

MAY 2000

# SACO VETERANS

OF  
THE RICE PADDY NAVY

Sino  
American  
Cooperative  
Organization

Issue No. 20

WHAT THE HELL?

Perpetual Skipper  
VAdm. Milton E. "Mary" Miles



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## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK;

Things were looking pretty dismal as far as getting any issue at all out this spring before convention time. I had, in fact, resigned myself to the fact that it was almost impossible. Our household, like many others I'm hearing about, has been a tight schedule for months as my mother has been under the weather since October. Those of you who are in similar circumstances (and I hear of several), realize there isn't a lot of time for sidelines.

However, since the membership needs to know of things that are happening, particularly Carolyn Inman Arnold's project explained in this issue, it is urgent to get the message out to all on our mailing list.

It is now the first of April and I've only been working on a rush project for about 5 days to fulfill this goal. I'm taking all the shortcuts I can - for one, omitting the section for letters from readers until the next issue - and "throwing together" quickly that what I can. And I'm not sure that I'll be successful, but I'll give it a helluva try so here goes!

rlr

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## SACO HISTORY

SACO (*pronounced "SOCKO"*) was established during WWII by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. Officially 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. 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 volunteers from all branches of service, but for the most part, Navy and Marine men. Three books: *THE RICE PADDY NAVY*. by Roy Olin Stratton, *A DIFFERENT KIND OF WAR*, by VAdm. Milton E. Miles and *THE ARMY~NAVY GAME* by Roy Stratton. One movie: *DESTINATION GOBI* was based on SACO's activities..

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

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## SACO NEWS

### Cover:

Young Chinese lady teaches  
Adm. Miles latest dance steps.

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

Send your comments and newsworthy items for future publication to the editor:

## SACO NEWS DONORS SINCE LAST ISSUE

Note from the editor: I have been critiqued from many sides for printing the amount donors contribute. If I were requested to respect anonymity, I would comply. This has happened probably no more than on two occasions. I cannot, in clear conscience, ignore generosity by listing names only. If I am overruled by the trustees, I shall abide - but I won't necessarily agree. I think by ignoring generous benefactors, you'll find a decrease in support. Any amount, no matter how small, I think all will agree, is greatly appreciated and helps meet expenses.

In the meantime, I will revise the report not to reflect precise amounts, but respect all donors as follows:

\$1 - \$99:

Bartlett, Rodger  
 Bash, James (In memory of Warren Yip Chung)  
 Bisceglia, Victor R  
 Boroff, Paul  
 Ching, Joseph Tzu Li  
 Coughlin, Thomas W  
 Gabeline, Donald B.  
 Hische, James J.  
 Johnston, Leslie  
 Katz, Bernard  
 Keogh, Jim  
 Kwapiszewski, Richard J.  
 Lally, Dorothy E. F.  
 Lear, Rober J.  
 McCabe, Burton W  
 Miller, Jack  
 Olsen, Arthur R  
 Parson, Alfred  
 Peacock, William J.  
 Petri, Richard L.

Reid, James R.  
 Ritter, Edwin B.  
 Robillard, Donald F.  
 Schumacher, Robert H.  
 Shragel, Elsie (In memory of husband, Jim)  
 Smith, Louis A  
 Spaulding, D. H  
 Stoddard, Walter  
 Ulaneck, Julius

\$100 - \$199

King, Weldon C.  
 Green, Luther  
 White, William  
 Leighton, Martha (In memory of husband, Jim)

\$200 +

Chu, Stephen  
 Dunn, James  
 King, Weldon  
 Tate, S. Shepherd

Ladies and SACO Gentlemen:

Thanks so very much for your continued support of our wonderful organization. The generosity of people such as you will keep us going until we are no more.

Ed.



# CAROLYN INMAN ARNOLD WORKING FULL SPEED TO PRODUCE SACO DOCUMENTARY

## HERE IS OUTLINE OF WHAT SHE HOPES TO ACCOMPLISH

February 19, 2000

I have been working feverishly on getting things ready for the making of a documentary. Acting upon my accountant's advice, I've created a company called Inman Films, Inc. which will 'produce' the doc. Learning the business of running a business has a steep learning curve and sometimes I feel like I'm jumping off a cliff! I now have a deep appreciation for the work performed by bookkeepers and accountants!

Much has been accomplished since the start of the year. With the exception of a camera matt stand, all of the necessary equipment that it takes to produce a documentary has been obtained.

There is still a long way to go. I now need to do research on the costs of production insurance and 'Errors and Omissions' insurance. I am following Sager's sage-like advice: "Turn over every stone and look behind every tree!" He doesn't want me to get blindsided by an unanticipated event. (God bless you, Bill!)

Putting together the contents of the documentary is going to be a challenge. An hour long documentary is actually 42 minutes in length—the rest of the time spent in commercial breaks. That gives us only 42 minutes to tell the story of SACO! (A two part documentary is not out of the question but it is more difficult to sell and takes twice as long to produce. I also fear that we don't have that kind of time as we are getting older.)

Here's my plan:

- 15 minutes on Miles, why SACO was created, and the responsibilities held by the group. (I'll need the permission of the Miles family for shooting their collection of photographs.)
- 18 minutes of personal experiences.
- 9 minutes 'wrap' including footage of the reunion.

Here's where I may need your help and advice. I can't make everybody a 'star'. There's just not enough time. I need to find the most colorful and insightful stories and put them together. I have a big SACO directory in

front of me and I could write each and every member asking them about their 'story' but that would take months! It's not an efficient use of time.

I would like to interview as many people as possible at the reunion but can spend no longer than 45 minutes with each person. Although their story may not make it into the final product, they will have it on videotape, which can be passed down to their children and grandchildren. A precious gift.

It is my intention to book an additional room in which the interviews will take place. ('Location fees' do not apply to hotel rooms!) Equipment will be set up and left in place so that interviews can take place smoothly.

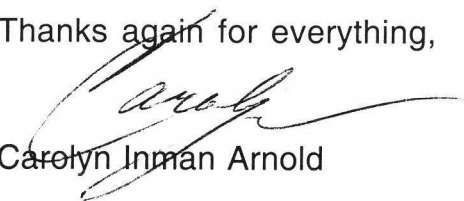
Here is a sampling of the questions that I plan to ask:

- What made you want to volunteer for dangerous duty behind enemy lines? (Does anyone have a copy of the original call to duty?)
- What is your most vivid memory of SACO?
- What was it like working under the leadership of Miles? (What made Miles so different?)
- What camp were you assigned to and describe the living conditions.
- What was your camp's main objective? (Intelligence, weather reporting, radio, etc.)
- Describe the most threatening or dangerous moment of your tour.
- What is your fondest memory?
- Describe the relationship and cooperation with the Chinese.
- What is it that created the strong bond between the SACO men.
- Describe the importance of these reunions.

Due to time restraints, it is my intention to keep the questions to a minimum but there may be more questions that arise out of answers given.

I am copying this letter to the trustees because communication between us is very important. The upcoming months will move swiftly and the reunion will be upon us before we know it!

Thanks again for everything,

  
Carolyn Inman Arnold

Cc: Trustees





MILITARY INTELLIGENCE BUREAU  
MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE  
SHIHLIN, TAIPEI, TAIWAN  
REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Mr. Bill Bartee  
Secretary, SACO  
4624 N. Cheyenne Trail  
Tucson, AZ 85750-9717

4 October, 1999

Dear Mr. Bartee:

I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation for the sympathy and concerns that you and members of SACO rendered to the people who suffered from the calamitous earthquake that struck central Taiwan on September 21, 1999. Fortunately, our friends at the veterans' home and the children at Hua Hsing Orphanage were safe from this catastrophe.

Although people buffeted by the quake have suffered greatly from the loss of their beloved family, relatives, and friends, as well as property damage, they are being comforted by the fraternity and sorority shared with others within the whole nation. All sectors of Taiwan are doing their best to relieve the people's plight and rehabilitate the disaster areas. It is good to see that our fellow citizens understand the difficulties our nation is facing and are willing to help each other. We are very touched and grateful that the rescue teams and humanitarian aid from all over the world have come to Taiwan to help in time. I would particularly like to thank members of SACO for their philanthropy and friendship. With such spiritual and physical support as well as their own strong will to stand up again, I am fully convinced that victims of the 921 earthquake will soon recover from this disaster.

I understand that you, members of SACO, are eager to help. May I provide the following account information for your generous contributions.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs Account for the 921 Earthquake.  
International Commercial Bank of China, Head Office.  
Account Number: 00753018830

Again, please accept my sincere appreciation.

Truly,

Hsu Chu-sheng  
Director, MIB  
VADM, ROC Navy

# TAIWAN EARTHQUAKE

December 21, 1999

MEMO for: All SACO Officers and Trustee's

RE: Taiwan Earthquake Disaster Fund

Forwarded for your information are copies of:

- a. Correspondence relative to referenced fund.
- b. List of contributors.

A cashiers check in the amount of \$3,285 has been forwarded to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Account # 00753018830, established at the International Bank of China, Head Office as instructed by V. Adm. Hsu, Chu-sheng Director of the M.I.B.

It is important to remember that this effort was made to indicate our concern and caring for our Chinese friends as opposed to trying to repair the entire damage. To that end I believe our goal was achieved by this gesture.

At the request of some contributors their names have been omitted from the list. The amounts of each contribution are also withheld until a firm policy is established on this subject. The total can be summarized as follows:

|    |                        |         |
|----|------------------------|---------|
| 1. | Officers and Trustees' | \$1,300 |
| 2. | Membership             | 983     |
| 3. | SACO Treasury          | \$1,000 |
| 4. | Interest               | 2       |

I would like to take this opportunity to express my personal thanks and gratitude for the generosity shown by all. I'm sure it can be considered as "*Above and Beyond*" especially at this time of the year and on such short notice. Where else but SACO could we find such a "*CanDo*" attitude.

Sincerely

  
Bill Bartee  
Secretary

Encl: 10/4/99 Ltr from M.I.B  
12/21/99 Cover ltr to Ministry of Foreign Affairs.  
12/21/99 Ltr. To M.I.B  
List of contributors

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## CONTRIBUTORS TO THE TAIWAN EARTHQUAKE

### DISASTER FUND

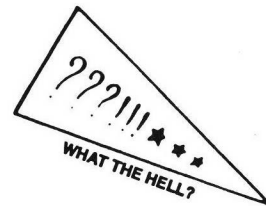
|                      |                      |                  |                  |
|----------------------|----------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Bill Miller          | Salvatore Ciaccio    | William Sager    | Richard Terpstra |
| Anonymous            | Arlene "Peg" Leshner | George Barrett   | Burnell Rebert   |
| Willie Baker         | Don Hardenbrook      | Stephen J. Fiduk | Anonymous        |
| Erma & Richard Rutan | H. W. Weskamp        | Buren Hanson     | Richard Bannier  |
| Bill Bartee          | Herbert Goldberg     | Harold Bonin     | Edward J. Lynch  |
| Paul Casamajor       | Beryl Breitstein     | John C. Waters   | SACO Treasury    |
| Jack Miller          | Robert J. Hoe        | John N Klos      |                  |



# SACO

SINO AMERICAN COOPERATIVE ORGANIZATION

U. S. NAVAL GROUP CHINA VETERANS



Vice Admiral Milton E. Miles  
Perpetual Skipper

December 21, 1999

Vice Admiral Hsu, Chu-sheng ROC Navy  
Director M.I.B.  
P.O. Box 3692  
Taipei, Taiwan, R.O.C.

Re: 921 Earthquake

Dear Admiral Hsu, Chu-sheng

The enclosed letter is provided for your information. We thank you profusely for your assistance and guidance in this matter. A cashiers check in the amount of \$3,285 was forwarded to the Ministry of foreign Affairs, Account #00753018830, on 12/21/1999.

