

Red Cross Days

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(Mrs. James D. Withington)

The two main questions I have been asked are, "Why did you decide to join the Red Cross", and "With so many men and so few women, how were you treated?" To understand my joining the Red Cross you would have to have lived during World War II. Everyone was involved in every way. We saved tin cans, toothpaste tubes, cooked our oatmeal with marshmallows to conserve sugar, (which was rationed as was gasoline and many other things), often wore shoes with wooden soles to save our ration stamps for fancier things, appeared in fashion shows to raise money for war relief, worked with the Victory Crop Corp to help farmers who desperately needed workers. (I went one time with the National Bank to sucker tobacco but I apparently wasn't much good because they never asked me back!)

I laughingly say I danced my way through the war because on Friday nights a bus load of well chaperoned young ladies in evening dresses went to Seymour Johnson Field 28 miles away to dance (they had a wonderful Glenn Miller trained band I got to know quite well). On Saturday nights we went to the American Legion Hall to dance, and on Sunday afternoons we took turns at the USO. There were strict rules we followed but many couples dated and eventually got married.

All of our many friends from Johnson Field were shipped to Europe, the war had dragged on for years and we knew something big was going to happen. I had heard about the Club and Recreation Department of the Red Cross so I applied and was immediately accepted. The requirements were very simple- age 23 to go overseas, 25 to work in the states, and a college degree. Within a few weeks I was sent to Washington, D.C. for training and classified as a Staff Assistant.

It was quite exciting! we were billeted at the old Phillipine Embassy and were trained at American University. There were about 50 girls in our group- mostly from the north and west - very few southerners. Washington was a mad-house!

Several of us decided to take a cab to the University the first morning and we were very fortunate.. The driver who picked us up was a retired contractor- too old to fight, but he was serving his country, so he had come to Washington to drive a cab. This was his contribution to the war effort. He asked us what time we would be leaving that afternoon and said he would be waiting for us. From then on he was waiting for us every morning and every afternoon.

We were issued summer weight uniforms complete with hats, purses, and high heels- and were required to wear stockings and girdles. A Washington socialite, Mrs. Bard Letts, helped us with our uniforms and every morning when you came in she would hit you on your bottom to be sure you were wearing your girdle. We nicknamed her "threats Letts".

During our training the main things that stuck with me and I remembered more than anything else are 1. Do not judge your fellowman., and 2. You can do anything, All through my months with Red Cross these two things were put into practice more than anything else.

We had some "on the job" training at Camp Pickett not too far from Washington. As a rehabilitation center there were all kinds of cases- from traction to psychos. We even put on a show for them- and we wore jeans, blue shirts and comfy shoes. It was heavenly to get out of our stockings and girdles for a while. I immediately had to put into practice what I had learned because some of our "boys" were really "way out", and also, this was the first time I had ever seen a white girl dancing with a black man.

The most interesting thing that happened to me in Washington was that the war ended on Aug. 14! I happened to be going out to dinner with my college roommate and her husband - who was stationed in D. C., and an old family friend whose wife was not there. I shall never forget that night!! Absolute bedlam! Crowds everywhere - no car traffic. All you could do was just "Go with the flow". Whichever way the crowd was going you were pushed along, too. Everyone was screaming, hugging, and we wound up

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at the White House. M. P.'s were surrounding the grounds with their arms locked. I heard someone say, "Well, Mary Harvey Ruffin, what are you doing here?" It was Robert Johnston from Wilson - the first of many men from Wilson County I would see in the coming months.

In September we left by train for Camp Stoneman in California - fully dressed in our summer uniforms (complete with stockings and girdles!). We left one Friday night from Union Station at 10 to the cheers of many G. I.s.

We were very comfortable in Pullmans with a dear black man taking wonderful care of us. We stopped in Chicago the next afternoon for about six hours so a bunch of us went to the Stevens Hotel for dinner and dancing. There were some men attached to our group and they had asked different ones of us so we had a delightful evening. We danced to the music of Clyde McCoy's band from Memphis, Tenn. Little did I know how my life would turn out two years later!

The trip across the country was gorgeous. Quite often the train stopped and we would get off for a meal. At night different groups would put on a show and ~~more~~ everybody would crowd into one car and sit everywhere to watch. Even though they were a good bit older, all our men participated, too, and that made it more interesting. One of the funniest skits I still remember was a girl trying to climb into an upper berth with the assistance of a man and she dropped everything on him including the contents of a hot water bottle! We were never bored even though the trip took about 8 days.

When the train stopped in Albuquerque I could not believe it when I saw a familiar face standing on the platform - John Schell - a soldier I knew from the dances at Seymour Johnson Field. He had returned from overseas and was on his way to San Francisco.

We arrived at Camp Stoneman where troops were stationed prior to going overseas and spent four days being re-outfitted in khakis and doing such things as climbing on board a ship using a 50 foot rope ladder - and back down the other side. In those days women did not wear slacks, but we boarded ship in them and were not allowed to wear anything else on the ship. Our favorite saying was Dorothy Parker's, "Women in slacks should not turn their backs!"

We were also issued all sorts of equipment - canteens, helmets, gun-belts, K-rations, etc., and had to wear them all as we boarded ship. Our crowd had swelled by this time and there were well over 200 of us waiting to leave. Two ships were waiting for us to board - one the Lurline - a great lakes steamer - and the other a victory ship - the Marine Shark. Naturally, I was in the second group and boarded the Marine Shark!

We left San Francisco from pier 15 and there were various officials, a band and a Red Cross Canteen Corps to see us off. We ate cookies and drank juice to the strains of "Serenade In Blue". The warehouse and pier were decorated in all kinds of red, white, and blue flags and banners. The band played a march as we boarded our ship and streamed into our little staterooms. There were 8 of us - 3 berths deep and barely enough room to turn around - in our khaki slacks and loaded with so much equipment we could hardly move..

There were 3,500 troops on board - 200 were officers and 72 Red Cross girls. We were classed as 2nd Lt.s and were not allowed to associate with enlisted men. The third day out our orders were changed and we would spend our days talking to the men, but we had to be off their deck by dark. Our trip was certainly not dull! PFC George Lewis approached me about being in a show, "Now Hear This". In spite of my lack of talent, I remembered the second thing we were taught (that you can do anything) and I agreed - having no idea what I would be doing. George did a sort of mock interview and then I was a jitterbug. Two boys were stationed in the audience to start dancing with me and others from the audience were encouraged to come up and break on us. We had to wait until dinner was served because that was the only large area. It really was fun but you can imagine how some of the dancers were - Often I just stood back and watched them perform - and I was very thankful that we were required to wear slacks!

We had seven performances of the show to packed dinin~~g~~ rooms, and then they did a sort of travelling show, but I declined. There was always someone trying to get up a bridge game and I soon learned I was one of the few girls who knew how to play.

When we passed the International Date Line all the Red Cross girls were summoned before a Kangaroo court. Our judges were two Captains and a Major with mops on their heads. We were ordered to scrub the decks in our bare feet with our pants legs rolled up. Paula Shaw and I were cited for insubordination and they threatened to throw us in the brig if we did not sing for them. So we did- some silly tune about North Carolina. I wanted to sing "Mustard and Gravy's song about "Beautiful Wilson" but I couldn't teach it to Paula. Then 15 of us were ordered to dance with 15 GI's for 15 minutes. We were barefooted and the GI's had on combat boots so my feet really suffered. One very interesting thing - while we were on deck talking to the GI's they would show us mines in the water and tell us about a ship that had been sunk two weeks ago in these same waters. I don't know whether they were trying to scare us or not, but you had to either wear your life preserver or carry it with you at all times. Mainly we used ours as a seat cushion.

We arrived in Manila Harbor at night October 5 and I've never seen so many lights in my life! It was gorgeous! I was greatly disappointed the next morning to find out the lights were from other ships and certainly not Manila! This was only 6 or 8 weeks after the war had ended and Manila had suffered terrible damage. There was only one street open at the time and they told us there were dead Japs everywhere - specially in the Walled City. I did not ever go through the Walled City but many of the girls did.

Buses picked us up and took us to a Replacement Depot to await our assignments. I found out I was assigned to the 29th Replacement Depot to help open a new club there. There was already a club there but so many men were being shipped home they were quickly opening two more. For one week while we were getting the club ready we helped repatriate nurses who had been held prisoners at Bilibad. They were pitiful sights- thin as rails, wrinkled skin and yellow from taking atabrine to ward off malaria.. We quickly became friends with a bunch of pilots who were there solely to take the Generals flying all over the area- places like Bataan and Corregidor. Naturally, when they weren't flying the pilots they flew us!

There were four of us staying in nurse's quarters- tents with wooden floors and sides. We had our own shower and faucet, latrine, two chairs, two light switches, and an ironing board. The mess hall was right across the street and every night at 9.00 they had coffee hour.

The Red Cross girl who was starting the club was a veteran who knew how to get things done (I later learned this, too!) We dyed parachutes to hang from the ceilings and scrounged bottles to put candles in creating an outdoor French Cafe look. There were three parts to the club- a reading and writing room, a game room, and a kitchen with tables - plus a little outside room with tables.

We had a GI detail helping us and we made coffee in 32gallon cans - one black, one with sugar and one with sugar and cream.. The men came at 9.00 in the morning when we opened and stay until we closed at 11.00. They would leave for a meal and come right back! Unfortunately the Longshoremen in California were on strike so there were no boats coming to pick them up- these thousands of unhappy men. We spent most of our time talking to them, looking at pictures of their families and girl friends, listening to horror stories from the ones who had not been home in years.

As always there were 20 or 30 who liked to play bridge so I would organize games and be the only female playing. They also loved to play bingo but insisted that I call because of my southern accent. Our prizes were always cigarettes!

There was always someone who wanted to take your picture or paint your picture. Of course, we always said yes and put things on the bulletin board until that group had gone. - then because of lack of space we would throw them away. One, however, I kept. One GI asked me if he could paint my picture and followed me around all night. When he left and gave it to me I could see that it was not the usual picture. He told me that he was a cartoonist for the New Yorker magazine - it was done in water colors and even titled- "Harvey by Hamabe". When we opened a county Veterans Museum several years ago I gave everything I had left from Red Cross days to the museum - including the picture by Hamabe. It is on permanent display as are several other things I gave them. One of my children looked up Hamabe on the computer and discovered he died a couple of years ago. I am sorry that I did not get in touch with him when he was alive. I discovered he had been inducted into the Cartoon Hall of Fame -

When we were working on the club I met my first boy from Wilson and Wilson County - many many more were to come. G. C. Crutchfield, jr.. I had no transportation, we were not allowed off the base without a male escort, but everybody who was around knew how to contact me.- including a first cousin John Hackney, Jr. Some w~~e~~t home and shipped out through this depot.

One funny incident occurred that the GI's in the club really enjoyed. Someone named Westbrook from Burlington, N. C., came in the club looking for me. - said he drove a truck through Wilson all the time and knew I was a waitress who worked in one of the cafes. Said he was always try~~ing~~ing to date her. Said he eventually married a "classy dame" from Louisiana, shipped out 6 months later and hadn't heard from her in a year and a half until he got a telegram saying he was a new father.

One of the first from Wilson to contact me was Johnny Riley. He was a supply seargent and took me to the president's home - Malacaan Palace-and even for a ride on the president's yacht. He also gave me some very valuable items like a hot plate,screw in plugs to connect lights to, and when he left soon afterwards he sent a jeep full of everything- bed linens, blankets and even a pillow- an unheard luxury!

I had also seen another cousin from Wilson, Frank Lea. He later came out here to wait for a ship home. At the same time, Johnny Riley came out to tell me goodbye and Jimmy Millhouse called to see how I was doing. We decided to call John Hackney and have a Wilson party when I got off at 11.00. We went to the Rec hall, put blankets on the floor and had a great time.

Before Thanksgiving the head of our club, Doris Callahan, was sent to Japan. Most of the boys had been sent home by that time so they were combinig all the clubs into the main one - called the Caribou Club - and I was to be the director. There were so many rumors going around about what was going to happen to the 29th, we were short staffed and did not know what to expect.

The rainy season had started and we were literally knee deep in mud. One of the captains in supply got me combat boots to wear so I could get to the club. Christmas was coming up and I deeded the thought. We were short handed and had many unhappy men on our hands. Most of them had been at the 29th at least 14 days and had even sent representatives to Replacement Command to investigate the ship situation. No one was able to take any time off- we all worked hard singing carols, being decorated as human Christmas trees, I made about 600 pieces of fudge on my little hot plate- all this in spite of the fact that the GI's assigned to the club got roaring drunk and were no help at all. That night we had a buffet- turkey sandwiches,relishes, a large cake with Christmas Greetings on it in the middle ot the table - flanked by candles. We gave out little gifts to the boys and many of them said it was the nicest Christmas they had had in years. The nicest thing off all was that all day long we were reading out shipping numbers- the best Christmas present the boys could have!

Christmas day in the club a boy came up to me and said,"I had Christmas dinner at your house in Wilson last year!" He had been at Seymour Johnson Field and we had gotten him with several others at the USO!

After the holidays it was obvious the 29th was closing. structures were being torn down and most of the Red Cross girls had been sent to other assignments. I got up one morning and tried to take a shower - no water! The next thing to go was the telephone. In the midst of all this they had some great emergency at Clark Field and I learned that Maggie McDougal from Jackson, Miss., and I were to go immediately. I was not at all anxious to go to Clark but we had no choice in the matter. If we were told to go we went!

Manila was slowly recovering. You made friends in a hurry in those days and you were always running in to someone you knew- specially people who had come over on the Marione Shark with me. We also loved our Field Director- Marian Barrows - the most unlikely person you would ever pick to come overseas and live in a tent!

Remember , this was over 60 years ago - no TV, no computer. You got together with people and you went out to dinner, you danced, you talked(which I never seemed to find difficult). When ever we had free time there was always something to do. Often we went out to dinner with 6 or 8 men and you would be the only girl.

I saw a lot of my cousin, John Hackney , and his friends. I went to various productions like the ballet, the Manila Symphony, some plays, and even a Notre Dame ~~EXCURSION~~ Reunion where I met the cream of Manila society as Manila was largely Catholic.

In order to pump up the local economy we were furnished many Phillipino helpers. One of our house girls invited us all to Sunday dinner. Several accepted but I was the only one who actually went. Carlos, a truck driver at the base, took me out in a two ton army truck. The house was the average bamboo affair on stilts. You had to climb something like a ladder to get to the upstairs living quarters while pigs and chickens roamed around underneath. I was served at a table all by myself while everyone else stood around and watched me eat. They served me fried chicken, sticky rice, GI pickles, warm GI beer, and papaya. I poured a little catsup on my rice - which did not help it - but then my hosts kept pouring more on. All during the meal the women kept stroking my hair and a child was standing there with sores all over her. I could hardly wait to get home and wash my hair!!

One night I had dinner with an American couple who had been interned at Santa Tomas prison for 3 years. After dinner we went to a club and saw many more of their internee friends.

There were many Phillipino night clubs all with Phillipino bands (gold teeth everywhere!)and wonderful mahogany dance floors. One very interesting place I went was Tom Dixie's. I went with a friend who evidently had been there many times because he introduced me to Tom and told me he used to run the Army-Navy Club. The food was excellent, all kinds of fine china (though nothing matched) and silver services in glass cases that I drooled over. Behind closed doors was a gambling room. We walked through but didn't stop. I saw big black limousines parked outside and my friend told me this was a favorite place of the Chinese and white Russians - who were everywhere!. My friend said the place would be off limits to army personnel one week and on the next.

San Pedro was our closest small town and I gave some light bulbs to the church. One day the Padre, Sexton and their families (always families over here) came to thank me. We had coffee and cookies in the club and they brought me bananas and many thanks. And so reluctantly , and very suddenly , one Saturday morning at 6 o'clock Maggie McDougal from Jackson, Miss., and I were transported to Clark in an open air weapons carrier! The road was horrible and we literally bumped our way up there. At least it didn't rain.. What we called Clark was actually Ft. Stotsenberg- a cavalry post before the war. We were amazed! Paved streets, sidewalks, houses tennis courts, a parade ground, flowers, trees! We were put on temporary quarters and who should arrive that same afternoon and be quartered right next to us but Col. Dave Wade's Raiders - a squadron of B29s. They immediately adopted us and ^{were great} ~~were~~ us the entire time we were at Clark.

