business so we never delivered to the bachelor quarters. We earned something like 16 guilders a week, plus tips. Some of those papers, like the Washington Post, were too heavy to throw. We used to meet at the Sunday school area to pick up our papers. I have forgotten the name of the man who delivered the papers to us in the back end of his car. Billy MacNutt was another of the paperboys.

BOYS' STATE

During 1960 I was selected one year by the American Legion to go to Boys' State while Gary Schlageter was my alternate. Boys' State, a school held in the Panama Canal Zone, taught local, state and federal government. Representatives came from all over, including the States. We stayed in some barracks there. The American Legion expected and got a report of what happened when I returned.

CUB SCOUT DAYS

Marchant Davidson was one of the Cub Scout leaders. Usually the fathers went on campouts with their boys. I remember helping load our equipment on a large flatbed truck when we went camping. My dad was a veteran of many of these campouts.

COLLEGE

When I was ready for college I had a time deciding between Texas Tech and Texas A & M. A cousin on my mother's side graduated from A & M, so I decided to go there. In those years, you were drafted into the service after attending R.O.T.C. for four years, but my second year they made the last two years optional. While in R.O.T.C., I was in the marching band and I played the trumpet.

Originally in mechanical engineering, I switched to industrial technology my second year.

The Lotje McReynolds Story

I wish Mac was here to help me remember "the long ago;" it was surely the most meaningful period of my life.

My name is Johanna Charlotte McReynolds and Mac's was Leonard Stevens McReynolds. His father was a Major in the U. S. Marines and he was killed in the 1920's in Nicaragua. He is buried in the Arlington Cemetery.

My sister and I were born on the Dutch island of Saint Martin (up near the Virgin Islands). My brother was born in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. My father was born and educated in Holland and was sent out to St. Martin to manage a Salt Development and Export Company, the island's chief source of income. There he met and married my lovely mother, descendent of a titled French family who escaped from France, and the guillotine, during the revolutions there in the 1700's. Some settled in England and others in the Caribbean islands of Martinique and Guadeloupe (where my mother was born).

SCHOOL

My earliest memories of school started at the age of five years in Canada, continued in North Brookfield, Massachusetts, and later in New York. In my early teens we returned to the warm blue Caribbean and I attended Dutch and English schools in Saint Martin, St. Christopher and Barbados. My sister went to Miss Branch's School for Girls in Antigua. I earned my Oxford/Cambridge High School diploma and, after another year's study a Business School Certificate. In those days English girls did not flock to colleges unless they planned a business career. I joined the Barbados branch of the Royal Bank of Canada as a secretary.

EARLY YEARS

Those were such glamorous and exciting years in the Islands! The social life was delightful with picnics and dancing and sailing and swimming, but it wasn't considered proper to have "dates," as we do today. A goodly supply of chaperons was always on hand.

ARUBA ENTERED OUR LIVES

When we were in St. Martin, there was a Government doctor and his young French wife who were friends of my family, a Dr. Nunez and Lizette. They were transferred to Aruba at the time we lived in Barbados, and Mrs. Nunez wrote to Sylvia, my sister, inviting her to come for a visit. We knew nothing of Aruba or the Lago Company then.

However, just at that time Captain and Mrs. Rodger, Mr. Farquharson, Ralph Watson, Bert Oxley and three or four Englishmen whose names I have forgotten, were in Oranjestad starting up the Shipping Department of Lago. Except for a Miss Carrie Croes, there did not seem to be any available secretaries, and my sister was asked to help out in Captain Rodger's office, which she did, until she and Bert Oxley were married a couple of years later.

MY FIRST JOB IN ARUBA

A Pan-American accounting office was started at the other end of the small building where Captain Rodger had the Shipping Office, and I received a letter from the company, offering me three times the monthly salary I was being paid by the bank of Barbados. Also, I was asked would I be able to persuade an equally qualified secretary to accompany me. So that is how my friend, Peggy Edwards, and I came to Aruba. The accountant from the New York Office was Mr. John Alden, who descended from the John Alden.

I became Mr. Alden's secretary. Peggy joined the Shipping Department and a few years later married Bert Martel, an accountant from the U. S. and a fine gentleman.

OUR HOUSING AND SOCIAL LIFE IN THE EARLY DAYS

I went to Aruba in my 20's and am now in my 70's. We traveled by steamer, first to Trinidad as I recall, to Curacao and then to Oranjestad, Aruba. I do remember how warmly we were received; everyone seemed so grateful to us for coming. They had prepared temporary quarters for us until we and the others could move to the five new bungalows being finished out at Lago. We were taken to the upstairs floor of a private home. I seem to remember we only had breakfast there, and then drove over to Lago and back again after 5:00 p.m. I think our small office by the cliff became the Post Office later. We were across from the old "White House" where we had lunch and supper.

Mr. Farquharson, second in command in the Shipping Department, was very kind and helpful. In the Oranjestad house, he would help us whenever things got stuck, such as the stove, or a window, etc. He was from Scotland and became our dear friend (as they all did). Later, when the colony at Lago was pretty well along, his fiancée (Hilda) came out from England and they were married. Pretty soon, five bungalows and a sheep shed were completed and we all moved over to Lago. Captain and Mrs. Rodger and their daughters lived in the stone house which later became the main office. The five bungalows were in a row east of the Rodger's home and in them lived the Aldens, the Pennys, two other

British couples (I have forgotten their names), and us three girls. Soon after, a nurse came down and stayed with us, and the small hospital was built.

We were often entertained at the Rodger's home at Saturday evening parties. Mrs. Rodger very kindly wrote reassuring letters about us to our mother, who was never too clear in her mind about Aruba. My sister and Bert Oxley were married at the Rodger's home. There was a big reception and everyone was invited, all the captains and officers from the ships. The Lake Tankers in the harbor strung up their flags. Peggy and I were bridesmaids. I remember how helpful Mrs. Rodger was in having our dresses made. Her youngest daughter was the flower girl.

Later, one of the ships' officers was married to an American nurse and another big reception and party was held at the Rodger's home.