While the amount is comparatively small for such a large rehabilitation project we would hope that it expresses SACO's profound concern for those affected.

We have made every effort to show this concern prior to the Christmas Season in order to express our *"Good will toward our Chinese friends"*.

Sincerely

Bill Bartee  
Secretary

Enc: One enclosure

CC: Saco Officers & Trustees

Editor's note:

"Enclosed letter" has reference to letter to Ministry of Foreign Affairs which follows next page.

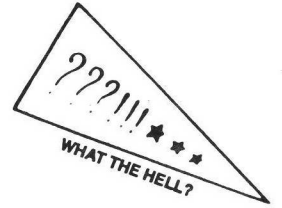




# SACO

SINO AMERICAN COOPERATIVE ORGANIZATION

U. S. NAVAL GROUP CHINA VETERANS



Vice Admiral Milton E. Miles  
Perpetual Skipper

December 21, 1999

Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Account for 921 earthquake  
International Commercial Bank of China  
Head Office

Taipei, Taiwan, R.O.C.

Re: Earthquake Fund – Account Number 00753018830

Your Excellency

As an indication of our concern and an effort to provide some assistance to our Chinese friends, please accept the enclosed check for such use as you deem appropriate in relation to the 921 earthquake victims. While our wish is that the amount could be larger we in the SACO organization hope it will provide some small measure of assistance to the survivors in getting their lives back to normal.

The funds for this check were assembled by individual donations from SACO members throughout the United States thus there is somewhat of a delay in getting them to you. For that we apologize but as the old adage goes "*Better late than never*".

For your information SACO is made up of a group of veterans who served under General Tail Li and Admiral M.E. Miles during World War II. Throughout the years since, we have continued to maintain contact with some of our Chinese friends. Vice Admiral Hsu, Chu-sheng, the present Director of M.I.B. was kind enough to provide us with the information relative to your office and the appropriate account number. I am therefore providing him with a copy of this correspondence.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter and please relay our best regards to those who have suffered in this catastrophe.

Sincerely

Bill Bartee  
Secretary

C.C.: V.Adm Hsu, Chu-sheng, M.I.B.

# **“Doc” Felmly’s Campaign to get Combat Action Ribbon becomes reality**

**Although it’s been several years, Doc’s perseverance has paid off.**

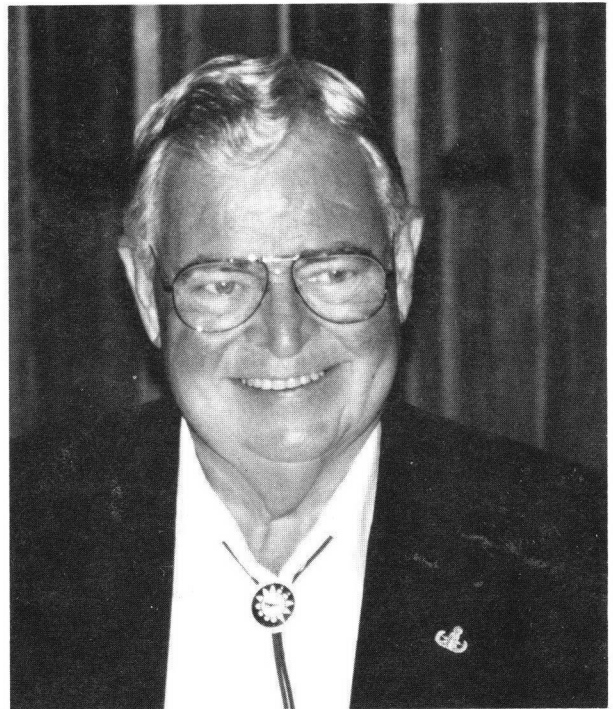
As “Doc” wrote in 1993 (see Issue #9 p. 47):

“I was actually unaware of this ribbon (there is no corresponding medal) until early in 1989. My inquiry sent to the Board of Medals and Awards was answered by the National Personnel Records Center, solely in the form of a scribbled note in the margin of my original letter, which was returned to me.

“I was told that the dates of eligibility covered service from 1 March 1961 to 15 May 1975. For a moment, I let the matter drop. I also inquired elsewhere as to the cutoff date for awards for performances in WWII, and was told , ‘It was long ago.’

Not satisfied with the negatives responses, Doc cited a couple instances (detailed in above reference) that were not within the boundaries of “expiration” and further pursued his contention of “righting a wrong.”

The following letter to Doc from his former friend and patient, Rep. Michael McNulty (D-NY) reveals the fruition of Doc’s dedication to gain recognition for many of the SACO Tigers.



**Dr. Lloyd M. Felmly, MD**

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON TRADE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT

WASHINGTON OFFICE:  
2161 RAYBURN BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515-3221  
(202) 225-5078



MICHAEL R. McNULTY  
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES  
21ST DISTRICT, NEW YORK

February 1, 2000

Dr. Lloyd M. Felmly  
432 Golden Beach Boulevard  
Venice, Florida 34285

Dear Dr. Felmly:

I thought you might like an update regarding the Navy Combat Action Ribbon.

As you know, my bill, H.R. 552, was included as a provision of the conference report of the annual Defense Authorization bill. This is the legislation that determines the spending and policy priorities for the U.S. Department of Defense, for the next Fiscal Year. The President signed this proposal into law on October 5, 1999.

The provision that is included in what is now Public Law 106-65: "Authorizes the Secretary of the Navy to award the Navy Combat Action Ribbon to a member of the Navy or Marine Corps for participation in ground or surface combat during any period after December 6, 1941 and before March 1, 1961, if the Secretary determines that the member has not been previously recognized for such participation".

The Department of Defense is currently preparing the regulations and forms necessary to implement the change in the law. This is expected to be completed sometime in March, 2000.

Doc, we would not have reached this point with out your assistance and advice. While it was a long-haul, I appreciate your counsel.

Sincerely, *Ben Wicks*

*Michael R. McNulty*  
Michael R. McNulty  
Member of Congress

MRM/jeg

DISTRICT OFFICES  
ROOM 827  
LEO W. O'BRIEN  
FEDERAL BUILDING  
ALBANY, NY 12207  
(518) 465-0700

U.S. POST OFFICE  
SCHENECTADY, NY 12305  
(518) 374-4547

33 2ND STREET  
TROY, NY 12180  
(518) 271-0822

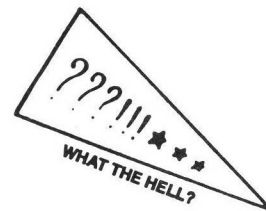
2490 RIVERFRONT CENTER  
AMSTERDAM, NY 12010  
(518) 843-3400



# SACO

SINO AMERICAN COOPERATIVE ORGANIZATION

U. S. NAVAL GROUP CHINA VETERANS



Vice Admiral Milton E. Miles  
Perpetual Skipper

February 18, 2000

Congressman Michael R. McNulty  
2161 Rayburn Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-3221

Re: Navy Combat Action Ribbon.

Dear Congressman McNulty,

On behalf of the Sino-American Cooperative Organization (SACO) Veterans Group I would like to convey our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to you for your successful effort in getting H.R. 552 included and approved in the upcoming defense budget.

As you are no doubt aware, SACO was one of the initial special operations groups formed during WW11. Because of the secrecy imposed, the organization was given very little recognition.

Dr. Lloyd Felmy M.D. was kind enough to keep our organization apprised of the bill's status during the arduous times when it appeared the effort might be for naught.

As you are aware it is extremely difficult for those who "Have Not" been there to understand why a mere ribbon has so much meaning to those who "Have". I'm not sure there is an explanation however I personally feel it is a visible expression of gratitude, as opposed to the Navy's age-old response of "Well Done". Even now, it is interesting to note that some of those in the Navy do not seem to accept the edict (See enclosure from VFW Magazine). I'm sure that after clarification they will comply.

Again, please accept our sincere and profound thanks for your efforts in recognizing a group of more or less forgotten individuals.

Sincerely,

Bill Bartee  
Secretary

Encl:

CC: Officers & Trustees.

Editor's note: Re: applying for ribbon - The only info I have at the moment is a notice from VFW magazine which reads:  
To obtain a CAR, fill out SF 180 - *Request Pertaining to Military Records* - and send it along with a copy of your discharge to:  
*Bureau of Naval Personnel, Liaison Office, Room 5409, 9700 Page Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63132-5100*

# ANOTHER SACO SON FOLLOWS U.S. NAVY CAREER

DR. AND MRS. LLOYD M. "DOC" FELMLY

PROUDLY ANNOUNCE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

OF THEIR SON

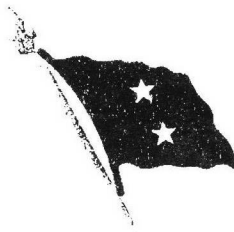
CAPTAIN MICHAEL J. FELMLY, USN



**Vice Admiral (I.D. unknown) Presents  
Captain Felmly Official Appointment  
to the Naval War College.**

Copy of this appointment and *LEGION OF MERIT  
AWARD* are on following pages.

Captain Felmly, might I add, and I'm sure speaking for all SACO Tigers, (today's "family" of who and what we were in *The Rice Paddy Navy in China in WWII*) that we are happy to acknowledge your commendable career. We, too, along with your parents, are proud of those children of our "SACO Family" who have chosen the U.S. Navy as their life. We thank you for your love and protection of our country and wish you peaceful waters and continued success always Ed..



PROVOST, NAVAL WAR COLLEGE  
Newport, Rhode Island  
02841-1207

12 January 2000

Dear Captain Felmly,

I am pleased to inform you of your appointment to the Arleigh Burke Military Chair of Surface Warfare. The Chair commemorates the distinguished record of accomplishments of Admiral Burke in all aspects of naval warfare, both operationally and academically. Your appointment to this Chair recognizes the experience, intellectual accomplishments, and professional recognition you have achieved in the same field among your peers.

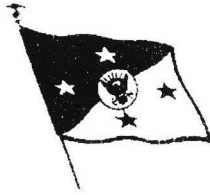
As the Burke Chairholder, you are not only the focal point of intellectual activity for Surface Warfare, but you accede to a special relationship with the sponsor of that area of interest on the staff of the Chief of Naval Operations as well as other service staffs who have significant responsibilities in that area. By maintaining a close and active dialogue with the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations Resources, Warfare Requirements and Assessments (N8), you will ensure the Naval War College (NWC) remains abreast of current Navy plans, policies, and developments in current operations which are a fundamental part of the intellectual renaissance in strategic thought underway at the NWC. By this appointment, you are responsible for the delivery of lectures, the conduct of research and seminars, and for providing consultation on naval strategy to the President, faculty, staff, and student body of the NWC. Likewise, you will ensure that the OPNAV sponsors and other relevant commands have the opportunity to participate in the evolving strategic and operational thought at the NWC.

All of us on the faculty and staff extend our most sincere congratulations on this most well deserved appointment.