As this was the air force there plenty of pilots, planes, and brass. General Wurtsmith was the head man followed by Gen. Brandt. General Wurtsmith loved the Red Cross and insisted that we all wear the 13th air force patch on everything. Our nearest town was Angeles and they had a restaurant we learned to love called Kinio's where they served steak (probably caribou!) with an egg on top- the Australian's got there first! There was another place good for dancing called the Mayfair.

As a regular army base right far from Manila Clark was rather self sufficient. The Officers club was great and had a wonderful dining room where we all ate dinner every night. There was a great place for dancing called the Wind Tunnel. Also on the base was an absolutely fabulous restaurant called Mr. Cy's- sort of a mixture of Chinese and American food. Most all the private dinner parties were held there.

There were no Red Cross clubs like we had at the 29th, but we had a club mobile and I had a little white jeep with ARC on it in red letters which I drove myself. There were places on a trailer for jugs of juice and doughnuts. We had a commissary and they made hundreds of doughnuts!! I soon learned to back that little trailer right up to the loading dock perfectly. We would meet buses, planes, and service areas right at Clark, but other times we travelled all around in deserted areas.

Soon after our arrival I was taken by our boss and introduced to another route I was supposed to take. That day we started out in a weapon's carrier and I soon realized why. Never have I seen such isolated spots - each one worse than the other - until we finally started on a cobblestone road that seemed impassable - came to a stream which we drove right through and finally reached our station. There would be about 12 boys in each group and all they did was walk the pipe line every day to be sure no one had damaged it. The pipe line transported oil and gas everywhere and this was what was known as Huck territory - a leftist guerilla group always stirring up trouble. Imagine my surprise at station #6 to see Phil Sewell who was married to a girl from Wilson - Dottie Little. We ate lunch and had the best time visiting. The men were always so sweet and considerate - they would take sheets and cover their screened latrines for us.

One day we were coming back from station #5 when we came across this enormous deserted air strip. We drove down it and all around. It was eerie - not a soul in sight, but dismantled/burned planes everywhere. If we were close by we would always stop at the quartermaster farm - not to service them but just to have a cup of coffee and visit. They grew wonderful vegetables and fruits there and would bring a load down to the general a couple of times a week. They would also stop at the Red Cross house and leave us a huge basket filled with everything. When we covered the ordinance outfits I ran across two men who were on the Marine Shark and it was always like "old home week" when you saw anyone you had gotten to know before.

There were also two boys from Wilson who were pilots - Don James and Julian Rogers.

We went to the rifle range sometimes and I loved it up there. It was up in the hills and there were beautiful trees and tropical plants everywhere. The rest of it was tall grass and sort of burned out because there was so much fighting in the area. In fact, the whole area we covered was part of the horrible death march from Bataan to Camp O'Donnell. In a few weeks we were flown up to Florida Blanca remote area hard to reach but with an air strip where they had the newly acquired secret jet fighter planes. We had a small area off of base operations where we served our juice and doughnuts. Our main pilot was Ken Sarchet and we learned to love him. Also, another good friend, Jack Wolfe, was sent up there and we always visited him in the tower.

As the war had ended officers were being assigned houses to wait in until their families came. In a short while Maggie and I were moved into one of these permanent houses with some other Red Cross girls. It was typical - a large center room with bedrooms that were like sleeping porches on the sides - screen at the top and bottom and wood in the middle. It was not unusual to wake up and see ~~big~~ prisoners staring up at you through the bottom screen. They were there cutting grass with these huge curved knives.

There were two maids and a houseboy for 6 of us. He would serve you breakfast and lunch on a tray in the dining area. We had to keep lights on in our closets because of the dampness and if you took a garment off and laid it aside for a minute a maid would grab it and wash it. We learned to hide our clothes if we didn't want them washed. For dinner at night we always went to the officers club.

The area where we lived was like a big neighborhood. In 62 Col. Tim Tyler had asked 5 boys from the hospital area to live with him until his family came, the B29 pilots were across the street in 62 and were in 61. We would sit on our front steps and visit and the boys across the street had a wireless radio outfit - station KAIK - and we would talk late at night - mainly to the west coast. I sent my mother several messages but I don't think anyone ever followed through and called her.

As soon as I arrived I started playing bridge with three other men - Don Hayden, Bill Kinney and I can't remember the fourth. Don was being sent home so he brought someone over to our table after dinner one night and introduced me to our new bridge fourth - he was Lt. Jimmy Witherington - a young doctor from next door who would become my husband a year and a half later.

For the first time since the Marine Shark I had a chance to go to church and ~~there were always~~ ^{there were always} a bunch of friends who wanted to go with me. We would go and then someone always had a brunch - quite often Gen. Wurtsmith. I discovered the regular army was big on brunches!

Also in April two boys from the quartermaster corps took Susie and me to Baguio - the resort spot of the Phillipines! It was gorgeous - like the mountains at home but ~~you~~ you would see natives wandering around in fur coats and G-strings- funniest sight you ever saw. We stayed in a private home that was now a hotel and Susie's and my room opened on a gorgeous balcony that overlooked the town square. We went everywhere - to see the dog market where they sold dogs to eat and to a burned out monastery on top of a mountain. Going up it was amazing to see tobacco fields and rice paddies.

In May the 13th air force was beginning to move to Ft. McKinley near Manila. Soldiers who had enough points were being sent home constantly and Red Cross girls going to places like Japan and Okinawa. There were many going away parties. About this time was ~~was~~ some of the boys staying next door at house 63 left and Tim Tyler asked 3 young doctors to move in- Jimmy from Covington, Woody woodcock from Nashville, Tenn., and Ned Wisor from Clifton Forge., Va. The boys had been together in the states, been sent to Japan and now to Clark. They were listed as Flight Surgeons and would go out on ambulances when there were plane crashes and accidents. . . They were also in and out of house 61 visiting and playing games.

My cousin from Manila was in and out with his friends and pretty often we would fly to Manila. Usually we flew in a two seater but once I got to fly in a Catalina that took off and landed on water. I thought we were going to shake to death! The most thrilling though was when I got to fly in a B29- The Challenger. What a thrill! I got to sit in the front bubble when we were coming back and that was really exciting.

The most exciting, though, was when General Eisenhower flew into Clark and reviewed the Philli-pine troops. Maggie and I decided to go down on the strip to watch everything but we had been working and were too late. We went back to Stotsenberg to wait when Maggie saw Pappy Hines - a dear old Col. we all loved. He got in the jeep with us and the MP's just saluted and let us right on by. We got to see everything and then rushed back to headquarters to see him there. While we were outside waiting 3 other girls joined us. When he came out he saw us and came over for a minute and talked to us. We were all so dumb-founded we couldn't say a word and he just smiled that wonderful smile of his. Everyone was snapping pictures and they got many of us from the back!

There were many typhoons but the worst was Opal in mid-Sept. Every time one was threatened Sue and I would have to move our beds into the living room- . We usually knew what time they would hit so we would be prepared. The worst thing about Opal to me was that they could not fly all the B29s out so they packed them with EMs to weight them down. We were there the next morning as the planes were unloaded with hot coffee and fresh doughnuts. We had no water at Clark for several days and rain really blew in our side porches.

Baguio suffered much damage from Ingrid earlier but Maggie and I had a chance to go back and took it. It was quite a trip The bus never stopped for us but we saw Joe Paddy from operations and he told us a plane was coming to San Fernando north and perhaps we could catch it. Maggie rushed down and got orders for us and we flew up on a C47. One of our friends had alerted them that we were coming so two men met us and we had dinner at their mess hall and they drove us on up to Baguio 30 miles away.

We stayed at the Country Club run by the army - gorgeous - fabulous food and a golf course with a pro. Maggie and I decided to take a few lessons and were sitting in the pro shop when a Major Vargas was paged. Being as this is such an unusual name I was not at all surprised a few minutes later when Pete Vargas walked in - one of the boys from house 62 across the street who had been transferred to McKinley. He had a friend with him and we were all mightyglad to see each other.

Maggie and I were tired of that hilly golf course so they gave us the keys to their jeep and then we all met for dinner that night. There was a dance and we had a table in front of the fireplace. The next day they gave us the keys to their jeep again and we shopped and looked around. That night we all got together for dinner and then went to town to see the fireworks in the town square. There was also a band and a public dance. Then we went to the local night spot - El Mocamba - before going back to the club for our nightly hot chocolate. Eleanor Gay was there with the Red Cross and showed us around, too. It was mighty hard to go back and work again after all that beautiful resort spot!

There was always something going on and people always were stopping by the house. It was hard not to play favorites but I couldn't help it. My three were Ken Sarchet - the pilot who flew us to Florida Blanca and who was also one of my church buddies, Jack Wolfe and Pete Tisdale. They were always around and ready to do anything for us - so much so that when Pete went to Australia on leave he asked me if there was anything he could get for me. I told him I desperately needed underwear pants. (I don't know if it was the maids or the mice but you just couldn't keep decent underwear and I was desperate!) So he brought me back 6 pairs of pink ones, two pieces of flowered cloth, and a red, a white, and two blue flowers - his own special gift. I'm sure he was teased terribly but he was one of 8 children and had sisters.

In July my cousin, John Hackney, went home and I surely did hate that. Of course, a good friend I had made through him - Joe Cross - also went. Joe's first child was born while he was over there and we all "sweated it out with him" and I'm sure sent gifts made of parachutes - the rage in that area then.

While I was at Clark two things happened that were terrible. Don James, the young pilot from Wilson was out flying one morning and his plane crashed. He was killed instantly. I corresponded with his mother and got in touch with several people for her. I did not go to the funeral in Manila but my cousin did. I did go by the cemetery later and took pictures of his grave for his family. Jack Wolfe had been to Manila to a football game with him just before it happened.

Then a couple of months later Gen. Wurtsmith went home on leave and his plane crashed into the N. C. mountains killing all on board. He had all his staff with him and had given all of them leave while he was there. Unfortunately, I think this happened as they were going home - not after their leave. I think Maj. Freddie Noonan was his pilot and Dave Liebman was his aide - a bunch of really nice people. This upset all of us terribly.

There was always something happening - one night Maggie kept hearing weird noises from somewhere near the house. The Phil. were notoriously bad about stealing (Jimmy next door had his footlocker stolen twice) so we finally called the M. B.s. After searching the area diligently it was discovered that a dog had puppies under Maggie's bedroom. If you took a jeep into town (and we could do that at Clark) you had to take a lock and chain to hook around your steering wheel. One time when the Huck's had been acting up we were issued 45.s and had to learn to shoot - or try to. I don't think I ever hit the target - but when Maggie and I went to town we had to take the 45. As it was too heavy and big for either one of us to strap it around our waist one of us would carry it like a bowl of flowers while the other one shipped! I'm sure everyone gave us a wide berth that day!

One night in July I was playing bridge with Art Perry and Dave Liebman when the phone rang and it was Keda, one of our maids. She was at the motor pool - scared to death because the Huck's were supposed to raid her barrio that night. I talked to the M.P.s and they brought Keda, her three children and a few pitiful belongings over and I settled them in one of our back rooms. The MPs told me the motor pool was flooded with Phillipinos that night, but I never did find out if the Bucks raided the barrio.

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With so many men being shifted around and everything changing, the powers that be decided we needed a regular club at Clark so we were trying to work this out. With all the families coming in we were also told that we would have to give up our house. In the middle of this I was suddenly told to report to the Black Hawk division - an infantry group I can't even remember where. Maggie had already been sent to Okinawa.

As I have been refreshing my memory by reading letters I wrote my mother (and my mother was not much of a saver) there is a lapse after my days at Clark. There are no letters that she saved while I was at the Black Hawk Division. It was what Maggie and I had thought we were getting into when we were sent to Clark - a desolate out post in the middle of no-where. I was assigned two tasks - One to clean out and set up some kind of system for the store room and to organize a hill-billy band. At Club 86 I ran into a lot of young boys who had been at the 29th and they were so happy to see me. And cleaning out the store room was a simple job. And organizing a hill-billy band was fun - but there was no way I could get those boys to dance.

After I had been at the 86th for two weeks I was called into Red Cross headquarters. When I arrived I was treated like a queen and they were so nice to me I couldn't believe it. The top folks were there to see me and told me to get back to the 86th that very day and I was being re-assigned to Ft. McKinley to open a club on Saturday night!! There was a girl named Ruth Hubay who would be helping me and we were the only two people in the club. They even were sending two girls from Red Cross Headquarters to help us!

I never could figure out Red Cross transfers and I certainly couldn't figure this one out. There was a club in Manila called the Roosevelt Club that seemed heavenly and I had thought I would love to work there - but the girls who were there hated it - and my close friends had already resigned and gone home. Anyhow, I dashed back to the 86th, packed and was taken to McKinley.

I ran some errands in town, rushed back to ~~McKinley~~^{86th} to pack, and was at McKinley by 7 - only to find myself locked out! This was particularly annoying because I had called to tell them I was arriving about that time. When someone finally came and let me in my room I found nothing but an army cot with a mattress on it. I unpacked as best I could, made up the bed and fell in. When Brownie Reynolds came in she woke me up to see if I needed anything. I told her everything!! I later found out the dog had puppies on my cot a few days before.

As Brownie had done nothing about a bed for me, one of my old friends from McKinley sent one by the house for me but Brownie wouldn't let the boy bring it in. At least she got me a bed after that plus a card table and a beat up bamboo chair. However she would not give me a key, so after sitting in the rain the next night for 35 minutes before someone came to let me in, I heard of a girl with another key who had moved and I went and got her key and never told Brownie.

The house was lovely - tall ceilings, painted a lovely color, beautiful furniture except in my room - however ~~was~~ Brownie soon went to Baguio, I fixed my room up. Brownie had a dog who had just had puppies and she would not let the men spray for vermin - which we had plenty of! We slept under mosquito netting firmly tucked around us not to keep mosquitoes out - but mice. We never could understand that woman!!

Ruth Hubay was as amazed at the sudden turn of events as I was. We were bewildered at the seriousness of our task. From the next day on we worked like beavers (with the help of two girls awaiting transportation to Korea), Jap POWs and a GI detail. We made a curtain out of muslin for the stage, blew up balloons, cut crepe paper and by 5.30 Saturday night we were ready!

Results were terrific and our opening a huge success. We had an MC who introduced all ~~us~~. Col. Pyle, head man at McKinley, Gen. Eubank, head of the 13th plus many other big wigs and officials,

8

Ruth and I had to make speeches. We had a big cake and I asked Wilbur Johnson from Wilson County to help me cut it. The photographers really pounced on that and even sent a copy to The Wilson Daily Times- my hometown newspaper.. We were a couple of bone tired girls but felt it was a job well done.

Ruth was going to run the club and I was to do programs. I planned everything from dancing lessons, string bands, state parties and anything else I could think of. The club itself was the old 85th Wing Officers Club and was a lovely building. I had never worked under a better set-up except that Ruth and I were the only ones there and we really needed more help. We both worked from 11.00 to 11.00 but we agreed that we would take every other week-end off. I planned programs around that as Ruth was no good at programming. We had a PX snack bar for the boys to buy things and we planned to serve only on special occasions. One of the first boys to come to our club happened to be one of our drivers from the old 29th. Many others followed. They all seemed so old (at 24) and reminded me of my younger brother's friends - and they were just as polite!

There was a weather outfit there- the 15th- that Ken Sarchet flew with at Clark. They had the most wonderful food in the world and one day presented me with a cake with "Here's to Friendship" written on it. I took it back to the club and we drew names out of a hat to see who would get slices. I ate with them most all the time and I was the only woman eating with them on Thanksgiving Day. They even had a program made out for me and several of them signed it. I still have it. They also made ice cream and a huge chocolate cake for me at the club one night.