THE COLONY GROWS

It was fantastic how fast the place was growing. Contractors arrived to build the refinery, and new bungalows and office buildings were going up all the time. "Bird Cage Row" was built, overlooking the sea. These were for families of the officers on the Lake Tankers. Harbor docks were being built, and an entrance had to be opened in the reef and dredged deep enough to permit ocean tankers to enter. There was usually a strong current flowing west just outside the harbor entrance and it was believed that was what kept the flaming oil outside, after the submarine attack in 1942. Finally in November of 1928 the San Nicholas harbor was opened for shipping. The big ocean oil tanker *Cerro Azul* was the first ocean tanker to come inside and we had quite a celebration.

There was a small dock on the beach above the camps, and afternoons and weekends we went swimming. The ball parks and tennis courts came later. We wondered how the reef looked close up, so one day my sister and I swam across to find out.

The *sheep sheds* were filling up with refinery workers, and new bachelor quarters and bungalows were being built. The Rodgers and other officials moved up to "The Hill" overlooking the upper lagoon where we sailed and swam. The Lloyd Smith family lived higher up (further east) in "Casa Grande" and had groups of us to parties occasionally. "Essie" Esselstijn and Winnie Smith became engaged. The "stone house," the Rodger's former home, became Mr. Bartel's office, with the Engineering building on one side and the Accounting on the other. The Aldens left and T. C. Brown arrived as an "efficiency expert" to run the Accounting Office. Later he became the Controller.

Bob Schlageter arrived, and started our weekly newspaper, "The Pan-Aruban." I still treasure some copies of it. It was a great gift to the community at that time and so it continued to be through the years.

I WENT ON VACATION IN 1931

I wanted to visit my family in Holland and elsewhere, so I clutched my small purse of savings and quit in 1931; visited New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, then sailed from New York to Europe on the lovely Holland-American passenger Line, and visited in Holland, England, and Scotland. After seven or eight months I returned to New York and have often wondered why, instead of finding secretarial work in England, as I was not an American citizen. However, in our New York office they said I was still needed in Aruba.

THE COLONY GROWS!

Such changes during my absence! Bungalow 32, on the sea front, was home to the school teachers; one hospital technician (Beulah Snide who later married Ralph Watson) and me. Jennie (Thorpe) Greene was there; Myrtle Parham, Louise Powers, Maude Thomas, Edith Greer, and another whose face I can see so plainly, but cannot remember her name. Later when the Girls Dormitory was built, we moved there, and Vina Walz, Marguerite Fassler, Peggy Engle, (before she was married to "Dutch") and others were there. Marguerite married the superintendent of the Eagle Refinery (Mr. Newton) in Oranjestad, and we all attended the wedding, including Governor Wagemaker. Those were all wonderful people and I was happy to live among them.

THE HURRICANE OF 1932

One day we were told to expect a hurricane, coming straight at Aruba from the East. The Company started preparations for vacating the bungalows if it became necessary. It was suggested that we should go to the caves for shelter. We remembered the caves had bats in them, lizards too, and maybe even land crabs. We decided to stay in Bungalow 32. The eye of the storm passed several miles north of us. We had high winds and lots of rain. Since our windows were just louvers, the rain came in all over the house. We hung blankets over the closed louvers. When the sunshine returned, our carpets and rugs were put out to dry. It took a whole week for them to dry completely.

WE WERE FORTUNATE WITH OUR MUSICIANS

Jan Koulman was our "Music Man." He led the community and school bands and our church choir on Sundays. His talented wife, Mary Lou was our school music teacher. They were often at our home with their musical instruments, and we felt privileged to have them there. Jan

was from Holland and became an American citizen later. He taught at Potsdam, N. Y. after they left Aruba. Mrs. Doris Thompson, the wife of our school superintendent, organized and led the community choral concerts, and they were wonderful.

If Jan Koulman was our "Music Man", Mrs. Nell Mingus was our "Music Lady." She was an accomplished pianist and taught piano to our young daughters at a time when we parents really needed such a teacher for our children. She trained the children to give recitals, and I seem to remember one was given over in Oranjestad, as well as in the Colony. We were all very grateful indeed.

MARRIAGE

When I returned to Aruba after my vacation in 1931 I met Mac (Leonard Stevens McReynolds). He was a Mechanical Engineer in the Engineering Department. Four years later we were married.

Before my marriage to Mac, all the girls gave me a surprise shower, and it was <u>really</u> a surprise. Paul and Louise O'Brien were my dear friends and they gave an engagement dinner for us. Their guests were Margaret and "Chip" Chippendale, the Paulus's, Stuart Harrison (who came down to Aruba ahead of his family), Myrtle Parham, who was bridesmaid at the wedding, and Jack Souder, Mac's Best Man. Our church had not been built yet, so the minister (Reverend Rishell) performed the service on the O'Brien' lawn, overlooking the blue sea. Paul O'Brien gave me away, as my parents could not come. Mrs. Rodger attended the service also. That afternoon there was a wedding reception at O'Brien's home with all our friends present. I seem to remember there were sixty guests. For a week-end honeymoon we flew over to Curacao in the small, very noisy Dutch "Fokker" plane.

I valued the friendship and kindness of the O'Brien family, and when Louise died of pneumonia a few years later, I lost a dear friend. It seems incredible now, but there was no penicillin available in our hospital in those days; it might have saved her life.

BUNGALOWS BECAME COLORFUL

At first the bungalows were drab, gray stucco on the outside. Later the company painted them in soft colors of blue, pink, green, yellow, white and our Colony blossomed like a bouquet. Everyone planted hibiscus, croton, star-of-Venezuela, frangipani, oleanders, yellow bells, etc., in the flower beds built alongside our houses. Mrs. Hewlett actually grew rose bushes! Good garden soil was non-existent in the colony and had to be brought in from other parts of the island. I think we paid seven guilders for a small truck load (or was it Fls. 14.00?). Patios were being

added to back yards and when we lived in Bungalow 305, Mac had a really beautiful one built for us. We also planted a small flamboyant in the yard. Over the years it grew as big as those in Florida.

During the War years the Company built a cover of sorts over the top of the outdoor movie screen, maybe at the sides too. That way, no light could be seen by the German submarines at sea.

A really nice patio was built alongside our church, overlooking the blue sea. We held our church suppers there, and Easter morning sunrise services. I wish I could remember the name of the minister who had it done. He went to Florida to live.