Warm regards,

PETER A. C. LONG  
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy

CAPT Michael L. Felmly, USN  
Naval War College  
676 Cushing Road  
Newport, RI 02841-1207



# Chief of Naval Operations

The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the  
LEGION OF MERIT to

CAPTAIN MICHAEL L. FELMLY  
UNITED STATES NAVY

for service as set forth in the following

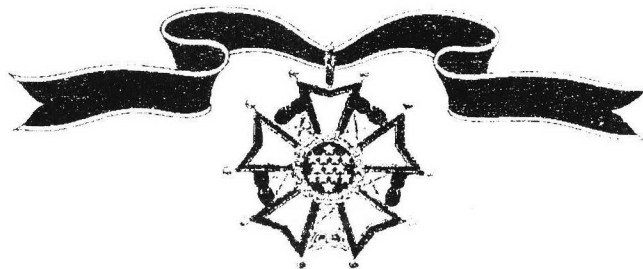
CITATION:

For exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding service as Assistant Chief of Staff for Command, Control, Communications, Computers and Intelligence (C4I) for Commander, SEVENTH Fleet from July 1997 to July 1999. Captain Felmly performed his duties in an exemplary and highly professional manner. Displaying extensive knowledge of fleet operational issues, he provided outstanding technical support for major exercises including ULCHI FOCUS LENS, KEEN EDGE, TEMPEST EXPRESS, TEMPO BRAVE, and TANDEM THRUST. Captain Felmly's vast experience and technical insight ensured all issues involving command and control matters were expertly planned and flawlessly executed. He provided detailed training to embarked staffs on flagship and theater C4I architectures significantly improving the Joint Task Force Commander's warfighting ability and mission effectiveness. Representing Commander, SEVENTH Fleet at numerous C4I forums around the world, he skillfully crafted a SEVENTH Fleet position on the integration of new C4I technologies into the warfighting environment. By his exceptional professional ability, personal initiative, and total dedication to duty, Captain Felmly reflected great credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.

For the President,

Handwritten signature of J. L. Johnson

J. L. JOHNSON  
Admiral, United States Navy  
Chief of Naval Operations



# THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT  
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
HAS AWARDED THE

## LEGION OF MERIT

TO

CAPTAIN MICHAEL L. FELMLY, UNITED STATES NAVY

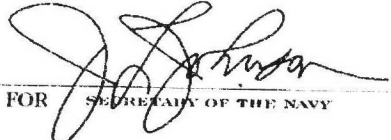
FOR

EXCEPTIONALLY MERITORIOUS CONDUCT  
IN THE PERFORMANCE OF OUTSTANDING SERVICES

FROM JULY 1997 TO JULY 1999

GIVEN THIS 28TH DAY OF SEP 19 99



  
FOR SECRETARY OF THE NAVY



# Al Parsons Writes re: SACO Lifetime Membership & Special Card.

10-8-99

Dear Bill (Bartee)

Received the "SACO NEWS," your letter, my "Lifetime Membership" in the SACO organization and the membership card. I'm not one to grope around for words, but I honestly don't know how to thank you, Harold, Richard and the entire SACO gang. I suppose the best response off the top of the "ole gourd" would be, "What an Honor!"

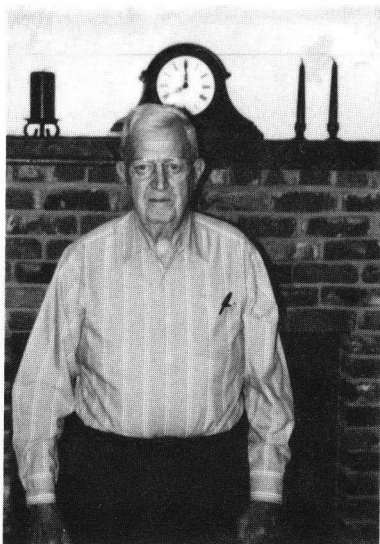
Harold, as you well know, is one of the closest friends I have ever had. He has been a true friend to me and SACO for some 55 yrs. (since 1944). Can you even imagine it's been that long? I'll never forget our indoctrination in Wash., D.C. into this new venture. No one seemed to know what was about to transpire from one day to the next. When we arrived at San Pedro, CA, we still were not totally convinced. The train-ride from Bombay to Calcutta, India seemed to support some of the rumors concerning China. What a fantastic job SACO did in China under VAdm. Milton E. "Mary" Miles, the greatest skipper of all time. His legacy continues to live through the memory and loyalty of all SACO members. The "SACO NEWS" is a great example of the love this skipper had for his crew and vice versa. Richard Rutan does a great job keeping all informed of the latest developments and stories of past episodes we may never have known.

Please forgive the belated thanks; we have had a summer of sickness and are now praying the worst is behind.

God bless you all,

*Al Parsons*

**ALFRED W. PARSONS**  
5648 Tucker Rd.  
Ooltewah, TN 37363



Know All Ye That the Bearer  
**ALFRED W. PARSONS**

Having duly served with U.S. Naval Group China as a member of  
The Rice Paddy Navy, during which time he suffered untold  
hardships as a Japanese P.O.W. is hereby certified  
**LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP**

# LEE ALVERSON RELIVES ORDERS TO COMPLETE LONE JOURNEY OF OVER HALF-CENTURY AGO

## THE WOO SU AFFAIR

In this excerpt from the China section of his autobiography, Alverson amazingly retraces his expedition of 55 years ago with almost total recall.

By late June, more than half of the camp personnel were in the field with their Chinese colleagues engaging the Japanese forces at a number of coastal areas. I had just come down from the RDF shack when I was told that Commander Halperin had requested I proceed down-river immediately and courier two .50 caliber machine guns to SACO forces who were about to make an attack on a small Japanese-held island, just to the south of Amoy Harbor. I didn't know what Radio Intelligence Hqtrs would think and, at that point in time, didn't really care. Back at the room I checked my weapons, laid out my clothes and helmet, picked up some atabrine pills at the sick bay and pulled out my rubberized maps of Fujien Province. Arrangements were made to

have a contingent of coolies carry the guns over the coastal trail, past the treacherous rapids and falls that made boat traffic impossible below Huaan for about 5 to 7 miles down-river. At that point, the guns were to be loaded on a sampan and the guns ferried to Shima.

The next morning I departed, just after sunup with my coolie-carriers and two Chinese SACO soldiers. The trail to the coast ran across the Huaan Valley, filled with rice paddies, and then climbed steeply for several miles up a mountain grade. When we finally reached the top of the pass, I could see why the Japanese forces might be reluctant to attack the American mountain hideaway. The trail from the top of the pass down to the river got steeper and steeper and half-way down, became difficult to



traverse. In many places, the trail was almost tantamount to making your way down the face of a cliff. We moved slowly and carefully down a path that frequently sloped at an angle exceeding 45 degrees. As we neared the river, the trail descended through a small gorge on rocks that had apparently been worn down by generations of travelers. The coolies carefully inched their way down the trail, but gave evidence that they knew exactly what they were doing.

I arrived at the river launch site about 10 minutes before

the rest of the entourage. At the foot of the trail, there was a small clump of buildings, several houseboats and a dock. Tied to one side was a sampan, somewhat larger than I had used upriver. It had a mat-covered living area amidship and just forward of the "mat cabin" was a charcoal stove built into a stone base. On board, I could see the apparent owner, presumably his wife and a small girl who was perhaps 5 to 6 years old. When the coolies arrived, the guns and ammunition were immediately put on board and I jumped on deck. The boatman untied the sampan and we were on our way. The two SACO men and the coolies standing on the back gave me "thumbs up" as we began our river trek. The rest was up to me and the sampan crew. If luck was with us, we would be in Shima in about 15 or 16 hours. The river, from the launch site seaward, was, however, larger, deeper and the pace of flow slower. As they were along the entire length of the river of the Nine Dragons, the mountains rose steeply on both sides of the river banks.

I sat just forward of the "mat-cabin" with my carbine laying across my waist and watched the banks of the river slide past. The owner manned the stern oar and kept the sampan in the areas of strongest current. There were no

villages or people to be seen along the river bank, but several sampans passed us trying to make their way up river. Neither the boatman nor his wife tried to make any conversation with me and their daughter sat quietly, seemingly pensive and watched me continuously. I smiled at her several times, but her face remained stoic and she seemed almost mesmerized. Shortly after noon, the boatman's wife put some rice on the charcoal stove along with a few greens. When the rice was cooked, she brought me a bowl along with some tea and a set of wooden chopsticks. I noticed that she had poured hot water over them before she presented them, so I assumed she had a sense of sanitation. However, with the giving of the food, there was no smile, just a nod of the head when I thanked her.

Suddenly, I felt like a piece of freight and little more. It made me uneasy as I had always gotten along well with the SACO Chinese element and civilians that I had met or worked with around Huanan. In my thoughts, I imagined that they were not overwhelmed with taking their boat so far down river in areas sometimes frequented by the Japanese. After all, Shima was a name given to the town after the Japanese had occupied the region - it was not a Chinese

name. There was also the possibility that whoever had arranged the trip had not paid them well or intimidated them. Over the next several hours, the young girl continued to stare at me without emotion or facial expressions while her parents tended the boat. It seemed to me like I had boarded with the plague! I sat quietly for the most of the afternoon, occasionally checking my maps in an attempt to gauge where we were. Just before sundown, the wife cooked up some more rice to which several chunks of fish were added. Again, she gave me a bowl along with chopsticks and without expression, moved off to take care of her family.

It became very dark after the sunset, but with just enough star- and moonlight for the operator to navigate the boat. About ten in the evening, I laid down under the mat-cabin to rest assuming that we would arrive in Shima before sunrise. The daughter had already laid down in the area adjacent to me and on the other side of the sampan. She wasn't sleeping, just lying there watching my every move. My intentions were to take a shore rest, but within a few minutes, I fell into a deep sleep. It has been a long day starting at five in the morning; we had hiked several hours

and perhaps I had been a little tense about carrying vital cargo down river to a town I had only seen on my rubberized map. It was the first time I had to operate solo. Successful completion of my mission was totally in the hands of an unknown (to me) boatman.

Sometime after midnight, I woke up hearing the yelling of the boatman and his wife. I got up, and to my surprise, found that the boat had gone aground on a sandbar. It was so dark that I couldn't make out the banks of the river. I could see, however, that the boatman had gone over the side and was attempting to free the sampan. He had braced his back against the hull of the boat and was straining to move it into deeper water. After about 15 minutes it became clear to me that he wasn't going to get the job done. At that point, I stripped down to my jockey shorts, put my clothes and guns under the covered area and jumped into the water onto the sandbar. The water was somewhat over my knees and shallow enough to get good leverage on the boat. Working together, I could feel the sampan move several inches at a time towards deeper water.

After five to ten minutes, the boat lurched free and began to swing sharply into the current. I had one hand firmly on the

gunnel, but, with my body twisting, found it difficult to get in a position to pull myself on board. In the interim, the boat owner had scampered up on deck and I suddenly felt his hand reach down and under my arm to steady me until I got my second hand on the boat railing. I pulled myself up and was soon on deck, a little cold and almost naked. The wife motioned for me to come alongside of the charcoal stove to which she had added fuel and, at the same time, handed me something resembling a towel. As soon as I dried myself off, she gave me, as well as her husband, a bowl of hot tea. They both looked at me for a few seconds and then began to laugh. It was infectious and I joined them in the laughter. The ice had broken; I was no longer just "freight."

I took off my jockey shorts, put on my pants, dried the shorts next to the stove and redressed. It was then just before three in the morning and we were again making for Shima, but I was afraid we were going to arrive late. Less than two hours later, dawn was upon us. I noted we were leaving the mountains and another large river was flowing in from the right side of the boat. I pulled my rubberized map out of my jacket pocket and saw that we had arrived at the junction in the river where a branch that

flowed down from Changchow joined the River of the Nine Dragons. Shima appeared to be only several miles downstream. I looked at my watch. It was shortly after five in the morning; we were running late. I began to get nervous and asked the boatman (in Chinese) to hurry, but he just smiled and gave a gesture that I interpreted as, "What can I do?"