I worked very closely with the Chaplains and Col's Jordan and Davis were two of my favorites. I played golf with them and went to the Army-Navy Club. We met with Mrs. Pyle - the C.O.'s wife, to discuss the army wives helping the GIs in some way. I also started teaching a Sunday School class and joined the Wives Club. Mainly we played bridge at their meetings. All the wives were lovely but they were always trying to get me to date one of their friends. Pete Vargas was there and we were thrown together quite often simply because we were the two singles in the bunch. I was so busy at the club I had little free time. We had a big Halloween party and I was the chief spook- white sheets, white face - I was a fright, but we bobbed for apples and did simple things and the boys loved it.

About once a month we had dances- just like at Seymour Johnson Field - bunch of Phillipino girls dressed in evening dresses and very heavily chaperoned!!! We always gave their aristocratic chaperones a gift.

Our orchestra was Dimples with a singer called Baby Darling. I got to know Mrs. Dimples well because she always came with her husband. One day I had planned a boat trip to Corregidor. Naturally we had a huge crowd because this was really something special. We had a wonderful day and everything went fine ---but coming back home that night the boat stopped! Well, there was nothing we could do except wait for daylight and someone to come out and repair the boat. Thank goodness there was extra food down stairs and we would take turns going down there to eat and rest a few minutes. I felt like a mother hen with a bunch of chickens. They all gathered round and we sang songs and told tales until we were all so tired we put our heads on our life preservers and tried to sleep. I think a few of the boys were actually scared. As I said before, I felt like I was dealing with my little brother's friends.

XT

One day I was sitting in the club when Julian Lane from Wilson walked in. He had not gone home after the war but had stayed in Manila and started the Cabanatuan Lumber Company with a Phillipino friend of his. We had a great time talking and I went out to dinner with him at the Manila Hotel - still in operation but you could ^{see} ravages of war everywhere.

Right after Thanksgiving Jimmy called to tell me that he, Woody, and Ned were going home. I was so hopeful they would get home for Christmas but they were on a troop ship so it took quite a while. Jimmy did not get out of the service in time to enter his class at John Gaston Hospital where he was to specialize in obstetrics.

After you had been in the Red Cross for a year you were eligible for leave so in October I applied. I've never understood why they did not grant my request because they did many others but they didn't. My mother who had been extremely opposed to me joining the Red Cross was very upset. My sister was living at home with her new baby when I left while her husband was overseas - and then the war ended so mother was alone. She really was not in good health and had had a double mastectomy a few years back. Anyhow about a week before Christmas I got a letter from our family doctor telling me that he did not think my mother was doing too well and he thought I should come home. So letter in hand I went to R. C. headquarters and was released so quickly I couldn't believe it. However I learned that the Roosevelt Club was closing and that the 86th Infantry was being dis-banded, so I'm sure they had a surplus of R. C. girls.

One fly in the ointment - Eleanor Gay who had been home on leave (as I said everyone got leave except me!) returned with wedding plans and a dress for me as her bridesmaid. Things had happened to me so quickly I was stunned but I quickly packed and reported to a temporary billet in Manila.

I guess all my Clark connections helped because arrangements were made for me to fly to Clark for the wedding. Lennie and Gay flew down for me and coming back Lennie let Gay take over the controls and fly the plane. Eleanor was a very unusual girl. Her family lived in Hawaii on a small island where they owned a pineapple plantation. They went everywhere by plane so Eleanor learned to fly at an early age.

I had to call my billet three times a day and they kept an AT6 standing by with a clearance so I could be back in Manila in short order. The wedding was lovely. Col. Sturdivant gave Gay away and Col. Tucker was best man. A nurse was her maid of honor and I was the bridesmaid. We wore identical dresses Gay had brought back for us - hers blue - mine yellow. The Tuckers had a dinner party Friday night and Polly and I had a luncheon Saturday at noon. We decorated the chapel - and wore! - more orchids than you'll ever see, and had a reception at the Red Cross house.. They went to Baguio on their wedding trip and called me the next day to see how things were with me.

As always you have to wait and wait in the army. I did have a chance to do a few things in Manila like go to Madame Savary's French Restaurant and see how things were changing. Lt. Teel at the Army Navy club was wonderful and let several of us fully use his quarters there.

As I said before, I never knew how to find anyone but anyone from my area seemed to find me and John Corbett Borden from Wilson - a Lt. Com. at Phil. Sea Front - called and invited me to Christmas dinner. He lived in a quonset with his wife Lois and daughter. I really enjoyed it. The night before - Christmas Eve - I was invited to some big deal at the Army-Navy Club. I really don't remember any details except that I ran into a Red Cross supervisor - very good looking who was known to date only Generals and Colonels. She was as surprised to see me as I was to see her.

Finally the day after Christmas we left in a C47 - certainly not like the planes you fly in today! Ran into several people I knew including Lt. Bill Carpenter who asked me to sit with him. We made several stops. I think Wake Island and Kwajalein where we spent the night in deserted nurse's quarters. Then we were delayed several days in Hawaii because of a typhoon. A bunch of us would rent a cab from Hickham Field and go into ~~Manila~~ and look around. We always wound up at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel which had been turned over to the service during the war.

Finally, on New Year's eve we left. It was during the night and we were all sleeping peacefully when all of a sudden all hell broke loose!!! We were thrown out of our seats with luggage and everything else falling down all around us. The plane was bouncing up and down and this went on for several minutes. Some people were praying, some crying, some vomiting. It was horrible and we all thought we were done for. Only Carp was as cool as a cucumber, and I guess that helped me stay calmer. After a few minutes when everything settled Carp helped everybody get things cleared out and put back up. There were some kinds of refreshments for us but the poor little soldier who was supposed to help us was completely out of it so Carp and I served everybody. None of us will ever forget that night and we were a happy bunch of people to land at Fairfield on New Year's Day.. All the plans we had made about meeting at the top of the Mark were gone - everybody had one thought in mind - to get home as quickly as possible. While we were waiting for a cab at the airport a soldier came up to me and told me he had just seen me at one of the clubs in Manila. Flying then was not like it is today and it took me several days to get into Raleigh N. C. and then catch a train to Wilson.

Now to answer question #2- with so many men and so few women how were you treated? Well, I was treated just like the lady I was brought up to be! I cannot say enough nice things about every body I dealt with - except Red Cross Field Director Brownie Reynolds and I think she just resented having to share what she considered her house with anyone.

Once in a while you would get a wolf whistle or a smart remark but I pretended I didn't hear a thing and that ended it. Truly it was an experience I shall always be thankful for - especially as I met my husband who died in 2003, after 55 years of a very happy marriage and four lovely children.

I've often wondered what happened to so many of the people I met, but I kept up with very few. When Jimmy was too late to enter his class at John Gaston and would have to wait 6 months for another class, he started practicing with his father and liked it, so we got married Oct. 4, 1947. Woody Woodcock got married at the same time so he and Jimmy were not in each other's weddings - but Ned Wysor was in both. We saw Woody and his wife many times because they were still in Nashville but they are both dead now. Of course, my cousin John Hackney, I still see in Wilson. He and Joe Cross were both in our wedding. Maggie McDougal never married but she lived in Jackson, Miss., so I did see her and we kept up until she died several years ago. We often laughed about being two southern girls who were sent to Clark Field because of their southern accents!

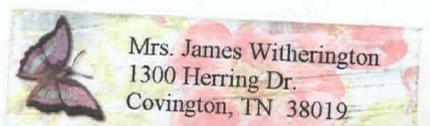
P. S. When I resigned at McKinley Ruth Hubay was assigned 4 Phillipino girls - all college graduates. Writing this has brought back so many memories! Back in those days you really didn't do things like that, or as my mother said, "nice southern girls don't do things like this". Of course, now no one would think anything about it. My daughter travels all over the world with Fed-Ex., two of my grand children even went abroad to perform with their chorus while still in High School.

I never went back to the Phillipines, but Woody and I talked about it often. Jimmy did not like to travel, so Hawaii was as far as I could get him.

When there was a Museum started in Covington I was so happy to give them many things that Jimmy and I had collected - plus my summer Red Cross outfit I had kept. When the museum opened they insisted that I go down and stand by my uniform on display and talk to people. Reluctantly, I did and was amazed to have a line of people waiting to talk to me.

When I left the Phillipines the folks at Tinio's restaurant gave me an elaborately carved tray which is in the museum.

When we got together with the Woodcock's from Nashville naturally the talk would get around to our days in the Phillipines. I always worried about poor Anita having to listen to us, but she assured me she loved it and was envious of the bond we all formed. Ned Wysor retired from practicing, too, but he still lives in Va. and we keep up at Christmas.



From the Desk of

(Mrs Witherington)
Mary Harvey Ruffin

John N. Hackney, Jr.

12/06/09

(Red Cross
Stores)

Hi: Betty Ray -

I sent these pics
from my own scrapbook
to Woody for Laura,
on a visit to Clark
Field on Loren with
Mary Harvey - she got
me up with Julian Rogers
from Wilson who was
flying PBY's out of
Clark for Air Sea Rescue

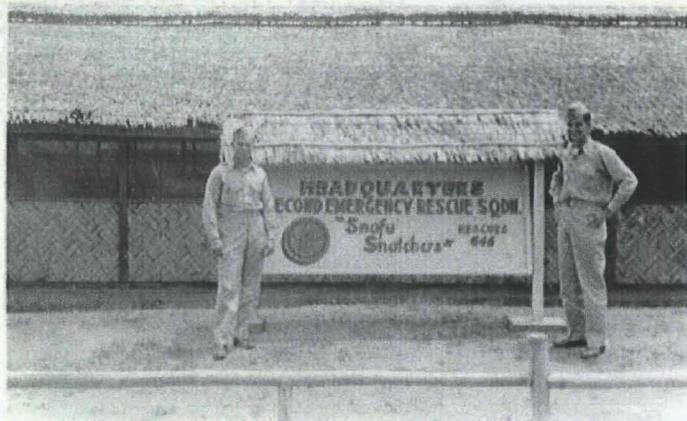




Rescue Squadron Pilot and Mary Harvey
in front of Jap zero - Clark Field
April 1946



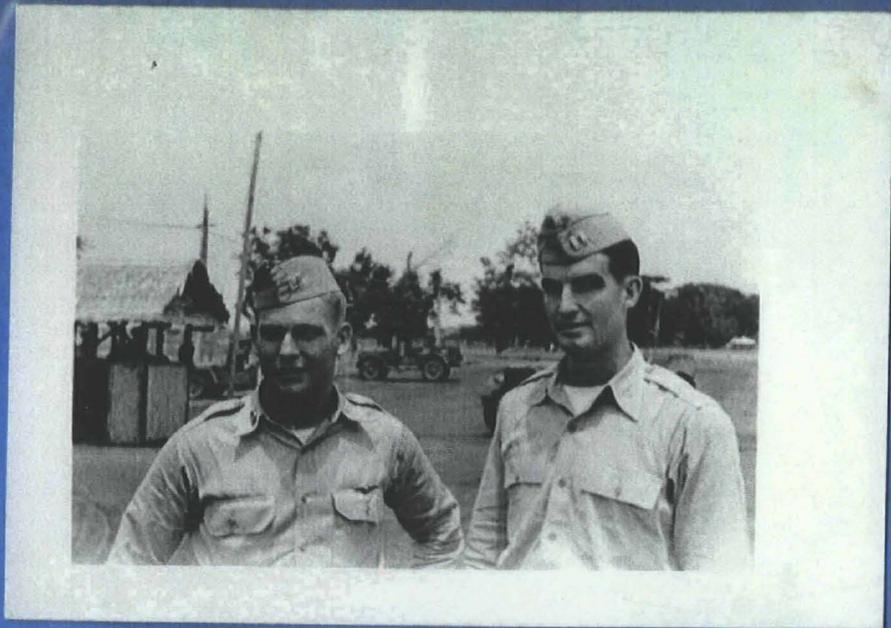
Capt Julian Rogers - Joe Cross and
Mary Harvey - in front of Jap PBY
Clark Field - April 1946



Capt Julian Rogers - Wilson, N.C.
Second Emergency Rescue SQDN.
Clark Field, Near Angeles, Luzon P.I.

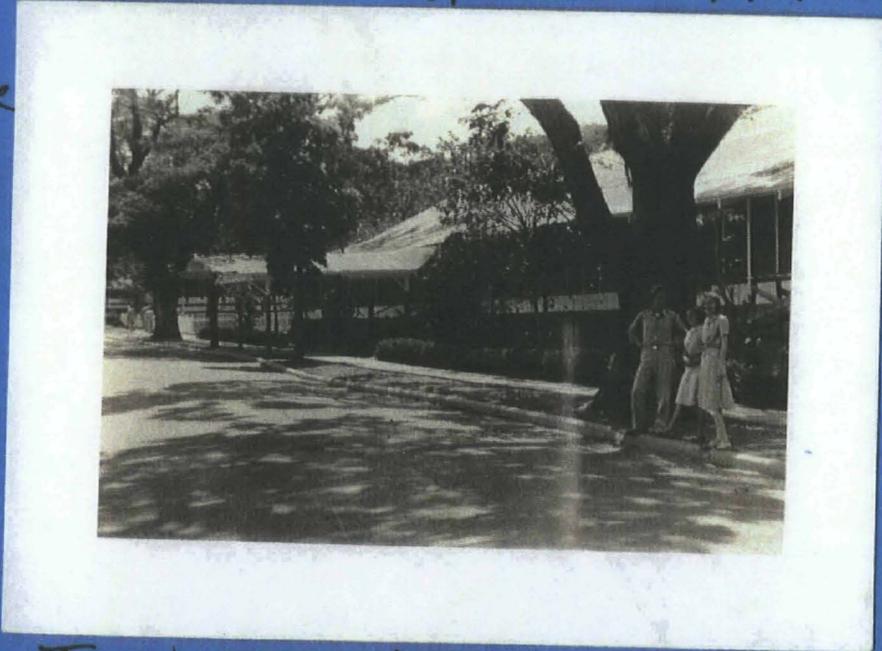


Mary Harvey and Julian Rogers
His Rescue PBY - Clark Field



Two Wilson, N.C. Boys April 1946
 at Clark Field - Luzon, P.I.
 Capt Julian Rogers - USAF
 Capt John N. Hackner Jr RPT
 mespae

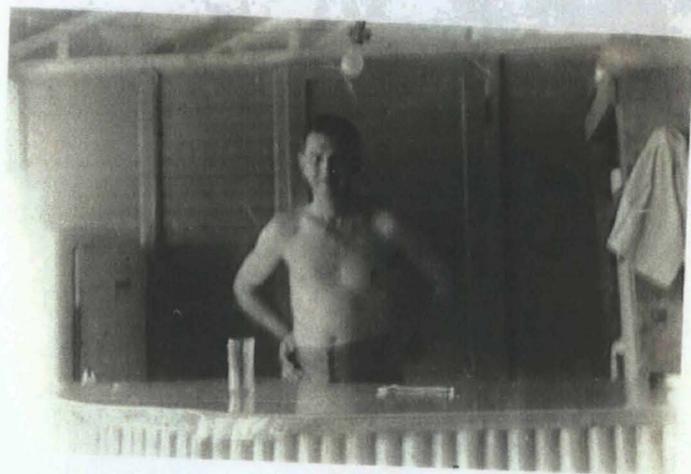
Capt Julian Rogers and me
 Rescue Helicopter, Clark Field



LIBRAN and Mary HARVEY - in front
 of ARC Barracks Clark Field
 John - Mary HARVEY - Sue Jordan - ARC
 in front of Air Force Officers Club



MARY HARVEY - JULIAN ROGERS
LILLIAN ALLEN - JOHN - APRIL 1946
CLARK FIELD AIR FORCE D.C.



