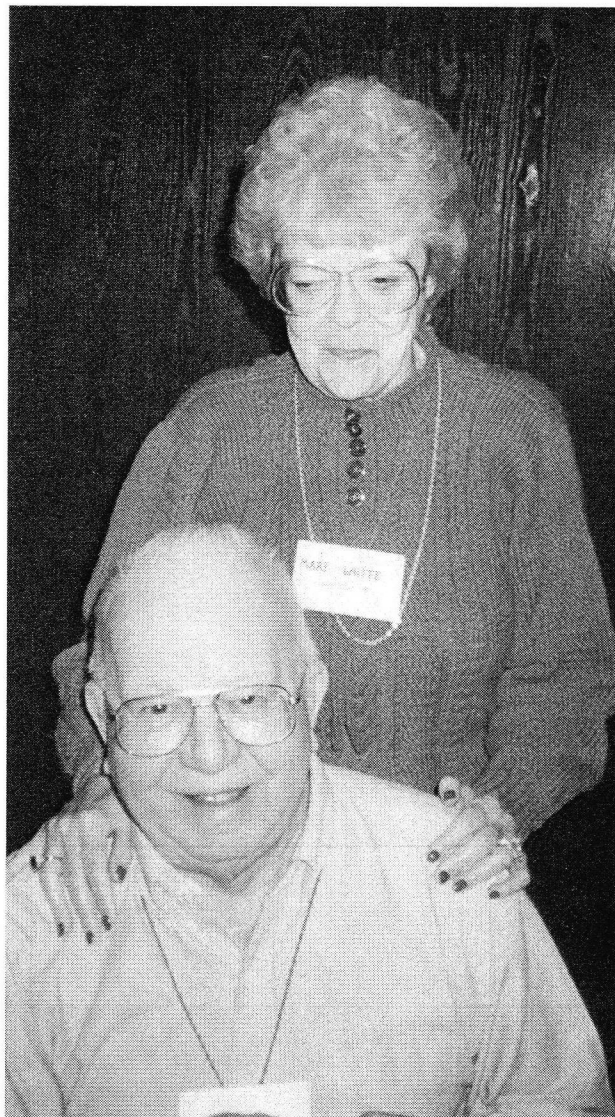
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MARY MADELINE WHITE

38-year employee of Bell Telephone from Claysville Mary Madeline Morris Fankhauser White, 85, of Claysville, (PA) died Thursday, March 13, 2003, in Hillsvie Personal Care Home, Claysville.

She was born February 26, 1918, in New Martinsville, W.VA., a daughter of Isaac and Sina Postlethwait Morris.

Mrs. White was a member of Claysville United Methodist Church. She was a 1935 graduate of New Martinsville (W.VA.) High



Mary and Bill White

School and was a homemaker. For 38 years, she was employed by Bell Telephone Co. in New Martinsville and Columbus, Ohio.

She was a lifetime member of Order of Eastern Star in New Martinsville and a member of Ladies of the Elk Lodge 776 of Washington and Ladies Auxiliary of James R. Hunt American Legion Post 639 of Claysville.

She loved being with children and animals and particularly valued the friendships she made through the years.

She was previously married to Richard Fankhauser, who is deceased.

In 1951, at Claysville United Methodist parsonage, she married William F. White who survives.

Also surviving are a son, Samuel Daugherty White of Philadelphia; two stepsons, William Gatewood White of Des Plaines, Ill., and George Wesley White of Salem, Ore; and four step-grandchildren, Andrew, William A. and Sarah Beth White and Emily Maruna.

????!***

ISOLDA "CANDY" PRATHER



Candy & Fred

Fred called me in April to advise he had lost Candy in February 2003. Candy had been in professional care for some time due to Alzheimer's disease.

????!***

Other Deaths Reported

CHISEFSKY, Albert E. 2003
Radio Tech 2/c-
Calcutta/Kunming/Shanghai

DUPUIS, William H.
RM 1/c-Calcutta/Chungking/Shanghai

JAMES, William C. 2002
MoMM 1/c-Kunming/Chungking

KRAMER, Vincent R. 2001
Maj. USMC-Camp3/Liutung

LACEY, John Albert 2002
Lt.(jg)-Chungking/Shanghai/Peiping

LEU, Donald J. 2003
Lt. Comdr-Chungking

LYNCH, Edward J. 2002
Y1/c-Calcutta

MANGOLD, Edward A 2001
CPhM-Calcutta

MILLER, Donald A. 2002
Ens.-Calcutta/Chungking/Shanghai

REEVES, Harry M. 2001
Capt. USMCR-Chungking

SCHLAITZER, Robert Wallace 2002
CCS- Calcutta/Kunming



*Eulogy read aloud by Richard at graveside service - Forest Lawn Hollywood Hills
Burbank, California 23 May 2003*

A Walk With An Angel

Once upon a time, about 74 years ago, a shy little boy of 6 fell in love with a girl who was 20. He had lived with an aunt and uncle who were “Mom and Pop” and he had a “Daddy” working in the steel mill in Kokomo, Indiana. Daddy drove 320 miles each way to West Virginia to see his son nearly every weekend. On one of his trips around 1929, he brought his girl friend along and she and the little boy went for a walk. It was a walk with an angel, the angel being Erma and the little boy was Richard.

I never felt so close to anyone in my childhood as with my new friend, Erma. On one trip, Dad and Erma took me to Kokomo for Christmas and I was so happy to again be with my new friend. Dad gave me money to go shopping for a gift for Erma and I chose two small silhouette pictures of a cowboy and cowgirl from the five-and-dime, which still hang on her bedroom wall.

By the time I was seven, Hollis, (my dad), married Erma and took me to Indiana to live with them – my friend became my mother. I know she would have cherished being called “mother” but she was first my friend, and though I was aware she was also my mother, Erma stuck.

Erma Lucille Ramsey Rutan was born in Effingham County, Illinois July 19, 1909 to Tell Estes Ramsey and Sarah Elizabeth Newberry Ramsey. She died Sunday afternoon, May 18, 2003 at home asleep in her living room chair following 3 weeks of serious illness. Erma was the second born of five siblings and the last survivor of the family. She is survived by many nephews and nieces. Her great-nephew Jack Parks and wife Diane have lived nearby for several years and were of particular aid during this crisis. Her oldest nephew, Carl Slifer and wife Evelyn, visited annually here in La Quinta and have kept close contact with her by phone for years as well as nephew Bill Percy and Marge. The list can go on and on, too numerous to name here, but loved none the less. Erma’s brother-in-law, George Slifer, widower of Erma’s elder sister Gretta, still survives at 97.

Erma’s mother died when she was 8 yrs old. She and 2 brothers and 2 sisters were split up in different families of relatives. Her maternal grandmother took her after raising 8 or so of her own. It was a life of poverty and they baked pies early in the morning for a local restaurant – Erma delivering pies in carriers on her way to school.

