

by a historical visit to Washington D.C. for another seven days. DEBBIE's parents, MR. & MRS. NORMAN LUM accompanied them on this memorable trip this past June. DEBBIE's dad, NORMAN LUM retired as a machinist from Pearl Harbor Shipyard, and thereafter was employed as a Road Planner at the City & County of Honolulu's Public Works Department.

To refresh you all regarding TAKAMORI and KIKUYE, both are now happily retired and busy looking after their three grandchildren. Since their older grandchildren BRANDON and JODIE attend schools in Honolulu, they arrive early at their home to nap and partake in breakfast before busing to their respective schools. TAKA has been helping our 442nd Veterans Club doing touch-up painting at the request of our House Rules and Management Committee and the Sons and Daughter's Archives and Learning Center. A replacement trooper assigned to Charlie Company, he extended his service by one year after cessation of hostilities in Europe. His re-enlistment was rewarded with a pass to both Rome and Switzerland. Prior to the 442nd Regimental Colors return to Hawaii, TAKA was shipped home to Schofield Barracks and assigned to an AA outfit thereat on February of 1946. He ended his Army career after guarding Japanese prisoners of war, about 5000 strong, at a location which is now the Kalihi Shopping Center. After his honorable discharge from the Army, TAKA settled down with KIKUYE KANESHIRO on March 25, 1950. Prior to World War II he served as a deckhand on the Inter Island steamers. When the war started, having Coast Guard papers he volunteered to serve in the Navy without success. He also tried to volunteer for the 442nd when the call for volunteers was announced but was turned down due to his Merchant Marine's 3-A draft classification. He resumed his Merchant Marine career as his discharge and marriage. He was employed as a kitchen helper aboard the American President Line ships, the General Gordon, President Wilson, and President Cleveland. He thoroughly enjoyed 17 trips to the Far East. TAKA ended his

career as a maintenance painter for the Sheraton Hotel's Pacific Division after 21 faithful employment. He and his family are entitled to a lifetime benefit of complimentary rooms at the Sheraton chain of hotels. KIKUYE retired after 12 years as a manager of the Seaview Apartments, owned at that time by Chapter member, MORIO MORI. Since their retirement, the TAKAMORIS have been traveling extensively. Livorno Chapter appreciates TAKA's faithful service as our "Executive Secretary!"

Arrivadeeci!



by **HAROLD FUKUNAGA**

The writer was fortunate in receiving two write-ups from FRED IDA and MARY KARATSU (Los Angeles), thereby making it easier for himself. Many thanks to both of them.

Fred Ida's account

The Reunion and Homecoming at Camp Shelby is a fond memory for the 375 attendees, majority of whom were from the Mainland. Unofficially, I estimate about 75 were from Hawaii.

Since DOLORES had never visited New Orleans, we arrived at the Headquarters Hotel, the Monteleone, situated in the center of the French Quarters, four days ahead of the group. We went the whole tourist route by going on tours to the Audubon Zoo, the impressive Aquarium of the Americas, ferry rides, casinos and even toured the swamps.

New Orleans' French Quarters changed very little over the years, because city ordinances prohibit changing the fronts of shops. I searched for the Puppy House, which we patronized during the war, but my efforts were in vain.

On June 15, all of the attendees began to arrive and each group was greeted by four employees of the Hattiesburg Convention and

Visitors Bureau and they stayed with us throughout our entire stay. The lobby of the Monteleone was full of veterans and families, prompting a hotel guest to ask, "Are you all related?"

June 16 saw the group board nine buses and the caravan proceeded north to Gulfport, where we lunched as guests of the Grand Casino. For the next 1 hour and 20 minutes ride to Hattiesburg, we were escorted by the State Highway patrol and the Gulfport Police. This meant that we were going through red lights at intersections and causing traffic jams all along the way.

G Co. all rode on Bus No. 2 and were assigned to stay at the Cabot Lodge in Hattiesburg, which turned out to be the best of the 4 motels situated in the same area.

All of the programs for the 2 days went right on schedule. We were served lunches on both days in a big tent in the vicinity of most of the activities. The food was prepared by the GI's and both lunches were the same—same salad, same fried chicken and same dessert. Many of us felt for sure that we were being served left overs.

As usual, our own Senator DAN INOUE did us proud and so did other Nisei appearing on several programs. They are: HERBERT SASAKI, general chairman and brother of HARRY, a G Co. vet, Lt. Gen. (R) ALLEN ONO of American Savings Bank fame, Major Gen. (R) JAMES MUKOYAMA, Jr., and of course, ROBERT KATAYAMA, representing us "buddhaheads." Not to be overlooked is JIMMY MAKINO of G Co, who was recognized as a member of the Committee. HENRY YOSHITAKE represented the California and mainland contingent.