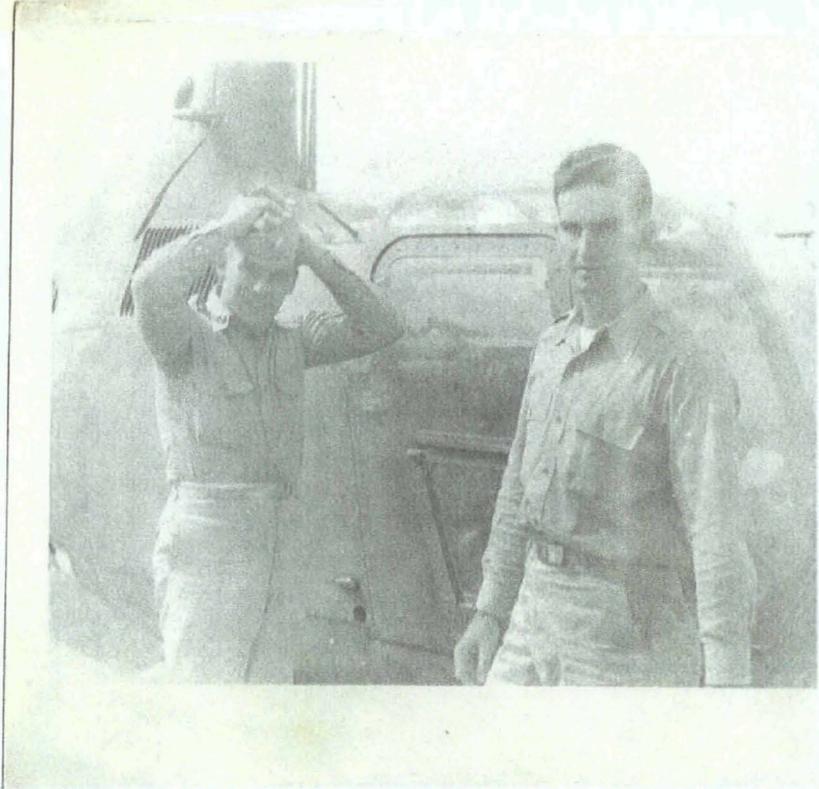
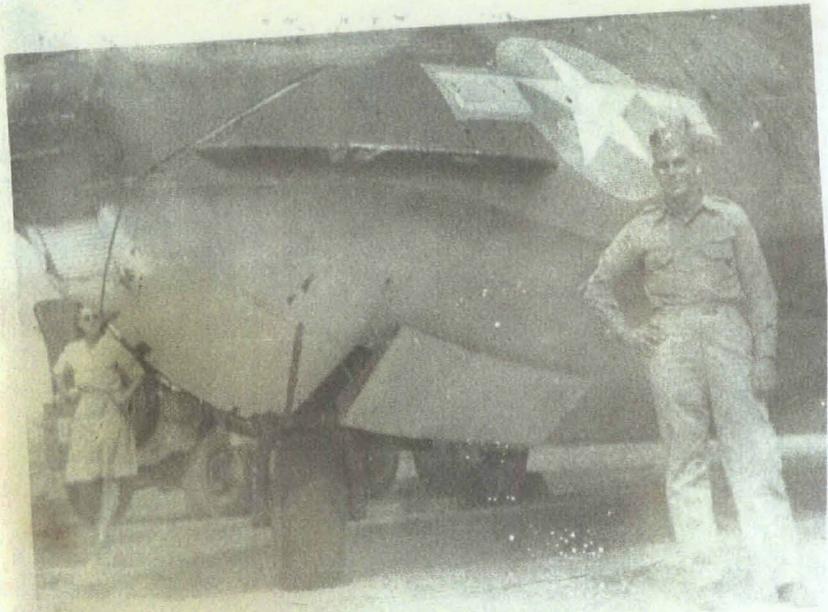
CAPT. HARPER - USAF - DANBERRY, S.C.
APRIL 1946 - OUR HOST FOR STAY
AT CLARK FIELD OVERNIGHT



JULIAN ROGERS - JOHN MARY HARVEY
WITH JAP PLANE AT CLARK FIELD



MARY HARVEY - SUE JORDAN RE
J.F. STOTSA BROS - CLARK FIELD



Red Cross Days

The two main questions I have been asked are, "Why did you decide to join the Red Cross?", and "With so many men and so few women, how were you treated?" .

To understand my joining the Red Cross you would have to have lived during World War II. Everyone was involved in every way. We saved tin cans, toothpaste tubes, cooked our oatmeal with marsh-mellows to conserve sugar, (which was rationed as was gasoline and many other things), often wore shoes with wooden soles to save our ration stamps for fancier things, appeared in fashion shows to raise money for war relief, worked with Victory Crop Corp to help farmers who desperately needed workers. (I once went with the National Bank to sucker tobacco but I apparently wasn't much good because they never asked me back!)

I laughingly say I danced my way through the war because on Friday nights a bus load of well chaperoned young ladies in evening dresses went to Seymour Johnson Field 28 miles away to dance (they had a wonderful Glenn Miller trained band I got to know quite well). On Saturday nights we went to the American legion Hall to dance, and on Sunday afternoons we took turns at the USO. There were many strict rules we followed but many couples dated and eventually got married.

All of our many friends from Johnson Field were shipped to Europe, the war had dragged on for years and we knew something big was going to happen. I had heard about the Club and Recreation Department of the Red Cross so I applied and was immediately accepted. The requirements were very simple – age 23 to go overseas, 25 to work in the states, and a college degree. Within a few weeks I was sent to Washington, D.C. for training and classified as a Staff Assistant.

It was quite exciting! We were billeted at the old Philippine Embassy and were trained at American University. There were about 50 girls in our group – mostly from the north and west – very few southerners. Washington was a madhouse!

Several of us decided to take a cab to the University the first morning and we were very fortunate. The driver who picked us up was a retired contractor – too old to fight, but he was serving his country, so he had come to Washington to drive a cab. This was his contribution to the war effort. He asked us what time we would be leaving that afternoon and said he would be waiting for us. From then on he was waiting for us every morning and afternoon.

We were issued summer weight uniforms complete with hats, purses, and high heels – and were required to wear stockings and girdles. A Washington socialite, Mrs. Bard Letts, helped us with our uniforms and every morning when you came in she would hit you on your bottom to be sure you were wearing your girdle. We nicknamed her "threats Letts".

During our training the main things that stuck with me and I remember more than anything else are 1. Do not judge your fellow man. , and 2. You can do anything. All thorough my months with Red Cross these two things were put into practice more than anything else.

We had some "on the job" training at Camp Pickett not too far from Washington. As a rehabilitation center there were all kinds of cases – from traction to psychos. We even put on a show for them – and we wore jeans, blue shirts, and comfy shoes. It was heavenly to get out of our stockings and girdles for a while. I immediately had to put into practice what I had learned because some of our "boys" were really "way out", and also, this was the first time I had ever seen a white girl dancing with a black man.

The most interesting thing that happened to me in Washington was that the war ended on Aug. 14! I happened to be going out to dinner with my college roommate and her husband – who was stationed in D.C., and an old family friend whose wife was not there. I shall never forget that night!! Absolute bedlam! Crowds everywhere – no car traffic. All you could do was just "Go with the flow". Whichever way the crowd was going you were pushed along, too. Everyone was screaming, hugging, and we wound up at the White House. M.P.s were surrounding the grounds with their arms locked I heard someone say, "Well, Mary Harvey Ruffin, what are you doing here?" It was Robert Johnson from Wilson – the first of many men from Wilson County I would see in the coming months.

In September we left by train for Camp Stoneman in California – fully dressed in our summer uniforms (complete with stockings and girdles!). We left one Friday night from Union Station at 10 to the cheers of many GIs.

We were very comfortable in Pullmans with a dear black man taking wonderful care of us. We stopped in Chicago the next afternoon for about six hours so a bunch of us went to the Stevens Hotel for dinner and dancing. There were some Red Cross men attached to our group and they had asked different ones of us so we had a delightful evening.

We danced to the music of Clyde McCoy's band from Memphis, Tenn. Little did I know how my life would turn out two years later!

The trip across the country was gorgeous. Quite often the train stopped and we would get off for a meal. At night different groups would put on a show and everybody would crowd into one car and sit everywhere to watch. Even though they were a good bit older, all our men participated, too, and that made it more interesting. One of the funniest skits I still remember was a girl trying to climb into an upper berth with the assistance of a man and she dropped everything on him including the contents of a hot water bottle! We were never bored even though the trip took about 8 days.

When the train stopped in Albuquerque I could not believe it when I saw a familiar face standing on the platform – John Schnell – a Soldier I knew from the dances at Seymour Johnson Field. He had returned from overseas and was on his way to San Francisco.

We arrived at Camp Stoneman where troops were stationed prior to going overseas and spent four days being re-outfitted in khakis and doing such things as climbing on board a ship using a 50 foot rope ladder – and back down the other side. ~~I~~ Those days women did not wear slacks, but we boarded ship in them and were not allowed to wear anything else on the ships. Our favorite saying was Dorothy Parker's, "Women in slacks should not turn their backs!"

We were also issued all sorts of equipment – canteens, helmets, gun-belts, K-rations, etc., and had to wear them all as we boarded ship. Our crowd had swelled by this time and there were well over 200 of us waiting to leave. Two ships were waiting for us to board – one the Lurline – a great lakes steamer – and the other a victory ship – the Marine Shark. Naturally, I was in the second group and boarded the Marine Shark!

We left San Francisco from pier 15 and there were various officials, a band, and a Red Cross Canteen Corps to see us off. We ate cookies and drank juice to the strains of "Serenade In Blue". The warehouse and pier were decorated in all kinds of red, white, and blue flags and banners. The band played a march as boarded our ship and streamed into our staterooms. There were 8 of us – 3 berths deep and barely enough room to turn around – in our khaki slacks loaded with so much equipment we could hardly move.

There were 3,500 troops on board – 200 were officers and 72 Red Cross girls. We were classed as 2nd Lt.s and were not allowed to associate with enlisted men. The third day out our orders were changed and we would spend our days talking to men, but we had to be off their deck by dark. Our trip was certainly not dull! PFC George Lewis approached me about being in a show, "Now Hear This". In spite of my lack of talent, I remembered the second thing we were taught (that you can do anything) and I agreed = having no idea what I would be doing. George did a sort of mock interview and then I was a jitterbug. Two boys were stationed in the audience to start dancing with me and others from the audience were encouraged to come up and break on us. We had to wait until dinner was served because that was the only large area. It really was fun but you can imagine how some of the dancers were – Often I just stood back and watched them perform – and I was very thankful that we were required to wear slacks!

We had seven performances of the show to packed dining rooms, and then they did a sort of traveling show, but I declined. There was always someone trying to get up a bridge game and I soon learned I was one of the few girls who knew how to play.

When we passed the International Date Line all the Red Cross girls were summoned before a kangaroo court. Our judges were two captains and a Major with mops on their heads. We were ordered to scrub the decks ~~win~~ in our bare feet with our pants legs rolled up. Paula Shaw and I were cited for insubordination and they threatened to throw us in the brig if we didn't sing for them. So we did – some silly tune about North Carolina. I wanted to sing "Mustard and Gravy's" song about "Beautiful Wilson" but I couldn't teach it to Paula. Then 15 of us were ordered to dance with 15 GI's for 15 minutes. We were barefooted and the GI's had on combat boots so my feet really suffered! One very interesting things – while we were on deck talking to the GI's they would show us mines in the water and tell us about a ship that had been sunk two weeks ago in these same waters. I don't know whether they were trying to scare us or not, but you had to either wear our life preserver or carry it with you at all times. Mainly we used ours as a seat cushion.

We arrived in Manila Harbor at night October 5 and I've never seen so many lights in my life! It was gorgeous! I was greatly disappointed the next morning to find out the lights were from other ships and certainly not Manila! This was only 6 or 8 weeks after the war had ended and Manila had suffered terrible damage. There was only one street open at the time and they told us there were dead Japs everywhere – specially in the Walled City. I did not ever go through the Walled City but many of the girls did.

Buses picked us up and took us to a Replacement Depot to await our assignments. I found out I was assigned to the 29th Replacement Depot to help open a new club there. There was already a club there but so many men were being shipped home they were quickly opening two more. For one week while we were getting the club ready we helped repatriate nurses who had been held prisoners at Bilibid Prison. They were pitiful sights – thin as rails, wrinkled skin, and yellow from taking atabrine to ward off Malaria. We quickly became friends with a bunch of pilots who were solely to take the Generals flying all over the area – places like Bataan and Corregidor. Naturally, when they weren't flying the Generals they flew us!

There were four of us staying in the nurse's quarters – tents with wooden floors and sides. We had our own shower and faucet, latrine, two chairs, two light switches, and an ironing board. The mess hall was right across the street and every night at 9:00 they had coffee hour.

The Red Cross girl who was starting the club was a veteran who knew how to get things done (I later learned this, too!). We dyed parachutes to hang from the ceilings and scrounged bottles to put candles in, creating an outdoor French Café look. There were three parts to the club – a reading and writing room, a game room, and a kitchen with tables – plus a little outside room with tables.

We had a GI detail helping us and we made coffee in 32 gallon cans – one black, one with sugar, and one with sugar and cream. The men came at 9:00 in the morning when we opened and stayed until we closed at 11:00. They would leave for a meal and come right back! Unfortunately the Longshoremen in California were on strike so there were no boats coming to pick them up – these thousands of unhappy men. We spent most of our time talking to them, looking at pictures of their families and girlfriends, listening to horror stories from the ones who had not been home in years.

As always there were 20 or 30 who liked to play bridge so I would organize games and be the only female playing. They also loved to play bingo but insisted that I call because of my southern accent. Our prizes were always cigarettes!

There was always someone who wanted to take your picture or paint your picture. Of course, we always said yes and put things on the bulletin board until that group had gone – then because of lack of space we would throw them away. One, however, I kept. One GI asked me if he could paint my picture and followed me around all night. When he left and gave it to me I could see that it was not the usual picture. He told me that he was a cartoonist for the New Yorker magazine – it was done in watercolors and even titled – “Harvey by Hamabe”. When we open^{ed} a county Veterans Museum several years ago I gave everything I had left from Red Cross days to the museum – including the picture by Hamabe. It is on permanent display as are several other things I gave them. One of my children looked up Hamabe on the computer and discovered he died a couple of years ago. I am sorry that I did not get in touch with him when he was alive. I discovered he had been inducted into the Cartoon Hall of Fame.

When we were working on the club I met my first boy from Wilson and Wilson County – many, many more were to come. G. C. Crutchfield, Jr. I had no transportation, we were not allowed off the base without a male escort, but everybody who was around knew how to contact me – including a first cousin John Hackney, Jr. Some went home and shipped out through this depot.

One funny incident occurred that the GI's in the club really enjoyed. Someone named Westbrook from Burlington, N.C., came in the club looking for me – said he drove a truck through Wilson all the time and knew I was a waitress who worked in one of the cafes. Said he was always trying to date her. Said he eventually married a “classy dame” from Louisiana, shipped out 6 months later and hadn't heard from her in a year and a half until he got a telegram saying he was a new father.

One of the first from Wilson to contact me was Johnny Riley. He was a supply sergeant and took me to the president's home – Malacaan Palace – and even for a ride on the president's yacht.

He also gave me some very valuable items like a hot plate, screw in plugs to connect lights to, and when he left soon afterwards he sent a jeep full of everything – bed linens, blankets and even a pillow – an unheard luxury!

I had also seen another cousin from Wilson, Frank Lea. He later came out here to wait for a ship home. At the same time, Johnny Riley came out to tell me goodbye and Jimmy Millhouse called to see how I was doing. We decided to call John Hackney and have a Wilson party when I got off at 11:00. We went to the Rec hall, put blankets on the floor and had a great time.

Before Thanksgiving the head of our club, Doris Callahan, was sent to Japan. Most of the boys had been sent home by that time so they were combining all the clubs into the main one – called the Caribou Club – and I was to be the director. There were so many rumors going around about what was going to happen to the 29th. We were short on staff and didn't know what to expect.