Following high school, Erma married her childhood sweetheart, Leroy Correll. Unfortunately he was like the King of Siam, like a bee that goes from flower to flower. Erma told me that his favorite pie was raisin, and one time she met him with one in the face as he came through the door. They lived with his parents in the early stages and Erma helped with the younger children. Believe there were 9 children – one still survives in Illinois. Even though the marriage dissolved, Erma stayed close with the entire Correll family throughout her life. She and her ex remained friends and was accepted by Dad and me. He was my barber for several years before I knew he had been married to Erma.

Erma started working in Terre Haute, Indiana in a Chinese restaurant and later moved on to Kokomo, Indiana working as a waitress in the Hotel Francis. Leroy followed to Kokomo where he was a popular barber. Erma lived with her uncle and aunt, the aunt running a boarding house where she met Hollis. She said one evening the men were playing cards and she reached over and took a sip of Dad’s beer and started a romance. Allegedly, he remarked, “I’m gonna marry that broad.” You’ll never know how glad I was that it came true.

Erma never knew a stranger – she loved people and was loved in return. Jimmy Doolittle, who piloted the bomber with the atomic bomb that was dropped on Japan ending WWII, in earlier years was in Kokomo staying at the Hotel Francis where she worked and she loved to tell about sitting in his lap. She also served the then popular celebrity newscaster Lowell Thomas.

During the depression, Erma said to Dad, “If I can buy a home, would you let me?” He replied, “Hell, woman, you couldn’t buy an old settin’ hen.” But she did it, she found a 3 ½ acre little farm with a six-room house surrounded by native woods for \$1800 and \$19 monthly payments as I recall. This is where I grew up in my teens and later went into the Navy.

After WWII, we moved to California – Erma worked in the motion picture studios in food catering – spent much time on the set of then popular TV series Peyton Place and often on film locations – one I remember being “Stagecoach.” At the time, Dad was working at a studio as carpenter – “building background mountains” for filming Treasure of the Sierra Madre.”

In 1950, Erma and I attended the Motion Picture Academy Awards at the Pantages Theatre in Hollywood. That year, “Baby It’s Cold Outside” prevailed over my choice, “My Foolish Heart,” for the Oscar.

The three of us traveled a lot in the U.S. and 27 days in the Caribbean prior to Dad’s death in 1979. Erma made 7 trips with me to Taiwan through the years as guests of the government where she was affectionately known as “Mama Erma.” She also got to Bangkok, Manila, Hong Kong, Macao, Monterrey and Cancun, Mexico. She visited every state in the union except Alaska. Dad made it to Alaska to work, but got homesick in 6 weeks and came home. Hawaii was Erma’s favorite, she went several times and was wondering recently if we could go back. In 1987, we had an extended coast-to-coast trip to the SACO reunion in Annapolis and back home through Canada with Paul and Martha Casamajor. Of course there were annual trips to various parts of the U.S. for SACO reunions. Until recent years, Erma and I hosted the Hospitality Room as long as she was physically able and since that, as Doc Felmy stated, “She’s Hostess Emeritus.” Our last trip together was to Florida for the 2002 reunion in September and we stayed an extra week and went to one of our favorite haunts, Key West.

Erma’s other ventures included working as Chef at the Burbank, CA Elks Club for five years, preparing lunch for the public as well as doing large banquets. Lodge members helped in the kitchen and at one time, she was doing 15 standing beef rib roasts. In later years, she worked with a bankruptcy auctioneer as an allotter, one who tags and numbers items to be auctioned

I never wanted the prefix “step” to precede “mother.” I never spoke it and always resented it – only my closest friends knew and a few along the years that were a bit too inquisitive. I’m sure a few mental calculators functioned along the years, but she’s the only mother I ever knew and I could never have found one who equaled her qualifications. She was my life and I was hers. The good feeling now is that we told each other so with every goodnight kiss during these last years.

We moved to the desert in 1992 and we both loved our desert home. Many times she would remark, “We have such a pretty home, don’t you love it? And wouldn’t Dad have?” She looked forward to the “Happy Hour” every evening when we would go to the guest house (casita if you will), which is our den and I’d mix her a Manhattan on-the-

Rocks before dinner. Ohh! How I'm going to miss serving her and hearing, almost every evening, "Hmmm! That tastes so good – guess I needed that!"

I think the verse in my Mother's Day card* said what I'm trying to:

Erma,

*You're a
wonderful
mother...
and a very special friend
to me.*

*It seems as if we've always been close...
and as I get older, I find myself
treasuring that closeness more and more.*

*It's nice having someone who really
knows and understands me, someone with
whom I can always be myself.*

*You may not know it, but your support
and faith in me have pulled me through
more times than I can count...*

*I don't know what I'd do without you
in my life.*

These are some of her sayings:

As she grew older and tiring, she would often quote: "There was and old, old lady and a boy who was half-past three, and the way they played together was beautiful so see." I understand there was more, but this is all she remembered.

Then an often remark, "Love goes where it's sent (scent) even if it's up a dog's butt."

"What you throw over your shoulder will come back and kick you in the butt."

"The church I believe in has a very big sky for a roof."

And the one I've never forgotten, "I wouldn't give a damn for a man without a temper, but I have no respect for one who can't control it."

While in Eisenhower Hospital these tough times, I believe she sensed the end being near. During a period of sedation, she softly remarked, "I've sung my last song," then spoke slowly the words, "Oh say can you see by the dawn's early light..." Later in the Skilled Nursing facility, she rallied slightly and stated, "Richard, it's so hard to die."

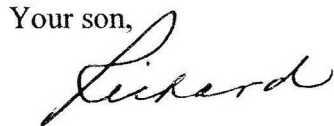
Erma was one of a kind, a rare jewel, loved everybody and everybody loved her. When admitted to skilled nursing, the first night I left her, she asked, "Are you going away and leave me here forever?" I promised her many times we would get her home. We did and she got a life long wish that, as she put it, "When I go, I hope I wake up dead." She got her wishes, she was home again and died peacefully in her sleep.

Very recently, she said to me, "Richard, I've lived a very good life and you've been close enough to know that."

I can't begin to imagine my remaining years without her, but what beautiful memories we shared that are now mine alone.

Goodnight, Angel, and you know...I don't have to tell you...I'll never stop loving you.

Your son,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Richard". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name "Richard".

*Strangely, the first card I picked up and I looked no further. . .there was no need to; I couldn't have worded it better myself.

pretty young woman who spoke fluent English and had been to see me in connection with trying to obtain a passport in order to travel to the States for further education. She came to see me several times, and offered at one point to teach me more conversational Chinese if I cared to try. I took her up on this offer and we had some regular meetings for this purpose. She even invited me to a family dinner at their home across the river on the banks of the Jiang. This was a most honored thing for me, I was told by my Attaché comrades. And besides that who knew what valuable information I might pick up in the course of the meal. As it turned out there was slim chance of this happening for although the family knew some English, Rose was the only one fluent enough to converse with me. It was a pleasant evening and there was lots of good food and it gave me a chance to observe how a well-to-do official family functioned in this war time capital of China.

