

by TADASHI TOJO, Guest Writer

*(Our guest writer participated in the recent pilgrimage to Japan, honoring CHIUNE SUGIHARA, Japan's Consul General to Lithuania in 1940 and the 50th Anniversary of the liberation of Bruyeres & Biffontaine, France. The following is the first in a series that he will write for this column.)*

### Bruyeres, France

At 3:30 AM on October 13, we assembled at the Honolulu International Airport for departure at 5:05 AM to Los Angeles and Frankfurt, Germany. The itinerary was commendable but for us "Makules" a bit too ambitious. The Able Btry contingent included the following:

Supply Sgt. LAWRENCE MORI and wife AKIKO, Wire Section THOMAS KONO and wife THELMA, MUNEAKI & EMIKO KONISHI, 5th Section SEIJIN TABA and wife MASAKO and daughter. The gun section was represented by JOE ICHIUJI while HARRIET and I represented the Forward Observers. Initially, the Mess was represented by TAICHI & TATSUE IMADA. However, one week prior to departure, TAICHI became ill and had to cancel out.

We all traveled to Europe to be part of the 50th Anniversary of the Liberation of Bruyeres. Others in the 100th Battalion and 442nd RCT will be writing about the anniversary celebration so I will relate my personal feelings as I experienced the celebrations.

The people of Bruyeres, old and young, turned out in mass to keep the memory of the liberation alive. **I was moved by the enthusiastic participation of the school children.** They marched and sang in the parade and **they are the ones that will be carrying the spirit of the occasion through to the 100th anniversary.**

The struggle that led to the liberation of Bruyeres occurred over the strategic hill position behind the town. This time, we were grateful that, as a special concession to our aging legs, the buses could take us up the hill. **We found a setting of peace and tranquillity.** The sentinels on the hillsides are the trees that survived the bombardment and their massive trunks have grown around the bomb fragments and shrapnel that were embedded in them during the conflict. A forester told me that the metal in their wood make it useless as lumber so **those trees will be symbols, throughout their natural lives, of the redeeming quality of time as the healer of all wounds.** The trees, that were topped and scarred in battle, now spread their beautiful branches to protect and shade the hallowed ground where our comrades were wounded or made their supreme sacrifice. **The nobility of these trees is a tribute and landmark we will remember forever.**

A clearing has been made in the forest for the granite monument that commemorates that action that liberated Bruyeres. **The simplicity and strength of the stone made me feel that everything the liberation meant was properly memorialized.** The deeds of the 100th Battalion and the 442nd RCT are recorded on a plaque for perpetuity and in everlasting remembrance and gratitude.

*(Note: TADASHI TOJO will continue his series in the next issue. He hopes to put down in writing the experiences that he and HARRIET had while looking for a little eight-year old German girl CAROLLA who he, NITTA, YUTAKA, and NOMURA helped rescue from the churning waters of the Danube River at Donauworth, Germany.)*



SONS & DAUGHTERS  
*Dialogue*

by GRACE TSUBATA FUJII



### Bonjour, Ca va? Bien, merci, et vous?

Greetings and salutations, and all that politeness during our European journey almost rubbed off on us. However, a reality check through Honolulu customs upon arriving home made my temper boil when I had to wait for a half hour for someone to locate a receipt book for my 10% (\$50) customs duty assessment. They apparently did not care nor imagine anyone would be honest about having had anything to declare. Having traveled over 11 time zones in 25 hours and 3 segments of flying probably attributed to my lack of patience (I was really disgusted at their inefficiency).

Okay, take a deep breath, I can now start this column. There is no place like Hawaii, as everywhere we traveled, people exclaimed, "You're from Hawaii!" with great excitement and envious smiles. Yes, we are very fortunate to live in the land of aloha, palm trees and sunshine. Yet, in visiting Biffontaine and Bruyeres there was the *Spirit of Aloha* reigning from the thankful faces and voices of the townspeople and at the well planned dignified ceremonies in the great *Hawaiian weather*. This pilgrimage will always remain in my heart as a most perfect voyage. I imagine each participant in the 50th anniversary celebration feels very thankful to have been a part of the events. WADE WASANO, S&D member, said it was very rewarding for him. CARY MIYASHIRO, who is usually very low keyed, was having a great time with his dad, OSCAR MIYASHIRO.