The rainy season had started and we were literally knee deep in mud. One of the captains in supply got me combat boots to wear so I could get to the club. Christmas was coming and I dreaded the thought. We were short handed and had many unhappy men on our hands. Most of them had been at the 29th at least 14 days and had sent several representatives to Replacement Command to investigate the ship situation. No one was able to take any time off – we all worked hard singing carols, being decorated as human Christmas trees, I made about 600 pieces of fudge on my little hot plate – all this in spite of the fact that the GI's assigned to the club got roaring drunk and were no help at all. The night we had a buffet – turkey sandwiches, relishes, a large cake with Christmas Greetings on it in the middle of the table – flanked by candles. We gave out little gifts to the boys and many of them said it was the nicest Christmas they had had in years. The nicest thing of all was that all day long we were reading out shipping numbers – the best Christmas present the boys could have!

Christmas day in the club a boy came up to me and said "I had Christmas dinner at your house in Wilson last year!" He had been at Seymour Johnson Field and we had gotten him with several others at the USO!

After the holidays it was obvious the 29th was closing. Structures were being torn down and most of the Red Cross girls had been sent to other assignments. I got up early one morning and tried to take a shower – no water! The next thing to go was the telephone. In the midst of all this they had some great emergency ^{at} Clark Field and I learned that Maggie McDougal from Jackson, Miss., and I were to go immediately. I was not at all anxious to go to Clark but we had no choice in the matter. If we were told to go we went!

Manila was slowly recovering. You made friends in a hurry in those days and you were always running into someone you knew – specially people who had come over on the Marine Shark with me. We also loved our Field Director – Marian Barrows – the most unlikely person you would ever pick to come overseas and live in a tent!

Remember, this was over 60 years ago – no TV, no computer. You got together with people and you went out to dinner, you danced, you talked (which I never seemed to find difficult). Whenever we had free time there was always something to do. Often we went out to dinner with 6 or 8 men and you would be the only girl.

I saw a lot of my cousin, John Hackney, and his friends. I went to various productions like the ballet, the Manila Symphony, some plays, and even a Notre Dame Reunion where I met the cream of Manila society as Manila was largely Catholic.

In order to pump up the local economy we were furnished many Philippino helpers. One of our house girls invited us all to Sunday dinner. Several accepted but I was the only one who actually went. Carlos, a truck driver at the base, took me out in a two-ton army truck. The house was the average bamboo affair on stilts. You had to climb something like a ladder to get to the upstairs living quarters while pigs and chickens roamed around underneath. I was served at a table all by myself while everyone stood around and watched me eat. They served me fried chicken, sticky rice, GI pickles, warm GI beer, and papaya. I poured a little catsup on my rice – which did not help it – but then my hosts kept pouring more on. All during the meal the women kept stroking my hair and a child was standing there with sores all over her. I could hardly wait to get home and wash my hair!!

One night I had dinner with an American couple who had been interned at Santa Tomas prison for 3 years. After dinner we went to a club and saw many more of their internee friends.

There were many Philippino nightclubs all with Philippino bands (gold teeth everywhere!) and wonderful mahogany dance floors. One very interesting place I went was Tom Dixie's. I went with a friend who evidently had been there many times because he introduced me to Tom and told me he used to run the Army-Navy Club. The food was excellent, all kinds of fine china (though nothing matched) and silver services in glass cases that I drooled over. Behind closed doors was a gambling room. We walked through but didn't stop. I saw big black limousines parked outside and my friend told me this was a favorite place of the Chinese and white Russians – who were everywhere! My friend said the place would be off limits to army personnel one week and on the next.

San Pedro was our closest small town and I gave some light bulbs to the church. One day the Padre, Sexton and their families (always families over here) came to thank me. We had coffee

and cookies in the club and they brought me bananas and many thanks. And so reluctantly, and very suddenly, on Saturday morning at 6 o'clock Maggie McDougal from Jackson Miss., and I were transported to Clark in an open-air weapons carrier! The road was horrible and we literally bumped our way there. At least it didn't rain. What we called Clark was actually Ft. Stotsenberg – a cavalry post before the war. We were amazed! Paved streets, sidewalks, houses, tennis courts, a parade ground, flowers, trees! We were put in temporary quarters and who should arrive that same afternoon and be quartered right next to us but Col. Dave Wade's Raiders – a squadron of B29s. They immediately adopted us and were great to us the entire time we were at Clark.

As this was the air force there were plenty of pilots, planes, and brass. General Wurtsmith was the head man followed by Gen. Brandt. General Wurtsmith loved the Red Cross and insisted that we all wear the 13th air force patch on everything. Our nearest town was Angeles and they had a restaurant we learned to love called Trinio's where they served steak (probably caribou!) with an egg on top – the Australian's got there first! There was another place good for dancing called the Mayfair.

As a regular army base right far from Manila, Clark, was rather self sufficient. The Officers club was great and had a wonderful dining room where we all ate dinner every night. There was a great place for dancing called the Wind Tunnel. Also on the base was an absolutely fabulous restaurant called Mr. Cy's sort of a mixture of Chinese and American food. Most all the private dinner parties were held there.

There were no Red Cross clubs like we had at the 29th, but we had a club mobile and I had a ~~light~~^{light} white jeep with ARC on it in red letters which I drove myself. There were places on a trailer for jugs of juice and doughnuts. We had a commissary and they made hundreds of doughnuts!! I soon learned to back that little trailer right up to the loading dock perfectly. We would meet buses, planes, and service areas right at Clark, but other times we traveled all around in deserted areas.

Soon after our arrival I was taken by our boss and introduced to another route I was supposed to take. That day we started out in a weapon's carrier and I soon realized why. Never have I seen such isolated spots – each one worse than the other – until we finally started on a cobblestone road that seemed impassable – came to a stream which we drove right through and finally reached our station. There would be about 12 boys in each group and all they did was walk the pipeline everyday to be sure no one had damaged it. The pipe line transported oil and gas everywhere and this was what was known as Huck territory - - a leftist guerilla group always stirring up trouble. Imagine my surprise at station #6 to see Phil Sewell who was married to a girl from Wilson –

Dottie Little. We ate lunch and had the best time visiting. The men were always so sweet and considerate – they would take sheets and cover their screened latrines for us.

One day we were coming back from Station #5 when we came across this enormous deserted airstrip. We drove down it and all around. It was eerie – not a soul in sight, but dismantled burned planes everywhere. If we were close by we would always stop at the quartermaster farm – not to service them but just to have a cup of coffee and visit. They grew wonderful vegetables and fruits there and would bring a load down to the general a couple of times a week. They would also stop at the Red Cross house and leave us a huge basket filled with everything. When we covered the ordinance outfits I ran across two men who were on the Marine Stark and it was always like “old home week” when you saw anyone you had gotten to know before.

There were also two boys from Wilson who were pilots – Don James and Julian Rogers.

We went to the rifle range sometimes and I loved it there. It was up in the hills and there were beautiful trees and tropical plants everywhere. The rest of it was tall grass and sort of burned out because there was so much fighting in the area. In fact, the whole area we covered was part of the horrible death march from Bataan to Camp O'Donnell. In a few weeks we were flown up to Florida Blanca a remote area hard to reach but with an airstrip where they had the newly acquired secret jet fighter planes. We had a small area off of base operations where we served our juice and doughnuts. Our main pilot was Ken Sarchet and we learned to love him. Also, another good friend, Jack Wolfe, was sent up there and we always visited him in the tower.

As the war had ended officers were being assigned houses to wait until their families came. In a short while Maggie and I were moved into one of these permanent houses with some other Red Cross girls. It was typical – a large center room with bedrooms that were like sleeping porches on the sides – screen at the top and bottom and wood in the middle. It was not unusual to wake up and ^{see JAP.} prisoners staring up at you through the bottom screen. They were there cutting grass with these huge curved knives.

There were two maids and a houseboy for 6 of us. He would serve you breakfast and lunch on a tray in the dining area. We had to keep lights on in our closets because of the dampness and if you took a garment off and laid it aside for a minute a maid would grab it and wash it. We learned to hide our clothes if we didn't want them washed. For dinner at night we always went to the officers club.

The area where we lived was like a big neighborhood. In 62 Col. Tim Tyler had asked 5 boys from the hospital area to live with him until his family came, the B29 pilots were across the street in 62 and we were in 61. We would sit on our front steps and visit and the boys across the street had a wireless radio outfit – station KIAK – and we would talk late at night – mainly to the west

coast. I sent my mother several messages but I don't think anyone ever followed through and called her.

As soon as I arrived I started playing bridge with three other men – Don Hayden, Bill Kinney and I can't remember the fourth. Don was sent home so he brought someone over to our table after dinner one night and introduced me to our new bridge fourth – he was Lt. Jimmy Witherington – a young doctor from next door who would become my husband a year and a half later.

For the first time since the Marine Shark I had a chance to go to church and there were always a bunch of friends who wanted to go with me. We would go and then someone always had a brunch – quite often Gen. Wurtsmith. I discovered the regular army was big on brunches!

Also in April two boys from the quartermaster corps took Susie and me to Baguio – the resort spot of the Philippines! It was gorgeous – like the mountains at home but you would see natives wandering around in fur coats and G-strings – funniest sight you ever saw. We stayed in a private home that was now a hotel and Susie's and my room opened on a gorgeous balcony that overlooked the town square. We went everywhere – to see the dog market where they sold dogs to eat and to a burned out monastery on top of a mountain. Going up it was amazing to see tobacco fields and rice paddies.

In May the 13th air force was beginning to move to Ft. McKinley near Manila. Soldiers who had enough points were being sent home constantly and Red Cross girls going places like Japan and Okinawa. There were many going away parties. About this time was when some of the boys staying next door at house 63 left and Tim Tyler asked 3 young doctors to move in – Jimmy from Covington, Woody Woodcock from Nashville, Tenn., and Ned Wysor from Clifton Forge, Va. The boys had been together in the states, been sent to Japan and now to Clark. They were listed as Flight Surgeons and would go on ambulances when there were plane crashes and accidents. They were also in and out of house 61 visiting and playing games.

My cousin from Manila was in and out with his friends and pretty often we would fly to Manila. Usually we flew in a two seater but once I got to fly in a Catalina that took off and landed on water. I thought we were going to shake to death! The most thrilling though was when I got to fly in a B29 – The Challenger. What a thrill! I got to sit in the front bubble when we were coming back and that was really exciting.

The most exciting, though, was when General Eisenhower flew into Clark and reviewed the Philippine troops. Maggie and I decided to go down on the strip to watch everything but we had been working and were too late. We went back to Stotsenberg to wait when Maggie saw Pappy Hines – a dear old Col. we all loved. He got in the jeep with us and the MP's just saluted and let

us right on by. We got to see everything and then rushed back to the headquarters to see him there. While we were outside waiting 3 other girls joined us. When he came out he saw us and came over for a minute and talked to us. We were all so dumb-founded we couldn't say a word and he just smiled that wonderful smile of his. Everyone was snapping pictures and they got many of us from the back!

There were many typhoons but the worst was Opal in mid-Sept. Every time one was threatened Sue and I would have to move our beds into the living room. We usually knew what time they would hit so we would be prepared. The worst thing about Opal to me was that they could not fly all the B29s out so they packed them with EMs to weight them down. We were there the next morning as the planes were unloaded with hot coffee and fresh doughnuts. We had no water at Clark for several days and rain really blew in our side porches.

Baguio suffered much damage from Ingrid earlier but Maggie and I had a chance to go back and took it. It was quite a trip. The bus never stopped for us but we saw Joe Paddy from operations and he told us a plane was coming to San Fernando north and perhaps we could catch it. Maggie rushed down and got orders for us and we flew on a C47. One of our friends had alerted them that we were coming so two men met us and we had dinner at their mess hall and they drove us on up to Baguio 30 miles away.

We stayed at the Country Club run by the army – gorgeous – fabulous food and a golf course with a pro. Maggie and I decided to take a few lessons and were sitting in the pro shop when a Major Vargas was paged. Being as this is such an unusual name I was not at all surprised a few minutes later when Pete Vargas walked in – one of the boys from house 62 across the street who had been transferred to McKinley. He had a friend with him and we were all mighty glad to see each other.

Maggie and I were tired of that hilly golf course so they gave us the keys to their jeep and then we all met for dinner that night. There was a dance and we had a table in front of the fireplace. The next day they gave us the keys to their jeep again and we shopped and looked around. That night we all got together for dinner and then went to town to see the fireworks in the town square. There was also a band and a public dance. Then we went to the local night spot – El Mocamba – before going back to the club for our nightly hot chocolate. Eleanor Gay was there with the Red Cross and showed us around, too. It was mighty hard to go back to work again after that beautiful resort spot!

There was always something going on and people always were stopping by the house. It was hard not to play favorites but I couldn't help it. My three were Ken Sarchet – the pilot who flew us to Florida Blanca and who was one of my church buddies, Jack Wolfe and Pete Tisdale. They

were always around and ready to do anything for us – so much so that when Pete went to Australia on leave he asked me if there was anything he could get for me. I told him I desperately needed underwear pants! (I don't know if it was the maids or the mice but you just couldn't keep decent underwear and I was desperate!) So he brought me back 6 pair of pink ones, two pieces of flowered cloth, and a red, a white, and two blue flowers – his own special gift. I'm sure he was teased terribly but he was one of 8 children and had sisters.

In July my cousin, John Hackney, went home and I surely did hate that. Of course, a good friend I had made through him – Joe Cross – also went. Joe's first child was born while he was over there and we all "sweated it out with him" and I'm sure sent gifts made of parachutes – the rage in that area then.

While I was at Clark, two things happened that were terrible. Don James, the young pilot from Wilson, was flying out one morning and his plane crashed. He was killed instantly. I corresponded with his mother and got in touch with several people for her. I did not go to the funeral in Manila but my cousin did. I did go by the cemetery later and took pictures of his grave for his family. Jack Wolfe had been in Manila to a football game with him just before it happened.

Then a couple of months later Gen. Wurtsmith went home on leave and his plane crashed into the N.C. mountains killing all on board. He had all his staff with him and had given all of them leave while he was there. Unfortunately, I think this happen as they were going home – not after their leave. I think Maj. Freddie Noonan was his pilot and Dave Liebman was his aide – a bunch of really nice people. This upset all of us terribly.

There was always something happening – one night Maggie kept hearing weird noises from somewhere near the house. The Phil. were notoriously bad about stealing (Jimmy next door had his footlocker stolen twice) so we finally called the MPs. After searching the area diligently it was discovered that a dog had puppies under Maggie's bedroom.

If you took a jeep into town (and we could do that at Clark) you had to take a lock and chain to hook around your steering wheel. One time when the Huck's had been acting up we were issued 45's and had to learn to shoot – or try to. I don't think I ever hit the target – but when Maggie and I went to town we had to take the 45. As it was too heavy and big for either one of us to strap it around our waist, one of us would carry it like a bowl of flowers while the other on shopped! I'm sure everyone gave us a wide berth that day!

One night in July I was playing bridge with Art Perry and Dave Liebman when the phone rang and it was Keda, one of our maids. She was at the motor pool – scared to death because the Huck's were supposed to raid her barrio that night. I talked to the MPs and they brought Keda,

her three children, and a few pitiful belongings over and I settled them in one of our back rooms. The MPs told me the motor pool was flooded with Philipinos that night, but I never did find out if the Huck's raided the barrio.

With so many men being shifted around and everything changing, the powers that be decided we needed a regular club at Clark, so we were trying to work this out. With all the families coming in we were also told that we would have to give up our house. In the middle of this I was suddenly told to re[po]rt to the Black Hawk division – an infantry group I can't even remember where. Maggie had already been sent to Okinawa.

As I have been refreshing my memory by reading letters I wrote my m mother (and my mother was no much of a saver), there is a lapse after my days at Clark. There are no letters that she saved while I was at the Black Hawk Division. It was what Maggie and I had thought we were getting into when we were sent to Clark – a desolate out post in the middle of no-where. I was assigned two tasks – one to clean out and set up some kind of system for the storeroom and to organize a hillbilly band. At Club 86 I ran into a lot of young boys who had been at the 29th and they were so happy to see me. And cleaning out the storeroom was a simple job. And organizing a hillbilly band was fun – but there was no way I could get those boys to dance.