In the course of my early stay with the Naval Attaché there occurred an unusual event in which I was privileged to participate. Word came to us at the Embassy that one of our Air Force bombers, a huge B-29 had been forced to land at the local airport in an emergency. In itself this may not have seemed to be such big news except for the fact that this airport had a very tenuous existence in that it was comprised of a long low and very flat sand-bank in the middle of the Jiang river which during many months of the year was *under water*, particularly during the rainy season, and as such was of course unusable!! Our B-29 had been on a long bombing mission from it's base at Chendu to over Okinawa, but on the return flight had, for reasons not revealed to most of us, been unable to reach its home field, and had set down on the nearest available field, namely Chungking's river field.

The problem they faced was how to get that huge plane off of the field, safely airborne and back to more useful duty in it's routine missions as a heavy bomber. This seemed at first an insurmountable task, but while the crew were being fêted at our Embassy other heads were pondering the problem. We had the opportunity to visit the plane as it sat in isolated splendor at the far upper end of the field, closely guarded by both Chinese and Air Force personnel. Various dignitaries were allowed to visit the plane's landing site, including General Wedemeyer and Ambassador to China Strauss. Our Attaché staff was among those visitors.

The plan called for a reduction of the weight of the plane to as low a point as was physically possible and still be able to fly. That meant removal of all armament, a great deal of it's navigational equipment, largely of a secret nature, leaving only the minimum of fuel that would take them home, and a reduction of the crew to the bare number necessary to fly. In addition, the Chinese government were to expand the field to the required length necessary for take off, but this was also going to involve installing a 'dog-leg' portion to the far end that would permit the plane to turn slightly to the left as it did its run down field before actually lifting off. Whether this would be physically and aeronautically feasible was a big question about which many of us had serious doubts but not those 'fly-boys'. They never seemed to consider in their minds that there was ever any doubt as to how it could be done.

In the course of the next week hundreds of coolie labor proceeded to carry literally tons of sand, dirt, and gravel, all by yo-yo pole carriers across their bent shoulders, only a matter of maybe twenty or thirty pounds in each basket, gradually filling and packing the length of the field and adding the bend at the end of the sand-bar that went right to the river's edge. It was a long and arduous task, worked at night and day, under torch light when necessary, without the benefit or help of any mechanical devices at all. No scrapers, no tractors, no bulldozers, just shovels and rakes and that was about all.

As one surveyed the run-way that was thus built for this one flight it did not seem likely that even if they got off the ground, would they be able to continue their flight down the narrow river chasm at the far end, lined on each side by high banks and hills, and still avoid the heavy electric power lines that were strung across the river a mile or so beyond the end of the island between two large steel towers. The local power company had agreed to shut off the electricity for the day of take-off, but the pilot and crew shrugged it all off as just another challenge to meet and overcome.

We had been in preparation for this event for several weeks before it finally was scheduled to take place. There was the usual gathering of officialdom, both Chinese and American and representatives of the other nations who had ties with the Nationalist government or the United States. I recall the pilot calling out to us as we were all grouped around the plane just before take-off, "Don't worry-we'll get this baby in the air, and show you what she's really made of!!".

It was a tense and exciting moment as most of us assembled on the left of the runway about three-quarters of the way down the field. The plane was chocked on all wheels as it's engines one by one roared into life with an ever-increasing crescendo of RPMs, and then with a casual wave of an arm out of the cockpit window it began it's journey home in an agonizingly slow lumbering roll down the run-way. It's speed and momentum gathered perceptibly as it tore by us on the field, and finally after what seemed like an endless run the nose of the plane rose and they were air-borne--and had not even come to the dog-leg portion of the tarmac. It was a thrilling and stupendous achievement for that crew, and we all cheered lustily as the plane soared low over the river and went *under* the hanging electric cable.

True to his prediction, the pilot showed us what the 'old girl' could do, as he turned to his right in a wide sweeping upward flight and we thought that he was soon to be gone and on his way to Chendu. But he had other plans, and we soon realized it when the plane did another wide turn to the right heading back in the direction of the field, and made a low level -strafing-type -run, 'buzzing' the field to it's full length, and then zooming steeply, up and over the top side of the cable and soaring off into the clouds beyond.

We were all hoarse with cheering, and the relief to all on the ground was very apparent. I personally never heard another word about that plane except that it had landed safely at its home field.

“Gom Bei” (translation: “BottomsUp”)

There was hardly a week gone by before I recognized that the duties of the Medical Officer were more than just handling the routine sick call every morning. The Naval Attaché had said to me at the time of my introduction to the Embassy staff that there would be many occasions of a social nature to which I would be invited for a brunch or luncheon or a cocktail party or whatever, and that it was to be part of my mission to “keep your ears open and your mouth shut” and to be prepared to have a de-briefing after such occasions at which time we were to report any gossip or snatches of conversation overheard, to glean if possible, more information regarding the people attending the party.

I was not sure to what purpose this would be directed in the long run, but it was intriguing that these little morsels of gossip might reveal something of significance for the total war effort. This would become increasingly doubtful after attending a few of these gatherings that started well before the noon hour, and extended into the afternoon. We often had imbibed of the potent ‘bei jyoo’ or “wan jyoo” served warm and liberally in small white porcelain cups that were never allowed to remain empty after having been tossed off niftily with a hearty “Gom Bei”, honoring the long list of guests or the Officialdom of either country, or if there were no other excuses, just for “the helluvit’.

One such occasion stands out in my memory as of particular significance for I was a participant to a trick we played on one of our American civilian guests at one of these luncheons. He was the Senior representative of the American Red Cross, Stanley Wright, an upright and earnest young man who sat beside me at this particularly long repast of many courses in which we had all dutifully hoisted the toasting cup many times in between several dishes of chicken, fried in Chinese-’southern’ style. Stan was pretty well oiled and standing often and toasting and enthusiastically waving his left arm in the air. I noticed that his khaki jacket uniform coat had a large pocket gaping open on the side next to where I was sitting. I began stealthily to slip chewed-off chicken bones of quite a variety into his open pocket, some with remnants of meat or chicken fat or whatnot still attached. Stan never noticed during the time we were there and in my silly half drunken state I was imagining the look on his face as he must have later on casually stuck his hand into that pocket searching for a pack of matches or whatever only to find the greasy goop of bones. I don’t remember that we came up with any reliable or significant tidbits of information at our de-briefing but I was sure the Red Cross must have wondered why their respectable leader had such a greasy uniform jacket.