It was a surprise and a humble honor for LEONARD OKA, ANNA MAE SHISHIDO and me to discover printed in the program that we were appointed to present the SONS AND DAUGHTERS of the 100/442 VETERANS wreath at the Bruyeres memorial service in the forest. So many other sons and daughters, nieces and nephews of 100/442 veterans attended their first commemoration ceremonies. Already plans for the 60th anniversary events are being thought of by the French people. In accepting the Sons and Daughters commemorative plaque in Bruyeres it was expressed that we offspring are very grateful for the Bond of

Friendship between our fathers and the French families and that we will continue to nurture this relationship. The sons and daughters of the 100/442 and France were asked to please stand and be recognized where upon a round of applause filled the room.

### Thank you, ISABELLE, for your friendship

MLLE. ISABELLE RUPP, 442 RCT S&D chapter member was a perfect hostess, as she warmly greeted us and introduced her mother's cousin, MAYOR ALAIN THIRION, to the S&D representatives on stage. She and I expressed our hopes that more S&D would be able to make the 60th anniversary commemoration trip.

I kept telling RON OBA that I wished my mom, FRANCES TSUBATA, were with us also and he agreed. Mom went in 1974 when the events were rained upon, cold and quite uncomfortable so she was very happy that we enjoyed the festivities with ideal weather.

### Following the battle lines

All along the journey, looking at the terrain, hills, villages, forests and cities imagining how the men must have felt sleeping on the hard ground, digging their damp and cold trenches, carrying their heavily laden gear, thinking of home, eating their cold or if ideal hot meals, for them the burden of war was taken in stride. They had a duty to fulfill and they did it splendidly.

Watching the lined faces of the veterans seeing the sights of 50 years ago made me constantly remind myself that these men were the same age as my two sons, GRANT and GUY, when they went off to war—WAR! WAR! Not just something in the comic books, television or movies but, *to die for WAR!* to be permanently injured WAR!, to see your buddy slain WAR! The veterans may walk and speak a little slower; they will never admit to any heroic acts of courage and they have to be encouraged to share their experiences as this subject is still very painful to many of them but they are embarrassed when they are labeled heroes.





### Between Nice and Pisa

The terrain was flat and arid and had very sparse foliage, so I asked RON OBA about the battles in that region. I wondered whether the area was just the same as it was 50 years ago and he said yes, that the men were walking targets when they tried to move through that area and many were killed by snipers so the companies had to stay in the hills for protection.

Sightseeing in Pisa, Roma, Fiorenza, Venezia (European correct) one can only imagine the few times the soldiers had any real enjoyment of being in far away historical Europe. Wearing their khaki uniforms on passes, taking pictures, meeting girls, being tourists and writing home, waiting for the time that the war would end so that they could return safely to the U.S.A.

### Pisa, Piazza, Paesanos, Parks

Meandering through the open markets and generally taking in the culture we were enchanted with listening to people talk and gesture to one another on character faces that came out

of paintings and books.

As soon as I turned the corner and passed the souvenir stands it startled me to gaze up and see the famous Leaning Tower of Pisa. My heart started to pound at the awesome sight and all of a sudden I missed my late father, ED TSUBATA (3HQ). Tears formed as I remembered that he and mom were also very impressed at this beautiful sight. ELAINE OKUTSU from Hilo was right next to me and she put her arm around my shoulders and said, "Your dad is right here too." Thank you, ELAINE. She and her husband, YUKIO OKUTSU (Fox) along with the other vets and wives became like uncles and aunties to us. Also want to thank HENRY and DORIS ISHIDA (552B) for being our surrogate parents.

### Roma

In Roma, the Colosseum still stands, thank God unlike many other structures completely destroyed save for a few blocks of stone and marble. It is amazing to know of man's inhumanity to man committed there. Saw the famous



*Three Coins Fountain* (the *Fontana di Trevi*) 18th century where VERONIQUE, our tour guide said, "Hold your left hand over your heart, and with your right hand throw over your left shoulder one coin if you want to come back, two coins if you want a new love and three coins if you are rich and want to throw your money away.") I threw one coin in.

### **The Vatican City**

We oohed and ahhed our way through the elaborately gilded halls and passageways. I thought it's too bad we, in America, did not have the same kind of edifices.

A most daunting experience was entering the building where the Sistine Chapel, named after Pope Sixtus IV, is located. One enters a small entry, rides an elevator up, goes into a larger room, stands in line, trying to keep together as a group, walks towards the chapel where upon your body along with other bodies are smashed together to traverse down the stairway like ketchup flowing through smaller rooms, (if you need to faint you can't). Then the bodies ooze through a doorway; your eyes see the frescos your guide indoctrinated you on outside and you are suddenly transfixed by the wonderment of MICHELANGELO's masterpieces, *Creation of Man*, *the Last Judgment*, and *Jesus' Passion*. Your mouth hangs open, your neck needs support as you arch your back to see all you try to see and not bump into another person who is doing the same thing. After the allotted 20 minutes of impressive viewing time you have to pry yourself away to meet the others in the group wondering whether you will ever come back again.