MY SERVICE WITH THE LAGO SCHOOL SYSTEM

One day, when Mac and I returned from vacation I was asked to help out temporarily at the High School Office until a replacement could be employed. I was there as secretary to Mr. Smith and Mr. Dean Thompson for seven years, until we left Aruba to live in the States.

FEBRUARY 16, 1942 AND THE WAR YEARS

After our daughter Aileen was born in 1937 in the small first hospital, we were moved down the road to a larger, two bedroom bungalow, No. 222, and were there when the German submarine attacked us. Across the coral lived Charlie and Kay Drew and Eileen and Bernie Shearon. The Perkins family lived just up the road. It seemed as if the whole ocean was on fire that night. We stood on our front porch and watched the sub's tracer bullets pass over the refinery between the towers (by the grace of Providence!) My knees were knocking together so hard I could almost hear them. Someone pulled the main plug at the Power House and every light went out. Someone with a flashlight came by and told all the families around there to drive up to the church hill or higher. There was a chance of the tank farm being ignited.

The Scottish troops had left the island just the day before. We caught up Aileen from her crib, the kitty, a bottle of Poland water, and my pictures of Aileen, and drove up the road just behind a big American truck. I marveled at how they kept so closely to a strange road without lights, as they had arrived on the island just the day before or two days before, and were stationed outside the colony (at Savaneta, I think). They would blow a siren at night when a submarine was near, and we had to vacate our homes and drive higher up the road. Some nights we stayed with friends. We had the submarines around us all the time. The airplanes would go out and drop depth charges. For the remainder of the war we lived in blackout. The men volunteered to help, and if a speck of light showed at any bungalow, they would knock and ask the family

indoors to straighten the blinds. Mac helped out in many ways during those years as did many other employees. Our refinery was making the high octane gasoline for England during the Battle of Britain. My sister and her family were in Kent, not far from London.

There were six or eight American G. I. boys who came up for a meal or a visit at least once a week. There was a certain day in the week when rations were particularly distasteful at the army mess hall. On that day Mac would receive a visitor, or two or three, at the office and soon after he would phone me to add a few vegetables to the stew, or bake some extra biscuits or cookies that evening. We had them on holidays too. One sergeant still writes every Christmas from Pennsylvania.

There was also a U. S. Navy boat patrolling the harbor and outside the reef. I don't think it was a regular P. T. boat, but it might have been. The Commander (I mean Captain) often came up to dinner with us, and we enjoyed his company. Once, the Navy and Army were there together, unfortunately. It was a quiet evening. Luckily, it was not a dinner night, just chatting, mostly by Mac and me! I think the Cameron Highlanders were with us two years, shortly after Dunkirk, but I am not sure. They had a small canteen outside the gate, and we baked pies and cakes for them and served tea and coffee. We met them at dances in the small Marine Club near the docks.

Word of the German invasion of Holland arrived at Oranjestad Governor's Office at midnight on May 10, 1940, and by 2:00 a.m. the few Nazi Germans in Oranjestad and San Nicholas were rounded up and given a very short time to pack a suitcase before they were shipped over to Bonaire, where they remained for the duration of the war. Not far from our bungalow No. 222 there lived a German couple, and the wife attended first-aid classes which our hospital held for us wives in the colony. She was a very pleasant and quiet woman and I had heard they owned some lovely things in their home. I felt sorry for her. However, Bonaire was not an unpleasant place to wait out the war. One of my cousins in Holland had a spell in a Nazi concentration camp in Germany. After the war it took six months of hospital care in Holland for him to recover.

After the submarine attack, many families returned to the States. Some enlisted, Bernard Shearon among them. They sent up their household goods, wedding gifts, etc., by tanker, which was torpedoed on the way up. This exodus left some empty bungalows in the colony, and we moved from No. 222 up to 305. Our neighbors there were the Pomeroys, McBurneys and Frybacks. There Gregersons, with all their

beautiful Danish treasures, lived just a short way down the cliff.

HOUSING MAINTENANCE IN LAGO COLONY

Periodically, we had "paint jobs" on our houses, by the colony Maintenance Department. We were moved out to a "paint house" kept for that purpose, and moved back in a week or two to a freshly painted and renovated house. We could choose the new colors for the rooms, and have minor alterations done at that time also.

THE COMPANY CALENDARS

The Company published a calendar each year. Employees were asked to submit colored slides or negatives. Hundreds of beautiful negatives were submitted and the judges had a hard time each year choosing twelve from among the lot. One of them was surely the most beautiful sunset ever, at Aruba. Some really fine cameras could be purchased over in the Oranjestad stores. I now treasure those calendars with their beautiful pictures of our island.

OUR HOSPITAL

A large, new, modern hospital was built on the cliffs up by Lighthouse Point (known as Colorado Point). The view over the blue sea was wonderful, and on clear days we could see the island of Curacao on the horizon. Two or three new doctors came from Holland. Dr. Russell Carrol was in charge and later Dr. Glenn Hendrickson. The nurses lived in the new girls' dormitory. Sometimes we had visiting doctors from the States for a few weeks. One evening, after a very strenuous basketball game, Mac had a pain in his chest and was examined at the hospital by a visiting heart specialist. They gave Mac a through examination and kept him in the hospital for four days in case the pain returned. It did not, but we were told it might have been a "nicotine spasm." For the rest of his life, Mac never smoked another cigarette. [1]

OUR CAMERON HIGHLANDER FRIEND

When we had the Scots Highlanders with us soon after Dunkirk, we had the privilege of knowing their pastor, Reverend Murdo MacDonald. He was with his troops in North Africa, was captured, and spent four years in Nazi prison camps, mostly with British and American soldiers. After the war, he returned to Aruba and visited in our home. He married Betty Russell, the daughter of one of our Lake Tanker Captains, and they returned to his church in Scotland. Many years after we were settled in the lovely town of Worthington, U.S.A. Reverend McDonald visited our Presbyterian church here and preached the Sunday sermon. He came to

[1] *Aileen passed away in 1976 of cancer; Mac in 1978 due to a stroke and Lotje in January 7, 1987.*

our home for a short visit, and I felt that we had received a blessing.