After I had been at the 86th for two weeks I was called into Red Cross headquarters. When I arrived I was treated like a queen and they were so nice to me I couldn't believe it. The top folks were there to see me and told me to get back the 86th that very day and I was being re-assigned to Ft. McKinley to open a club on Saturday night!! There was a girl named Ruth Hubay who would be helping me and we were the only two people in the club. They were even sending two girls from Red Cross headquarters to help us!

I never could figure out Red Cross transfers and I certainly couldn't figure this one out. There was a club in Manila called the Roosevelt Club that seemed heavenly and I had thought I would love to work there – but the girls who were there hated it – and my close friends had already resigned and gone home. Anyhow, I dashed back to the 86th, packed and was taken to McKinley.

I ran some errands in town, rushed back to the 86th to pack, and was at McKinley by 7 – only to find myself locked out! This was particularly annoying because I had called to tell them I was arriving about that time. When someone finally came and let me in my room I found nothing but an army cot with a mattress on it. I unpacked as best I could, made my bed and fell in. When Brownie Reynolds came in she woke me up to see if I needed anything. I told her everything!! I later found out the dog had puppies on my cot a few days before.

As Brownie had done nothing about a bed for me, one of my old friends from McKinley sent one by the house for me but Brownie wouldn't let the boy bring it in. At least she got me a bed

after that plus a card table and a beat up bamboo chair. However, she would not give me a key, so after sitting in the rain the next night for 35 minutes before someone came to let me in, I heard of a girl with another key who had moved and I went and got her key and never told Brownie.

The house was lovely – tall ceilings, painted a lovely color, beautiful furniture except in my room – however, Brownie soon went to Baguio and I fixed my room up. Brownie had a dog who had just had puppies and she would not let the men spray for vermin – which we had plenty of! We slept under mosquito netting firmly tucked around us not to keep mosquitoes out – but mice. We never could understand that woman!!

Ruth Hubay was as amazed at the sudden turn of events as I was. We were bewildered at the seriousness of our task. From the next day on we worked like beavers (with the help of two girls awaiting transport to Korea), Jap POWs, and a GI detail. We had made a curtain out of muslin for the stage, blew up balloons, cut crepe paper and by 5:30 Saturday night we were ready!

Results were terrific and our opening a huge success. We had an MC who introduced all – Col. Pyle, head man at McKinley, Gen. Eubank, head of the 13th, plus many other big wigs and officials.

Ruth and I had to make speeches. We had a big cake and I asked Wilbur Johnson from Wilson County to help me cut it. The photographers really pounced on that and even sent a copy to The Wilson Daily Times – my hometown newspaper. We were a couple of bone tired girls but felt it was a job well done.

Ruth was going to run the club and I was to do the programs. I planned everything from dancing lessons, string bands, state parties, and everything else I could think of. The club itself was the old 85th Wing Officers Club and was a lovely building. I had never worked under a better set-up except that Ruth and I were the only ones there and we really needed more help. We both worked from 11:00 to 11:00 but we agreed that we would take every other weekend off. I planned programs around that as Ruth was no good at programming. We had a PX snack bar for the boys to buy things and we planned to serve only on special occasions. One of the first boys to come to our club happened to be one of our drivers from the old 29th. Many others followed. They all seemed so young to me (at 24) and reminded me of my younger brother's friends – and they were just as polite!

There was a weather outfit there – the 15th – that Ken Sarchet flew with at Clark. They had the most wonderful food in the world and one day presented me with a cake with "Here's to Friendship" written on it. I took it back to the club and we drew manes out of a hat to see who would get slices. I ate with them most all the time and I was the only woman eating with them

Thanksgiving Day. They even had a program made out for me and several of them signed it. I still have it. They also made ice cream and a huge chocolate cake for me at the club one night.

I worked very closely with the Chaplains and Col.'s, Jordan and Davis were two of my favorites. I played golf with them and went to the Army-Navy Club. We met with Mrs. Pyle – the C.O.'s wife, to discuss the army wives helping the GIs in some way. I also started teaching Sunday School class and joined the Wives Club. Mainly we played bridge at the ~~the~~ meetings. All the wives were lovely but they were always trying to get me to date one of their friends. Pete Vargas was there and we were thrown together quite often simply because we were the two singles in the bunch. I was so busy at the club I had very little free time. We had a big Halloween party and I was the chief spook – white sheets, white face – I was a fright, but we bobbed for apples and did simple things and the boys loved it.

About once a month we had dances – just like at Seymour Johnson Field – a bunch of Phillipino girls dressed in evening dresses and very heavily chaperoned!!! We always gave their aristocratic chaperones a gift.

Our orchestra was Dimples with a singer called Baby Darling. I go to know Mrs. Dimples well because she always came with her husband. One day I had planned a boat trip to Corregidor. Naturally we had a huge crowd because this was really something special. We had a wonderful day and everything went fine --- but coming back home that night the boat stopped! Well, there was nothing we could do except wait for daylight and someone to come out and repair the boat. Thank goodness there was extra food down stairs and we would take turns going down there to eat and rest a few minutes. I felt like a mother hen with a bunch of chickens. They all gathered round and we sang songs and told tales until we were all so tired we put our heads on our life preservers and tried to sleep. I think a few of the boys were actually scared. As I said before, I felt like I was dealing with my younger brother's friends.

One day I was sitting in the club when Julian Lane from Wilson walked in. He had not gone home after the war but had stayed in Manila and started the Cabanatuan Lumber Company with a Philippino friend of his. We had a great time talking and I went out to dinner with him at the Manila Hotel – still in operation but you could see ravages of war everywhere.

Right after Thanksgiving Jimmy called to tell me that he, Woody and Ned were going home. I was hopeful they would get home before Christmas but they were on a troop ship so it took quite a while. Jimmy did not get out of the service in time to enter his class at John Gaston Hospital where he was to specialize in obstetrics.

After you had been in the Red Cross for a year you were eligible for leave so in October I applied. I've never understood why they ^{did not} grant my request because they did many others but they

didn't. My mother who had been extremely opposed to me joining the Red Cross was very upset. My sister was living at home with her new baby when I left while her husband was oversea – and then the war ended so mother was alone. She really was not in good health and had had a double mastectomy a few years back. Anyhow about a week before Christmas I got a letter from our doctor telling me that he did not think mother was doing too well and he thought I should come home. So, letter in hand I went to R.C. Headquarters and was released so quickly I couldn't believe it. However I learned that the Roosevelt Club was closing and that the 86th Infantry was being disbanded, so I am sure they had a surplus of R.C. girls.

One fly in the ointment – Eleanor Gay who had been home on Leave (as I said everyone got leave except me!) returned with wedding plans and a dress for me as her bridesmaid. Things had happened to me so quickly I was stunned but I quickly packed and reported to a temporary billet in Manila. I guess all my Clark connections helped because arrangements were made for me to fly to Clark for the wedding. Lennie and Gay flew down for me and coming back Lennie let Gay take over the controls and fly the plane. Eleanor was a very unusual girl. Her family lived in Hawaii on a small island where they owned a pineapple plantation. They went everywhere by plane so Eleanor learned to fly at an early age.

I had to call my billet three times a day and they kept an AT6 standing by with a clearance so I could be back in Manila in short order. The wedding was lovely. Col. Strudivant gave Gay away and Col. Tucker was best man. A nurse was her maid of honor and I was the bridesmaid. We wore identical dresses Gay had brought back for us – hers blue – mine yellow. The Tuckers had a dinner party Friday night and Polly and I had a luncheon Saturday at noon. We decorated the chapel – and wore! – more orchids than you'll ever see, and had a reception at the Red Cross house. They went to Baguio on their wedding trip and called me the next day to see how things were with me.

As always you have to wait and wait in the army. I did have a chance to do a few things in Manila like go to Madame Savary's French Restaurant and see how things were changing. Lt. Teel at the Army Navy club was wonderful and let several of us fully use his quarters there.

As I said before, I never knew how to find anyone but anyone from my area seemed to find me and John Corbett Borden from Wilson – a Lt. Com. At Phil. Sea Front called and invited me to Christmas dinner. He lived in a Quonset with his wife Lois and daughter. I really enjoyed it. The night before – Christmas Eve – I was invited to some big deal at the Army Navy Club. I really don't remember any details except that I ran into a Red Cross supervisor – very good looking who was known to date only Generals and Colonels. She was surprised to see me as I was to see her.

Finally the day after Christmas we left in a C47 – certainly not like the planes you fly in today! Ran into several people I knew including Lt. Bill Carpenter who asked me to sit with him. We made several stops. I think Wake Island and Kwajalein where we spent the night in deserted nurse's quarters. Then we delayed several days in Hawaii because of a typhoon. A bunch of us would rent a cab from Hickman Field and go into town and look around. We always wound up at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel which had been turned over to the service during the war.

Finally on New Years Eve we left. It was during the night and we were all sleeping peacefully when all of a sudden all hell broke loose!!! We were thrown out of our seats with luggage and everything else falling down all around us. The plane was bouncing up and down and this went on for several minutes. Some people were praying, some crying, some vomiting. It was horrible and we all thought we were done for. Only Carp was as cool as a cucumber, and I guess that helped me stay calmer. After a few minutes when everything settled Carp helped everybody get things cleared out and put back up. There were some kinds of refreshments for us but the poor little soldier who was supposed to help us was completely out of it so Carp and I served everybody. None of us will ever forget that night and we were a happy bunch of people to land at Fairfield on New Years Day. All the plans we had made about meeting at the top of the Mark were gone – everybody had one thought in mind – to get to home as quickly as possible. While we were waiting for a cab at the airport a soldier came up to me and told me he had just seen me at one of the clubs in Manila. Flying then was not like it is today and it took me several days to get into Raleigh N. C. and then catch a train to Wilson.

Now to answer question #2 – with so many men and so few women how were you treated? Well, I was treated just like the lady I was brought up to be! I cannot say enough nice things about everybody I dealt with – except Red Cross Field Director Brownie Reynolds, and I think she just resented having to share what she considered her house with anyone.

Once in a while you would get a wolf whistle or a smart remark but I pretended I didn't hear a thing and that ended it. Truly it was an experience I shall always be thankful for – especially as I met my husband who died in 2003, after 55 years of a very happy marriage and four lovely children.

I've often wondered what happened to so many of the people I met, but I kept up with very few. When Jimmy was too late to enter his class at John Gaston, and would have to wait 6 months for another class, he started practicing with his father and liked it, so we got married Oct 4, 1947. Woody Woodcock got married at the same time so he and Jimmy were not in each other's weddings – but Ned Wysor was in both. We saw Woody and his wife many times because they were still in Nashville but they are both dead now. Of course, my cousin John Hackney, I still see

in Wilson. He and Joe Cross were both in our wedding. Maggie McDougal never married but she lived in Jackson, Miss., so I did see her and we kept up until she died several years ago. We often laughed about being two southern girls who were sent to Clark Field because of their southern accents.

P.S. When I resigned at McKinley Ruth Hubay was assigned 4 Philippino girls – all college graduates.

Writing this has brought back so so many memories! Back in those days you really didn't do things like that, or as my mother said, “nice southern girls don't do things like this”. Of course, now no one would think anything about it. My daughter travels all over the world with Fed-Ex., two of my grandchildren even went abroad with their chorus while still in High School.

I never went back to the Philippines, but Woody and I talked about it often. Jimmy did not like to travel, so Hawaii was as far as I could get him.

When their was a Museum started in Covington I was so happy to give them many things that Jimmy and I had collected – plus my summer Red Cross outfit I had kept. When the museum opened they insisted that I go down and stand by my uniform on display and talk to people. Reluctantly, I did and was amazed to have a line of people waiting to talk to me.

When I left the Philippines the folks at Tinio's restaurant gave me an elaborately carved tray which is in the museum.

When we got together with the Woodcock's from Nashville naturally the talk would get around to our days in the Philippines. I always worried about poor Anita having to listen to us, but she assured me she loved it and was envious of the bond we all formed. Ned Wysor retired from practicing, too, but he still lives in Va. And we keep up at Christmas.

Having never done this kind of thing before I checked out few things after I was finished – should have done it before!

1. Instead of over 200 or more Red Cross girls leaving for the orient there were about 140.
2. I transposed the name of the orchestra and singer of the band that played at the Red Cross club at McKinley – the orchestra was Baby Darling and the singer Dimples.
3. On the way home we also stopped at Guam. Also, we evidently hit the tail end of the typhoon and that's why our plane had that awful trouble.
4. The G.I. who talked to me at Fairfield said he danced with me at Seymour Field, Goldsboro, N.C., not Manila.

As I never took a picture and did not own a camera I feel I owe a debt of gratitude to all the boys who took pictures and brought me copies. That's why I have a scrapbook full and decided to include some pictures.

Other things I wish I had included – Tom Dixie was a Negro. When I was on Clubmobile at Clark I had a terrible time with heat rash on my back. The doctors couldn't cure it – my cousin John Hackney did. He told me to wear a man's cotton t-shirt!

When Jimmy's foot locker was stolen the second time and he had to wire home for money again his dad sent it with this message – "BLOW ON THOSE DICE!". We all thought it was hilarious because Jimmy did not gamble!

When I found out I was Leaving for home Jimmy had already gone so I wired him and he got it (my message) on board ship.

The few people who have read this have complained that I did not write enough about my husband. When Maggie McDougal and I were sent to Clark Field Jimmy was not there. He, Woody and Ned were first in Japan and weren't sent to Clark until late Spring of 1946.

As neighbors we all visited back and forth, played bridge, monopoly, and saw a lot of each other. When I was suddenly transferred to the 86th and then McKinley we realized we were very unhappy being separated. I was back working in clubs with very little time off, but Jimmy would come to McKinley and wait until I got off work. On weekends when I was off I would go back to Clark and stay with the girls at the Red Cross house. In between times we talked over the phone.

When Jimmy left in early December of 1946, I had thought I was staying in the Red Cross for 7 or 8 more months. Jimmy had a residency at John Gaston hospital in obstetrics.

Unfortunately the class started Jan 1 and he was not released from the army until early February, so he started practicing with his father here in Covington – like it, so we got married in October of 1947. It's a typical "I married the boy next door" story – only it just happened to be the Philippines!

MARY HARVEY RUFFIN (WITHERINGTON)

^{never}
HAVING DONE THIS KIND OF THING BEFORE I CHECKED OUT A FEW THINGS AFTER I HAD FINISHED- SHOULD HAVE DONE IT BEFORE!

1. INSTEAD OF 200 girls LEAVING FOR THE ORIENT, THERE WERE PROBABLY AROUND 140.
2. I TRANSPOSED THE NAME OF THE ORCHESTRA AND SINGER AT MCKINLEY. THE ORCHESTRA WAS BABY DARLING AND THE SINGER WAS DIMPLES.
- #. ON THE WAY HOME WE STOPPED AT GUAM, ALSO. WE EVIDENTLY HIT THE TAIL END OF THE TYPHOON AND THAT'S WHY THE PLANE HAD SO MUCH TROUBLE.
4. THE GI WHO STOPPED ME AT FAIRFIELD AND SAID HE HAD DANCED WITH ME SAID SEYMOUR FOHNSTON FIELD IN THE STATES NOT MANILA.

I FEEL I OWE A DEBT OF GRATITUDE TO ALL THE BOYS WHO TOOK PICTURES AND GAVE ME COPIES. I NEVER OWNED A CAMERA AND NEVER TOOK A PICTURE BUT I HAVE A SCRAPBOOK FULL -THANKS TO MANY OTHERS.

ALSO, THERE ARE SEVERAL THINGS I WISH I HAD INCLUDED. ONE IS THAT TOM DIXIE WAS A NEGRO BUT I'M NOT SURE WHEN HE LEFT THE ARMY-NAVY CLUB AND OPENED HIS OWN RESTAURANT.

WHEN JIMMY'S FOOTLOCKER WAS STOLEN FOR THE SECOND TIME AND HE HAD TO WIRE HOME FOR MONEY HIS DAD SENT THE MONEY WITH A WIRE THAT SAID "BLOW ON THOSE DICE". WE ALL THOUGHT THAT WAS HILARIOUS BECAUSE JIMMY DID NOT GAMBLE.