Months before this Homecoming, there was some talk of either President CLINTON or VP Gore or Chief of Staff may be in attendance but none showed. Instead, we had the 111th Army Band, Hawaii National Guard perform at all of the programs. They did a wonderful job. There were also a whole bunch of TV people covering the festivities. YUKIO OKAMOTO was one of the many interviewed on CNN.

DOLORES and I hired a cab to take a look see

at old Hattiesburg. We found it a ghost town, with all of the town and business moved to the highway, which by-passed the town. We couldn't even find the old bus station or the White Kitchen restaurant.

G Co. people attending were: MARGURITE & RAY SAKIGUCHI, DOROTHY SUGIURA, MARY CHIKUMA, MAE TAKAMURA and FUJIO TASHIRO, all from Denver; FRANK & DOT KURODA, Detroit; STAN SERIKAKU, Chicago; YUKIO OKAMOTO, San Jose', TED TAKENAKA, Reno; MINOR & LILY MIYASAKI, Richmond, Ca.; JIMMY MAKINO and LARRY & GLADYS GIMA, L. A.; SAM & MARY OGAWA, Paul, Idaho; and FRED & DOLORES IDA.

The festivities finally came to an end with a memorial service on Memorial Lane in Shelby, where the 442 monument stands—only vivid memories remain of a wonderful few days spent at Shelby as we boarded our respective busses to go our own way, as we vowed to some day return where they made us feel as heroes and Southern Hospitality abound.

The attendees list included SAM OGAWA and LARRY GIMA. Here are thumbnail sketches of them.

SAM is a retired farmer, residing in Paul, Idaho. He used to grow wheat, beets and of course, potatoes. He sold his farm, except for his home and now lives a life of leisure. Not long ago, he had a knee replacement and is just now acclimating to his new knee. He sends his regards.

LARRY GIMA is a Kahaluu boy (same as STAN SERIKAKU). He was a contractor here but moved to LA and went into the produce business. He retired 10 years ago—most of us really don't remember him, because he joined G Co. during the last push in the Massa area.

A Bombshell—We were told by HERB SASAKI that Capt. VOWELL has lived in Hattiesburg for 50 years. He is completely deaf and lives with his son. We understood that he was in Shelby on the Saturday we were there. Some of us thought we should pay a courtesy call, but there were some emphatic NO's, so we just let it be.

BILL & MARGARET YOKOCHI relocated in

May to Whittier, Ca., where their daughter JAN and family resides.

Most of the Hawaii attendees of Shelby ended up in Vegas. The Four Queens Hotel looked like a 442 Reunion. I need to report that on the 23rd Keno game on a set of 25, DOLORES hit the jackpot, by using her birthdate and our anniversary. Let's just say that the pay-off was big enough that we had to sign a W12 for the IRS. Since she hit it early, we spent much time at the Factory Outlets, Meadow Mall and Boulevard Mall.

There are a number of C Chapter members that may be seen at Kahala Mall. On Monday, July 17, we almost had a quorum.

We all had coffee, hosted by SHIGEMI, a big winner at the last G Co. poker game. Present were: BOBBY MIYATA, HENRY HORI, SPEED TANNA, TAKETO KAWABATA, SHIGEMI ISHIZAKI and Fred IDA. Occasionally, RAY HANDA and TAKESHI ONUMA roam the hallways of the mall.

FRED IDA tagged along with TAKESHI ONUMA on his annual fishing trip to the Shelter Lodge, 20 minutes by boat from Juneau. Big Kings, Silvers and Pinks and huge Halibuts were caught. SPEED made room in his freezer for part of the catch, but is still waiting. Is he waiting for ONUMA or FRED?

It was the hottest day in Chicago and many elderly were dying, but ROCKY MATAYOSHI, STAN SERIKAKU and FRED IDA met and had dinner at the Far Eastern Restaurant on Diversey St. The highlight of this dinner was ROCKY pulling out of a cooler-three heads of lettuce, broccoli, one cucumber and one zucchini; all homegrown. He could be called the HENRY HORI of Chicago. HENRY is G Chapter's best farmer who grows everything in his backyard.

FRED IDA reported at the annual meeting that a proposed European Tour is being developed, whereby the places where G. Co. went will be visited. It's planned for next fall.

Mary Karatsu

On July 2nd, G Co. met at Paul's Kitchen in

Monterey Park for lunch and then adjourned to the FUKUZAWA's home for the meeting. Those in attendance were: TETS & DOROTHY ASATO, BONES & SHIZ FUJIMOTO, JUNE & DOREEN FUKUZAWA, TAKI HANDA, TOSH ITO, GEORGE & MARY KARATSU, MARY KAWABATA and sister SUE NISHINAKA, ROY & FUMI MACHIDA, JIM & MASAYO MAKINO, DOROTHY NAKAGAWA (JIM had minor surgery), TOM & SACHI NAKAMOTO, GEORGE & MARY NAKATSU, EDDIE & MARIE OTSUKA, and KAY SEKINO.