My staff and I finally wandered back to the dispensary where I was supposed to be seeing my usual list of appointees for the day. I was standing somewhat unsteadily in my back office room that contained a small cot for the purpose of the occasional patient who needed to lie down after having had some minor procedure. I really wanted to use the cot for recovery purposes myself, but at that moment Smitty, my Pharmacist Mate who had also been at the party, wove into the room and standing at rigid but wavering attention, saluted me formally and said, “Permission to rest a bit, Sir!” and fell flat out on the cot. I don’t believe he moved for the rest of the day, while I sat dopily in my rickety

swivel chair with my feet up on the desk. Alcohol was a distinct hazard of the war for which you never got any ribbons to put on your tunic, but which led to many a memorable hangover.

Chungking was filled with a multitude of sights and sounds that were so unique to a very large and overcrowded wartime capitol of the country. I would often awaken at night hearing the high pitched call of some vendor wandering up and down the streets selling his heated chestnuts or perhaps a small cup of some unknown cooked vegetable that could be a tasty side dish for the passerby. These night sounds were often recalled hauntingly and reminiscently heard, as a lonely cry in the night that would lead me to ponder what the strange events had been that had brought me to this side of the earth.

With end of the hostilities in Europe there was an almost constant scene of revelry on the main streets of the town, for it was thought that this would presage the end of the war in the Pacific too. But for those of us at Happy Valley it only doubled our efforts to prepare for whatever our mission might be, and it fell to my lot to begin working on the medical supply side of preparation for what we knew could be bloody landings on the China coast. There were numerous plans laid out for what might be the various exigencies and how could we best prepare our coastal units or any of the others including my old unit up in the Gobi Desert for the final 'big push'. Some of the more remote coast-watcher units were often out of touch for long periods of time with our Chungking based communications, leading to considerable speculation and concern as to what was happening to the unit. It was suggested at one point that someone in the medical center of things should go out to one or more of these units to appraise their availability and capability as back-line reserves that could have medical supplies and services ready for the intense action that would certainly result with any invasion directed toward the coastal provinces. I don't know whatever possessed me to volunteer to be one of the medics that would do this job. It meant that we would have to be parachuted into the territory that was closest to the current site of the camp. But that was always a problem to know just where they might be at any given time. In fact they were so mobile, were forced to be so, because the Japanese were constantly sending out patrols to intercede with their activities, and it became a dangerous game of hide and seek. Fortunately for me, Captain Shipley, the Medical C.O. at Happy Valley felt that my services and experience were of more value at the headquarters than jumping and hiding along the coast. Also there was the dilemma of how in hell did they expect to get any of us back and be able to use any of the information we might have been able to gather. I was grateful to have that hare-brained idea abandoned as I continued with my duties at the camp.

We were all distracted at about this point by the eruption of a cholera epidemic among the Chinese personnel attached to our unit. We had heard of the epidemic that was sweeping India, particularly in the vicinity of Calcutta where it was reported there were fatalities in the range of 1000 to 1500 per day. We began having an influx of very sick, often moribund, Chinese soldiers with all the classical symptoms of cholera. We began a program of inoculation of as many as we had available to us, and we of the American forces were given booster shots. Although our fatality rate was less than that

of India, mainly because we were at least able to treat the more acute cases with I.V. fluids and antibiotics, penicillin mainly, which had only just begun to be sent to us over the Hump in ever increasing amounts. We had no repetition of the earlier experience of getting a whole plane load of Old GrandDad whiskey that had arrived labeled as 'canvas two-man stretchers' which had eventuated in my taking a case of the whisky with me in my earlier assignment to Camp Four near Shempa in the Gobi Desert. I could have used the penicillin up there instead of the twenty cartons of Stibamine that I found there on my arrival. That particular drug was very effective for Kala Azar, a disease that ran rampant in Egypt and the Middle East, but had never been seen to my knowledge in Inner Mongolia!

The cholera epidemic subsided almost as quickly as it appeared, but despite leaving a swath of mortality among the Chinese, there was not a single case among any of the American personnel.

Venereal diseases of all varieties were rampant however, despite the repeated warnings we made almost daily to all of our personnel. Sulfonamides of various kinds were the treatment of choice, but as penicillin became more available it soon became the preferred treatment.

The "Bomb" is Dropped

The explosions of the atomic bombs over Hiroshima and Nagasaki were not only a highly charged event for the whole war effort and the world in general, but it had a singular effect upon those of us diligently preparing for the 'mother of all invasions,' the Chinese mainland.

As nearly as I could grasp what the top secret intentions of the 'brass' had been up to that point, there was to be a grand triple invasion of the southernmost island of Japan, Kyushu, the main island Honshu, and some indeterminate part of the coast of China, where we were presumably to be ready to meet and provide local resources. Our various 'camps' were a primary source of information as to what the conditions inland might be to receive an invasion force. But there was always the uncertainty of their exact location or their ability to communicate with the main base.

Our Commanding Officer was Rear-Admiral Marion ("Mary") E. Miles USN who was considered to be Chief of all Naval Operations in the China-Burma-India Theater. He was a very personable and dedicated officer who had excellent ties with the Nationalist Chinese forces headed of course by Generalissimo Chiang Kai Chek. Our main liaison in China was through Major-General Tai Li the titular head of the 'Secret Police' section of the government. He was a mysterious figure in all circles, leading a charmed life in that he had apparently been subject to numerous attempts on his life by dissident forces within and without the government who envied his close ties with the Generalissimo. He however, reigned in his position with an iron and ruthless hand, and was respected with a mixture of fear and admiration. Admiral Miles had made a close liaison with Tai Li largely because our own involvement in China was of such a secret

nature, largely controlled in the U.S. through the Office of Strategic Services (later becoming the CIA), and administrated through the command of Brig. Gen. "Wild Bill" Donovan.

With the almost immediate cessation of overt hostilities our mission in China abruptly changed leaving us, in a manner of speaking, 'hanging fire'. The Admiral began a series of massive meetings of the command staff that eventually began to include all personnel meeting to hear the Admiral declaim what our roles were to become in the immediate future. It became apparent to us in the chain of command that the chaos and furor that accompanied the abrupt about face of our mission was getting to the Admiral in a fashion that was making him behave in a frantic and often erratic and totally unpredictable fashion. He became garrulous, disconnected in his train of thought, hyperactive in his efforts to keep up with the tremendous responsibilities foisted upon him, and seemingly unable to comprehend the complexities that were inherent among all of the military forces that were to be involved in re-deployment. There were tremendous forces at work relating to the release of the atomic bomb news, the other military units in the country were equally bewildered at the unexpected turn of events, the Chinese and particularly the Communist forces in North China were making threatening gestures toward a potential take-over of any nearby Japanese bastions. All in all it was total chaos and confusion, mixed with tremendous relief among the majority of us who were down the line of command to the lowest echelons of military ranks.

Through all of this the Admiral became more and more disorganized, culminating at one point in an order to assemble *all* forces in the largest building available to listen to the Admirals latest interpretation of 'World Events'. He ordered that it be filmed, wire recorded, and that all available press as well as significant well-known figures in both the military and civilian spheres of Chungking be invited.