AT CLARK I HAD A TERRIBLE TIME WITH HEAT RASH ON MY BACK. NOTHING THE DOCTORS TRIED DID IT ANY GOOD BUT MY COUSIN, JOHN HACKNEY, CURED ME --HE TOLD ME TO WEAR A MAN'COTTON T SHIRT.

WHEN I FOUND OUT I WAS GOING HOME JIMMY HAD ALREADY GONE SO I WIRED HIM AND AMAZINGLY, HE GOT THE MESSAGE.

Dear John Hack,

This is it! I'm through now with everything - Please add the sheet to the end & insert the pictures - & put page numbers and 1/2 beside it so you could insert them at the proper spot -

When I went to the Print Shop to have the pictures copied I had forgotten that every woman in there was a patient of Jimmy - they had to look at all the pictures, ask many questions & use much much nicer paper than I intended - & when I protested said they wouldn't charge me - so I just let them do it their way!! and insisted on paying them - They also cut the Xomphe cartoon down to the same size which pleased me no end - I was going to feed it over twice - & so hope all this is satisfactory!!

wish 2 had included ~~that~~ ~~good~~

Tom Dixie was a negro
owner of the famous club

Thank goodness, I stayed quite healthy.

but ~~at~~ Clark Field I did ~~not~~ have quite

a problem with heat rash on my back - the

doctors tried all their remedies with no

success ~~and~~ and my cousin John Hackney,

told me how to cure it - ~~to start~~ ^{start} wearing

men's cotton T-shirts! ~~under my~~

when Jimmy's foot locker was stolen for

the second time and he had to wire home

for money Dr. Jack sent the money. ~~and~~

~~at~~ a message "Blow on the dice!"

which we all thought was hilarious

because Jimmy did not gamble - when I

found out I was leaving for home I

~~wired~~ ^{no} him had way to contact him so I

Having never done



NATIVES MEETING THE SHIP



STOCKS OF SUPPLIES ON DEWEY BLVD.



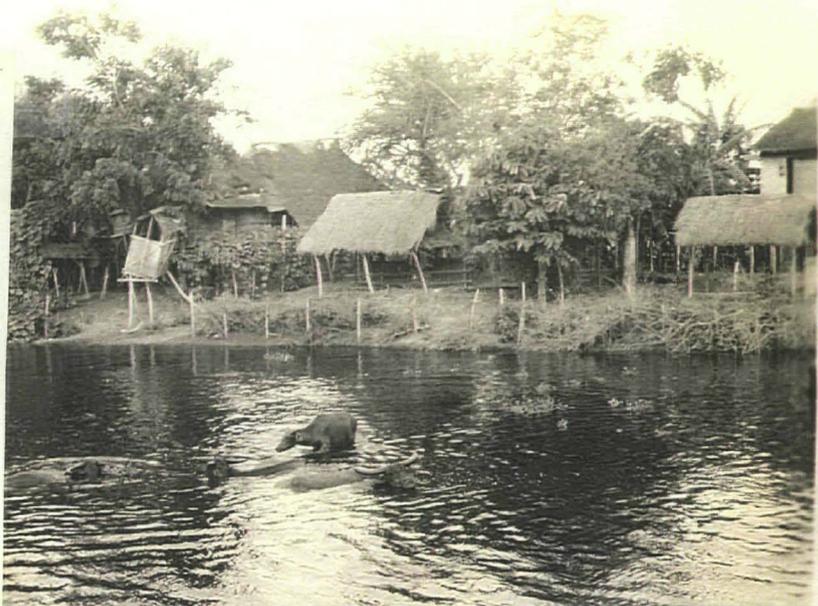
LEGISLATIVE BUILDING



MARY HARVY. FRANK OFFENBACHER, NANCY FOX IN MANILA



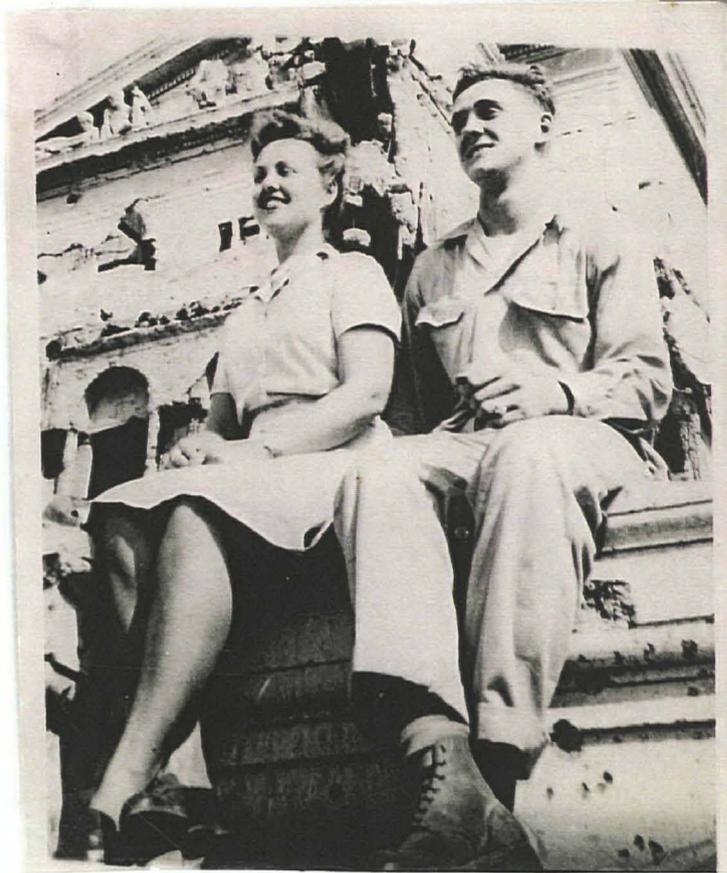
RUINS IN WALLED CITY



TYPICAL HUTS -ALSO WHERE THEY BATHE, DRINK, AND WASH CLOTHES



TYPICAL

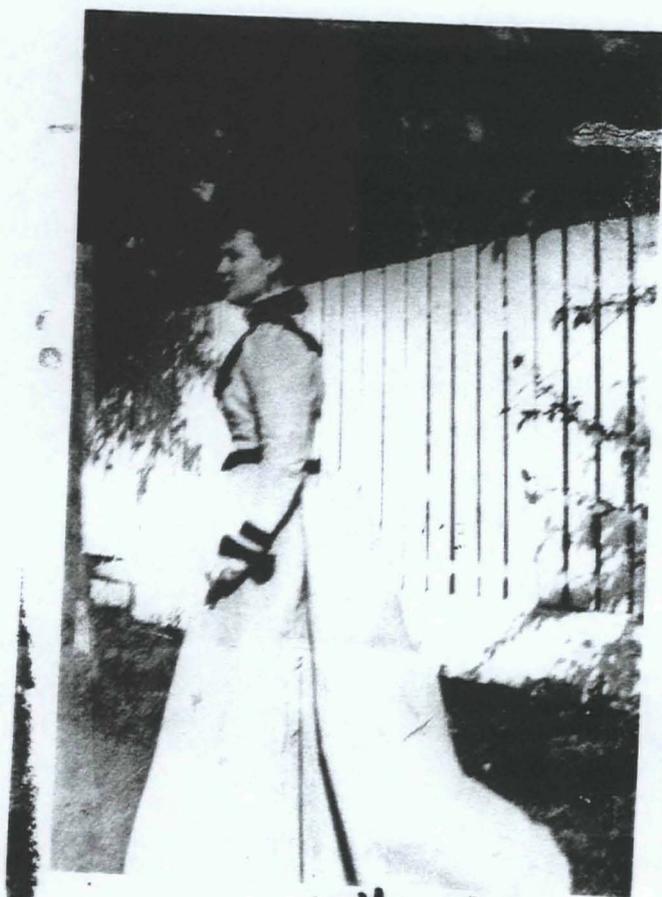


MARY HARVEY AND FRANK OFFENBACHER IN MANILA (OUR DRIVER)



COCK FIGHT

Mary Harvey Ruffin appearing in a fashion show of vintage gowns to raise money for War Relief in 1944.



mtl-194

Dear John Jack -

I'm still "cleaning out" and I ran across this picture - I had it copied & add to my collection and thought you might enjoy seeing it! The main thing I remember about that fashion show was that it took 15 or 20 minutes to pack me into the dress! It was called a "second day dress" - I believe this particular show was held in Harwood Chapel at A.C.C.

Bud said he saw you at the club Sunday so I'm glad Anne's still getting out - Do me a favor and send me her correct address - at Christmas time I thought she was still at Crestview and sent a little something there which I'm sure never reached her - I'll drop her a line because I still remember how much I looked forward to mail when I was in so long -

I've been having a little trouble with my old enemy - Rheumatoid arthritis

CONNOR, BUNN, ROGERSON & WOODARD, P.L.L.C.

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WILSON, NORTH CAROLINA 27895-3299

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TURNER B. BUNN, III
JAMES F. ROGERSON
DAVID W. WOODARD
L. PATRICK FLEMING, JR.
WILLIAM H. BOYETTE, JR.
MISTY E. WOODARD

DAVID M. CONNOR
(1935-1994)

H.G. CONNOR
(1911-1989)

December 27, 2006

Mrs. Betty McCain
1134 Woodland Drive
Wilson, NC 27893

Dear Betty:

As a result of our conversation at the Wilmed Foundation Retreat, I am enclosing some World War II information.

Please feel free to edit any of the materials, call me if you have any questions, or if they are not what you are looking for, to just dispose of them. I have included a Mallie Paul story that you probably would not want to be in the proposed book, but it is one I have heard all of my life.

If I can be of any further help in your project, please do not hesitate to contact me.

With best wishes and kindest personal regards, I am

Very truly yours,



David W. Woodard

DWW/kso
Enclosures



RED CROSS

CONDEMNED
CONDEMNED
CONDEMNED
CONDEMNED
CONDEMNED
CONDEMNED
CONDEMNED

Portrait of
Harvey
by Hamabe

29th REPT. DEMIT
AT THE AM. RED CROSS CLUB

Fall 1946

III
1/2



OUR HOUSE



HELEN PARRISH _ MARY HARVEY



OUR CLUB



OUR "HOUSE"



M. H. OUTSIDE CLUB



MARY HARVEY OUTSIDE CLUB WITH FRIENDS

IV 1/2



TYPICAL PHILLIPINO HOUSE



SAN FERNANDO (OUTSIDE OF CLARK)



BRIDGE LEADING OUT OF SAN FERNANDO TO MANILA



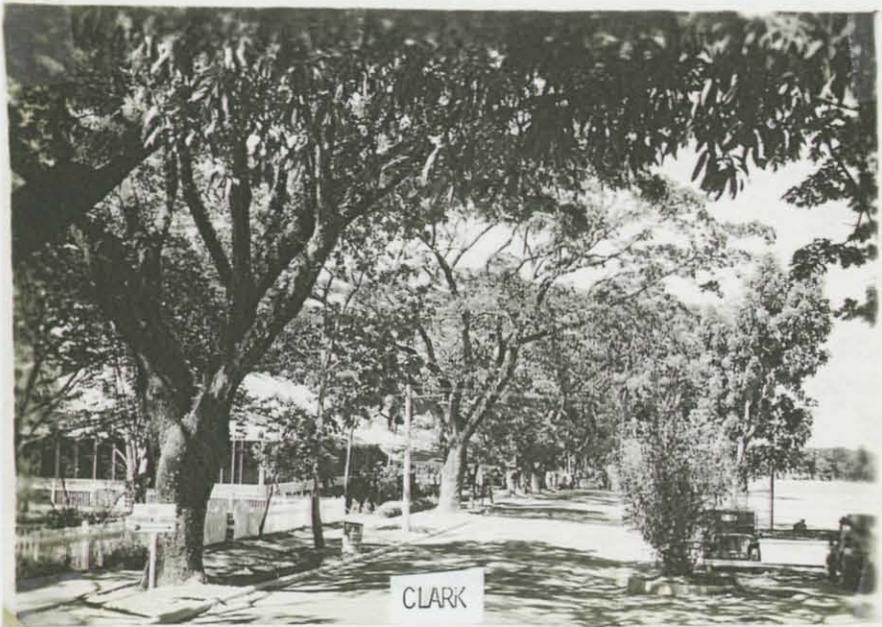
NATIVES MAKING SAWALEE



MARKET IN MANILA



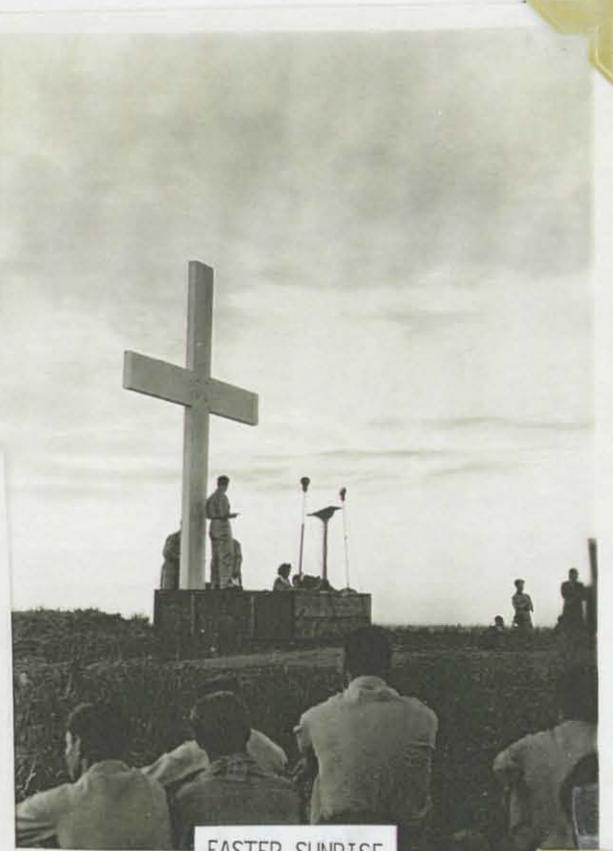
FT. STOTSENBERG- CLARK FIELD



CLARK



CLARK



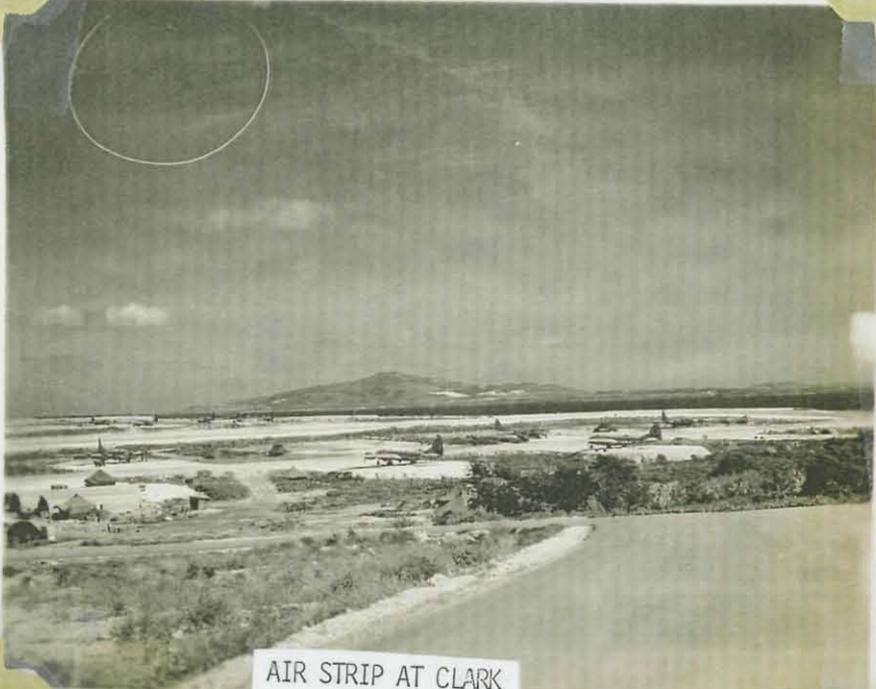
EASTER SUNRISE SERVICES



PARADE GROUNDS



V 1/2



AIR STRIP AT CLARK



ATC
JAP ZERO
IN FRONT



B29



ARCHIE AND FRIENDS
PICTURE HE SENT TO HIS WIFE WITH HIS "FRIENDS"