We welcomed LARRY & GLADYS GIMA who attended their first meeting—apparently they have lived in the area for some time and they happened to meet the MAKINOS at church and JIM persuaded them to attend. Poor GLADYS was royally welcomed—she got stuck in the bathroom and it required our engineers to figure how to get the door unlocked (such an initiation!).

We understand that FRANK & DOROTHY KURODA from Michigan were in town recently, as well as HIRO TANAKA from Chicago. We ran into the SAKAGUCHIS from Denver at the Japanese American National Museum several months ago—it's always good to see familiar faces.

Members were reminded that the Association Annual Dinner Meeting will be on Sept. 9th at the 442 Hall, and that our annual Vegas junket is set for October 13-15. Looking ahead - the mini-reunion with the Hawaii "G" group is scheduled for March 22, 1996 at the Fremont in Vegas.

On a sad note, we were sorry to hear of the recent passing of KOYA KURIHARA, who lived in Long Beach.

Wartime Experiences of Ralph Yempuku

RALPH went into the Army about 2 or 3 months later than the rest of the guys who volunteered and were sent to Camp Shelby in April 1943. According to RALPH, he volunteered at the same time, but was rejected because of an old knee injury. He enlisted the help of his friend, Capt. JACK BURNS of the Honolulu Police Dept., to convince the Army that he was okay, in spite of his old knee injury. He was given a

chance to train with an Army Ranger group in Schofield. Fortunately, the person in charge of this group was a friend of his. After he cleared this test, the Colonel in charge asked him to pass another test. He was told to stand on desktop and jump from it to the floor, which he did without any problem. He was approved to enlist into the Army.

When he arrived in Camp Shelby, the rest of the guys were already in basic training. He was assigned as a platoon leader of 2nd platoon in G Co. Because he received his commission through the Univ. of Hawaii ROTC program, he was rusty. He needed to train the recruits in various phases of military training, so he needed to study the Army Manual the night before in order to do a decent job. He stayed up into the wee hours of the morning every day in order to be ready to instruct the recruits the next day. He memorized sections of the manual each night.

He remembers an incident while they were out in the field. After a long hike of about 10 miles, he saw two guys by the pup tent that they shared. He told them how tired he was after the long hike, because he was much older than the recruits. The two guys, whose names were MURAKAMI and SHIDAKI, told him that they were much older than him, so RALPH had to shut up and realize that there were some guys much older than him. These two were in their 30's, while others were in 20's or late teens.

Because a number of Nisei officers came into the service through the ROTC program, they had to go through a refresher course at Ft. Benning, Georgia after the basic training. RALPH was in this group and the program was called the Officer Training School, as contrasted with the Officer Candidate School, which is made up of enlisted personnel, who are trying to become officers. Because he had memorized the contents of the Army Manual, RALPH breezed through this training.

At Benning, he was approached by an elderly and distinguished person from Washington, D.C. His name was Dr. BUCHANAN. He reviewed the Nisei officers' files and asked them if they would like to volunteer for an important mission.

After checking out his fellow Nisei officers at the school, RALPH decided to volunteer. They found out that organization was the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), which needed military personnel who knew the Japanese language. He was conditionally accepted, subject to a background clearance. RALPH and the others returned to 442 after the training. After a brief time, they were notified that they were accepted and were given orders to join the OSS. The other Nisei officers accepted were CHIYOKI IKEDA, JUNICHI BUTO and RICHARD BETSUI. Some 442 enlisted personnel were also accepted. At this point, their names were changed. RALPH was Lt. TSU, IKEDA was Lt. CHICK, BUTO was Lt. JUN, and BETSUI was Lt. DICK.

They went through rigorous training at Camp Savage, Minnesota on Japanese language, customs, history and geography in classes which lasted over 10 hours per day. RALPH said that after he finished the course, he could give you the name of each prefecture and their capital and geographical landmarks. They were trained for an eventual parachute drop into Japan and setting up anti-government guerrilla operations. Their training also included knowing how to operate the radio, how to assemble the parts and disassemble them, so that they could use the radio for clandestine purposes. They were also sent to Catalina Island for close combat training for about 4 weeks. This training also included conditioning through climbing up the mountains, and survival training which required them to go for days without food or water.

After that training, they were considered fit for action. They were placed aboard a train and sent to Miami, Florida. They were not allowed to get off the train at any of the stops on the way to Miami since their organization was such a hush hush group.