About an hour later, we pulled into a relatively large dock at Shima. The town, made up of two-storied stucco or mud buildings was built down to the river and ran several blocks inland. We tied the boat up alongside a host of other sampans, but there was no one in sight waiting to greet us. My choice was to stay on board and wait for someone to contact me or leave the guns with the boat owner and attempt to locate our SACO unit. In the almost 18-hour trip with the small boat family, we had bonded. I felt confident that they would stay put with my cargo. I got off the sampan and looked at the boatman and said, "Please wait, thanks (dunge dung, si si!)", in my best Chinese. He nodded his head and I jumped up on the dock and ran into town. There were only a few people walking the streets and all of them were strangers. To my amazement, I ran into an outdoor phone and I had been told there was phone service

into Changchow. Somehow I managed to get an operator and struggled to try to get her to put me in touch with the American base in Changchow, but my Chinese was just not adequate to get the call through.

I then turned and started back to the boat when a Chinese SACO soldier ran up to me and motioned for me to follow. We quickly returned to the boat where we transferred the cargo to a smaller sampan. Just before departing, I took one of the USN pins off my shirt collar and pinned it on the little girl, shook hands with the boatman and thanked his wife. As I jumped onto the adjacent boat, both waved (the Chinese wave for good-bye is different than used in the West) and smiled and at last the daughter's face broke into a grin. I wasn't sure if the grin was for me or because the large white foreigner that had invaded her life was leaving. It didn't make any difference because the grin was instantly captured and copied in my memory - *it has remained there for over 50 years*. It had been a good trip and they had brought me safely to my destination. The guns fate, as well as mine, were now in the hands of another unknown boatman and a fellow warrior

We immediately started down-river and I had no idea where we were bound. I

looked at the map and it was obvious that we were moving into enemy-held territory. After about an hour drifting, it was apparent to me, by examining the river banks, we were in an area of tidal influence. In the back of my mind, thoughts began to stir that this unknown SACO soldier might well be a Japanese agent who was about to deliver the sampan, guns and me to a Japanese patrol boat. After all, 100,000 dollars was a lot of money. However, within minutes, he had the sampan boatman pull over to the river bank. There were a number of buildings perhaps 200 yards away from the river. He motioned for me to wait and ran quickly into the small town and disappeared. A few minutes later, he returned and pointed downstream. I was more than a little nervous, but my choices were few. Trust the SACO soldier or abandon the effort to deliver the guns. We continued down-river and in less than five minutes, I spotted our navy unit standing several yards away from the river bank. I was relieved and the men on shore were equally happy as the guns that they felt were vital to the success of the mission were in their hands. My confidence in my fellow Chinese had skyrocketed.

In the next few days, things moved so fast it is difficult for me to reconstruct them with

any accuracy. From the site on the bank of the estuary of the River of Nine Dragons, our unit moved off towards the Island of WooSu; the target of a planned attack. In addition to taking the island, there were expectations of capturing a set of code books from the Japanese radio station. After moving through several villages. (I believe Gongway and Wong Dung), the SACO commandos arrived at Tau Be, a small town largely occupied by fishermen on the mainland opposite the island of WooSu. The trip to Tau Be was undertaken at night and the trail was difficult to follow because it was both steep and narrow. Although all arrived without major injuries, a number of slips and falls had left some of the men with bruises and sore muscles.

The attack started about sundown as several groups aboard sampans approached the island from different directions. I remember West and several other SACO men were left on the mainland with one of the fifty caliber machine guns and there was also a fifty caliber gun taken to the small island adjacent to Woo Su-Woo An. The machine guns were provided to protect the departing landing party and their return. However, Murphy's law was at work. The Japanese, anticipating the attack, had reinforced the island and had patrol boats

and artillery available and ready for the island's defense. When our sampans were about 50 to 100 yards offshore, all hell broke loose. The shore side defenses let loose, the patrol boats began to approach our boats and shelling of the area in and around Tau Be began. I'm not sure in what order, all I know is that things did not go as planned. With bullets flying through the sampan sails and sides, the boatmen fled back to the mainland with the American and Chinese commandos. Those thrown into the water swam ashore.

My role in the adventure had been minor, but I was glad the machine guns had been delivered. West and others used the machine guns well in battling off the enemy patrol vessels which allowed our men to evacuate the battle scene. Halperin would not allow me to join the attack force noting that I had been up for almost 45 hours with little or no sleep and that from the launch site, I should make my way back to Shima and then to Changchow. The short battle had been a SNAFU and we were unable to get anyone on the island. On the other hand, we managed to fight off their patrol vessels and recover our force largely intact. Despite bullet and shells filling the evening skies and sunken junks, only a few were injured and we had not lost an

American or Chinese guerrilla member.

While the men were regrouping on the mainland, I was on my way back to the base camp. I was offered a Chinese guide, but during the few days since leaving Huaan, my confidence in making my way through the Chinese countryside had grown immensely. I made my way back to Shima before sundown the day following the raid. There, I put up in a river-front inn. The pace of the previous few days had caught up with me and I fell asleep without taking dinner. I slept straight through until about 8 the next morning. When I awoke, I found large swollen bites all over my entire body. I hadn't secured my mosquito tent properly and I had been scavenged by a horde of bed bugs. I suspect they had taken 40 or more bites out of my hide. I had learned another lesson of survival and was not as much concerned with the bites as the possibilities that I would get something worse from them.

When I dressed and went outdoors, the streets were crowded with people going to work, moving products through the streets or shopping. I found a small restaurant and ordered some boiled eggs, rice and hot tea. It was a good breakfast. Then I returned to the waterfront to

secure transportation upriver. A young woman, perhaps 17 or 20 years old who knew English quite well, came up to me and asked if she could help and I said, "Yes, I need to make my way to Changchow." She told me that a river ferry would leave for there in about an hour and took me to an office where I purchased a ticket. I thanked her, she smiled and moved off into the crowds on the street.

The boat docked at the same location that I arrived in Shima from Huaan. It was a diesel-powered river craft about 65 feet in length, beamy and when loaded, carried about 60 to 80 passengers including adults, children and various livestock. I noticed several Chinese soldiers had boarded, but I was not sure they were a part of our SACO group. The local police dressed much the same as our SACO men. They seemed to be accompanying a couple of prisoners, but I wasn't sure. The trip upriver was going well. Someone had given me a large tangerine which was sweet and juicy. I sat outside the main cabin eating my gift of fruit in the warm sun. It was a pleasant day on the river. The passengers seemed happy and were chatting among themselves. I took out my AAF map and looked at the route up the river. We would go up the River of Nine

Dragons several miles and then take the branch that moved off to the southwest towards Changchow instead of proceeding up the main branch towards Huaan. The countryside from Shima inland was largely a part of a "flat coastal plane" that ran from the ocean to the base of the mountains, the latter dominated the countryside from there hundreds of miles inland. The land adjacent to the river was occupied by small farms growing rice and occasional fruit orchards.

Perhaps an hour and a half later, we arrived at the confluence of the two major river branches and swung off and started up the southern tributary that ran past Changchow. The river was smaller and the current faster. I could see the mountain rising to the north, but the valley was much broader than the gorge that the river followed down from Huaan. We had been on the Changchow branch of the river for about 30 minutes when a fight broke out between the Chinese soldiers and several of their prisoners. They were standing between the crafts house and the railing, perhaps 30 or so feet forward of where I was sitting. As there were about 12 to 15 passengers between me and the scuffle, I couldn't make out what was going on except there was a lot of pushing and yelling. Suddenly one of the

prisoners shoved the guard down, jumped on the rail and dove into the river. The two guards were screaming at the escaped man who, with an excellent free-style stroke, was heading for the bank of the river. The guards were helpless because they had no guns, just wooden clubs (guns and ammunition were scarce and only issued by the Navy to individuals who had passed our training course). Soon they were pointing to and yelling at me and I presumed they wanted me to shoot the escaping prisoner. By the looks on the soldiers faces, I could tell they were enraged, but I didn't want to shoot the prisoner without some understanding of the situation. This just infuriated the soldiers who screamed louder. "Shoot, shoot!" in Chinese. However, when I looked at the civilian passengers, it was obvious they didn't want me to get involved and an old woman, sitting next to me, kept shaking her head. I put my gun down and sat back against the cabin. It was apparent I had caused the soldiers to lose face and my inaction had made enemies. Several hours later, we arrived at Changchow and the soldiers scampered ashore and moved off to report to their superiors. When I reached the American Base I told the officer-in-charge about the incident and he told me that I

had done the right thing and not to worry and he would talk to the local SACO Headquarters about the incident. Later, I was told that the local Chinese Commander had said that under their rules of war, they would have shot the prisoner, but it was ridiculous for their escorts to have expected me to intervene. Later, I met the two guards and, through an interpreter, told them that I just didn't know what was going on and what my responsibilities were as a member of SACO. We parted friends, perhaps because I had sought them out to give an explanation, but I suspected they still would have been happier if I had shot the swimming escapee in the back. It was the local way of doing business.

At the base of Changchow, they had hot water, indoor plumbing and good food. More fruit and vegetables were available than in Huaan. I had been traveling in sampans and walking for the better part of a week. I cleaned up and crashed in my bunk and when I awoke the next morning, the most of the raiding party from the Woo Su event had returned. There were a thousand stories and at least a dozen versions of the raid, but no one was pointing fingers. It didn't go well, but we had learned something about our enemy, our

comrades, and planning for the things that are not supposed to happen.

Following the Japanese surrender, members of Camp 6 were heading home - we pick up Alverson's story of events leading to departure from China . . .

We were only in Amoy/Goo Long Gu for about 10 days when arrangements were made to take our group to Shanghai. The first plane, a C-47, arrived the following day and took 20 or so of our group north while the rest of us, with the exception of a few that were to remain and transfer war materials to Chiang Kai-shek's troops, readied our gear for a flight out the next morning. It was then that it suddenly dawned on me that our close-knit group would soon be broken up and that the China experience was coming to an end. With roughly half our group gone, it was lonely and memories of a war we were fighting just a month ago seemed unreal. With the departure of the American component of the SACO unit, all of us began to realize the friendship and bonds we had developed with our house-boys who stood watching the first plane depart with tears in their eyes. Duncan (H.R. Duncan, Boatswain Mate 1/c) and I had put together close to 200 dollars US in CNC currency and gave it to John before "Dunc" left on the first plane.

He took the money and began to cry.

The next day, the second C-47 arrived and the remainder of the group, including yours truly, boarded the plane, said our farewells to the remaining Americans and Chinese friends and flew off to Shanghai. I can't remember how long it took, but remember flying over continuous mountain ranges interspersed with the large rivers that were, at that time, the transportation links with the inland areas. Before arriving at Shanghai, the mountains gave way to a large flat coastal plain drained by numerous rivers. We sat down at the large Japanese built airport outside of town and from there were trucked to the Shanghai American School where SACO units from all over China were being billeted. The school rooms had been converted to barracks - each room loaded with bunks and lockers. We were back in the *real* Navy with a mess hall, sick bay and all. But, however, we retained our unique look of soldiers with USN pins on our khaki shirts. I was arranging my

belongings when I heard someone hollering my name. It was Duncan and O'Connor (G. W. O'Connor, CM 3/c) who had flown up the day earlier. Both had already received assignment in the various Naval facilities that were being opened in Shanghai. They told me that the Camp Six group was spread all over the school and were being reassigned to various activities in town.

The next morning, I was called into the local headquarters and told that I would be reassigned to a communications unit being set up down on the Bund. The Bund was the arc of the city along the Huangpu River at the foot of Bubbling Well Boulevard. To get to the communication center from the Shanghai American school, I would walk one block up from the school entrance to Bubbling Well Avenue and then down a mile or so to where the road ended on the river-front (Bund). From there, I turned left a couple of blocks. The building sat just upriver from where a large slough joined the Wangpoo. When we first arrived in Shanghai, the cost



of a bicycle rickshaw- ride from the School to the radio base was about a dollar. If it was raining, I would take a rickshaw to work. The city was exciting in that it was rebounding from Japanese control. New restaurants, dance halls, bars, night clubs and shops with jewelry and local artifacts were spring up all over town to entertain and relieve the servicemen of their extra greenbacks

After returning from work on the third day after my arrival, Duncan noted that we could move off the School campus into an apartment on our own. I asked how long we were likely to be in China before being sent home and discharged. He didn't seem to know and neither did the local CO at the School. I decided to remain at the School anticipating that we could be shipped out anytime. Most of SACO units had enough discharge points (discharge was dependent on your time in service, time overseas, time in combat, awards, etc.) so that we expected to be returned to the states as soon as transportation could be arranged. But, it wasn't really that simple in that replacements had to be on hand before you were relieved.