COL, ARCHIE MARTIN'S PLANE _ ONE MEAT BALL



ANGELES TOWN NEAR CLARK

2/12



CLUBMOBILE
AT
CLARK





RED CROSS QUARTERS AT CLARK



SUE JORDAN, MARY MOORE,

MARY HARVEY, MAGGIE McDUGAL



MARY HARVEY WITH COUSIN JOHN HACKNEY



LT.S JIMMY WITHERINGTON, NEB WYSOR
CLARENCE WOODCOCK



OUTING WITH JOE CROSS, MARY HARVEY, JOHN HACKNEY AND FRIENDS



GENERAL IKE'S VISIT



MARY HARVEY AND MAGGIE AT THE SNARK

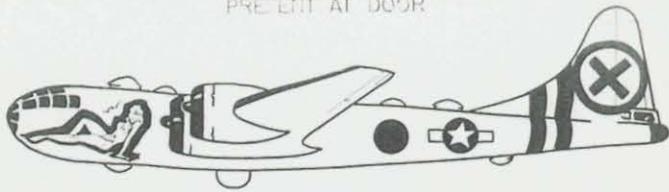


COL. TIM TYLER (HOUSE 63) AT TINIO'S



SATURDAY NIGHT DANCE AT THE WIND TUNNEL

PRESENT AT DOOR



WADE'S RAIDERS

OFFICIALLY KNOWN
AS

9TH BOMB GROUP VHB

CORDIALLY INVITES

NAME *Miss Harvey Ruffin* RANK *A.P.C.*

TO A
FAREWELL PARTY FOR THOSE
UNFORTUNATE INDIVIDUALS (?) SOON TO BE
TRANSFERRED FROM THEIR BELOVED A.F. 
TO "PERMANENT" OVERSEAS DUTY IN THE
USA

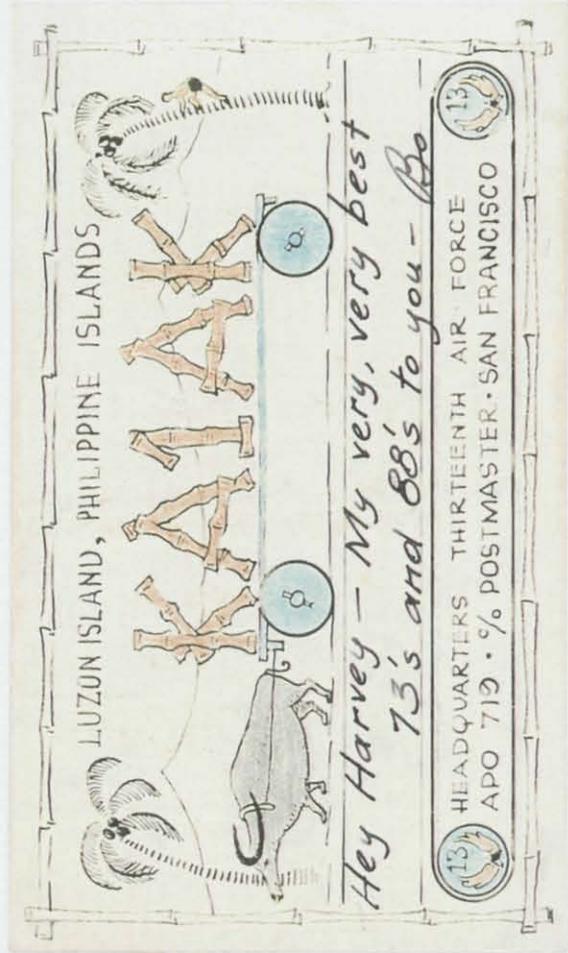
FRIDAY MAY 10, 1946
HOURS... 1930 - 0100

13TH A.F. OFFICERS' CLUB
CLARK ARMY AIR FIELD

313TH BOMB WING

WADES RAIDERS FAREWELL PARTY

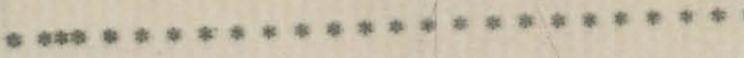
VIL 1/2



COL. HINES' FAREWELL PARTY

May 9, 1946
6:00 P. M.

C. F. BASE RESTAURANT



MUSHROOM VEGETABLE SOUP

SMOTHERED CHICKEN
Dixie Style

SIRLOIN STEAK
w/ Onion

COMBINATION VEGETABLE SALAD

MANGO ICE CREAM

PAPPY HINES FAREWELL PARTY WHEN HE WENT HOME

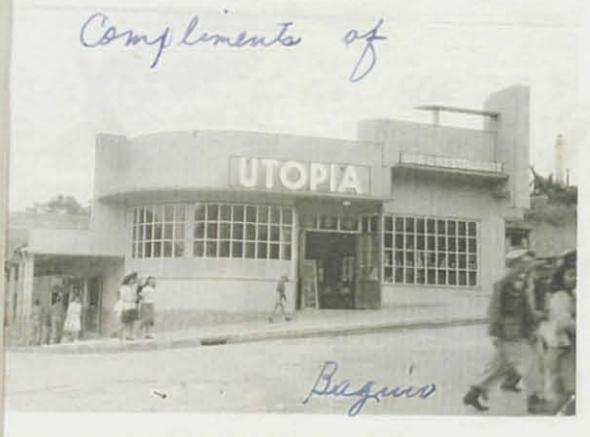
COFFEE



MAC - OUR HOUSE BOY

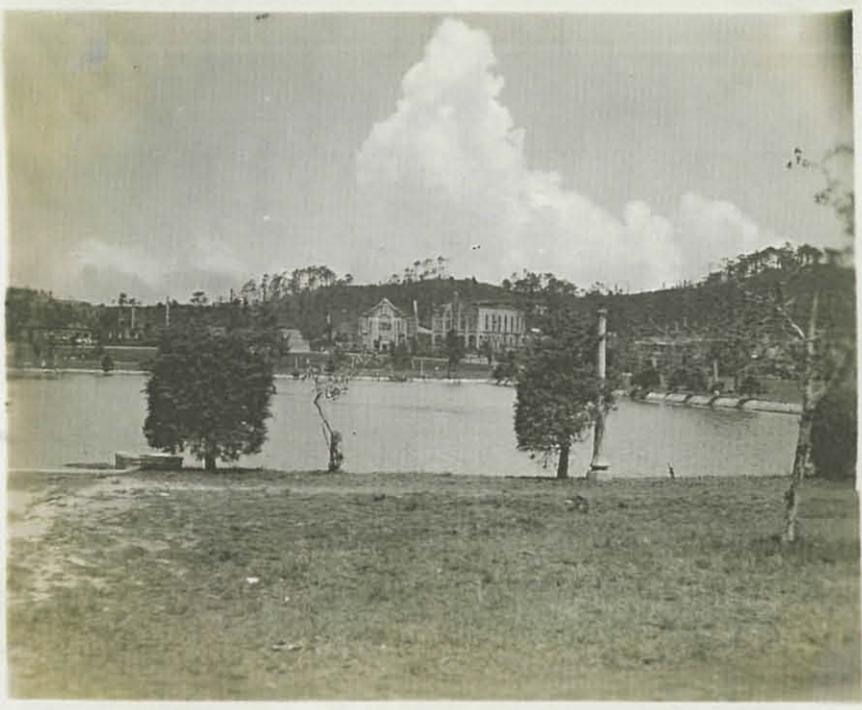


COUNTRY CLUB



Compliments of

Bequiro



TOWN SQUARE





CATHOLIC CHURCH AT BAGUIO



DOG MARKET AT BAGUIO



DINING HALL AT COUNTRY CLUB



NATIVES AT BAGUIO

VIII 1/2

IX 1/2



RUTH AND PAUL HUBAY

THANKSGIVING 1946

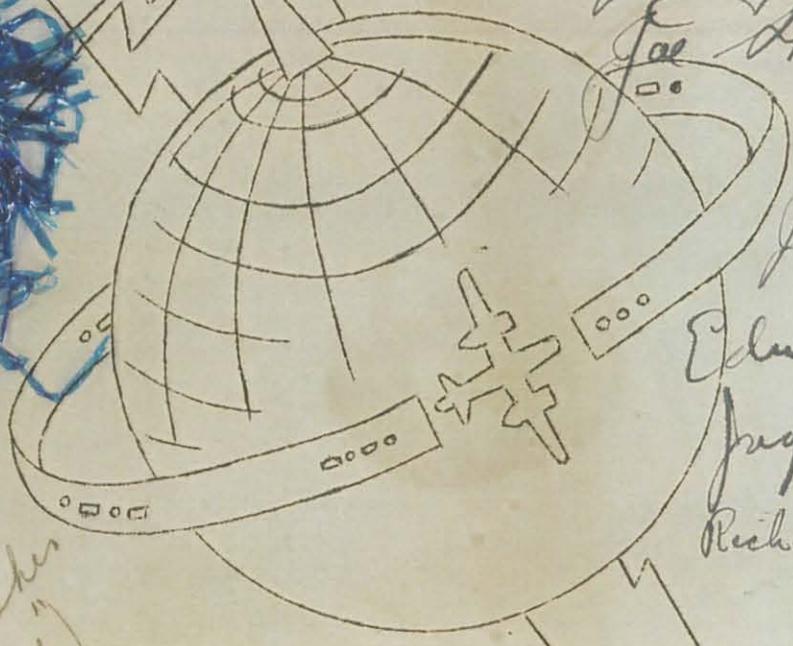
14TH AACS SQUAD

Happy Thanksgiving
Henry Williams
Joe Harvill

Jimmy Can
Edmond
Jugodzinski
Richard the Boy

Best Wishes
("Balay")

FT. WILLIAM H. MCKINLEY
MANILA, P.I.



GRAND OPENING AT MCKINLEY



IX 2



SCENE FROM CLUB AT MCKINLEY



CLUB OPENING-BROWNIE, COL. PYLE, MRS. LOUISE DARLING

x 1/2



MARY HARVEY AND FRANK OFFENBACHER-ONE OF OUR DRIVERS AT THE 29th WHO WAS TRANSFERRED TO SKINLEY



DANCE AT
Dance at McKinley

2/12



ELEANOR GAY-LENNIE LEGG'S WEDDING
POLLY POLLARD-MAID OF HONOR
MARY HARVEY -BRIDESMAID



RECEPTION AT RED CROSS HOUSE
MARY MOORE, MARY HARVEY WITH
ENLISTED FRIENDS



ROOSEVELT CLUB



CHRISTMAS AT THE ARMY-NAVY CLUB



SOGN AT NIELSON FIELD

GOING HOME



OUR LUGGAGE



OUR PLANE



GUAM

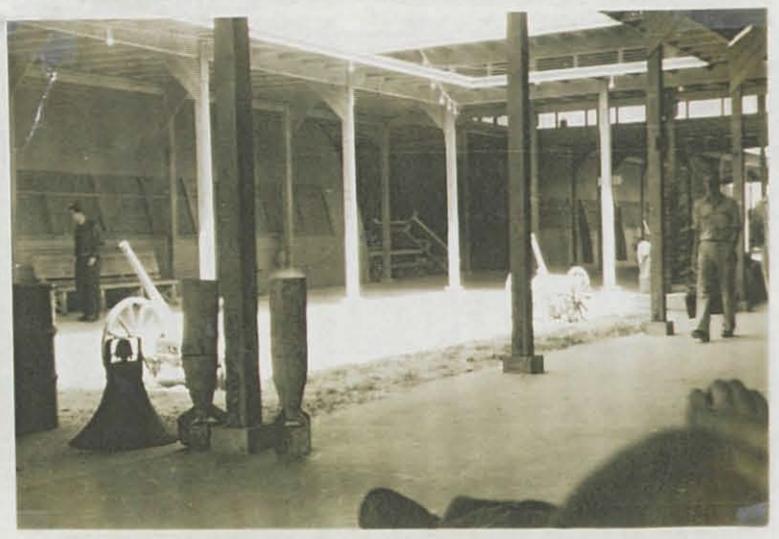


INSIDE OUR PLANE

ON THE WAY HOME

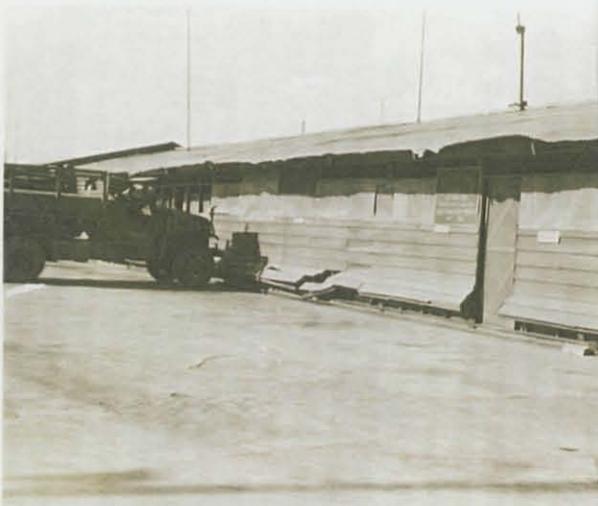


CARP. AT KWAJALEIN



KWAJALEIN

811 1/2



NICHOL'S FIELD



ROYAL HAWAIIAN HOTEL



FAIRFIELD -WAITING FOR TRANSPORTATION
(THIS IS WHEN A BOY CAME UP TO ME AND SAID HE
USED TO DANCE WITH ME AT SEYNOUR JOHNSON FIELD!)



FRISCO

The Miss Harvey

This photo now appears upon
the wall of "MOONLIGHT PORCH"
as a silent tribute to our

"MISS HARVEY"

and in memory of the many happy
moments SHE and THEY have given
us in these past few evenings.

In addition, we sincerely hope
that SHE and THEY shall continue
to be our inspiration till comes
that day when we may all again
experience the presence of HER
and THEIR counterparts that we
shall find at home - STATESIDE

Lt MAC
Sgt MAHARIS
and

"THE COFFEETIME PARTY"

ICE CREAM SOCIAL
TONITE

AT 9:00PM FOR
LADIES + GENTS.

ONLY

PLACE — N.C.O. QTRS.

(g.m. farm)

Miss Ruffin

Your phone call is
waiting. The waiter will
show you the way.

DURING SATURDAY NIGHT DANCES AT THE WIND TUNNEL MY GI FRIENDS
WHO WORKED THERE WOULD SEND ME MESSAGES LIKE THIS SO I COULD
BACK TO THE OFFICE AND TALK WITH THEM.

I HAD NOT MEANT TO INCLUDE THIS. WHEN I LEFT CLARK FIELD MY GI FRIENDS BROUGHT THIS TO ME. I
SPENT MANY AN HOUR DRINKING COFFEE AND EATING ICE CREAM WITH THEM. I CERTAINLY DID NOT LOOK
LIKE THIS IN MY SEERSUCKER DRESSES AND MY DOROTHY PARKER SLACKS AND MY HAIR WAS ALWAYS A MESS IN
THAT CLIMATE. BUT THIS EXPRESSES SO WELL WHAT THE CLUB AND RECREATION GIRLS MEANT TO THE GIS.
WE WERE THE SOFT VOICE, THE FRIENDLY SMILE, SOMEONE TO TEASE (AND I REALLY CAUGHT IT WITH MY DEEP
SOUTHERN ACCENT),. WE BRAGGED OVER THEIR FAMILY PICTURES, REJOICED WITH THEM OVER THE BABY
THEY HAD NEVER SEEN, GRIEVED WITH THEM OVER THEIR DEAR JOHN LETTERS-WE WERE SUBSTITUTES.
WE REPRESENTED HOME!!!!!!!!!!!!