

**ONE PUKA PUKA**  
40th Anniversary Celebration

**Breakfast/Memorial Service**

SUNDAY, JULY 4, 1982  
ALA MOANA HOTEL — HIBISCUS ROOM  
9:00 a.m. Breakfast / 10:30 Memorial Service

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

ONE RESERVATION \$8.00

## MEMORIAL ADDRESS

Sunday, July 4, 1982

By MITSUYOSHI FUKUDA



I am honored to deliver the Memorial Address this morning. But I feel quite inadequate. In fact, the feeling I have today is similar to the feeling I had when I entered the Army. I was teaching school in Kona and as a reserve officer assigned, on paper, to Kilauea Military Camp. So, on December 7, when war broke out, I called KMC and was ordered to report to the 299th Hdq. in Hilo on Wednesday, December 10. My Army uniform was in Honolulu and it was impossible to get it by Wednesday, so I reported to duty in my black coat, white shirt, and tie. I don't think I ever experienced the feeling of being so inappropriately dressed, so inadequately prepared for military service as that morning when I reported for duty.

Each of us recalled quite vividly what we were doing on the morning of December 7, 1941, when Japan attacked Pearl



Harbor. It was on December 7, after the attack, that it suddenly dawned on all of us that our enemy was Japan; and our parents were Japanese, many still citizens of Japan, and the language spoken in most of our homes was Japanese.

There was no way to erase those facts. We hoped people in Hawaii and the United States would realize we were Niseis and Sanseis and that we were Americans and our loyalty should not be questioned and we should be allowed to serve, as any citizen of the United States of America.

However, each day we heard of new restrictions placed on the Japanese people. We learned of the refusal of draft boards to draft young men of Japanese ancestry, the refusal of the Transport Command to allow Japanese longshoremen to work on the waterfront, and the refusal of the Army to permit Japanese to work on any defense installation.

We learned of the mass evacuation of the Japanese people from the West Coast. These developments brought new fears that we would not be allowed to serve, that we would not be trusted to serve.

We remembered in May, 1942, when all soldiers of Japanese ancestry were called together to be informed that we would be sent to Schofield Barracks for reassignment. We remember receiving the news with apprehension. Why were they doing this to us? Where were they planning to send us? But, down deep, we were optimistic. We felt that someone, somewhere, would convince the Army we were loyal Americans and good soldiers.

There was much confusion in Schofield Barracks as we reorganized into the 100th Prov. Bn. We had to make new friends, get assigned to new units, write farewell letters, make phone calls, and get last-minute passes. There was an undercurrent of excitement and adventure, intermingled with the questions of why and where.

Then, we headed for Camp McCoy, Wisconsin, on troop trains. For many of us, this was our first glimpse of the mainland USA. Most of our memories of Camp McCoy are pleasant — playing football in the snow, seeing a bottle of milk standing out in the cold of winter with the cap floating above the bottle because the milk had frozen and expanded, sitting with a case of good Heileman beer brewed in LaCrosse, and chug-a-lugging all night until the case was gone. We remember Col. Turner's instructions of how to behave, and, more importantly, how **not** to behave in LaCrosse, Wisconsin, because our behavior would

reflect on the people of Hawaii. However, some of our self-doubts were erased by the friendly reception of the Wisconsin people, and many lasting friendships grew out of our stay there.

We remember that first Christmas away from home. In spite of our newfound friends, it was sad and lonely. Wisconsin was okay but Christmas was a time for families and home; it was not a time for a military stint 5,000 miles away.

From Wisconsin, we headed for Camp Shelby, Mississippi, to face new experiences and new people. Going to Hattiesburg, we wondered whether we should sit in the white section or the colored section of buses and movie theaters. Although it was established that we were more white than black for buses and theaters, a few of our boys discovered that if they wished to marry a white female, they could not get married in the state of Mississippi or in many of the southern states. Instead, they had to run off to a state that allowed mixed marriages.

Then, we remember the coral snakes, the chiggers, the ticks, and the armadillos so much a part of our Louisiana maneuvers. Sometimes, we burned holes in our combat boots by putting them against burning pine logs to keep our feet warm. And we realized how poor were the Louisiana and Mississippi farmers.

We returned to Camp Shelby in April, 1943, and met, for the first time, the men of the 442nd RCT. We shared much brotherly advice with these young kids who had volunteered for the 442nd.

Soon, we were transferred to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey. There we were confined to the camp and although we were close to New Brunswick and Rutgers University, we never did see anything outside of Camp Kilmer.

On August 20, 1943, we were herded onto a train headed for Statten Island, where we boarded the USS James Parker for destination unknown.

As we steamed into the Mediterranean Sea, we saw the Rock of Gibraltar and then we saw Oran. It was in a cork forest in Oran where we learned we were to become a part of the 34th Division, a division in which we would serve for one year.

Most of our conversation during the last three days have

revolved around our combat experience with the 34th Division, starting from Salerno, through Benevento, up through Naples, the Voltorno River Crossings, Cassino, Anzio, Rome, Belvedere, the Arno River, Leghorn, to France and Biffontaine. We talked, also, about the "champagne campaign" in southern France, recalling magical names such as Menton, Beausoleil, Monte Carlo, Monaco, Nice and Cannes. For those who survived the "champagne campaign," we had more battle stories of our return to Italy and the attack on the German Gothic Line on the Apennines Mountains. We remembered the hills of Georgia, Ohio, and Rocky Ridge.

Our stories took us through Massa, Carrara, Aulla, Genoa, and Alexandria. It was anti-climactic by the time we received word that the Germans had surrendered.

After the war, when we first came home to Hawaii in 1945 and 1946, each of us visited the families of buddies who did not return with us. It was difficult to face them and to explain how they had died. We wanted to believe that somehow, we would make up for the loss of their sons, that those of us who returned would have the strength and the will to take the place of our buddies.

At that point, we had made a vow to look after the families of our buddies who had died.

And now, 40 years later, we look back at these vows and some of us can truly say that we have kept our word. We have put flowers on their graves and we have visited their families on occasion. Others will have to confess that we do not know what happened to their mothers and fathers, their wives and children, because we failed to keep in touch with them. And that, in their time of need, we were not there to lend a helping hand because we had been too busy with our own lives.

But there is time. There are many years ahead of us to do the things we had promised to our buddies. Let's get on with the job. Let us make a vow once again that we will care for the loved ones left behind by 374 men who were killed in combat overseas. At our 50th anniversary, we want to be able to say that we remembered those men who died so that we might live. ☆

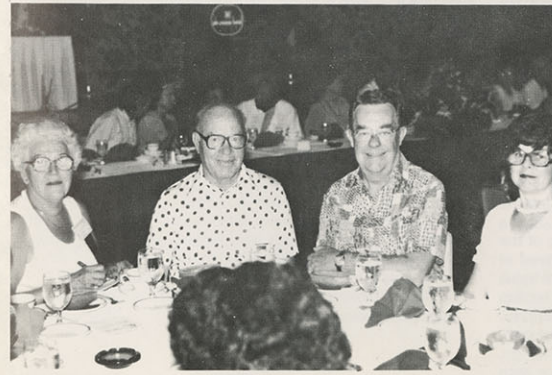


Notes: \_\_\_\_\_





Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_



Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_