They were placed on a plane at Miami and flew East, stopping at the Azores, Casablanca and other places before arriving in New Delhi, India, where the OSS was headquartered. They were split up there and RALPH and four enlisted personnel were assigned to Burma, while IKEDA and a few enlisted personnel were assigned to

China. BUTO and BETSUI were kept at the headquarters in New Delhi.

RALPH was assigned to a battalion of Kachin guerrilla troops in Burma operating deep behind enemy lines. The battalion size was only about 150 men, as contrasted to a much larger number in the U.S. Army. There were about half a dozen CIs assigned to each battalion. These Kachins were fierce tribesmen located in the Northern Highlands of Burma. The Japanese had infiltrated parts of their territory and tortured and beaten the men folks and raped the women in their conquest. Many of the Kachins were killed so they nurtured a very deep hatred for the Japanese.

RALPH explained that North Burma is one big impenetrable jungle and the whole operating areas were dense, with no roads, only trails. As a result, whoever controlled the trails, controlled the villages and the area. Their mission was to gather intelligence and harass and attack the Japanese forces from the rear. The Kachins were used to ambush the Japanese troops on the trails and villages. The Burma Road, which was used to transport men and supplies from China to Burma, was ambushed by Kachins quite regularly and extensively.

The American commander of the battalion that RALPH was in was not too confident that the Kachins would not accidentally shoot RALPH by mistake, thinking that he was a Japanese officer. Therefore, the whole battalion was assembled in formation and RALPH was paraded along with him and it was made sure the every Kachin recognized RALPH as an American officer. In addition to that lineup, the CO told RALPH to make sure that he was with Americans at all times.

The OSS had the idea that they needed Japanese interpreters in Burma, because the Japanese prisoners-of-war could be interrogated but RALPH said that very few prisoners were captured, because the Japanese soldiers were expected to die, if they were not victorious. They were not expected to surrender, because this would bring shame to their family and country. Instead, they should kill themselves, before sur-

rendering. RALPH interrogated four or five prisoners, who were too sick or injured to retreat. The number of Japanese prisoners who surrendered were very few.

RALPH came across a number of "comfort" women who were used by the Japanese troops for sex purposes. Some of them were Koreans and some were Burmese. They were housed in a building which identified itself. Signs were posted on the building that privates were given a certain time of the day, while the non-coms had another time and the officers another time. The reason these women were captured by the Kachins was because the Japanese troops, in their retreat, could not take them along.

After the Japanese retreated and evacuated Burma, the Kachin guerrilla troops were disbanded. About then, there was a rumor that 5,000 Japanese troops were in a certain valley and were ready to surrender. RALPH questioned the report because that many Japanese troops would never surrender while the war was on. Headquarters checked the report and lowered the head count, but wanted RALPH to parachute into that valley and convince the Japanese to surrender. He was reluctant to go, but figured that orders were orders. Before he was ready to proceed, headquarters decided that the rumor was false, so they canceled RALPH's parachute jump into the valley.

His next assignment was China. They had a convoy of vehicles and RALPH drove a jeep. It took them about 10 days to reach their destination, Kungming. They had to post perimeter guards every night to prevent the Chinese troops (our allies) from stealing our supplies and equipment. At Kungming, OSS had a jump school and they all started taking jump training. They also started taking lessons in Mandarin language.

In early August, Japan surrendered. Higher headquarters reported that there were a number of prisoner of war camps scattered in China and nearby. They were concerned that the communication about the end of the war would not be received by some of these installations so they requested volunteers to parachute into these areas and inform the Japanese about the

Emperor's capitulation. RALPH volunteered and he was assigned to parachute into the area near a POW camp on Hainan Island, near Hong Kong. RALPH and a group of about eight others parachuted on Hainan Island. Fortunately, the Japanese were aware of their surrender and the end of the war.

This POW camp was mostly occupied by Dutch and Australian troops. RALPH was shocked at the condition of these prisoners. They were all skin and bones and resembled the Jews from Dachau.

Their conditions were so bad, that some died every day that RALPH was there. Prisoners built small rat traps, so that they could eat the rats if they could catch them. Most of the prisoners were tortured, beaten, and starved. More than half of the POW's died in the prison camp. Until today the Japanese will not admit to the atrocities committed by their troops during W.W.II.

British warships came and evacuated the POW's. RALPH got on a British warship and went to Hong Kong. While there he witnessed the surrender ceremony. He recalls that this took place at the Peninsular Hotel and he watched the ceremony from the verandah of the hotel. The interpreter for the Japanese General, unbeknownst to RALPH, was his brother DONALD. DONALD saw RALPH looking down at them, but didn't say anything because he didn't want to embarrass RALPH.