Duncan joined with O'Connor and found living quarters off campus. Nevertheless, that evening, the

three of us decided to go to a new restaurant called the Shanghai American Steak House. We arrived at about 6:30PM and there was a lineup waiting for tables. It seemed that every service person in Shanghai had the same idea. It amazed me how quickly the merchants had been able to respond to the changing control of the city and arranged for supplies and food stuffs sought by the growing number of American servicemen in town. When we arrived inside the restaurant, they had steaks of all types along with hash browns, fries, etc., and green salads. The food was good, but they were running the clients through as fast as they could and it looked like they were trying to make their fortune in one night.

The city was endowed with an ever-increasing number of servicemen as elements of the Pacific Fleet moved up into the Wangpoo and the Navy, Marines and Air Force swarmed into the city. The Shanghai we had known was rapidly transforming before our eyes and prices began to skyrocket. Rickshaw rides that had been a dollar several weeks earlier were up tenfold as was the price of food and most store merchandise. What had been a buyer's paradise was suddenly a seller's market. I had intended to buy Ruby a set of pearls at the

Palace Hotel down on the Bund, but waited too long to get a great buy. Nevertheless, I bargained with the jewelry store owner in the hotel until I got a nice necklace for 100 dollars. The same set could have been purchased for just over 40 dollars two weeks earlier. The crowds of Servicemen in town began to create difficulties for the local police as well as the MP (Military Police) and Shore Patrol (SP). Servicemen were going into the tough parts of the city, getting into difficulty with the local inhabitants and starting fights. The situation deteriorated until a number of American servicemen were found dead drifting down the sloughs and Wangpoo River. As a result, major sectors of Shanghai were put off-limits to US service personnel.

I was just finishing a week's duty at the communication center when I was asked if I could help a shore patrol unit. The officer said they needed someone who could speak a little Chinese, particularly when they were patrolling the off-limits area of the city. I tried to beg off, noting my Chinese was limited to essential language of survival and that conversational Chinese was out of my league. It didn't seem to sway anyone and I got signed up for a Saturday shore patrol duty. My job was simple, just to assist in discussion with local



**Ruby**

Believe it or not. I had our local radio station on which plays all the oldies. As I sat pondering how to display Ruby's picture, I can't tell you what an eerie feeling I had when Ray Charles comes on the air singing "Ruby." There must be an omen there. Ruby, did something special come your way on this date - 9 April 2000? Or did your psyche invade my indecision as to layout of this article? Anyway, I called Erma's attention to the song and held up Ruby's picture. We were both dumbfounded.

police or inhabitants when necessary. I knew my Chinese was totally inadequate, and besides, what little understood was mostly Fujien dialect. Operating out of a small truck, the night started off quite calm, but as the evening moved along, it became more interesting, still it largely involved getting drunks off the street, stopping small fights and intervening in disputes over how much someone really owed a merchant in CNC. We had not been called out into the off-limit areas and, as of midnight, the duty had been less challenging than I had anticipated.

Sometime around 1:30AM, we were advised that some sailors were in trouble in the off-limit area. We moved along quickly into a region several miles from the city center. We stopped outside an alley entrance where the local Chinese had blocked the road access. A policeman kept telling us not to enter and the American sailors were "pu hao!" (no good). We presumed that someone was in real difficulty and the five of us (four SPs and myself) made our way down the alley to a door where we could hear a lot of yelling. We pushed our way through the door and found ourselves immediately surrounded by half a dozen Chinese men with bamboo poles that were sharpened to a

razor's point. The points of the poles were at our stomachs and backs. We had entered a hornet's nest. They had about 10 American servicemen, some without pants, pinned against the back wall. On the other side of the room, 6 to 8 half-dressed prostitutes were screaming at the top of their lungs. I was scared and knew that if anyone attempted to start a fight, there was going to be a lot of blood around and some of it might be mine.

I attempted to stay cool and began talking to a woman who appeared to be the Madam. I asked if she spoke any English and she shook her head, "No." I then asked her in my primitive Chinese what the problem was. With gestures and a few chose words she got the message across that the Americans had cheated them, not paid and one of the young girls had been beaten. While this was going on, the Chinese men, who I believe were the prostitutes' husbands, stood silent and stoic with their sharpened bamboo poles within inches of our group. The lot of pinned sailors at this point, looked like all the blood had drained from their faces. The madam yelled for someone to come and a girl walked in from a side room with blood gushing from her nose and a bruised lip. I asked, "Who the hell" had done this, but the men stood silent. Then I noted that if we didn't settle

this to their satisfaction, there would be a lot of bodies floating down the river in the morning. Finally, one of the men admitted to having hit the girl because, "She was charging me way too much.!" One of the other SPs then said, "It's going to cost you a hell of a lot more to get out of this mess." I then asked the Madam how much money they wanted, which started a yelling match between the men and their girls or wives. I finally was able to get some words in that, "The Americans are your friends and helped to fight the Japanese." It sounded corny at the time, but it seemed to work. The Madam then pointed out three of the men and told me they were "Pu hao!" (very bad) and managed to get one work out in English, "Jail." She asked for a sum of about 80 dollars American which was about fivefold the going rate for sex. But then, they held all of the cards (and sharpened stakes) and the sailors had been way out of line. I discussed the matter with the SP-in-charge and he made the group pony up the money and took the three men the Madam pointed out into custody. The Chinese men grudgingly put down their poles and we retreated to safety. I think I was closer to death that night than anytime during the war.

The behavior of the American troops in Shanghai seemed to

be inversely related to their abundance. As the numbers of servicemen increased, there seemed to be an increased level of belligerence and a heightened tendency for them to demonstrate their masculinity. Shanghai was a great liberty town for those who had been to sea and were searching for fun and pleasure. There were a great number of "white" Russian, beautiful Chinese and a sprinkling of French girls in town. The local merchants had opened a number of dance halls, night clubs and good restaurants. Most of the men took advantage of the welcome mat that had been spread before them. A fair number, however, seemed to have forgotten that the Chinese had fought on our side and treated them with disdain and frequently beat up their host. It was embarrassing and did nothing to endure the locals to the American way of life.

Sometime in November, I met Lee Hall in Shanghai. He had been in my radio class on Point Loma and had served at Imperial Beach. He had just come in from Chungking and was anxious to see the town. We made a date to have dinner and I made reservations at a nice Russian restaurant several blocks up Bubvbling Well from the Park Hotel. I had eaten there numerous times and the food and atmosphere were excellent.

We started the night off with a walk down to the Bund where I showed him our communication center and then walked along to the Palace Hotel which fronted the Huangpu River. The hotel had a touch of class and an excellent bar, which we decided to visit. As we were entering the hotel a 2nd class bos'n's mate got out of a bicycle rickshaw and an argument erupted between the sailor and the rickshaw driver. The bos'n's mate yelled at the driver and then knocked him off the bike. He then barged into the Palace Bar and took a seat on one of the stools at the relatively long bar.

Lee and I followed the sailor into the bar and as there were no other seats, sat on two stools adjacent to him. I was next to the bos'n's mate who told me he was from the Cruiser Nashville which laid in the Huangpu just off the Bund. He was a little over six feet, about 190 pounds, and seemed friendly enough so I thought I would try a little diplomacy on him. I asked him if the rickshaw operator had tried to overcharged him and he answered in the affirmative, swearing about "the damn little cheats!" I then pointed out that most of the time the rickshaw drivers would ask for sums that were out of line, but could be argued down without getting violent. His mood changed in

an instant and he was off his stool and with one swing, knocked me off mine on to the floor. I got up and took a boxer's stance and began to defend myself. He came at me like a windmill, but moved more air around than making contact. On his second rush, I managed to get a good left jab right on his nose which drew blood and made him ferocious. He began to rush me over and over and although he landed only a few blows, he was strong and pushed me around. He, however, had not landed a solid punch and I got in another good left when two shore patrols came in and with several others, broke up the fight.

I was glad they had come because his nose was bleeding rather profusely and he was madder than an enraged bull. They took us outside and said we could either go our way with no more trouble or spend the night in the brig. We shook hands and were about ready to depart the scene when a Chinese policeman came up and talked to the Sps about the incident with the rickshaw driver. The bos'n's mate ended up paying the driver, who was unhurt, an exorbitant amount; a little justice had occurred. It was the only fist-fight I had been involved in during my 3 ½ years in service.

I had inquired about my

return to the States several times and the answer was always the same, "Any day now." It was late in November and I was hoping to get home for Christmas. The weather had turned wet and cold and the walk down Bubbling Well was not as interesting in the rain. I was at work at the Shanghai Naval Communication Center when the CO asked me to come to his office. He told me, "O'Connor took his forty-five and shot himself in the head last night. He blew off half his head." I was shocked and didn't know what to say, but then asked, "Did he leave a note or tell Duncan about his problem?" He answered, "No, no one seems to have a clue why he did it." He asked me if I had any idea for the sudden suicide. I answered, "No, I had dinner with O'Connor and Duncan several weeks ago and O'Connor had seemed cheerful and was enjoying the Shanghai scene." "Well," he said, "he apparently told no one about his problem. They are expecting you, Duncan and several others from Camp Six to serve as honor guards at the funeral."

Two days later, just before noon, O'Connor was buried in a Shanghai cemetery. Duncan and I, plus four other Camp Six SACO members fired the salute using our carbines. It was a rainy and cold morning and after a tear-wrenching

taps which was played by a sailor off the Nashville, they lowered his casket into the earth. Everyone was caught off guard by O'Connor's affair and subsequent investigations revealed nothing regarding what had caused him to take his life. A few month later, I would visit his family and fiancée in San Diego, but I had nothing of substance to tell them. He just picked up his forty-five one night, put it to his head and pulled the trigger. He had shared his problem only with his God. After the funeral, the six of us went to a bar and toasted our friend. It seemed rather futile, but what else could we do? The irony of the matter was that O'Connor was due to go home within the month.

About two weeks before Christmas, I was asked if I would like to go home aboard a "can" (destroyer) which would be going to San Diego. The catch was that I would have to serve as one of the radiomen during the nine-day trip. My problem was that I had not copied anything but Japanese code in three years and not a great deal of that. I had been working a RDF (radio direction finder) and in the field with the SACO unit fighting a war and I suspected that I was just not up to the job of a first class radioman aboard ship. I declined knowing it would blow my chances of returning home

before Christmas. I was later told that I would be shipped out on a transport leaving shortly after the new year (1946).

### **An invitation to a never-to-be-forgotten party enhanced by an unexpected dinner companion . . .**

Several days before Xmas, I received an invitation to attend a party that was being given by Chiang Kai-shek and General Tai Li. The affair was for all the navy personnel that had served under their command during the war. I had thought the SACO unit was all but forgotten. However, the Chinese were planning a regal party for their American friends. The party which took place several days before Christmas, was held in a large hall several blocks off Bubbling Well. The extravaganza lasted the better part of two days. It featured acrobats, scarf dancers, singers, magicians, and an elegant band. The food was served throughout the party along with an ample supply of alcoholic and soft drinks. It was one of the greatest parties that I have attended in my life. It helped to stave off the loneliness of being away from home on Christmas.