MEMORIES

In our colony at Aruba, we now had four tennis courts, and we exchanged matches with Curacao teams when a long weekend turned up. We had a new hospital, a ball park, a golf club, and a beautiful new clubhouse down by the sand dunes, with movies, a book shop, and soda fountain, and an open-air dance floor, right near the sea front. We had square dances there and regular Saturday night dances and New Year's Eve parties.

We had four or five snipes in the lagoon and a boat dock, and Aileen had her sailfish. A small pavilion was built on the cliff above the boat dock--it resembled a well roofed-over porch, and it was named the "Indoor-Outdoor Yacht Club." After each race on week-ends, the "Yachtsmen" and wives and others gathered there for a coke and to discuss the race. There was also space to store the sails and starting cannon.

When Mac first came to Aruba, he was instrumental in getting the ball clubs and tennis games started. These filled a great need at the time. When he left Aruba, the tennis club presented Mac with a beautiful gift and a printed, framed token of appreciation for his efforts.

In my minds eye, I often see the high waves crashing on the rocks at lighthouse beach and over on the north side of the island, where we had picnics. Weekends, we would go driving over to Andicouri, Bushiribana, Boca Prins, Fontein, and the Spanish Lagoon; to a picnic at Sea Grape Grove. I would not enjoy seeing all the hotels now on our lovely Palm Beach--I remember it as it used to be.

MAC'S STORY

Mac worked his way through college and learned to catch a nap anywhere, anytime. While he was in Aruba this habit caught up with him and he would often nod off during an Engineers Club meeting.

When the Community Band was formed Mac was away from Aruba on vacation. In high school he used to play the clarinet. When he returned from his trip the only instrument that had not been selected by others was the Tuba. In his efforts to master the playing of the Tuba he first had a record of "Tubby the Tuba" which happened to be a popular piece at the time. Then he was on a business trip in the States and he found the "Fire House Five Plus Two" records. These were records made by a group of Disney Cartoonists who formed a little band to play for parties and small gatherings. In this series the Tuba carried the

melody. The songs they played were ones similar to "Minnie the Moocher," "Good Time Jazz," "I Love You Truly," "Love Songs of The Nile," "California Here I Come," "Lady of Spain," "China Boy." Mac did learn to play the Tuba well enough that he gave a rendition of "Tubby the Tuba" at one of the concerts given by the Community Band. Jim Lopez liked these records and bought several of them the next opportunity he had. The idea of the Tuba playing the melody convulsed everyone who heard the Disney group play.

Mac learned to play golf in Aruba. He took the admonition seriously to keep his head down and keep his eye on the ball when he made his golf swing. As he was learning he wore a baseball cap with a weighted string fastened to the brim of the cap. This weighted string was adjusted so if he did as he was instructed the weighted string was vertical through the swing of his golf club.

Steps up the side of Mt. Hooiberg - - circa 1976

Photo courtesy V. D. Lopez

The Willie M. Miller & Family Story

Willie M. (Bill) Miller was born in Anniston, Alabama, September 16, 1900. He was the last of five children, although only two of his sisters were still alive. His mother died soon afterward, so he was sent to live with a maiden aunt who lived in Los Angeles, California. Unfortunately she died when he was five, so her neighbors put a tag on him and sent him back to Alabama on a train. Bill often told stories of the great time he had crossing the country, and of all the wonderful people who took care of him along the way. Back in Anniston with an aunt and uncle, he went to school through the fourth grade.

The year of 1914 saw his father remarried and living in Anahuac, Texas with his wife and two daughters. Bill rejoined his family there later. As a teenager he drove a horse and wagon to the bayou where he unloaded groceries from the boats.

In 1917 he moved with his sister and her husband, a grocer, to the booming Texas oil field of Goose Creek now known as Baytown, Texas. His brother-in-law established one of the first grocery stores in the area, and Bill worked for him. In those days the local streets were mud, and there was no real road connecting the vicinity to Houston. Virtually everything needed by the community was brought in by boat and hauled to its destination by horse and wagon. During WWI his brother-in-law added a movie theater, and Bill worked as the projectionist. The day Bill was to be inducted into the Army, November 11, 1918, the Armistice was signed. All recruits were released.

In 1920 he went to work as a driller's helper in Humble Oil's Goose Creek oil field. On February 25, 1926, he transferred to the Humble Oil Refinery in Baytown. Here he was a pipefitter's helper until September 16, 1929, when he was transferred to the Lube Oil Treaters.

Bill lived in a boarding house with several Humble men. None of them had cars, so they pooled their money to hire a taxi to commute five miles to the refinery. Everyone stood at the refinery gate until the foreman read the list of workers needed for the day. Each man usually got work at least two or three days a week. On the days when Bill didn't get to work, he picked up odd jobs like delivering ice for the ice house or helping in the store. Delivering ice was how Bill met fifteen-year-old Gladys in 1925. She said that it seemed like the only time he delivered

ice to her house was when she was down on her hands and knees scrubbing the kitchen floor.

Nineteen twenty-nine brought uncertain times to America. Many men worked on a day-to-day basis. In October of that year, a notice listing overseas jobs available was posted. The Pan American Refinery in Aruba, Dutch West Indies had openings. Bill applied on October 17, 1929.

On October 28, in a letter, O.H. Shelton, of the Personnel Department of the Pan American Petroleum Corporation offered him an eighteen month term of employment as an operator. The salary was $185.00 per month. He was asked to wire his decision of acceptance, at the company's expense, and to advise them of the earliest possible date he could leave. If hired, he was allowed $0.06 per mile from Baytown to the port of embarkation. This sum was to cover railroad fare and meals. (1,750 miles x $.06 equals $105.00) At the port of embarkation he would be given $50 cash to cover the cost of his passport and living expenses while awaiting his sailing orders. The job was shift work, eight hours per day, seven days per week.

No housing accommodations were available for families, but when the construction period was over, there would be a certain number of houses available. In closing the letter stated: "In comparing the salary stated above with your present income, you should take in consideration the free room, board, laundry, medical attention, a fully paid thirty day vacation, and the ten days traveling time at the end of your term of employment."