After the incident in Hong Kong, RALPH and his group returned to Kungming, where he met a Nisei friend who was assigned as an interpreter to the British army. He had interrogated Japanese POW's in a camp just outside of Hong Kong. He asked RALPH if he had a brother. RALPH said he had a brother in the Japanese army. This interpreter told him that he saw a person in the POW camp who looked just like RALPH. At first, he didn't want to approach him because he thought that RALPH was engaged in some undercover mission. But the curiosity got the better of him so he asked the prisoner if he had a brother named RALPH, to which he replied, "Yes, I saw him the other day in Hong

Kong. "

RALPH then went to Shanghai, where one of the OSS headquarters were located. He wanted to go to Japan to look for his parents, who were supposed to be living near Hiroshima. He was told that if he extended his tour of duty for one year, they could send him to Japan and be assigned to the CIC (Counter Intelligence Corp.). So RALPH extended his duty and was sent to Japan. His search for his parents took him to Hiroshima, where he saw the devastation from the atomic bomb. He finally located his parents on an island off Miyajima. He saw his younger brother, PAUL, who was too young to be inducted into the Japanese army. PAUL is now the Publisher of Hawaii Hochi and Hawaii Herald in Honolulu. RALPH had three other brothers, who were conscripted into the Japanese army. They were not back from wherever they were operating while in the army. Several years later, RALPH found out that they returned to Japan from POW camps in China and Manchuria. His parents told RALPH that they thought he was dead, because the Japanese propaganda news reports stated that all of the Japanese Americans were used as cannon fodder, by having them precede any American attack, so that the casualty rate for the American troops would be reduced substantially. Another propaganda story told of a shoe falling out of a B-29 bomber passing over Japan with a note saying that Nisei were being treated very badly, and the person wanted the Japanese people to know about these cruel treatments of the Nisei.

RALPH remembers one assignment in the CIC while in Japan. He was sent to Kyushu to check the mountains in the region. He found a huge number of "Baka Bombs" positioned in the mountains defending Japan against the anticipated American invasion of Japan through Kyushu. They had many caves dug into the mountains with ammunitions, weapons, and equipment. After seeing all of these invasion defense preparation, RALPH felt that the American forces would have suffered disastrous casualties if the invasion had been launched, because he knew how the Japanese fought and

that they were willing to be killed to protect their country and the Emperor. He speculated that about 500,000 Americans might have been killed in the invasion, based on the way the Japanese fought in Okinawa. They would have preferred to be killed instead of surrendering. In turn, if the invasion had been launched, he estimated that about a million Japanese soldiers and civilians would have been killed. With that kind of casualty rates anticipated, he stated that the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were justified, in jolting the Emperor and military higher ups that it was useless to prolong the war. He realizes that the number of casualties from the bombs was very high, but the alternative would have been much worse and disastrous.

RALPH finally served his year in Japan and returned to Hawaii and was discharged here. He explained the reason for his family being in Japan while he remained in Hawaii. They had lived in Kahuku, where his father was a Buddhist minister and Japanese school principal, while his mother was a Japanese school teacher. His father suffered a stroke but recovered. About that time, in the early thirties, the Japanese army was fighting against China and talking about the Co-prosperity Sphere of Asia. This cloak was being used as an excuse to invade Southeast Asia for raw materials, especially oil.

RALPH's father decided that he wanted to take his family back to Japan. RALPH told him that he preferred to remain in Hawaii and continue his college education so the rest of the family left for Japan while RALPH remained in Hawaii. He was able to work odd jobs and finish college. After his graduation from the University of Hawaii, he remained at the UH as an instructor in physical education and Assistant Graduate Manager. He also was in the ROTC program for four years, so that when he graduated, he received his commission as a 2nd Lt.

When Japan bombed Pearl Harbor and started World War II, RALPH joined the Hawaii Territorial Guard and then the Varsity Victory Volunteers (VVV). But this is another story.



by Allen M. Nakamura

In an effort to comply with Editor ED GOTO's "Don't go overboard," I thought deeply of cutting short YOSHIJI AOKI's lengthy personal Camp Shelby journey, but after reflecting on the time and effort that he had put in to the article, I refrained from doing so. For different reasons, the article "Humanity in Action," a masterpiece by Dr. KENNETH INADA, a Distinguished Service Professor, the highest recognition awarded in the state of New York University System, is submitted for this issue because of the nature of the subject. Dr. INADA is a former resident of Hawaii now living in Buffalo, New York.

The articles on the 4th of July Parade, the Care Free Evening at Natsunoya Teahouse and other chapter activities will be in the next issue to hold in line with editor GOTO's message.

Humanity in Action by KENNETH INADA, Ph. D

The 50th Anniversary Celebration of the end of W.W.II brings back long forgotten/suppressed memories of our experiences and exploits in our tender years which are both bitter and sweet. The brutality, cruelty and senselessness of a war have well been documented by the media and in various writings and photographs, perhaps by now an overkill of a sort.