### **Fiorenza (Florence)**

My brother DAVIDS favorite city. We enjoyed our free morning there walking through piazzas (squares) where vendors are hawking their wares and telling you that this product or that was at a very good price. This is where to buy leather goods and many a purse was purchased (so we can tell the folks back home). Nothing like feel-

ing continental.

DAVID and I studied each city's tourist offerings for our free mornings and another of the star attractions was the Academia Galleria where we viewed the famous original statue of *David* by MICHELANGELO along with many of the artists' other creations. Standing in line we met a couple from Seattle (a retired music conductor) who shared his knowledge of Florence. We did this in many cities and learned so much. It made waiting in line very rewarding.

### **European Miracle Bus Driver**

Things I miss most about the journey are the daily camaraderie, cuisine, beautiful cathedrals, palaces, rivers, mountains, and rare people like BERNARD, our personable, miracle motorcoach driver who even stopped to pick up a small car in Paris and move it to the sidewalk so that he could drive the coach through a narrow street! Nothing stops this man. Next time we must hire him again!

### **O Solo Mio!**

My favorite city is Venezia (Venice)! Such an exciting, adventuresome and beautiful work of art. From the moment we arrived it was a constant *high* soaking in the gorgeous sculptured buildings, bridges, piazzas and stores. Our hotel was right near the San Marco Piazza (St. Mark square) and during the evening music fills the air and you can walk and shop and still enjoy the city, not like other places where we had to stay at the hotel at night. There is where the decision was made that a return trip to Europe was definitely very necessary. Another decision made was to take half as much clothing, twice as much money and three times as much film (10 rolls of 36 shots was not enough). In Europe 1 roll of film is about \$8 to \$12 each!

### **Lago de Como**

I think I recall my Dad saying he enjoyed Lake Como (Lago de Como). The breathtaking lake and mountain scenery reminded me of Lake Louise, Canada. Swans, boats, meandering roads and cool, crisp air. Extremely recom-



mended for anyone. The Hotel Grand Tremezzo (in Tremezzo, 20 miles north of Como) overlooked Lake Como. We were well rewarded with our stay there.

The picturesque cities and villages near the German border with their geranium filled window boxes and gingerbread buildings are also extremely enchanting. I'm thinking back to the memorial ceremonies where a woman speaker expressed appreciation for the 100/442 for liberating her town because if it weren't for them they would now be Germany. From Nazi ruled to half Communist to completely free Germany now. Thanks to America, France did not go that route.

In Strasbourg we took a tram ride through this picturesque city. We ate another one of the 4 best meals of the trip at the most famous restaurant built by the original owner to resemble a playhouse. We were most honored to have MRS. SHIRLEY BARNES, United States of America Counsel General of Strasbourg, at the personal invitation of the Alsace/USA Association, dine with us. Mrs. BARNES spoke in fluent French (as well as in English) at Biffontaine, Epinal, and Bruyeres in her tribute to the American liberators.

### Paris, City of Lights

Yes, this truly is a city that its inhabitants can be proud of. The entire city is like a monument to the creative imagination of mankind. Two and a half days is certainly not enough of a visit but one certainly does not have the funds to stay as long as one desires. We enjoyed the Eiffel Tower for about two and a half hours looking at every nook and cranny. Luckily the day wasn't sunny therefore the crowds weren't there and we had much freedom to walk and view the sights starting at the top and going to the next two levels. Rode the metro to view the Cathedral of Notre Dame and walked up the Champs Elysee (three and one-half miles).

The Louvre! How impressive and magnificent. Walking through it by myself enabled me to see every well-known work of art and history I truly wanted to see. The Mona Lisa, the Venus de Milo, Code of Hammurabi, the Crown Jewels

(can you imagine a 55 carat diamond ring about the size of a lemon?). King Louis chambers, Napoleon's living quarters with the most gigantic chandeliers and red tapestry and gold covered gilded walls, among other priceless works. There is a saying that if you looked at each piece of the entire Louvre collection for so many seconds you would have to stay there for about 8 months. (You have to pay 40F each day so that's a lot of money at 6 days a week.) Now,....maybe, just maybe.

