

## 48 French Visitors from Bruyeres Hold Reunion Here With Nisei GI Liberators



By Linda O. Ramirez

Despite the language barrier, the mood Monday evening was happy and exciting as 48 French visitors crowded into the Red Room of the Hotel Manx to meet some of the Nisei soldiers who in October, 1944, liberated their town of Bruyeres, France. Carrying suitcases and shopping bags full of flower petals, the French men and women made their way around the small room shaking hands with everyone who was not a member of their tour group.

The visitors, many wearing leis, had just arrived from Hawaii where they celebrated the 35th anniversary of the liberation of their village. The event was organized by the Bruyeres-Hawaii Jumelage, which promotes friendship with the Japanese American GIs of the noted 442nd Regimental Combat Unit.

When their plane landed at San Francisco International Airport, the group was

welcomed by a committee of Nisei veterans who presented everyone with corsage or boutonniere.

Of the 48 visitors, about 35 were from Bruyeres and a few were children born in Bruyeres after the town's liberation. While this was the first visit to San Francisco, the contingent had traveled across the Atlantic Ocean in 1976 and 1978. Their next trip will probably be in 1980 for the 20th anniversary observance of the Honolulu-Bruyeres sister city relation.

At the hotel, Col. (Ret.) James M. Hanley presented each Frenchman with a bottle of wine donated by the Gallo wine company.

Attending the informal reunion were Ruby Tokiwa, president of Company "K" Club and Col. Hank Oyazato, who received a battlefield commission during the war. Oyazato starred in "Go for Broke," a film about the 442nd as Sgt. Ohara.

After a night's rest, the group left for France Tuesday.

## COMING and GOING

Visitors from Bruyeres, France, spent only one night in San Francisco before departing for home Tuesday, Oct. 23. But, the 48 travelers wanted to meet with some of the San Franciscans and Bay Area residents who were part of the 442nd combat team that liberated their town during World War II. After being welcomed at San Francisco International Airport upon their arrival from Hawaii, the French men and women went to the Hotel Manx for another welcoming reception.



Rudy Tokiwa, president of the Company K Club, pins a corsage on a French woman at the airport.



Masayo Duus, author of "Tokyo Rose," also is presented with a corsage by Chester Tanaka, Company K newsletter editor. Duus is writing a book on the 442nd team.



Frenchmen and Americans crowded into the Hotel Manx Red Room.

(Photos by Kiyoshi Yoshii)



Col. (Ret.) James Hanley talks with French visitors at the Hotel Manx.

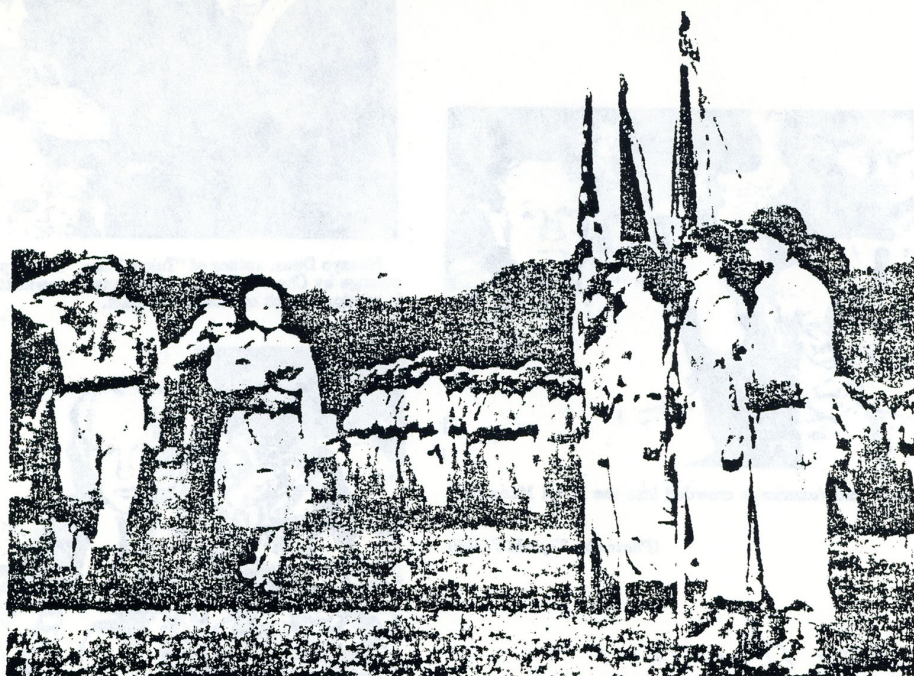
HOKUBEI MAINICHI

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Lt. Col. Alfred A. Pursall, Commanding Officer, 442nd Regimental Combat Team, chats with Rev. Masao Yamada, former 442nd chaplain upon the arrival of the Waterbury Victory that brought home the last of the 442nd soldiers from Europe. Signal Corps Photo.



(Photo from "Go For It")