My first taste (or sight) of battle came while walking in single-file column on the road to Bruyeres. Near the town, I saw a pale hand, elbow down, lying on the roadside like a broken piece of a vase. It was obviously the result of a direct hit by an artillery shell or a barrage of shells and I momentarily cringed and wondered what happened to the rest of the body. As the battle progressed, I would subsequently encounter more gruesome scenes, especially during the nightmarish yard-by-yard struggle to

rescue the lost battalion of the Texas 36th Division.

My particular story on humanity in action is focused on the activities after Bruyeres was liberated and we advanced on the left side of the town, clearing machine gun nests and bunkers along the way. I still remember seeing the landmark water tower on the high hill to the right. We advanced steadily and came to the edge of the rather thin forest and overlooking a green ravine where a single track rail ran from left to right, passing near a clump of farm houses. We learned later that the houses were used by the Germans as unit headquarters. We dug our foxholes quietly since the Germans were not aware of our presence.

The next morning was a beautiful Sunday, the sun out and the verdant Vosges Mountains displaying its best in the cool Autumn setting. Then suddenly from the left we heard a bouncy whistling of a song. Someone passed on the word that it is coming from a young German soldier on a bicycle, pouch slung across his shoulders together with his rifle, and riding leisurely in the middle of the track. He was apparently conveying a message to the headquarters in the farm houses. There were at least two platoons of us at the edge of the forest facing the tracks barely 50 yards away. He would likely be a clay pigeon. Someone offered, "Let's get him when he's right in front of us." To which the platoon sergeant, I believe, added, "Wait until I give the signal." We waited with rifles at the ready and within seconds the command came, "Fire!" As expected, all hell broke loose with a thunderous volume of fire. I pressed my trigger but my eyes were riveted on the German. He got off the bike, flung it away with his rifle and took off toward the farm houses like a scared jackrabbit and to safety.

We all burst out in laughter. None of us had any serious thought about gunning him down in cold blood. Perhaps, another situation may have prompted us to take yet another more brutal action but this time we had not the slightest thought of harming him. Our shots were all around him, not at him. A big bang, to be sure,

but a hollow one. I felt good inside for sparing this soldier and so did everyone else, I'm sure.

After this incident, it seemed that the enemy was on the run. Our artillery began to shell at will on the dense mountain forest across the tracks. The firepower was awesome. After a day or so, we could easily see the bald areas of the mountain where the huge trees had toppled in pronounced ways. As there were signs that the enemy was in full retreat, we were signaled to cross the tracks in pursuit. As we entered the forest, we immediately came under heavy fire from the well-hidden machine gun positions. Our squad concentrated on one of them halfway up the hill. We succeeded in routing the occupants who fled up and over the hill, except for a wounded soldier still in the bunker. Meanwhile, the squad was within 10 yards of the dugout and ready for the final assault, but the wounded soldier began to cry for help in German, his voice revealing excruciating pain. Within seconds, a huge German sergeant appeared from the hilltop clearance and ran and jumped into the dugout. He immediately lifted the wounded buddy on his back, piggyback, and went up the hill, step by step, and disappeared over the hill. We were all lying flat on the ground, trigger at the ready, and observed an uncommon scene. None in the squad had the heart to destroy an easy moving target. The piggyback trudge up the hill took several minutes but it felt like eternity. I looked at my buddies on both sides and we were engrossed in mere silence, a silence with complete understanding of the human situation. Like gallant samurais imbued with bushido, we could not strike an enemy in the back. Could it be that we were trained to fight a thousand battles but still held in reservation an expression for that one finest rare moment? I often wondered about the nascent power we possess.

These two events, only days apart, have haunted me throughout my life. This is the first time I have written about them. Some who were witness to them or to similar incidents in other occasions, will undoubtedly recall with anxiety that such things do happen despite the ugly

downside of the war. For me, there are also the upside of the war, the experiences that make you become a real human being. These experiences I do relish and think that they are the foundations for human relationship that crosses cultural differences of whatever kind. The war matured us in unexpected ways, nourishing us in richer and profound ways, but we have been notoriously reticent, not speaking out like veterans all over the world. But the silence too is a matured one that adds character to any culture.

Camp Shelby Homecoming Reunion by YOSHIJI AOKI

Though we knew that the response to the Camp Shelby journey will be almost nil from Hawaii, BETTY and I decided early on that we'll be going. BETTY's brother was in Company F of the 442nd, and he probably was the first casualty of his company as they were moving up to occupy Sassetta and Suvereto on our right flank, as you guys may recall. Curiously, I was wounded on the same day.