### Sons & Daughters win first place!

The *Bridge of Love* float designed by JACKSON MORISAWA (H) and built with the leadership of JOE UNO and the help of approximately 80 people won the MAYORS AWARD in the 1994 Aloha Festivals *Lokomaikai* floral parade on September 25. Again, TOMMY UNO was the driver who aimed the float 3 1/2 miles from Kewalo Basin to Kapiolani Park. The first place, non-commercial division award plaque will be displayed at the 442 clubhouse. VELMA KAWAMAE, chairperson with other key people, GAIL ONUMA, GENNY GOTO, ANN KABASAWA, MARIE YAMASHITA, EILEEN SAKAI, ALAN KUBOTA, ARLENE YOUNG, SHIRLEY IGARASHI, and GAIL NISHIMURA coordinated this project to its successful result.

Thank you again UNCLE JACKSON for designing this float that the viewers enjoyed seeing just as you did for us last year. Thank you Bank of Hawaii for the generous donation that kicked off this project as without your generous funding this would not have been possible. Thank you, KENNY SHIMABUKURO, who made the 12 foot banners for the MIS Veterans club and the 1399th Veterans club at cost. Thank you 1399th Veterans, MIS Veterans and Sons and Daughters of the 100th Battalion, for your kind monetary donations.

Thank you for the many donations of flowers and other fine foliage, food and refreshments from the veterans, families and friends. Thank you to the other generous and diligent workers, the Moms, Dads, Sons, Daughters, Grandchildren, Relatives and Friends who showed up and



lent their hearts and hands to the tying, stapling, and placing of flowers and foliage, many of them working into the wee hours of the night and morning.

This year the work seemed like precision as the experience gained from last years float building helped everyone to feel more at home doing their tasks and hardly wanting to take any breaks. We know that many of you came directly from work and stayed until the task was finished. We recognize your devotion to the legacy of our Nisei veterans.

Riding on the float were representatives of the Club 100, BEN and GLORIA TAMASHIRO (Bankoh's HARRY and MYRA), president, STANLEY KIMURA, 442nd Veterans Club, UNCLE JIMMY MIYAKE (Service), SADAICHI KUBOTA (I), sansei DEBBIE KUBOTA and yonsei children, KERIANNE and CAMERON, yonsei GEORGE UNO, JOE and NITA UNO'S son, VELMA KAWAMAE, special events chairman, 1399th Veterans Club, GORDON UMETSU (who attended every single planning meeting and worked intensely on this project), ED TARUTANI, and MIS Veterans Club president, HENRY FURUYA.

### Sons & Daughters Support Battalion

In 1995 celebrations commemorating the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II will take place during the first week in September and the veterans can count on the Sons and Daughters to contribute our manpower to support them.

In reading articles in the local newspaper, it is a real concern of other members of organizations of historical events to want to be assured that their legacy does not diminish. We can sympathize with their concerns as the current participants in the planning and operation of our S&D chapter address ways and means of raising a larger turnout for our meetings. We are planning to keep the business portion of the general meeting informative and brief and have learning sessions such as the one held in November on various topics concerning the 442 RCT.

The participation of two sons, CLIFTON

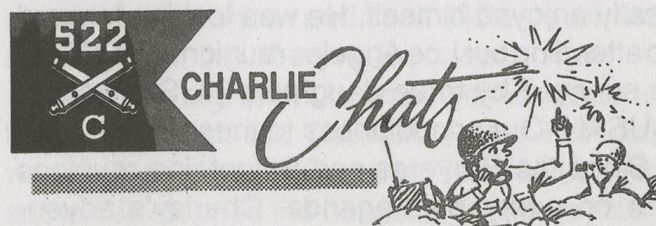
TANIMURA and STEVEN HIGA at the education committee meetings have greatly contributed to their planning for the future by researching ways to activate a membership drive and designing and producing a brochure to be handed out at club and public events, school visitations and lectures. Yes, this is what we need, more members and their timely and valuable personal input.

### Membership in the Sons & Daughters Chapter

Just want to inform the veterans and wives to tell their children and grandchildren to join our chapter. Write to Sons and Daughters of 442nd RCT, 933 Wiliwili Street, Honolulu, HI 96826 for membership applications and to ask us any questions you have. General meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month except in December. Archives, Membership, Special Events, Education Committee meetings are held monthly.

The next general membership meeting is January 19, Thursday, 7:00 PM at the 442nd Clubhouse.