Vacations, much less vacations with full pay, were unheard of for the common working man. This standard saw its first change the year before when, on October 1, 1928, the Humble Oil Refinery granted its employees one day's rest each week without reduction of present earnings. Any man working on a day-to-day basis with no guarantee of how many days a week he might get to work, would have been a fool to turn down Pan American's offer. For a single young man with no family obligations, it was an opportunity of a lifetime. On November 25, 1929, Bill received a letter that stated: "We confirm the offer made to you for position as first-class operator at a salary of $185.00 per month and sustenance." He was told to report in New York on December 10, 1929, at their office room 1913A, 122 East 42nd Street, New York City.

After reporting in New York on December 10, Bill and a couple of new fellow-employees went by train to Washington, D.C. to see the sights. They sailed out of Baltimore, Maryland on Chesapeake Bay

aboard the S.S. *George G. Henry* on December 12, and arrived in Aruba at 10:00 a.m. December 20, 1929.

Bill worked as a first-class helper in the Process-Cracking Plant from 1929 until February 5, 1940. He lived in Bachelor Quarters Five until 1935.

A roommate during much of that time was Louis G. Harris. Louis, a naturalized American citizen, had been well on his way to becoming a lawyer before he went to Aruba. Harris encouraged Bill to improve his education by taking extension courses from a university. One of his hobbies was photography, and after he came back from fighting in Europe in World War II, he had his own darkroom.

In letters that he wrote home between 1929 and 1934, Bill stated that there were a number of Baytown men working there. Several of them became unhappy and subsequently returned home. Bill apparently enjoyed the adventure. He wrote of spending off days seeing the island and its local color, playing golf with friends, and working with the punching bag at the club. The club was a good place to be for socializing, reading, or just seeing a show. Boating and swimming were indeed luxuries to a man from his background.

Letter home October 31, 1933 - "Have you been watching the rate of exchange on money since the States went off the gold standard? The dollar was worth Fls. 2.25. A few days ago it was worth Fls. 1.50."

Letter home April 2, 1934 - "You say that Humble isn't running but six of their pressure stills. That's almost shut down. We have continued for a long time at about full capacity here. That is always maintaining better than 95,000 barrels of crude a day. That is the set schedule of production, but we can go as high as 150,000 barrels per day in rush periods although they don't usually last more than ten to twenty days."

While on vacation in Baytown on October 30, 1934, Bill married his long-time love, Gladys Lucille Neal. The fourth of six children, she was born in the little oil town of Saratoga, Texas on July 19, 1910. Her father worked in the field. They moved so often that only two of the six children were born in the same town. Their last move was in 1924 to Pelly, Texas (Now known as Baytown). Her parents also cared for fourteen more children who had been orphaned in oil field accidents. With so many people in the household, everyone had to do their share. Fourteen-year-old Gladys worked as a carhop in a root beer stand after school. Later she worked in an ice cream parlor.

Bill left Baytown aboard a tanker bound for Aruba on Tuesday,

November 20, 1934. It was a very pleasant trip and the people were good to him. The hardest part was leaving his new bride waving to him from the ferry. He said that he got paid for the l9th and 20th, and he got regular pay when he got on the boat. The ship was off the coast of Aruba at 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, November 28. Since the docks were full, they spent two days, including Thanksgiving, off the Venezuelan coast. They finally arrived in Aruba at 4:00 p.m. Friday, November 30, 1934.

Letter to Gladys: "I started on days Sunday morning December 16, 1934, and will work until 4:00 p.m. Saturday evening. Will be off eight hours and back on at 12:00 p.m. Saturday night, December 23. Don't forget that we shift backwards down here - from days to graveyards to 4 - 12, then on days again."

When Gladys arrived in Aruba on March 29, 1935, she roomed with Mr. and Mrs. Ray Imler. Since houses were scarce, Gladys and Bill finally got a chance to share a house, Bungalow 483, on Tenth Ave., between Fourth St. and the new high school. They stayed with William D. (Bill) and Agnes Orr from Florida. A short time before their son, Arthur Clyde was born, they moved into Bungalow 436, on Ninth Ave., between Second and Fourth Streets. Clyde's birthday was February 1, 1936. Some of their neighbors were Vernon and Merle Turner. The Turners lived in Bungalow 434. Vernon had a fantastic telescope in his backyard that he built himself, and he made Bill a wood lathe that is still in use today. One of his other hobbies was flying. Vernon taught both his sons to fly. Stanley and Peggy Chapman in Bungalow 435 were also neighbors. Stanley was always working with his radios. Later on he built a great P.A. system for Bill's radio and record player. It had speakers in the bedroom, kitchen, patio, and shop. Clyde and his friends used it to create their own radio station, complete with disc jockey. Cary and Beulah Daly in Bungalow 437, Evelyn and Margaret Wade in Bungalow 438 were other friends of his. Margaret ran the magazine stand in a little building next to the post office. Later she moved it to the new Esso Club room that eventually became the library. Vincent (Binky) and Emily Fuller, who lived in Bungalow 442 were two more neighbors. Turner lived in Bungalow 471.

Bungalow 43 was one those wonderful houses on a grade that stood eleven steps off the ground. Bill had sand put under the house to make one gigantic sandbox for Clyde and his friends. Eventually he even put lights under the house so they could play at night. The first year they were there, they planted a tiny palm tree that by 1961 had grown taller than the house.

Since clothing stores for children were somewhat lacking, Gladys went into the business of selling "Klad E Z Clothes." (I'm sure that almost anyone from this era of Aruba's history can go through their mother's old button box and find Klad E Z fasteners.)

On March 24, 1937, Bill, Gladys, and Clyde left on vacation aboard the S.S. *H. M. Flagler* bound for Baytown. Their return trip scheduled for May 22, 1937. Once she was back in Aruba, Gladys began growing and selling pine tree seedlings. There were seedlings in coffee cans everywhere. (It could be truthfully said that half the pine trees grown in the colony started out on their back porch.)

Bill was good with animals. He had a trained monkey that liked to sit on his shoulder and fish things out of Bill's shirt pocket. He also made friends with an iguana that liked to sit on the trellis over the gate and wait to be fed.