Anyway, BETTY's brother SATORU had written that his days at Camp Shelby were very happy. Coming from a small plantation town on Kauai, he was overwhelmed with the friends he made and the goodwill of several families in Hattiesburg. BETTY wanted to make a sort of pilgrimage to honor the memory of her brother, and I was touched by her feelings. Also, since we hadn't been to Disney World, we figured this would be a good chance since we probably won't be going that way again.

Sometime prior to leaving, JUN YAMAMOTO wrote to ask if I could get 2 leis for friends from France who would be attending, enclosing a check. I mention this because his gesture turned out to be a most moving one, as it turned out. I made arrangements with a neighbor who owns a flower shop, and she suggested a certain type of dendrobium lei, with specific instructions on how to keep it fresh during the night. JUN explained that he couldn't go as he was heavily involved in the Los Angeles Museum Reunion in November, where they expect at least 3,000

participants. That, plus the fact that there were 300 people at the Bruyeres Reunion, undoubtedly cut down on the Camp Shelby attendance, which eventually topped off at 370, with very few from Hawaii.

To get along with this thing—the leis—on our first morning in New Orleans, while having breakfast, BETTY said that the couple at the adjoining table looked French, and the man looked kind of familiar. By incredible coincidence, these were the people the leis were for. The woman was MONIQUE CARLESSO from Paris, and she was accompanied by PIERRE MOULIN of Bruyeres. You guys with good memories may remember PIERRE, who remembered every detail of his reunion in Hawaii and especially his being a guest of Company L at Natsunoya Teahouse. In fact, they asked specifically to be included with the Company L contingent, figuring they'll be more of us going.

The leis were duly draped, Hawaiian-style of course, and for the rest of the Homecoming, for every occasion, day and night, they wore their leis. They were even wearing their leis when we said good-bye. Curiously, they were the only ones with leis until the very end of the Homecoming. At the very end, leis from Hawaii were presented to all the dignitaries, which they wore for all of 5 minutes. Personally, I didn't think that was very good timing. MONIQUE will be coming to Hawaii in August, and she has our phone number, but I'm wondering how we're going to communicate because PIERRE was the interpreter at Camp Shelby.

Another chance encounter happened on a stopover at the Dallas-Worth Airport. Because of an unscheduled stopover in Los Angeles, we had a rather lengthy wait at Dallas. We started talking to a couple seated next to us from Kula, Maui who was traveling with the small Maui group. They knew every L member on Maui that I mentioned, so we already had instant rapport. Talking about church and other things, they had even come across a stalled Rev. HIRO HIGUCHI on the slopes of Haleakala with a group of our youth from the church, and this couple, HIROSHI & EDNA ARISUMI, took them back to Kahului so they can make arrangements for their stalled

vehicle. They also met BEN & GLORIA TAMASHIRO of "Harry and Myra" fame while doing a play on Maui and got to know them. The TAMASHIROS are our neighbors! About that time, I figured God must have some kind of hand in this, so I asked about their plans after the homecoming. Without giving you 3 guesses, they were also going to Disney World! It later developed that we were the only couples going to Orlando and we're staying at the same resort hotel yet! So before Homecoming had started, good things had already happened.

Now, what was this article supposed to be about? Well, the first day was spent in New Orleans with all the registering, etc. We had a free night, so we're supposed to do the town. BETTY splurged on soft-shelled crab, but I was under doctor's order (especially in New Orleans), to stick to a bland diet, and NO DRINKING! Personally, I thought the French cuisine was vastly over-rated. BETTY said that Dungeness crab tastes better. But I was surprised, and envious, to see the amount of drinking going on in the street and the sidewalk bars going full blast. Pricing everything, the tourists have nothing to complain about Hawaii. We called it a short night because of the long travel time. We did take a short walk so we could say that we walked Bourbon Street, especially since it was right next to our hotel.

Camp Shelby at Last!

The following morning's bussing took a while because of the narrow streets, but I must say that Corliss Travel arranged everything in an impeccable fashion. When we reached Mississippi at the town of Gulfport, we had a convoy of 6 motorcycle state troopers to escort our 9 buses for the 1-1/2 hours to Camp Shelby and Hattiesburg, clearing all the side streets and damn all the street lights. Hattiesburg now seems more like a stopover for those traveling Interstate Highway 10, and there are scores of motels, and we needed 5 of them for our group.

Before I forget, I'd better mention the other Co. L members there. We had BEN & FUDGE KITAGAWA, DON & SUMI SEKI, JOHN &

GRACE KANDA, from Seattle way, and SHIGERU & RUBY KIZUKA from Sacramento. At one of the gatherings, the KIZUKAS called out to me, but I couldn't recognize them initially because they weren't registered with Co. L but with the Sacramento group and traveling with them.