I arrived at the party

several hours after noon. It had been going on since about 11AM. The large and spacious room was crowded with our Chinese hosts, their guests and several hundred American SACO members. I moved down a center walk area between rows of tables on each side of me looking for a place to sit. After looking over the room, it seemed that every seat was taken. Then, much to my surprise, a Chinese officer grabbed me by the arm and asked me to sit next to him. I didn't recognize him, but soon someone advised me that I was sitting next to General Tai Li; Chiang's feared head of the Chinese Intelligence. He had personally headed the SACO efforts in China.

There were numerous stories as to his methods in carrying out duties related to his position as the founder of today's Military Intelligence in Taiwan. I suspect some were true (but consistent with the rules of historical Chinese warfare) while other adverse rumors may have been the invention of his enemies. Regardless of his reputation, I sat next to him for the remainder of the day and well into the next morning. During that time, I found him to be a delightful dinner companion with a good sense of humor. He was one of the few military leaders that could listen as well as he could talk. Perhaps I was biased because

he had seen a lonely enlisted man looking for a seat, rescued me and escorted me to his table; a table occupied by numerous Chinese brass as well as civilian Chinese dignitaries. After he asked numerous questions of where I had served, who my CO was, where I had been trained, and where I had lived in the United States, he introduced me to the girl sitting to my right. I can't remember her name, but let's dub her "Mai Li."

It was Chinese etiquette not to initiate a conversation with a lady until you had been properly introduced, so I had said nothing to her for the better part of the hour that I was talking with the General. She turned out to be a member of the Soongs, but the exact relationship to this famous family was not clear to me. Later that evening, she asked if I would like to come to her house and have Xmas dinner with the family. I didn't know just what to say, or if it constituted a date or not. I told her I was engaged. She laughed and made it clear it was not a date but that she was asking several servicemen to the dinner so they would have a good holiday. The General then intervened and said "It's OK-OK, it will be properly chaperoned." Mai Li gave me a formal invitation with a map and arrival time of 7PM. I slipped it into the

pocket of my navy-blue blouse (We had been required to get rid of our SACO uniforms and dress in navy blues.) and thanked her for the invitation.

Shortly after dinner, they began passing out presents to all of the Americans at the party. They must have called names for about an hour when General Tai Li asked me to follow him. He made his way up to the front of the room where the presents were stacked in a large pile, went around to the side, picked up a nicely wrapped package and presented it to me. At first, I thought he had just taken a present at random, but then saw it had my name on it. His intelligence network was as good as reported. He seemed to know exactly where to find the gift. It was a beautiful bowl packed in a showcase, velvet lined, wooden display box, made sometime in the early Ting Dynasty. It has occupied a special place in the display hutch in our dining room for many years. I never met the General again, but for a short interval, we had exchanged small talk, toasted each other to the end of the war and to a lasting friendship between our two nations. The General died in an airplane accident in January 1946.

Christmas afternoon (1945), I hailed a bicycle rickshaw and gave the driver a copy of the map to Mai Li's house. It was a fairly long ride and we

ended up in an area with large homes surrounded by walls that had barbed wire strung along their tops. The driver stopped in front of a large home set well back from an attended gate. After a short argument with the driver over the price for the ride (which we had previously negotiated), I paid the original agreed price and proceeded to the gate. The attendant looked at my invitation and called the house. After a few minutes, a servant came and escorted me inside. I was led up a circular stairwell and met Mai Li at the top. She introduced me to her parents, Chinese friends and four naval officers, one Ensign, one Lt.jg, one full Lt. and a Lt. Commander. A quick glance around the house told me I was in "the high rent district." I felt a little embarrassed, outranked and out of place. I was the only noncom at the party.

But then Mai Li introduced me to all of her guests and her parents as a close friend of General Tai Li. I thought it best not to set the record straight and tell them the relationship between the General and I had been a fortuitous encounter. At the moment, it was the only thing that gave me any stature among the guests. I joined with the group in tete-a-tete conversations, drinking the host's fine wines and looking at the Chinese art and artifacts

displayed around the house. I spent most of the evening talking to Mai Li, her parents and the other Chinese guests. They were all very kind and gracious and made the evening very pleasant. One of the lieutenants asked me about my relationship with Tai Li and I laughed and told him that, "We had fought on the same side during the war." It seemed to satisfy him because he then turned to question what my expectations were after the war. It was a difficult question as I hadn't given the slightest thought to my postwar life.

The dinner was comprised of a number of excellent dishes, including soup, fish, rice and shrimp, sweet and sour pork, noodles with beef, etc. Mai Li's mother announced the food would be served American family style. Instead of one course following another as was normal in many banquets, the food, except the soup, which was served first, was placed on a large "Lazy Susan." As the food circled by the guests sitting at the table, each took as much as he or she wished from the variety of foods presented. I felt a little smug when Mai Li's mother noted that I handled the chopsticks very well. After dinner, the chit chat continued and, everything considered, it was a good party. Before leaving, I thanked Mai Li's parents for a

great evening. Mai Li walked to the door with me, said she was glad I came, wished me a good trip home and a wonderful life. As I was leaving, I told her that I wasn't really a special friend of the General, only a party acquaintance. She said, "I know, but it sure gave the guests something to talk over!" I then flagged another rickshaw and headed for the Shanghai American School. During the ride, I found my thoughts drifting to home and wondering what Ruby, my parents and brother were doing.

Orders for me to proceed to San Pedro (Terminal I) arrived in early January. I was anxious to leave. Many of my friends had departed in the last couple of weeks of December and others were scheduled out during the first two months of the year. The American SACO unit was rapidly entering into the civilian sector. My transportation, a small troop ship, was scheduled to depart Shanghai on the 9th of January and land in San Francisco. I gauged the ship would arrive at the Golden Gate sometime late in the month. I spent my last few days of China duty shopping for a few gifts, looking up my friends that were still in town to say good-bye and writing down addresses for future references. Dunc left on a rig headed for Seattle about a

week before my departure schedule and word had come down that Jim Murphy had been shipped home back over the "Hump" and was en route to Washington, D.C. As one might expect, I had my sea-bag packed and ready to go several days before departure time. The more expensive gift and artifacts, including the "doll" that I had collected during my China stay were put down near the bottom of my bag where they were least likely to be stolen. My orders, passport and other important papers were stuffed into my pea-jacket pocket. The last few days seemed an eternity.

On the morning of the 9th of January 1946, I took my sea-bag and other gear down to a small dock on the Bund where a shore boat picked up me and others waiting transportation home. The shore boat ran down the Huangpu River a short distance and delivered us to the gangway of the ship that would carry us home. The vessel was much smaller than the General Anderson, but I got a good bunk in a compartment just one level below the main deck. Several of my SACO companions were in the same hold space. We had no sooner stored our gear when we were told that liberty (shore time) was available to all hands. I had spent the last three months of

my life in Shanghai and enjoyed its culture, night life, cuisine and watched as it rebounded from Japanese occupancy. The message coming down from my head said, "You've seen Shanghai, both its good and its bad side. You've managed to stay clear of trouble and you're on your way home, don't chance getting into difficulty.

I went topside, and for several minutes, looked over at the busy and vibrant life along the Shanghai Bund. China had been a wonderful experience, but it was over. After the shore boat had departed filled with sailors and marines looking for a last night of excitement, a number of small sampans pulled alongside selling a variety of souvenirs. I spotted a vendor with a model sampan, about 20 inches long. It kindled a number of memories and I negotiated with the boatman for close to half an hour before purchasing it for somewhat less than half the price requested. I then went below to my compartment, disassembled and stowed it in the top of my sea-bag. Laying on the bunk, I began reading another of one of Zane Grey's books, knowing I would be with the ship when it sailed in the morning.

Early the next morning, the ship pulled anchor and with the help of two small tugs, we made our way slowly down

the Huangpu. The waterway was crowded with US Navy ships, foreign freighters, and a myriad of junks and sampans that seemed to move out of the ship's path at the last moment. As Shanghai faded from sight, we soon entered the broad waters of the Yangtze River. The going, however, just got slower as the ship had to navigate its way through a mass of sunken ships that cluttered the river's floor. Their masts and rigging appeared as a forest of deciduous trees. Once clear of the Yangtze "burial grounds," for ships sunken during the war, we picked up speed and China rapidly disappeared from the horizon. I had been gone close to 21 months from San Diego. With the wind in my face, a small swell gently rolling the ship and the bow plodding on to the east, my thoughts of home were burning strong.

I remember very little of the first part of the trip home, probably because there were few events that made any lasting impressions. I do remember sorting through my war years. It had started off quietly in San Diego, working on an intelligence effort that gave our country information that set the stage for the defeat of Japan at Midway; a devastating attack on their submarine fleet and the shooting down of the infamous Admiral Yamamoto.



It changed rapidly when I was transferred to the SACO unit and was dispatched to China during the war. There are many who will tell you that the American Navy unit that fought within China during the war behind the Japanese lines were subject to extreme danger and constant enemy harassment. Perhaps for some, but for the most, not true. I suspect that any of our servicemen who spent one day on the beaches of France during the invasion of Europe, were in much greater peril than our entire stay behind the lines in China. On the other hand, I was also convinced that no other unit during the war was exposed to such a bazaar, strange and fascinating experience.

A group of young Americans, most of whom had never been more than several hundred miles from their homes scattered across America, were seconded to and placed under the command of the famous Tai Li to live and fight with a ragtag, under-armed-guerrilla-unit. The Americans were swept into, and were expected to instantly acclimate to a society whose civilization evolved centuries before our country was colonized, and whose ways, behavior and culture were as different as night and day from those that had molded our character and beliefs. This was an experience unique to the few

hundred Navy men who volunteered for SACO. Men, who within months after their arrival, had adapted to living with a price on their heads in small isolated villages and cities scattered throughout China. Men who quickly learned to live within an environment inhabited by malaria, dinghy fever, scabies, dysentery, hepatitis, yellow fever and a host of other exotic diseases that were unknown to most of us.

The China we knew was made up of extensive mountain regions, connected by occasional roads, trails and vast river systems that were known only to the boat-people. Our lives were intertwined with the Chinese soldiers whom we trained and fought with and found to be loyal and brave soldiers. We watched, and at times, chatted with the peasants who tended the rice fields, small girls leading water buffaloes to paddies that needed plowing, women planting the grain of life, men, plodding across mountain trails that were centuries old, with heavy loads at the ends of their *yo yo sticks*, families who lived on sampans for their entire lives with old men drinking tea and chattering children who found us unusual and entertaining. SACO units lived with the mountain people of Western and Southeastern China and the plains and desert nomads

of Northern China. For the most part, until the war ended, we lived among the poor and have-nots, who despite their poverty, always retained a sense of humor. When the war ended, many of us were privileged to meet and mingle with China's leaders. We witnessed the ebb-tide of the era of War Lords and the beginnings of Chiang's defeat by the Communists.

While these thoughts were entrained in my memory, we moved slowly across the expansive Pacific Ocean. When we were several hundred miles north of Midway, we were required to detour and take care of a ship that had lost power. We came alongside of the vessel whose crew was sticking out their thumbs to hitch a ride, secured a long heavy manila rope to its bow and started again for home. I suspect those on board the rescued ship were elated while most of us found little joy in the fact that our journey would be extended ten or more days. The two ships moved on at about 8 or 9 knots, edging each day closer to San Francisco. Sometime in mid-February, about midday, the Farrilon Islands came into view. A tug came and relieved us of our tow and I realized we were just a few hours from the "City by the Sea." From there, it was only several hundred miles to Ruby who had written almost daily since

my departure and waited patiently for the war to end.