We close this column with a GET WELL REAL SOON message to our S&D past president, GUY KOGA, who is resting under his doctors orders. All of us wish GUY, STEPHANIE, AMEE and MARC best wishes as you are very special to the 442 family. Your presence, planning and very hard work have set the standard for us to follow and we miss you all very much, however, we want what is the best for you and that is for GUY to have a speedy recovery. God bless you all.



by ED ICHIYAMA

10 veterans from the 442nd RCT, 100th Inf. Bn and the 522 FA Bn plus 4 family members



recently visited Japan on a mission to promote goodwill and world peace. In addition, we were there to participate in memorial services honoring SENPO SUGIHARA, one of the greatest humanitarians of the 20th century (Please see JOHN TSUKANO's article in the "Other News" for further particulars.)

Negotiations are presently underway by the Japanese American National Museum of Los Angeles and MRS. YUKIKO SUGIHARA, widow of SENPO SUGIHARA to have her participate in the 522 FA Bn reunion in April. MRS. SUGIHARA's presence at the Sunday Memorial Service scheduled for April 30, 1994 will add much dignity and will reinforce the theme for the memorial service - peace and goodwill to men.

SADA HIGA and STANLEY SAKAI are hard at work coordinating our trip to the 522 FA Bn reunion as well as the post-reunion junket to Las Vegas. Please keep SADA and STAN informed of your plans - this will make life a little more bearable for these two.

It was taps for 2 very active Charley's within the past two months. PETER OGATA passed away on September 28, 1994 after a lengthy illness. In spite of his obvious pain, PETER remained upbeat until the end, greeting his Charley comrades with his infectious smile and good humor. PETER was an orchid enthusiast as well as a skilled potter, designing and creating beautiful cement flower pots. Condolences to his widow ALICE.

CHESTER GIRARD, one of Charley's more faithful reunion attendees, passed away on September 11, 1994. CHESTER was in failing health for some time but nevertheless attended our 50th Anniversary Reunion in March, 1993 and really enjoyed himself. He was looking forward to attending our Los Angeles reunion. CHESTER is survived by three daughters - LISA, PAM & SUSAN. Our condolences to these three.

Since the Bruyeres and Biffontaine reunions are on everyone's agenda, Charley's adventures at these reunions will be recounted by BOBBY KIKAWA and STANLEY SAKAI, our two volunteer scribes. So here they are.

## 50th Reunion Tour to Europe

Three AM in the morning - what an ungodly hour to report to the airport. And as usual, like in the army, it was hurry up and wait. We didn't leave until 5:05 AM. There were seven Charley battery boys or should we say, "old men" on the flight - CHAUNCY ORITA and FOO DOO SATO from Ewa, TSUK ISHII and FUJI FUJIMOTO from the Big Island, and STAN SAKAI, HIDE HIRATA, BOBBY KIKAWA, and THELMA KOBATAKE, taking the place of her late husband, SHARKEY, from Oahu. SHARKEY had really wanted to make the trip and was one of the first guys to sign up, so THELMA was making the trip in his memory. All the men were accompanied by their wives. THELMA brought along her second daughter YVONNE. In L.A., we picked up the rest of the tour group, which included NELSON AKAGI. This made Charley battery representation seventeen strong.

After a two hour lay-over, we boarded our plane, a 747, for our flight to Frankfurt that took over 12 hours to get there. Then came the first of our many long bus rides. Took us about five hours to arrive at the Hotel Des Valles at La Bresse. This was to be our home for three days, while we attended the 50th anniversary of the liberation of Bruyeres and Biffontaine and the rescue of the Lost Battalion.

We were told that there would be over 800 veterans, spouses, families, and friends who would be attending the ceremonies at a monument built in the mountains of the Black Forest where the 442nd rescued the "Lost Battalion" of the 36th Division. As the buses collected all the visitors from where they were housed and drove up to the Bourne 6 monument commemorating the battle for Biffontaine and the rescue of the lost battalion, the traffic was congested in the little towns surrounding Biffontaine. In all, we counted at least 18 huge buses, all capable of carrying 45 passengers. The weather was beautiful - sunshine and blue skies with the temperature at about 70 degree. People who came dressed for the cold had to peel off layers of clothing and seek the protection of the shade of the tall trees. The ceremony was impressive.



There were speeches, prayers, and the laying of wreaths. The twenty-one gun salute and the playing of Taps capped what was a solemn but appropriate ceremony at the monument. How different from the weather of 50 years ago, when we fought in the bitter cold, snow, rain, and mud.