Our first spin around Camp Shelby was a revelation, and not just because we had this motorcycle escort at all times. The camp is now the largest national guard training site and depot in the U.S., and all the equipment and buildings are state of art. Betty kept asking if I remembered anything, but after 52 years? Oh yes, I did remember the pine trees—they're just as impressive as ever.

Our first night's dinner was held in a huge tent pitched adjacent to what is now called "Memory Lane," where there are other memorials besides ours, which was still draped for unveiling. The 69th Division has one and I learned that they first went into action in Germany on March 25, 1945. There were also a couple of outfits who erected memorials also. Our meals at Camp Shelby were all taken at the tent, and the majority of time was taken with acknowledgments, welcome speeches, and the usual stuff.

It was good to see some Hawaiian flavor with the presence of the 111th Army Band of the National Guard, and the color guard of the 100th/442nd Unit. The band's playing of the "Go For Broke" song was a hit at every gathering.

I'd like to cite some personal impressions because I didn't take any notes, and my short-term memory is a mess. With all the pomp and circumstance, some of the speeches were very moving and easily worth the price of admission. Senator DAN INOUE's speech at the unveiling was very moving, and I truly felt that he really outdid himself. Our retired Lt. Gen. ALLEN ONO said that he wanted to put on his uniform one last time to show his stars, because without our sacrifices and efforts, he would never have gotten them. He also asked everyone to write down their experiences, just as GENRO KASHIWA has been urging us to do. I had a chance to talk further with him on one of the

buses, and he said he had a brother in Company A of the 100th, and even he didn't know what his brother did during the war. An embarrassing incident happened to me concerning the general about two weeks after we returned to Hawaii.

BETTY, myself and a couple of our granddaughters were lined up at Manoa McDonald's after church, and BETTY started talking to the person in the next line. I gave her a funny look, and she whispered to me, "That's General ONO." And so it was! Another of the many times my memory failed me.

ROBERT KATAYAMA gave a very precise speech—it almost seemed like he had committed everything to memory. RON OBA did a change of pace, and gave a somewhat humorous recollections. Anyway, to me those were the highlight speeches by the Hawaiian contingent, and as JAKE JICHAKU would say, "They did us proud."

On the day of the unveiling, there was a big crowd on hand because the whole camp was opened. While the speeches were going on, I noticed a woman with grandchildren in tow looking around as if she were looking for a specific person. We made eye contact because I was in an aisle seat and she asked me, "Do you know CLARENCE TABA? Is he here?" CLARENCE happened to be a member of our church, I said. In fact, he's been our treasurer for over 20 years. This woman explained that she and her sister got to know CLARENCE at Camp Shelby, corresponded throughout the war and even afterwards for a while, but lost contact. She wrote a address and short note on the back of an envelope which I happened to have. With my memory loss, I never thought of taking a snapshot of her for CLARENCE. I called CLARENCE soon as I returned. He surprised me by being at the church the following Sunday as he usually comes only when he's needed there as our treasurer. In our conversation, he explained that he met them initially at a church in Hattiesburg. Knowing CLARENCE, I'm sure that's the truth, but then his wife was listening to us on the side.

The day of the unveiling was a long one

because there were also a parade, flyover of various types of aircraft, a parachute drop, a mock battle with guardsman dressed as Germans (I felt sorry for them with their heavy greatcoat in the heat), and display of all kinds of hardware for the large Hattiesburg audience. Many of us were so beat about 3 p.m., including BETTY and I, that we missed the museum visit as we caught the bus back to the hotel as there was a banquet in the evening.

Appropriately, Sunday June 18 was our Memorial Service and it started at 9 a.m. so there wasn't much rest for the wicked. It was refreshing to see something unique injected into the ceremony. A pretty lass from Hattiesburg played the bagpipe for the "Call to Worship," and then she played "Amazing Grace," one of my favorite hymns so I knew things were going to go well. And it did!

Former "Go For Broke" chaplain GEORGE AKI gave the address entitled, "That Which Remade America," and the gist of his address was that events that went against the flow, made a lasting impact on the U.S. Examples he cited were the Revolutionary War, the protest against the Vietnam War, and the Relocation Camps. These events profoundly changed the attitudes of Americans, and I heartily agree. So all the addresses that interested us veterans were very well prepared and received by the overflowing Hattiesburg crowd in attendance.

All things eventually have to come to an ending, and now it was time to say our good-byes and depart for the many post-reunion tours. The buses were on their own without the ever present police escort. The event was well organized and even the weather cooperated. It was just like Hawaii with 88 degree temperatures both at Camp Shelby and Disney World. This trip will be long cherished by BETTY and me.

Sickness

MARY HIGA encouraged by her daughter KATHY who lives in San Francisco, to have a medical checkup because of her fast and irregular heartbeat and her continued tiredness. She had a by-pass surgery at a S.F. hospital when