Captain Beyerly, the Chief Executive Officer, and second in Command at this point and in a state of near desperation himself had an emergency meeting with other senior officers and particularly with the Senior Medical Officer, Captain Shipley, and arranged in secret to go ahead with the meeting but to try to limit it in some fashion that would protect the integrity of the Admiral without compromising his command status. It was a good thing this was planned in some fashion, for the Admiral and his aides were assembled for this meeting and proceeding as if nothing in the world was going to be more important than this speech. The Admiral began speaking, declaiming in loud and dramatic terms what his role and all SACO was to be. He went on and on without stopping, for nearly six hours! The cameras were empty but kept on grinding away 'as if', the wire recordings in a similar mode, and those of us in the audience having to endure the endless monologue with great anxiety at what we were witnessing and no little embarrassment.

Captains Beyerly and Shipley managed to finally convince the Admiral that he needed to return to his living compound and 'get a rest' in preparation for his forthcoming tasks. They assigned me to join the Admiral to act as his personal physician

for this 'rest period', and I was ordered to medicate the 'patient' in any fashion I deemed necessary, being assured by the Medical C.O., that he would back me up.

I was able to persuade the Admiral to take a fairly heavy dose of Phenobarbital, which in his truly exhausted state had an almost immediate effect. We told the Admiral that we felt he was having (also) a recurrence of his long-dormant malaria and that he should remain at quiet stance for perhaps few days.

To say the least I felt pretty nervous about this assignment, but I was aware that we were dealing with a psychotic or near-psychotic state that was of a highly sensitive official nature, and that the utmost of discretion was to be observed. Although I got very little sleep myself we did see to it that the Admiral was well sedated. He received almost no visitors, excepting only his Exec, Capt. Beyerly, and on one brief occasion some high Chinese officials who presented the Admiral with a medal, 'The Order of the Rising Sun' or some such title. He proudly accepted this, all dressed up in his whites, standing erect and with an almost shy smile on his face.

We had many conversations during this time, and the Admiral confided in me that he had been aware for several years of imminent development of the atomic bomb, proving it to me by showing me a battered copy of Collier's Magazine dated several years past that featured a full article on the '...secrets of the atom revealed in a research center...that might presage wondrous military applications..'. The magazine had been immediately recalled by the government as being too revealing for general public information, and very few if any other copies were extant. Admiral Miles had been assigned by the Navy Department to be their liaison contact with this project, and had been privy to this top-secret project, sworn to eternal secrecy. He was a Captain in rank at that point, becoming Commodore, when he was assigned to head up SACO.

I was impressed with these various stories told by the Admiral, and believed them, for by this time, a few days after the 'grand assemblage', he seemed to have calmed down considerably, but was still retaining an active interest and concern over current events.

My job was one that required almost constant attention to the Admiral's needs, but there was an on-going flurry of activity that the Admiral felt he belonged to as a participant. For instance, it was rumored that there was to be a summit meeting somewhere in China that would include President Truman, Joseph Stalin, Chiang Kai Chek, DeGaulle, and Winston Churchill. So the Admiral issued a proclamation and an invitation to all of these worthies that he had a 'plan' for 'World Peace' and the 'Ending of the War', and that they could all meet him at Happy Valley to discuss is all!!

I don't believe that proclamation ever saw the light of day in that Captain Beyerly who had assumed de-facto command managed to intercept it in some fashion.

However, another event developed that had subsequent very profound effects upon my life and career in the Navy. I had gone over briefly one morning to the

infirmary to pick up some more medications, and came back to find the Admiral's aide frantically running around, shouting the 'The Admiral has escaped!!' It seemed that Admiral Miles had heard about a planned meeting that morning of a variety of high command officialdom to be held at Happy Valley. They consisted of the Chief of Air Force in China, a Major-General representing Army, a Vice-Admiral from the Pacific Fleet, a Marine Corps general, and various representatives from the Chinese Command, plus all their assorted aides. As I heard about it later, they were to discuss the strategic problems associated with taking over the Japanese positions in China, but they were also to discuss the problem of our Admiral and his illness. I believe that the Admiral mistook this to be the grand summit meeting that he thought that he himself had instigated, and in view of his offer to be the host to this affair, he felt he should be present in person. Accordingly, he had simply gone out to the vehicle parking area at his compound and had appropriated a jeep and had taken off for the meeting.

There had been a frantic call from someone, perhaps Captain Beyerly, that 'at all costs the Admiral must not be allowed to come to the meeting'. With my heart in my throat I dashed out to give chase to find that there were no other vehicles available, so as I glanced down the narrow winding road that led from the Admiral's compound I could see the dust from his jeep moving long the road.

I decided to try to intercept him on the road as it wound down the hill across the valley, and accordingly began running at breakneck speed down the hill, across dried rice paddies, leaping over ditches or embankments finally reaching the narrow road, able to see that the Admiral's jeep was still slowly creeping down the curvy road.

At that moment I noted coming up the road from the opposite direction was a large six-by (a six-wheeled, covered, workhorse type of truck) used to haul supplies all over the camp. As it approached me I jumped in front to bring it to a halt, and as the two bewildered seamen, stared at me I shouted, "Stop! Stop! Block the road! Block it, dammit!" They must have thought I was crazy and they hesitated a moment asking "What's going on??" I shouted, "I'm a medical officer, I have an escaped patient trying to run away down this road in a jeep. We have to stop him!!"

They shrugged, and still obviously reluctant, the driver turned the wheel of the truck so that it blocked the road. At that very moment the jeep arrived at the site, and the Admiral honked his horn impatiently, then spotting me, jumped out of the jeep and shouted at me, "Get that damn truck out of my way, Doc. I'm late for a very important meeting." Then, yelling at the truck driver, "Get that thing out of my way, men. That's an order!"

By this time the men in the truck recognized the Admiral and, flustered, started to get back in the truck to obey his command. I ran up to the Admiral, saying, "You can't go to that meeting, Admiral Miles, You are on the sick list, and I am relieving you temporarily of your command!! You're on the sick list, - the *sick* list!!"

He stared at me, "What are you saying?? I'm on the *sick* list??"

“Yessir!!”, I gasped out, saluting as I spoke.

He stared at me some more, raised his hand to his cap and saluted me, saying “Aye Aye, Doctor!” and turned back to his jeep, climbing in, turning it around and heading back to his compound.

I really can't remember how I got back to the compound. I was so weak kneed at this point, but I believe the truck and the amazed duo gave me a lift up the short hill to the compound. I got there to find the Skipper had retreated to his room, and he was not visible at all for the remainder of the day. Later in the day there was a call from Captain Beyerly at which time I detailed the events exactly as they had happened, he gave me a verbal ‘Well done!’ and I collapsed in my own room. The Admiral ate in his room that night, while his Aide, his Yeoman, my Pharmacist Mate, and I ate a very somber supper, with the Aide muttering, “Unbelievable! Unbelievable!”