In 1938 Gladys's sister, Alta Neal, spent six months in Aruba visiting the Millers. Everyone was celebrating Queen Wilhelmina's 40th Jubilee while she was there. During the time of the celebration, most of the buildings were decorated with orange banners in honor of the House of Orange. [1]

In February 1940, Bill was made an assistant operator and worked at that level until July 1940, when he was promoted to operator.

At the start of World War II, all people of German descent were forced to leave the Island. They were transported in the dead of night to Bonaire where they were interred until after the war. Gladys told the story of being awakened in the night to crying, and shouts of "Please don't take me away" as they loaded some of her neighbors into trucks.

With Gladys expecting her second child, she and Clyde left Aruba on June 18, 1941, aboard the S.S. *F. M. Bedford* bound for New York. On August 25, 1941, the Miller's daughter, Billie Sue, was born in Baytown. Mother and children were not able to return to Aruba until November 1943. (I remember going to the house about dusk and being told we couldn't turn on the lights because of the blackout. I also remember seeing car lights painted black with just a slit of light, one centimeter wide by three centimeters long. The vehicles were also

[1] *Queen Wilhelmina's father, William III, died in 1890 when she was ten years old. Her mother, Emma, ruled in her place until 1898. Wilhelmina was crowned Queen of the Netherlands at 18, and she served until 1948 when she abdicated the throne in favor of her daughter, Juliana.*

marked by two red-lenses on the back and one on the front.)

On February 16, 1942, Bill was working the graveyard shift on Units Five and Six. In his nightly report he made the following entry: "Down for cleaning and tar line changes. The entire refinery down in about one hour. Submarine attacked at 1:30 a.m. Lasted until 2:11 a.m. Started circulating down at 3:15 a.m. Two ships sunk about 2:00 a.m. One at 6:00 a.m. Shelled power house for about 20 minutes with machine gun and 1-1/2 inch shells. Fire from ships too bad, unable to continue..."

On October 22, 1942, Bill again registered with the Selective Service. He was classified III-B until further notice, which meant he had already served, but could be called up in the event of a national emergency.

In 1945 the Millers moved one street over to Bungalow 413, on Eight Avenue between Second and Fourth Streets. Some of their neighbors were Lloyd and Esther Monroe in Bungalow 411. Broed and Emma Dell Cross in Bungalow 412, Fred and Vera Eaton in Bungalow 416, and Mr. and Mrs. (Chick) Casteel in Bungalow 197. One of Bill's first projects was building a concrete block fence and patio. He and Clyde were always mixing cement and making lattice blocks one-at-a-time. Bill also worked often in his woodwork shop, making gates and patio furniture.

Gladys took Spanish lessons and played "42" with Wilbur and Georgia Self of Bungalow 194. (Wilbur retired in 1949 and returned to Baytown.) In those days Gladys and Georgia would get together to pick almonds, and they often picked sea grapes for sea grape jelly. Agnes Orr made Guava jelly from the tree in her yard.

On June 13, 1945, Bill, Gladys, and children made their first trip by airplane. They flew KLM, to Miami, and they were scheduled to return August 20, 1945. Included in their travel documents was a shoe ration letter. In Texas Bill bought a 1942 Studebaker to take back to Aruba. To enable them to drive it to Miami, their friends and relatives donated gas ration coupons. At noon on August 15, 1945, they were passing through Biloxi, Mississippi when people just suddenly started pouring out of stores, buildings, and houses. They yelled and threw scraps of paper into the air like confetti. Traffic came to a standstill, and Bill leaned out the window and asked what was happening. "The Japanese have surrendered!" They were told. The Millers finally reached their destination, Miami's Columbus Hotel on Biscayne Boulevard.

Bill and Clyde spent most of their 1946 local leave camping out at Boca Mahos. They improved their campsite until they had all the comforts of home; a rock barbecue pit, and a swing tethered to a treetop. That was also the year that Bill helped Clyde build his first boat. Built from scrap lumber and just big enough for one person they paddled it around the Little Lagoon.

A fond memory of this time is walking to the club (this club was across the street from the commissary, and it was in the middle of the colony.} to go to the movie. He remembers sitting in the rows of canvas-backed directors' chairs and looking up a star-filled sky. Unless, of course, it began to rain. A mad dash to get under the eaves of the building was often followed by the realization that you forgot to bring your chair to keep it from getting wet.

The Esso Club Fair in December of 1948 was a big event for the colony. The merry-go-round put together in the open area near the Girl Scout House. Clyde won a prize of fls. $25 for a poster he had entered in the fair's contest. Horses were bolted onto the merry-go-round, and the flying swings were assembled near the Boy Scout House. (The flying swings were my favorite until one of them came apart one night. David Massey went flying off, hit the Boy Scout House, and broke his arm.) Inside the open area where films were shown, several booths were set up. Bill Koopman had a booth where he made spoons from two Dutch silver ten-cent pieces. One coin was used to form the bowl of the spoon and the other decorated its silver wire handle. Clocks were sold in one, and I think everybody bought one. A glassblower had a booth, and the electric company's Redi Killowatt occupied yet another. Teenage girls operated a wheel of fortune game outside to raise money for a good cause. Their prize was a free six-ounce bottle of Coke. It usually ended up costing you more to win the Coke than if you bought one outright at the inside soda bar.

Gladys and children went to New York aboard the S/S *Esso Aruba* on June 10, 1949. The other passengers included Mrs. Wease and her children; and a couple who were retiring from Aruba. Bill left on August 26 of that same year and joined them in Texas. The Millers and the Weases ran into each other again in New York at the Abbey Hotel, and they returned to Aruba together on October 16. (Billie Sue always wondered why vacations seemed to last so long. Her most frequently asked question of the summer was, "When are we going home?" Adults who grew up elsewhere really didn't seem to understand the bond their children had with Aruba.}

Gladys was in the village Christmas shopping in November, and as she exited the Aruba Trading Company, she was hit by two Dutch policemen in a jeep. When it began to rain, they drove under the awning to get out of the shower, crushing her leg in the process. She didn't lose it, but she did spend considerable time on crutches.

Just before Christmas, Bill became eligible for Bungalow 412. Clyde moving their fully decorated Christmas tree was sight to see.