An hour or so later, we sailed under the Golden Gate bridge and it dawned on me my service-life would soon be over. I could see cars, trucks and buses moving across the magnificent bridge. We sailed into San Francisco Bay past Alcatraz and docked at one of the piers on the city waterfront. As we walked down the gangway, a band was playing military marches and the Red Cross was busy handing out lemonade and coffee to returning sailors. We were loaded into a line of buses and driven to Treasure Island which was being used as a transit base. They held us there for two days and then shipped us by train down to Terminal Island, California. There they checked out our sanity, physical health, teeth, gave us some parting shots, handed us an envelope full of paper and sewed the gold discharge eagle on our blue blouses. That took the sum of three days and when it was over, they briefed us on our veterans' right, (GI Bill) - gave us several hundred dollars and said, "You're a civilian and on your own."

I jumped a red car (rail line) in Long Beach and made my way to Los Angeles and from there took a couple of street cars to Maywood, California. From there I made my way to Ruby's house and from the

street, could see her working in the kitchen. I watched for several seconds and then knocked on the back door and we were reunited. I asked Ruby if she could come to San Diego with me. She went straight to her room, packed a bag and within an hour we jumped the train and in a little over two hours were at the San Diego Depot. From there, we grabbed a streetcar to Ocean Beach, climbed the hill that formed the backbone of Point Loma, and within a few minutes were home. I passed out a few gifts and showed them the famous Flint doll whose body by then was covered with the names of cities through which she had traveled. My mother, father and Frank were there and we sat up until early the next morning trading war stories. After that, I don't think we ever mentioned them again. It was time to move on and build a new life.



Dayton Lee Alverson

*I am most proud to have printed this extremely interesting portion of Lee's autobiographical recall of that portion of his life with SACO in China and there's much more to his story that I look forward to reproducing in future issues. rlr - Ed.*



L-R Standing:

Lee Alverson  
Jim. Murphy  
Vernie Benedict

Seated:

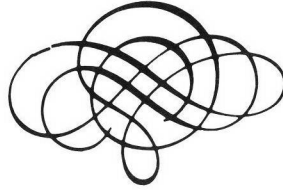
???

Jim Miller

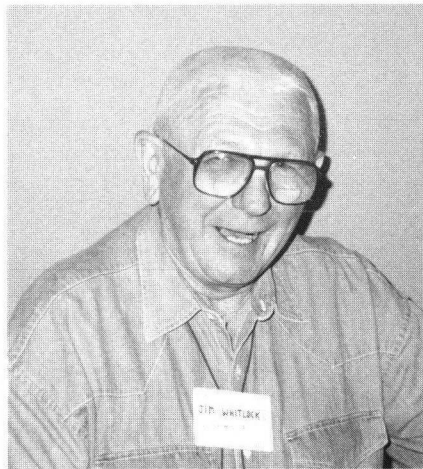


L-R: Lee Alverson, RM, Loretta Cabalek, PKM, Jim Murphy, RM  
U.S.O. Washington, D.C. 14 June 1944

# SICK BAY



Bill Miller had a heart attack but seems to be coming along well. Said he wasn't up to picking up heavy loads, but otherwise doing pretty well.



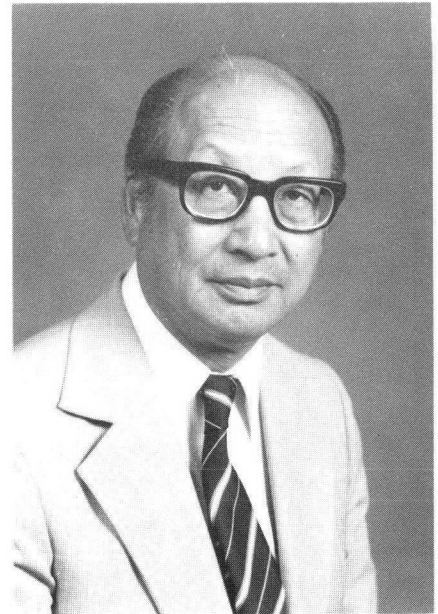
Jim Whitlock, according to news from Terpstra, lost one kidney due to cancer. He's hoping to make it to the convention in Williamsburg in June. Good luck in your recovery, Jim.



Martha Casamajor had a bad heart attack. She is now home under Paul's care. She has a congestive heart condition & Paul says recovery is slow as she is weak. She has a walker & wheelchair at home.



Frank Tao is still in convalescent care as Lilyan is unable to take care of him at home. (Most of you will recall he had a massive stroke a few years ago). At Christmas time, she said Frank sent his best to all SACO people. Frank and Lilyan were always regulars at annual reunions and are truly missed each year.



Steve Chu experienced severe knee pain on a trip to Taiwan for the Double Tenth in 1997. This cut their trip short and at home, scheduled a knee operation when a friend put him wise to some over-the-counter medication and in about four weeks he was able to cancel surgery as he was well enough to walk again.

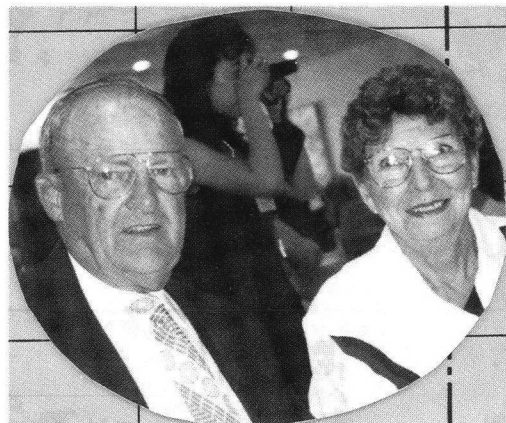


Frank Buckless has had several mini-strokes. He called me recently and sounds pretty good, but I know it hasn't been a fun time. Evelyn said he had to finally give up bowling which was he loved.

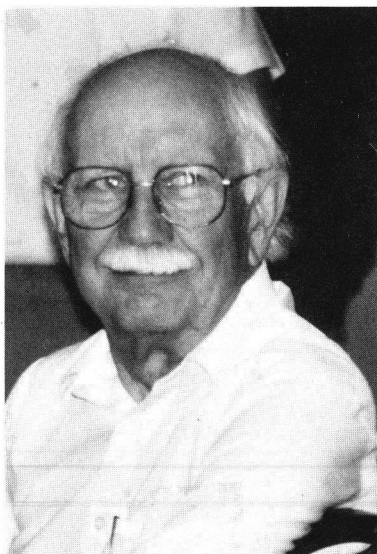
Evelyn Buckless - as she put it - just a little of everything. In the past heart trouble, breast cancer and now diabetes affecting her eyes - she's had several laser treatments on the retinas. They hope to go to the Williamsburg reunion, but not sure.



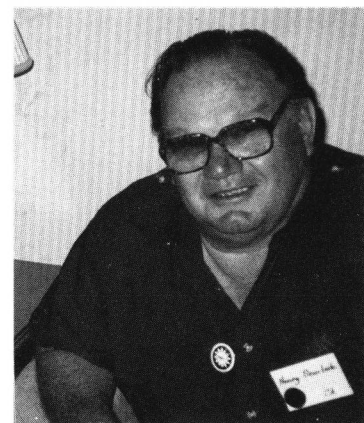
Bud Booth suffered a stroke. Ellen said he had no physical damage, but paralysis affected his vocal chords. At this current writing, they are spending a few weeks in Venice, FL.



Jack Petersen is battling prostate cancer and is about to finish treatment. He says prognosis is good as it was detected in the early stage. (Don't worry, he'll be in Williamsburg to pour if you're still able to imbibe???)



Jack Miller says he's doing fine. Couldn't believe he had open heart surgery just a short time prior to his convention. He kept it to himself until the convention was well under way. You're something else, Jack, to bird-dog such a successful reunion after such serious surgery. Bet Ann had her hands full keeping you from overdoing. Anyway, thanks a million for one of the fun times. It was great????!!!\*\*\*



Henry Scurlock seems to have a clean bill of health - at least with his recent recovery from prostate cancer. That's good news, as he has enough on his mind with the very recent loss of his wife, Laura.



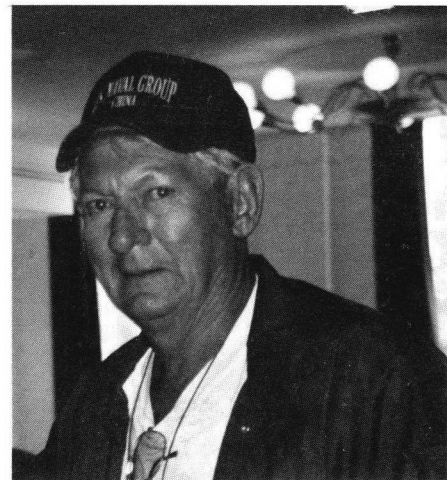
Ralph Mullen - haven't been able to get a current update. Talked to his buddy Bill Bartee who stated he hadn't been able to make contact with Rosemary for the latest report, but he is also in convalescent care. (He, too, suffered a massive stroke a few years back.)



Erma Rutan has been troubled with a large ulcer resulting from a skin infection of the lower left leg last October. This required a skin graft after the first of the year. Her skin donor site is almost healed but the leg is a slow process. She's at home with the aid of visiting nurses twice daily to effect medication. She uses a walker in the house and I take her in a wheelchair when we go out.

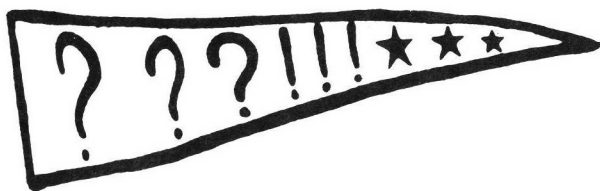


Mary White, as result of a fall, lost an eye. Bill stated that after a long waiting period, she got an artificial eye which she was happy about. However, Bill states, her Alzheimer condition has worsened and she has become so dependent on him that she doesn't want him out of her sight for fear of losing him.,



Leon "Duke" Zucks, as his buddy Dick Terpstra states, "is a tough old bird." Guess Duke has suffered trouble with his eyes, heart, and diabetes causing amputation of one leg. Dick says they have phone conversation about once a month and Duke has the positive outlook of a fifty-year old and speaks of going to another convention. Hope you can make it, Duke.

# NOSTALGIA



Occasion: Dinner given by Gen. Foo Tso Tsi for Americans of Camp Four Shempa, Suiyan

Gen. Foo Tso Tsi is seated at head of table. His left is Gen. Chang, Minister of Information, ROC. Americans, Major Victor Bisceglia USMC on R of Gen. Foo Tso and 2nd from Bisceglia is Fred Hardenbrook, LT. USN(R)



Admiral Miles & unidentified Chinese. Photo was taken July 6, 1945 while Miles was on a field trip to Camp Ten, Two and Navy Supply Depot, Kweiyang.



Smith?, Eddie Liu, "Mary" Miles, Tai Li - speaking to Chinese troops & WACs place unidentified.





Lt. CDR. S.P. Gantz, USN, Lt. Alfred P. Rosche, USN (R) and Chinese escorts on reconnaissance survey of East China Coast.



Adm Miles relaxing - on his R, Eddie Liu and Unidentified Navy Officer. Time and place not identified.