During the next rather quiet few days that passed I wrote up a detailed report on the Admiral's illness which I felt would be needed to place in his health record. I had given the Chief Medical Officer a full report, both written and oral. About two days later, on a late afternoon, I got a call from Captain Shipley who had been shuttling back and forth between Happy Valley and Shanghai preparing for the ultimate transfer of all medical facilities, leaving me pretty much on my own. He came right to a significant point: “Can you be prepared to be shipped back to the States along with the Admiral by tomorrow afternoon??” I gulped, nearly choked on my answer, but it came out as a vehement “YES, Sir”. He explained that it was the consensus of the command that the Admiral should be immediately shipped back to the Naval Hospital for further treatment of his so-called ‘malaria’, and that since I had had such an intimate relationship with him during this recent acute illness, that it would be appropriate for me to attend to him for this trip. We would be accompanied by his chief Aide, by a Yeoman, and by one Pharmacist Mate, and that the Air Force would provide a plane, a C-52, a large four-engined transport plane coming up from India, plus a full crew. “Pack up, medical gear as needed, and be ready to go tomorrow morning!! You will be in charge of the Admiral as your patient and responsible for his care.” Wow! Now it really was becoming ‘unbelievable’.

I saw little of the Admiral in the ensuing few hours, he keeping to himself, talking only to his Aide or the Yeoman, and largely ignoring or avoiding me. I continued the medication regime we had been maintaining, packing frantically for the trip. In a general way he appeared to be calm, cool and collected. He remained that way as we were taken by a command car to the airfield outside of Chungking. We met our crew and loaded aboard very quickly, taking off and heading straight for Shanghai.

It was a jolting sight as we came down for the landing to find that it was still in the hands of the Japanese, and they were in fact guarding the field. We were met by some Navy officers and taken to the Cathay Hotel right on the Bund (the waterfront on the mouth of the Yangtze River) in downtown Shanghai. We had seen portion of the Pacific Fleet at anchor in the Bund, led by the heavy cruiser, The Nashville. We stayed

only overnight, leaving early the next AM for that [still-in-enemy—hands] airport. By dint of his rank and station in the Navy, and the fact that he rode a great deal of the trip in the pilot's cabin, the Admiral was able to persuade the pilot in this next leg of our long journey to over-fly Okinawa where we could see the last ditch stand of hundreds of Japanese soldiers who were holed up in various caves and fortifications, still holding out in a suicidal effort to continue the war they felt they could never lose. The bursts of armament was evident to us even from the height that the pilot felt it was safe to fly, which seemed to be only a few thousand feet! Our flight continued on to Guam Island where once again we over-nighted. The Admiral was clearly avoiding me as much as possible, and I had little to do on the trip except read or write up some of my notes that were by now getting quite voluminous.

There was Guam, then Wake, and, via a fly over of Johnston Island, it led us finally to Hawaii (Oahu) where we landed with enough time to get to the airfield Officer's Club and gobble up the ice cream and milk shakes, or any other fresh milk product we could manage in the short time we had available. On a quick visit to Pearl Harbor Naval Base I had foolishly worn my camera around my neck only to have it confiscated by the Marine guards who stripped the film out of it ruining the great shots I had taken thus far on the flight.

Our last over-ocean leg was to be to San Francisco, and we were to leave at dusk. I remember the clear night with the moon beaming into our starboard portholes over the wing and its two engines. However, after a few hours of fitful sleep I awoke with a start to note that the moon was now over our portside wing, and there was a distinct difference in the sound of the engines. Then I could see that one engine was shut down, the propeller standing still!! What in hell was this?? At about this moment the air crew chief came by and casually informed us that we were heading back to Oahu!! "Dead engine", he said laconically. "No problem," he said, noting my look of consternation., "We'll just get a new engine—we're overdue for overhaul anyway!" I heard more about this 'overhaul' theme later in the trip.

So it was back to the glorious islands, where we were informed it would be about thirty-six hours before we could proceed. So there was nothing to do but hang out at the Club, swill down more milk shakes and sundaes, and be grateful that we had not reached the 'point of no return' en route to S.F. and that there was even an engine available to get us going again.

The second effort finally came about and we were on our way to the States, flying into Travis Airfield and then all of us being whisked into a bus and taken to the lavish St. Francis Hotel for our first Stateside night in almost two years!!

I awoke refreshed the next AM and with the Pharmacist Mate was enjoying a really great Stateside breakfast when up rushed the Yeoman, shouting, "He's gone! He's gone!"

"Whaaat!! Wodda yuh mean-Gone???"

“GONE, Doc. He’s taken off by himself, he an’ the Aide!!”

“Oh, My Gawd”, I groaned. Another flight to freedom!! But not one I would be likely to intercept this time. I dropped efforts to enjoy my first Stateside breakfast in a long time, and ran up to the Admiral’s suite, and sure enough he had fled, the maid saying as she was cleaning up, “He checked out about five AM”.

With nothing in my mind but the forthcoming scene of a court-martial for ‘dereliction of duty’, and anger at the goddam nerve of this guy to pull a stunt like this, we hastily got our car to take us out to Travis where we found our lovely plane and a somewhat chastened crew waiting for us. “Doc, “ the pilot said, “He just came out here to the line and *commandeered another plane*, crew and all, ‘ordering ‘ them to fly him to D.C. at once, non-stop!!”

Between curses, I told the pilot that it wasn’t his fault, but what in hell do we do now?? He then said he had been given orders to fly the rest of us to our presumed destination in D.C. and we could take off anytime. “Delivering the patient is your problem, Doc.”

I nodded grimly, and said maybe we could catch up with him??

“No Way, Doc,” “he’s got a three or four hour jump on us. We’ll be landing in Cleveland to refuel, and he probably had to also, he couldn’t have made it otherwise, I don’t think. Nah! He’s long gone, Doc,-- Well, enjoy your trip!!”

We were soon on our way, and believe me, it was a long and worrisome trip for all of us. We had respect and concern for the Admiral, but we knew we would be in deep ‘do-do’ for what our role had been.

I got to know the pilot better on this last leg of our Odyssey, riding up in the pilot cabin much as the Admiral had. I inquired of the two pilots what would be their next assignment—back to China? The Hump??

“Nope, Doc, we’re scheduled to deliver the plane to Birmingham”

“For what, Captain?”

“For junking, Doc. She’s long past due, would’a been junked over there (India) if we hadn’t come up with this assignment.”

“Ahh! The engine that broke down!!”

“Yeah, but that happens a lot, we can still fly-more or less-with even only two engines, but this time we didn’t wanta take a chance so we turned around. Too important a bit of luggage—you, fer instance, “ he said grinning.

“Captain, I agree, and I’m glad you did what you did. I’m not sure these damn things are really intended to stay up in the air that long”.

“Well, Doc, I just hope the baling wire holds it together for one more hop to Birmingham!!”, cheerfully going back to his task of just getting us to D.C.