The Crosses were gone by then, and the Casteel's had retired. There were some new neighbors - The Gongrieps of Bungalow 413, G.G. and Peggy Corrington of Bungalow 197, and Jim and Margaret Farris of Bungalow 195 were new neighbors.

Since she was a young girl, Gladys had a natural talent for cutting and styling hair. When the "Toni Home Permanent" came into use after the war, she was able to show her skill. (You can't imagine what it's like to wake up in the morning in a bedroom full of ladies and the pungent odor of permanent wave solution. A body will get out of bed and leave the house as quick as a bunny.)

Clyde was fourteen and was itching for his own motorboat in 1950. It all sounded simple enough. For $100 you could buy a boat kit that you could put together yourself. Bill and Clyde began to assemble the thing in Bill's shop. Two days of hard work passed before they became aware there was no way to get the completely assembled kit out of the shop. Much to Gladys' dismay they moved the whole mess into the patio. It finally got launched the first part of 1951. As if to prove that fathers really do enjoy their children's toys as much as their kids do, Bill bought Clyde a five horsepower motor for the boat because he thought it was all he could handle at his age. One spin around the Big Lagoon convinced Bill to trade it off for a more powerful seven-and-a-half horse motor. Bill still got sea sick, so he bought a 10 horse motor for Clyde's birthday. He claimed it rode the waves better.

Halloween and Christmas also bring back memories. On the evening of October 31, 1950, a kids' Halloween party was held at the Jr. Esso Club. Billie Sue won second prize for her "Tottering Grandmother" costume. There was also a Halloween dance at the Esso Club for the High School students that night. Santa Claus arrived at the Jr. Esso Club and gave each child a box of card games. (Who was Santa Claus?) Billie Sue's Donald Duck bicycle invaded the colony that year. Bill found it at that unique store in the village known as "Pete the Greek's." We mustn't forget the Valentine's Day parties at school and the annual Poppy Day Poster Contest held in April or May to advertise the

American Legion's poppy sale.

The next year there was an afternoon Halloween costume contest at the elementary school. Mrs. Mingus and one of the Catholic priests were among the judges. The parade was held on the playground and many mothers were there to watch. Billie Sue won first prize for her "Sunflower" costume. The school Halloween costume contest first prize was won by Dick Burson (Class of 1959). His pirate costume was complete with live, talking green parrot.

Bill worked as the temporary fire chief in the summer of 1953. On the Fourth of July he drove one of the parade's fire engines. You could hardly see the fire engine for all the teenagers riding it. That summer Billie belonged to the "Wheel and Saddle Club," a bicycle safety program sponsored by the Lago Police Department.

On July I9, 1953, Gladys and children went to New York aboard the S/S *Esso Aruba*. Other shipmates during their vacation trip included Dorothy Ammann, Babs, Lonnie, and a family of visitors leaving the island.

The visitors were quite upset. They failed to get the cabin they requested, and they were not seated at the captain's table. For the first time, Billie Sue realized that the Lago system of allocation by seniority and position was not necessarily universal.

The steward was the same one that Gladys had sailed with in 1935. He and Gladys had some amusing stories to tell about the rough trip they had shared. They were the only two that never missed a meal that trip.

While they were on the way to New York, the longshoremen went on strike. The crew honored their picket lines and shut down the galley among other things. The steward, who was making his last trip before retirement, served cold cuts and simple dishes he could prepare himself. Some of us kids pitched in, helping to prepare vegetables and set the tables.

Things were a little tense before the ship docked at an out of the way pier on the East River. A couple of taxies were the only signs of life. In New York, we stayed at the Abbey Hotel, 151 W. 51st Street.

The teenage boys who innocently hitched a ride with Mr. Brook on Halloween Day were a source of aggravation to him. After they jumped off the back of his police truck, he found they had damaged his radio antenna and he was unable to summon help to catch them. He saw how they raced down the sidewalk to the canteen, making sure to jump noisily

on each steel plate that covered the pipelines. At the back door of the canteen, Mr. Brook's first question was, "Okay, which way did Russell go?"

I don't think he was too happy when all we could say was, "Russell? Russell who?"

The seventh and eight grade Mother's Committee held a square-dance/couple dance for the kids at the picnic grounds November 14. Spin the bottle and kissing behind the barbecue pit were two prevalent games during the dance.

There was a New Year's Eve dance at the American Legion Hall for all high school students, and an adult dance at the Esso Club. This was the first tine in many years Bill didn't work on New Year's. It was his habit to help blow the plant's whistles at midnight.

Swimming at the beach was a short-lived although widely observed fad for those who celebrated Christmas and New Year's Day of 1954.

If Clyde wasn't at the lagoon working on his boat, he could usually be found messing around with his car. When Bill started working straight days and got a scooter to ride, he had given Clyde his 1937 Ford work car. Clyde cut the back of it cut off to make it into a hot-rod. A job delivering the Pan Aruban on Saturday mornings was necessary to support his two hobbies. By the time Clyde finally got his driver's license on February 1, he had a magazine delivery job with Margaret Wade. Saturday mornings were also times to earn money washing cars. Dean Thompson, the school superintendent, was one of his regular customers.

During March and April Clyde, David Massey, Danny Brewer, and some of his other friends headed for the tank farm behind the high school to try out their latest creation in kites.

The Youth Canteen house opened on Saturday, April 27, with a dedication ceremony at 7:00 p.m. A dance after the movie followed.

Mrs. Mingus donated a big, white ottoman for the Canteen; someone made curtains of rainbow striped material. Bill, Clyde, and other fathers and sons made furniture for the patio. Some of the girls with artistic abilities painted boys and girls on the rest room doors to indicate which was for whom. The patio floor was green cement and the house and fence around the patio was painted green to match. Inside there was a snack bar, shuffle board, Ping-Pong table, and tables and chairs for cards, checkers, chess, backgammon, and just plain "hanging

out."

In the spring of 1954 Bill was on vacation in Europe. By the time he got back, the summer activities program was in full swing. It consisted of swimming lessons at Rodger's Beach, arts and crafts classes at the elementary school. Arts and Crafts classes were facilitated by a man who had lived in Aruba as a boy. He said his house had been in the spot where the children's Sunday school patio now stands. There were tennis lessons at the new courts, archery at Lone Palm Stadium, miniature golf and games at the Jr. Esso Club. Peggy Corrington and Gladys gave teenage girls sewing lessons at the high school.