Chaplain Philip Shannon conducting Christmas Eve mass in Unit 9 mess hall



Commodore Miles, unidentified Navy man, Eddie Liu leaving for Camp Two



*When somebody dies, a cloud turns into an angel, and flies up to tell God to put another flower on a pillow. A bird gives the message back to the world, and sings a silent prayer that makes the rain cry. People disappear, but they never really go away. The spirits up there put the sun to bed, wake up grass, and spin the earth in dizzy circles. Sometimes you can see them dancing in a cloud during the day-time, when they're supposed to be sleeping. They paint the rainbows and also the sunsets and make waves splash and tug at the tide. They toss shooting stars and listen to wishes. And when they sing windsongs, they whisper to us, don't miss me too much, the view is nice and I am doing just fine.*

*-Ashley*

### **Laura Lucille Akeo-Scurlock**

The following update on Laura was sent to me by Henry with request that I not publish in its entirety, but I think under current circumstances, he will agree that those who knew her need to know:

Printed Sat. Feb. 5, 2000

"As you probably know, Laura has asthma and emphysema and this has affected her breathing

for some years now. In January, we both caught the flu bug, hers developed into pneumonia. On January 9th, she was having difficulty breathing even with her inhalers and oxygen. I called 911, she was taken to ER at Los Alamitos Medical Center; she was stabilized there and moved to ICU where she remained on life support 'til she was moved to a respiratory facility that specializes in pulmonary patients (this was on January 31 -

approximately 7pm - new facility Country Villas in Long Beach.)

"On February 3rd at 2 am, she was unstable; I was called and she was moved to the ER at Long Beach Community Hospital where she was stabilized (double pneumonia plus her other problems) and moved to ICU where she remains today. She is coherent, but with the tracheotomy she cannot talk, only move her head and mouth words. She has been diagnosed with End Stage COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease) brought about, no doubt, from her asthma/emphysema/smoking, etc. The prognosis is, she cannot breathe on her own sufficient enough to sustain life because her lungs are so damaged. She is on a pulmonary machine that forces oxygen to her lungs so that she may live. . . .

The future from here forward must be taken a step at a time for nobody knows 'til it

happens, the only thing we know for sure is, she must be on the life support equipment (oxygen machine) for the immediate future and fed thru a tube in the nose to her stomach (there are other hookups too numerous to mention.) It is not good, but we/I must live with it. And I/we will. Pray for her.

Henry F./ (Bud/Hank) Scurlock

Laura died the 15th of February, 2000 at the age of 72. The family and friends held a memorial service. Laura was cremated.

She is survived by her husband, Henry, two daughters, Mary Ellen Hurt and Christine Altenes, 5 grandchildren and 7 great grandchildren. (And Henry adds, #8 will soon join the others).



**Henry and Laura Scurlock at Louisville Reunion  
May 1993**

From *Mt. Pleasant News* (Iowa) Feb. 17, 2000  
(Gabeline died Feb. 12, 2000)  
(We reported the death of his wife in last issue)

— OBITUARY —

**Donald B. "Gabe" Gabeline**

Donald B. "Gabe" Gabeline, 84, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, died late Saturday night of an apparent heart attack at his home in Mt. Pleasant.

Visitation began at noon today at Weir Funeral Home, Mt. Pleasant.

Masonic and Order of the Eastern Star funeral services will be held at 7 p.m. this evening at the Weir Funeral Home where the family will receive friends after the services until 9 p.m.

Memorial funeral service will be held at 11 a.m. on Friday, Feb. 18, 2000 at First Baptist Church, Mt. Pleasant with Rev. David Plooster officiating.

Interment of his cremains with Full Military Honors will be held at 1:30 p.m. Friday in Trinity Cemetery south of Mt. Union, Iowa.

A memorial has been established to Henry Co. Health Center Foundation.

Mr. Gabeline was born on Sept. 15, 1915 at Mt. Union, Iowa to Everett L. and Grace Buchanan Gabeline. On June 22, 1946 at Washington, D.C., he married Doris E. Kirby who preceded him in death on April 21, 1999.

A 1933 graduate of Mt. Union High School, he farmed near Mt. Union most of his life. He served in the U.S. Navy Reserve from 1937 to 1941 and in the U.S. Navy until 1945, during WWII, as Chief Yeoman. He owned and operated Gabe's Restaurant near Mt. Union from 1972 to 1984. He worked at Mustang Market for eight years and recently was helping his son, Ward, with farming at Mt. Union.

He attended First Baptist Church, Mt. Pleasant and was Past Master of New London Masonic Lodge 28 and also attended Mt. Pleasant Masonic Lodge No. 8. He was Past Patron of Chapter 440 of the Order of the Eastern Star at New London. He was a member of Scottish Rite Consistory and KAABA Shrine at Davenport, where he was a member of the Legion of Honor. He was also a member of Optimist's Club, SACO, and Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7641.

He is survived by two sons, George K. Gabeline of Rapid City, S.D. and Ward E. Gabeline of rural Burlington, Iowa.; one daughter, Donna J. (Mrs. Jack) Carroll of Montreal, Canada; seven grandchildren, Chad, Heather, Jeff, Nick, Robbie, Shelly Gabeline, and Matt Laib; one great-grandchild, Amber; and three sisters, Florence Taylor of Jaynesville, Wis., Frances Tate of Lincoln, Neb., and Elda Deffer of San Antonio, Texas.



**Gabeline**

**Kenneth C. Sheaffer**

Springettsbury Township

Kenneth C.

Sheaffer of Springettsbury Township died at 6:45 a.m. Dec. 9 at Manor Care Health Services-Kingston Court. He was 86.



**Mr. Sheaffer**  
... died Dec. 9

Mr. Sheaffer was vice president of sales at the former T. R. Taylor and Company.

He served in the Navy during World War II, having been a lieutenant in communications and serving in China.

He was a long time member of Advent Lutheran Church and Sunday school, choir member for 45 years and past member of its council.

He was also a 50-year member of Zeredatha Lodge No. 451 Free and Accepted Masons, member of Harrisburg Consistory, Zembo Temple, York County Shrine Club, American Association of Retired Persons and its Bowling League and Sino American Cooperative Organization; life member of Out Door Country Club, York; past president, past treasurer and 40-year member of York Chorus; 30-year member of York Symphony Chorus; and life member and treasurer for 20 years at the former Sales and Marketing Executives Club of York.

He was a 1935 graduate of Lebanon Valley College.

Born in New Bloomfield, Perry County, May 12, 1913, he was a son of the late John E. and Nettie Umholtz Sheaffer.

He leaves his wife, Catherine Leber Sheaffer; a daughter, Sandra A. Thompson of Kill Devil Hills, N.C.; two granddaughters; and a sister, Rilla Tonon of Morgantown, W. Va.

From *The Boston Globe* Dec. 29, 1999  
(Submitted by Beryl Breitstein who states:  
"He was certainly a friend of SACO.")

## John Paton Davies, China Specialist fired during McCarthy era

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON - John Paton Davies, a China specialist at the State Department who was fired as a security risk during the McCarthy era but later regained government clearance, died yesterday in Asheville, N.C. He was 91.

Mr. Davies, who grew up in China as the son of missionary parents, was let go in 1954 after accusations by Senator Joseph R. McCarthy and others that Mr. Davies had undermined US policy and contributed to the Communists' victory in China.

Secretary of State John Foster Dulles fired him in 1954 for "bad judgment" in forecasting the defeat of Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist forces during China's civil war that ended in 1949.

After a long fight to clear his name, Mr. Davies was granted security clearance from the State Department in 1969. The review was requested after Mr. Davies was offered a job as a consultant on a disarmament research project.

Mr. Davies was born in China, attended Yenching University, served as a foreign service officer in China, and was political adviser to Gen. General Joseph W. Stilwell, who headed US forces in China, Burma, and India during World War II. He was awarded the Medal of Freedom following a parachute jump in the Burmese jungle.

Mr. Davies also served as first secretary at the US Embassy in Moscow; as a member of the State Department's policy planning staff; with the US High Commission for Germany; and director of political affairs at the US Embassy in Germany.

CBS newsman Eric Sevareid once said of Mr. Davies: "I have known a great number of men. . . I have known none who seemed more



## James G. Leighton, 78, retired Navy officer

James G. Leighton of Needham, a retired Navy lieutenant commander, died Monday at Deaconess Glover Hospital in Needham. He was 78.

Born in Haddonfield, N.J., he was educated in public schools in California, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Washington, D.C. He graduated from Georgetown University in 1942 and attended UCLA for one year. He attended the Navy Supply Corps School at Harvard University in 1943. He received his MBA, magna cum laude, from Babson College in Wellesley in 1974.

Mr. Leighton served in Calcutta, India, with the Navy during World War II.

He was an assistant for contracts with the Bureau of Weapons representative in Waltham from 1961-1964. He administered Navy and NASA contracts with Raytheon Co., in-

cluding the Sparrow III air-to-air missile, SPG-51 surface-to-air radar, Polaris Guidance System and the Apollo computer. He retired from the Navy in 1964 with the rank of lieutenant commander after 21 years.

He was an active member of the Needham Congregational Church where he was deacon, served on the finance committee and was chairman of the house committee. He was active in the Needham Community Council and was assistant treasurer.

Mr. Leighton is survived by his wife, Martha (Bailey); two sons, James F. of Needham and Richard T. of Upton; a brother, David of Arlington, Va.; and a granddaughter.

A memorial service was held yesterday at the Congregational Church of Needham.

Arrangements by Eaton Funeral Home, Needham.

the whole man, none more finished a civilized product in all a man should be - in modesty and thoughtfulness, in resourcefulness and steady strength of character."

Mr. Davies had a long post-government career as a consultant and a writer, particularly after the United States recognized China.

He leaves his wife, Patricia Grady Davies, seven children and 11 grandchildren.

## OTHER DEATHS REPORTED SINCE LAST ISSUE

**Earl A. Carbo 2000**  
PhM1/c -Calcutta/PactDoc/Hosp.1/Shanghai

**James T. Coffman 1999**  
RM2/c -Calcutta/Chungking

**Charles E. Franklin 1999**  
PhM1/c -Calcutta/Yangtze Unit

**Pete Hoffert 1996**  
GM2/c -Calcutta

**William E. Jungck 1998**  
Sr2/c CG -Chungking/Kunming

**Matthew A. Komorowski (Kaye) 1999**  
MoM2/c -Calcutta/Camp 3

**Mike J. Latimer 1999**  
Lt. -Calcutta/Kunming/Foochow

**Robert J. Lowell 1999**  
RM1/c -Kunming/14AF/FRUCHI

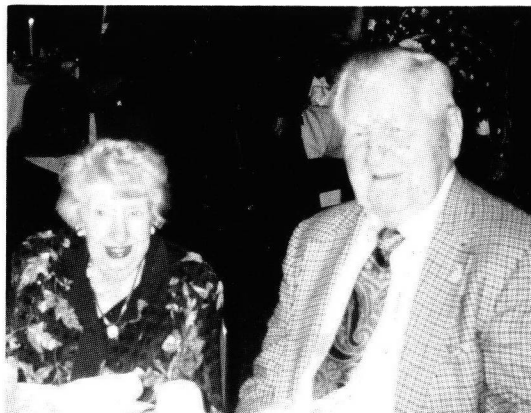
**Robert J. Neale 2000**  
MM1/c -Calcutta/Unit 3/Shanghai

**Daniel G. Pepper, Jr. 2000**  
CEM -Chungking/Washington/Shanghai

**Joseph Semonovich 2000**  
GM2/c -Calcutta/Kunming/Foochow

**Anthony W. Somers 1999**  
GM3/c -Calcutta

## Sick Bay Cont'd:



Julius and Helen Ulaneck - spoke with Helen this date (April 5). Julius was out with a friend. Said he was happy to get out of the house because he gets a little down being in the house all the time. (You'll recall that he had a serious heart attack in Honolulu a couple years ago and has had a long period of recuperation). A few weeks ago, he had recurrence of congestive heart, and sometime ago had bladder problem but is on medication and doing all right currently. Seems Hawaii has been bad luck for the two. They returned this year and Helen came down with pneumonia and was hospitalized for about 8 days in February. She said they were fortunate to have their daughter and family along to look after Julius while she was sick.



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