Court of Inquiry

I spent the next couple of days fretting and stewing in the ‘transient officers quarters then was notified that I was to appear at a ‘Board of Inquiry’ the afternoon of the following day. I had been given permission to call my wife, with the admonition to say nothing of how I happened to be ‘in town’, but to let her know that I would not be ‘available’ for awhile. She was one confused lady when I finally got through to her. Overjoyed that I was safe and sound in the U.S., but completely baffled at what the circumstances were that led to this. She had been working as a nurse at Lynn General Hospital but was ready to quit at a moment’s notice if I gave her the word. I cautioned her to do nothing yet and that I would fill in as many details as I could as soon as I could see her again.

The day of the Inquiry found me appearing in my beat up khakis (I still did not have a ‘proper’ set of ‘blues’ to my name), but I was assured by the staff that it would make no difference (I thought to myself, ‘who cares what you wear to your own hanging’!!)

As I entered, with my sheaf of notes in hand, I faced a long table behind which I had never seen so much ‘braid’ all at once. Several Admirals of high rank, a couple of Captains, other lesser ranks, all in their ‘blues’ strung with medals, and then to my intense relief, there was a familiar face, Captain Tayloe who had been the Chief Medical Officer when I first reported to Happy Valley after my crash and escape into the mountains. He gave me a broad smile and a nod of affirmation, that instantly relieved me immensely for I counted on him as a friend and a kindly man. The board had apparently seen the material I had written up and submitted to a hospital representative at the time of my arrival. Admiral Miles was not present, for which I was equally grateful. They asked me to tell them briefly in my own words how this whole scene had come about. I guess I had rehearsed it often enough on the way back home so that I could give a fairly succinct accounting of what had transpired. They asked a few questions, but in general left me feeling that I was probably not going to be hung to the nearest yardarm.

It was not a long session, but it seemed so and finally I was dismissed and told to stand by in my quarters, and to say nothing to anyone about what had transpired. The next day I was called back to the Navy department offices where the hearings had been held and there to my relief again, was met by Captain Tayloe alone.

He greeted me warmly and casually, saying, “You’ve had quite a siege of it, Doctor Neighbor, and you’ve carried it off in absolutely great style.” Again smiling broadly at me, saying, “Your tour of duty in China has about six more months to go

before you're eligible to be relieved", then again with a sideways grin, said, "I don't imagine you're just dying to go back to China to finish out your hitch out there??"

"We-e-l, Sir, I can't say I'd miss it dreadfully", spoken with great caution, not quite sure what this all portended.

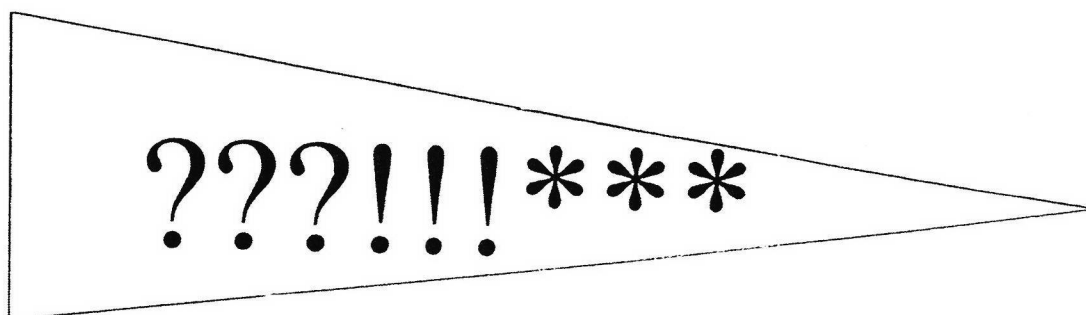
"Well, I tell you, Dr. Neighbor, you've done such a fine job with this *very* difficult assignment, I don't think you need to look forward to that possibility again, --I think we might be able to find you another job that is a little less stressful. What do you think of that, Doctor??"

My intense relief must have shown all over me for he clapped me on the shoulder, saying, "Get hold of your wife, we'll give you a couple of weeks leave to get used to the States again, and I think we have a spot for you at the Naval Air Station Hospital in Jacksonville, Florida where you can report for duty after your leave. Please keep in mind, all of this must remain Top Secret for the time being. Good Luck, Doctor ", shaking my hand.

I never saw Dr. Tayloe, - nor Admiral Miles, - again, although I communicated with Dr. Tayloe while I was trying to get released from the Navy, and I heard word of mouth stories about the Admiral up until the time of his death some years later after he had retired.

This is as far as Dad got on his time line.

As son, Eric, notes - this is the conclusion of Dr. Neighbor's saga of life in the Navy and SACO.



SACO DONORS

The following people have given above and beyond their annual dues to support our cause. As we have stated before, without that little extra tossed in the kitty, we wouldn't have the means to pay the printer for what we like to accomplish. And I shouldn't say "little extra" as some have been extremely generous but whatever the amount, each dollar is a big help and your contributions really give us latitude to expand and strive for quality in our publications.

We are now current with records & I will endeavor to replay some names by reporting the donors for the entire year 2002 and current benefactors for 2003 as of early June this year to hopefully avoid any oversights.

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**WHAT A WONDERFUL
LIST OF SACO
SUPPORTERS
LOOKS LIKE WE'RE
GONNA STAY IN
BUSINESS AT LEAST FOR
A LITTLE WHILE
MANY THANKS TO EACH
AND EVERYONE OF YOU
FOR YOUR GENEROSITY
AND KEEPING SACO
ALIVE THIS LAST HALF-
CENTURY**

???!!!!**



Some Thank Yous
from Erma and me

Erma looked forward to every SACO reunion only missing one in over 30 years. Particularly she loved working the bar with me in the OR for many years before she had to give it up. I don't think I have to tell you she loved every minute of life and gave so much joy to all who knew her. It was so heartbreaking to hear her softly say, "It's so hard to die" when I had no clue the end was near.

I want to thank all who sent cards & flowers. I don't think I opened a card without tears, but they were tears of heartache mixed with love from all of you. The money that some sent is earmarked for a plaque for her grave.

Erma & I had agreed some time ago, we wanted simplicity - viewing in Palm Springs and Forest Lawn Burbank and only graveside remarks. Thanks to all who were able to attend - it was very comforting.

*Love always,
Erma and Richard*



Erma at 17
High School
in Stewardson, IL



Richard age 7 – age when
Dad and Erma married. Ho
He hated those damn knick
ers. Tired hearing, “Too lit
tle for long pants.”



1929 at Age 20
Kokomo, IN



Same year, same spot
Hollis (dad) at 32



Dad & Erma
Sweethearts about 1930.



(L) Dad & Erma 1943
Sent to me early 1944
after my arrival in China.
Dad was 46 – Erma 34.

(R) Erma – age 37 in 1947
when we moved to CA.
Asked doctor for a diet –
got down to 108 – her
weight when she & Dad
married.





Hollis-Erma-Richard
Circa 1955



Erma trying her luck at slots in Las Vegas on
Sept 12, 1961. Looking pretty sharp at 52!