After the ceremony, there was a five-hour luncheon prepared by the people of Biffontaine. Free wine flowed throughout the luncheon. Too bad all the guys couldn't drink too much anymore - old age, doctor's orders, and what not. The program did not have entertainment - just speeches, a few war stories, and presentation of plaques commemorating the occasion. It would have been boring if we weren't using the time greeting other Charley battery members we saw at the lunch. They were with other tours that had converged on Biffontaine and Bruyeres for the celebration. We saw SUSITO, RAY KUNIMURA, GEORGE OUYE, TADD TOKUDA, SHIRO TAKESHITA, FRANK YASUDA, YUKIO HIBINO, MANABI HIRASAKI, and SLUGO MORIKAWA. Charley battery was well represented at the reunion!

After the luncheon, everyone went by bus to Epinal National Cemetery. Here again we were treated to an impressive ceremony on these hallowed grounds, and the playing of Taps after the twenty-one gun salute was sobering and very touching. Gave all of us attending "chicken skin." After picture taking, everyone was invited to walk among the crosses and visit the graves of eleven members of the 442nd combat team still buried there. Their graves had been marked with American flags.

The next day, we got an early start to attend a 50th anniversary Ecumenical service at an open air parking lot in Bruyeres. After the service, everyone joined in an informal parade through the town to the World War II memorial for the French and U.S. troops. We enjoyed waving to the people in their work places, in their homes, and on the streets. It was a gala affair - we saw smiling faces and heard shouts of "merci" and waving of the American flag. One could feel the appreciation and love displayed by the people of Bruyeres. After some speeches and laying of

wreaths at the WWII memorial in the city square, we were bussed to the American Memorial in the Vosges Mountains to commemorate the liberation of their town by the 442 and other American units. After the memorial services and laying of wreaths, we returned to Bruyeres where another five-hour luncheon awaited us, this time by the people of Bruyeres. There were the usual speeches and presentation of plaques commemorating the event. FUJIMOTO brought some excitement to an otherwise dull affair by fainting in the rest room. After a ride to the hospital in an ambulance followed by an EKG and a physical, he was back with us even before the luncheon was over. He just must have been tired after the long trip from LA and Frankfurt. After the luncheon, we went to see an excellent photo display illustrating the history of the 442nd.

The next day we bussed across the Rhine, through the Black Forest of Germany and down to Lucerne, Switzerland and the Astoria Hotel. We toured the town with a city guide the next day, doing and seeing the tourist things like the famous Lion Monument commemorating the heroic attempt of Swiss guards to save the life of MARIE ANTOINETTE, visiting the medieval walls, the Cathedrals, walking the bridges, of course, doing lots of shopping.

The next day, weather permitting, we were going to Mount Pilatus. That morning however, Mount Pilatus was socked in, but a higher mountain 10,000 feet high Mount Titlis was clear. We chose to go up to Mount Titlis. We rode cable lifts, cable cars, and a revolving gondola to go up and back. The panoramic view was truly breathtaking. We could see forever. The fall colors were in full glory. At the top of Mt. Titlis, we played in the snow and took pictures of the scenery from the observation tower.

After three nights in Lucerne, we moved on to Lugano through the Gotthard Pass. The ride was long, and the weather bad. Then it began to snow. We stopped the buses to get out to catch snowflakes on our tongues. In no time, the snow covered the mountainside. Because the weather was not cold however, the snow soon melted.

The next day we were on the road to Nice.



After eating breakfast in Switzerland, we were going to eat lunch in Italy and have supper in Nice, France. At the border between Switzerland and Italy, we had to change our Swiss money to Italian Lira. Most of us had to go to the bathroom, where we first encountered a burly woman sitting by a basket, guarding the entrance and demanding 300 lira before we could get in. STANLEY somehow slipped in, but she grabbed him as he came out and made him pay his toll fee. It was hilarious just watching her operate. We dubbed her "the Dragon Lady."

To get to Nice from Italy, we passed through 180 tunnels. The Italians are considered one of the best tunnel builders. We sure could use some of them to help us with the Halawa Tunnel. The countryside in Italy that used to have olive groves growing on the terraced mountainsides now have elaborate, glassed-in hothouses where fruits, vegetables, and flowers are grown. The guide said that these hot houses furnish most of Europe with flowers. We also crossed the Po river and the lush fields on the way to Nice. Being members of the European Community, crossing the border between Italy and France was a cinch. No hassle and no time delays checking passports by border guards. In fact, the border was actually in the middle of one of many tunnels that we passed through.

How Nice had changed! The traffic was murder. At the hotel our guide got ripped off for over \$7,000. The driver's room also got ransacked. Both were inside jobs because the doors were not even jimmied. "Ripararo." This was the word the tour leader used every time he felt that we were being ripped off - and he had been taken. The robbers also took his green card which was his re-entry into the United States. Yes, the French in Nice were still ripping us off.