(L) July 1956 Erma heads
a BBQ at Burbank, CA
Elks Lodge parking lot.
Age 47. Had just returned
from brother's funeral in Kokomo.



(L) & Middle in our patio
in San Fernando Valley about age 57.(R) Christmas in early '70's – about
63 wearing smoky topaz jewelry I bought about 1950.

Some personal notes from those who loved Erma -

"She was a great lady and we shall miss her at the SACO reunions. Our fondest memories of past reunions are those of speaking with Erma in the hospitality room.

"We were privileged to know Erma. May she now be blessed with everlasting peace."

Most sincerely, Elizabeth & Bill (Sager)

"I am certain your SACO comrades mourn with you. Your mother has been an institution and inspiration to the entire group. She will be unspeakably missed."

Dick & Judy Maurice (dtr and son-in-law of Jack & Ann Miller)

"I was going through the SACO NEWS and looking at the pictures from Cocoa Beach and Erma looked just like I remember her from the reunions that Betty and I attended. We should have visited you because of living so close. From the new address book of SACO, the list is getting much smaller. You have our deepest sympathy and please don't forget us."

All our love, Betty and Ben (Ritter)

"My heart goes out to you in memory of my wonderful sister-in-law. I want to thank you again for giving her such a wonderful life after my brother deserted her. I always considered her my 5th sister. We continued to be relatives over all these years."

Lillian (Knop) sister of Erma's "ex."

"I feel honored to be able to contribute toward a marker for Erma. We will all miss her so much, but didn't we have fun while she was with us? Erma was truly unique and I'm so glad I got to share in a portion of her life. I have been reflecting a lot on the joy she brought me. There are so many things that happen that remind me of her, i.e., hummingbirds, seeing a pretty rose, enjoying a Manhattan, picking a race horse. She will never be far from us and she'll be sharing every laugh with us. Someone that grand was never meant to disappear. Erma lingers on in everyone who knew her.

Love you, Sue. (Parks) (from Tennessee- she's attended reunions)

"I was so shocked hearing of your great loss - her hair-dresser told me & gave me your address - she was such a darling. Please accept my deepest sympathy; I am so terribly sorry and you took such good care of her. Do keep well & try to accept your great loss."

Sincerely, Nancy Gray (Nancy & I had many conversations at the beauty shop - she's another sweet lady one year older than Erma. Ed.)

Personal notes . . .

" . . . Erma was truly a noble lady with such courage and kindness for all. It was a privilege to have known her - we grieve with you - she was such an important part of all our lives every year - SACO will be deficient without her."

Fran & John Waters

"I want to say I love you and Erma both. There isn't anyone who could have shown anymore love or taken any better care of her than you have. I admire you for that. You will always remain a part of our family . . . "May the wind always be to your back and blow all of your troubles so far ahead of you that you may never catch up with them."

Uncle George and Aunt Gretta (Slifer). (Erma remembers when George was courting her older sister, Gretta (deceased several years) George is now 97.

"We will really miss this beautiful and joyful lady . . ."

Bill & Skeeter Bartee

" . . . I can't tell you how sorry I am for you, Richard. . .and for myself, too. I needn't tell you how much I admired your mother. She was truly a darling lady. I enjoyed bantering with her. . .she was so receptive to my twaddle. Her laughter was itself a joy; her hugs heartfelt. I know you'll miss her intensively as will all of us who had the privilege of knowing 'SACO's Erma.' . . . Know I send sincere condolences. Know, too, I'm grateful you brought Erma to our reunions. I regret she'll not be in Philly to provide her grace to the reunion."

Much love, Jim Kelly

"Erma was a dear friend who will be missed by all at future SACO reunions."

Hal (Bonin)

"We grieve with you and for you due to your/our loss. Erma was the 'girl friend' for every SACO Tiger and our wives knew it and were not bothered by it. A sweet lady and we all hope to see her in the after world."

Affectionately, George Barrett

Personal notes . . .

“, , , We feel fortunate to have known your mother as she was a great part of SACO. Her lively spirit will be missed at the reunions, but will be remembered always.”

Doris Barrett

In phone conversation with Bob and Delores Sinks recently, Delores made a beautiful and heartfelt statement about Erma I'll always remember, "She was a beacon in every room she entered." What a love sentiment! My heart aches that Erma couldn't hear these accolades - but maybe she does - we don't know, do we?

"I heard about Erma and can only say, I'm sorry, but also happy to know such a fine person. She was the highlight of the reunions and had a wonderful way to express her feelings and her constant love for you. She will be missed by not only you, but everyone she came in contact with.

She was so much a part of SACO, I would like to propose a plaque or remembrance to Madam Erma. Enclosed is a check for \$50 to start this rolling.

Richard, the pen is mightier than a sword and your pen, in my opinion, has kept our SACO group going.

Thanks for the memories."

Dick & Marti Terpstra

"Your mom was a true "joy" to the SACO Clan and we sincerely appreciated all the smiles, jokes and friendship she gave us."

Love, Lee & Ruby Alverson

"How very much your "dear angel" meant to Wes and me. I know she is giving us a nudge; I will never forget in Fredericksburg when the man treated the four of us to ice cream cones; it was Erma's charm, not the wheelchair brigade. We should have had a picture of that trip . . . Our love and prayers are with you."

Fondly, Wes & Kathryn

"There will be a deep void at the next reunion when we look across the room and see Erma not there. She sure was a much loved person whom I always looked so forward to seeing once again, (you too!!). How lucky she was to have you and to be able to pass away quietly at home with you by her side. I know of no greater gift someone can give than that. May all the wonderful memories of your life together give you strength in the future. Time is a great healer. Just know your friends are with you in spirit. Take care of yourself."

Eileen & Bud Booth

???!***



Lunch time
Taipei 1995



Happy after the surprise shock of
her 90th BD in Appleton, WI 1999



Hawaiian Cruise
1985??

Long Boat Key 1996

Modeling for our
photographer neighbor
1998/99





In the courtyard about 1997



**Looking at the moon from the courtyard
June 1999**



**Frank & Evelyn Buckless visit shortly after
we moved in our new home – 1993 or '04.**



At home July 2001 – 4 days after her 92nd BD



Members of our SACO family that shared their love at the final moments at Erma's graveside:

*Willie Baker Kathryn and Wes Weskamp Bob Hoe Richard
Vern Dalrymple Billi and Dean Warner Carolyn Inman Arnold*



Never will I see a sunrise or sunset in the west as pictured here from our front entrance, that I won't be reminded of a lovely, special, fun and grand lady, my mother, beautiful in every way, who loved a spectacular desert sunset.

*Don't Forget 49th Annual
National P.A.C. Reunion -
The Doubletree Hotel in Philadelphia, Pa 3-6 Sept 2003*

*Full details forthcoming in 2nd mailing from host Jim Kelly
which will be in the mail probably before you receive this publication*



*Any questions, write or call Jim : 109 E. Homestead Avenue
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