We walked the town the first night and the next day. Nope, there were no topless sunbathers - too cold. And yes, there still was the rocky beach and the long promenade. We hunted for the Hotel that used to house the Red Cross canteen, but couldn't find it. When we asked, we were told it had since burned down and only the front wall stands there today.

Next day we went to Monte Carlo, just to say we had been there. To get in to the gambling area, one had to wear a coat and tie and pay 25 francs, so most of us were content to go into the lobby and play the slot machines. Talk about being expensive! A one-bedroom apartment there costs one million dollars. Food was high and all the shops were exclusive ones. The streets were lined with Mercedes, Jaguars, BMWs, Porsches, and Rolls-Royces - not a cheap car in sight. For lunch, the grilled ham sandwich with cheese cost \$15, and a Coke \$3.00.

In the afternoon, we visited Sospel. The bus driver took those hairpin turns without having to back up once. Yes, even FUJI was impressed. Since most of the gun batteries had been dug in outside of the town, our recollection of the town was sketchy. It was nice to make the trip however, for Sospel will always hold fond memories for us.

Back in Nice, we went to a French restaurant for dinner. We met the ISHIIS and the FUJIMOTOS. They had been there the night before and, on their recommendation, ordered the duck. If you like your duck rare you would have enjoyed it - yuck!

We were glad to leave Nice the next day. We rode all day so we could be in Florence before nightfall. Shishi stops were scheduled for about every two hours. Each shishi stop meant shell-ing out 300 lira for, at each stop, there was a "dragon lady." So, for those with weak bladders (and who doesn't at our age), it got to be pretty expensive.

On October 24, we toured Florence. It is an ancient town and looked ancient too. Everything seemed dingy. The color on the buildings all seemed to look the same - yellowish beige like in the BILL MAULDEN cartoons of WWII. We were warned many times that, now that we were in Italy, we needed to watch for pickpockets, to hold on to your bags, to watch your wallets, etc. and etc. As a result, everyone went about clutching their handbags, and feeling for our wallets and being suspicious of anyone who came our way or who jostled us in a crowd. This killed the



joy of being in Italy. Italians are much more warm-hearted and relaxed than the Frenchmen.

The town of Florence had about 100,000 people when our guys were there in 1944. Today the population is 600,000. The traffic, therefore, was horrendous and familiar landmarks from the war days were impossible to find. Everywhere we went in Florence, there seemed to be some works of art - statues, sculptures, and paintings. Too bad we came on Sunday and Monday when the museums were closed. It gives us an excuse, however, to return some day for a more leisurely visit.

October 25, 1994. We began our trip south to Rome with a stop at the Leaning Tower of Pisa. The tower still stands. No one, of course, is allowed to climb it. For those of us who hadn't seen the tower before, it was well worth the sight. Once we had arrived at the Massimo D'Azeglio hotel in Rome, we asked the bellmen where a good Chinese restaurant was and headed straight for it. The food was good, the service lousy. This was the first time in 12 days we had rice to eat, and boy, it tasted good.

Next morning, we got an early start for our long trip to Naples. We picked up a guide who pointed out sights in Naples and who told World War II stories. He was a good guide. He spoke clearly, had a pleasant personality, and spoke in 6 languages. When we got to Pompeii, the guide took us through the excavated city. The city was buried in 79 A.D. by a volcanic eruption. Excavation showed that the inhabitants had an advanced civilization. It had steam baths, elaborate water system, other comforts of home.

On the way back to Rome, we went up to Monte Cassino. A rugged steep terrain led up the mountain to it. No wonder, the allied soldiers couldn't take Mount Cassino, which, at the end, had to be bombed by allied planes. We visited the rebuilt church. We were on hallowed grounds - we could feel sacredness of the place where so many had died.

On October 27, our last day in Rome, we toured the city with a city guide. She explained about ancient Rome as we drove to the Forum, the Coliseum, and other sights of interest. The

tour ended at the Vatican City where we saw Saint Peter's cathedral and walked the square where the Pope blessed his people. After a quick lunch, we went to the Sistine Chapel. Renovation had just been completed, so we were treated to paintings of MICHAELANGELO in full splendor. We stayed and stared at the biblical scenes and marveled at the three dimension effect and real life-like pictures. We could have stayed forever, but unfortunately, we had to meet our bus and had to leave.

Next day we now headed back up north to Venice. It rained all that day, so a scheduled tour (guides paid for and all) was canceled. On days such as this, Venice, we were told, would be flooded and the city closed to visitors. The citizens who had to get around walked on wooden platforms placed in the walkways and squares. It wouldn't have mattered for we got to our hotel late because of traffic and the bad weather.

Next morning, however, the weather was perfect. We left the hotel early and had a nice visit in Venice. To get to Venice, one had to go by boat. When we got there, we didn't have time to ride the gondolas, but we saw glass blowing demonstration, St. Mark's square, the church, the canals that made up their transportation system, and walked over the bridge of Sighs and along the waterfronts where there were many vendors selling their wares. Everyone seemed to have had a good time in Venice.

This was the 15th day of our trip. Next stop Berchtesgaden in the Bavarian Alps via Austria. We were pleasantly surprised at what a beautiful place Berchtesgaden was. The fall colors were brilliant and the scenery was breathtaking. We made a trip up the mountain the next day, so we could see the Eagle's Nest (HITLER's retreat) from a distance, and to view the spectacular scenery - snow-capped mountains, picturesque homes, green pastoral lands, and brilliant fall colors on the trees. We stopped for a quick look at Koenigsee where many of our boys had R & R. The guys who had spent time there thought the lake looked small, and that there were a lot more hotels and souvenir shops now.

We continued on to Dachau. Our guides took



us through the exhibits, the bunkhouses, the room where the prisoners disrobed and were stripped of their valuables, the gas chamber, and the crematory. The Dachau Museum was a gruesome reminder to mankind of the inhumanity to man that could be perpetuated when we let our guard down.

October 31. On to Donauwörth! We drove through Munich, had lunch there and pressed on. The traffic in Munich was stop and go, delaying us from our destination. We first went to Mertingen where Headquarters Battery was stationed before relocating to Donauwörth, and where Service Battery stayed. No one could recall much of the place, as we walked a few blocks of the town. We also went through Bomanheim before we reached Donauwörth at 4:30. The fields were being tilled by tractors - sugar beets were the big crop this time of year, and no honey wagons to stink up the air. After getting the keys to our rooms at the Posthoel Traube, STANLEY and I and our fraus headed towards the old bridge with the arch that at one time marked the beginning of the town. We found the arch, but the wooden bridge was down and being replaced. There was a foot path alongside the bridge. We made a bee line for Wagner House. We vaguely recalled the rounded corners of the building. It was spruced up and there was a department store on the bottom floor. We next went looking for the train station. We got lost, however, because there were a lot of new buildings, and the town was at least 5 times as large. As dusk settled, we came upon it. Of course the train station did not look the same and seemed much farther away from where our quarters used to be. Ah, what fifty years does to one's memory! That night we had dinner at the hotel and the burgermeister of Donauwörth gave a brief welcoming speech.

Next morning, as we left for Heidelberg, the whole staff lined the street in front of the hotel to bid us good-bye. We picked up a guide in Heidelberg and had an excellent tour of the castle, the university, and the city by the only American guide in the city. We moved on to Rudesheim for last minute shopping for omiyage.

We also had our farewell dinner at the Rudesheimer Schloss in Rudesheim. The night was spent at the Penta Hotel at Weisbaden. It was the best hotel of the whole trip - truly first class. The nice farewell dinner and the plush accommodations at the Penta Hotel topped what was a very memorable trip down memory lane.

November 2nd - our last day in Europe. We left the hotel at 12 o'clock for Frankfurt and the good ole USA. After one hour in LA for hasty good-byes to the kotonks, we caught the flight home arriving in Hawaii about 11:00 PM. The trip was a good one and we enjoyed it very much - and it was good to be back home.

The trip was well organized and planned. We thank AL RESCH, MARY KOSASA, STANLEY KANESHIRO, and FRED HIRAYAMA who spent countless hour so that the trip would be so successful.

### Tidbits

Us old guys and gals musta lost a lots of padding in the you-know-where, for by the end of the trip, everyone was complaining of sore behinds.

Interesting what people brought with them on the trip. Many like THELMA were like a walking pharmacy. Others brought their own coffee, tea, saimin, and even miso soup.

It's a wonder everyone didn't double their weight. On all the bus rides (and we had many), goodies were being passed around. Cookies, different kinds of arare, candies, fruits, etc. Nobody seemed to have run out of the bounty.

It was nice to have THELMA on the trip. She said that SHARKEY KOBATAKE was looking forward to this trip, so she decided to do it in his memory. YVONNE was persuaded to come along by an all-expense paid trip by her mother. We all got to know THELMA. She had fun on the trip and probably spent all her inheritance buying stuff. She also got to know us Charley battery guys, and will come to all our functions from now on. Right, THELMA?

THELMA's daughter is something else. She was good looking, so she got all the good