The summer of 1954 often found Clyde and his friends at the Millers with Denny Jones cooking split-pea soup. That boy did like to cook! Frequently the whole bunch went camping near the picnic grounds. For a conclusion to the summer, the tennis instructor took her charges camping at Sea Grape Grove. Mr. Downey and some of the older Boy Scouts went along as chaperones. Bill and Clyde helped Mr. Downey and the Scouts haul driftwood from the beach to make a campfire. After supper we sang songs and told stories.

A typical school day in the Miller household was started at 7:00 a.m. by the blare of their clock radio. The station began their morning broadcast with the sound of a rooster crowing followed by the recording of "Good Morning" from the movie "Singing in the Rain."

Since the colony was such a multi-cultural community, Gladys had long ago adopted the custom of 4:00 p.m. coffee. Their patio seemed to be a gathering place for teachers after school. Some of the more frequent visitors were fourth grade teacher Helen Busboom. Helen later married Jack Eder, a photography buff with his own darkroom. Others were Mildred Wightwood of the fifth grade, Lorraine Lupold of the fourth grade, and Laura Henniger, a high school teacher.

On Bill's birthday, September 16, 1954, they offered him a two-year position in Santos, Brazil. Since he only had one year before retirement, the job sounded good. To make it more enticing they gave him a year's leave of absence with pay.

Two hundred and five employees with 25 or more years of service were presented gold watches as a company expression of gratitude in November, and Bill was among them. Men from his unit gave him a gold band to go with his watch.

After several delays, the Millers finally departed on December 6, 1954. Bill had been on the Island a few days short of twenty-five years,

and he had been working for the company thirty-four years.

Bill went to work for Hydrocarbon Research in Brazil, and worked there until the job's completion at the end of December 1956. Many Aruba friends ended up in Brazil. Horace and Phyllis Semmens with their three children, Tracy, Barry, and Candy, were a tremendous help to us getting settled. After the first of the year Eugene "Brownie" and Harriett Kimler retired from Aruba and came down to Santos. (Brownie and Harriett Kimler had worked in Tampico, Mexico in 1936 before the government there began to require that more nationals work in operator positions.) Mr. Jamison also came down after the first of the year. Mr. Malcolm and Harold Locker were there on loan. Eugene and Gladys Work were on another job for Hydrocarbon Research in Rio de Janeiro. Louis G. Harris retired from Aruba and went to work in Manaus, Brazil. During the two years there were also visits from Elizabeth Johnson, Barbara Malcolm, Lorraine Lupold, Eula Locker and their three children.

Gladys and children returned to Baytown on September 1, 1956, so that Billie Sue could start school. Bill got there on January 2, 1957. On Bill's plane from Miami, on his way back to college, was Butch Hudson. Bill and Clyde spent most of their time in Texas repairing rent houses. Eventually the whole family began building a home of their own.

To comply with doctor's orders to walk more, Bill went to work part-time for one of the few remaining independent drillers. On February 28, 1970, while walking in the oil field, Bill died of a heart attack. Gladys died June 5, 1982, of natural causes.

Story as told by his daughter, Billie Sue Lewis.

The Lloyd & Esther Monroe Story

I was born August 15, 1917 in Pleasantville, Pennsylvania. My wife's name is Esther G. Monroe, born March 15, 1919 in Louisville, Kentucky.

We're western Pennsylvanians, although Esther was born in Kentucky and grew up in West Virginia. Her dad was a minister. My Dad was a driller/producer in the much worked-over Pennsylvania oil field, just a few miles from where Col. Drake started it all. I worked summers as dad's tool dresser during high school and college. Esther and I were high school sweethearts, and both attended Grove City College in Western Pennsylvania. I was on the track and soccer teams and was vice president of the senior class. We were both in one drama club production, playing opposite each other. We were married in June 1940 after my graduation. I went to work, as a student-engineer, for Standard Oil of New Jersey at the Bayway Refinery in New Jersey on July 1, 1940 - 5 days after the wedding. I knew Ira Kirkman and George Cunningham at Bayway; they gave me the low-down on Aruba when I was debating going.

We sold the furniture, packed up and transferred to Aruba November 24, 1945. We got on our very first airplane ride, a DC-3 to Miami. We went from Miami to Aruba via a KLM DC-3. We arrived there on Sunday November 25, 1945. We had three children, Larry 4, Rich 3, and Doug 4 months and we had our hands full. In Miami some helpful soul put our "KLM" hand bags on a hand truck that proved to be carrying the luggage being transferred to flight going to Caracas. Among the essentials winging their way to Venezuela was the baby's formula, with Doug hollering for his 4 o'clock feeding. It being Sunday, there were no stores open in Aruba. No one was at the Aruba Airport to meet us. Information received by the Lago Personnel Department indicated we were due to arrive on Monday. Deo DePalm, bless him, just happened to stop by the Airport. He thought someone might be on the plane. He brought us to Lago Colony, tried to locate some “Klim” for the baby formula. He managed to get us into one of the Bachelor Quarters. (Bungalow 411 wasn't ready for us until two weeks later.) He also found Tink and John Cahill who came to our rescue with formula fixings and a warm welcome. We began to discover how people there really went out of their way to make newcomers feel welcomed. By the way did it ever occur to you how <u>dead</u> and deserted the streets of the Colony could be on

a Sunday afternoon?

We had celebrated Franklin D. Roosevelt's early Thanksgiving in a restaurant in Cranford, New Jersey before going to Aruba. We celebrated the traditional one after arriving in Aruba in the Lago Mess Hall, and the outlook for Christmas was bleak. The only other recollection of that first night in Aruba was our first encounter with those HUGE cockroaches in the Bachelor Quarters kitchen. By the end of the first week in the Bachelor Quarters the kids were all sunburned from daily treks to the Mess Hall. They had also developed heat rash.

We were just ahead of the post-war influx so we got a house, whereas many got stuck in the "barracks" out at Colorado Point. We only experienced that briefly later on as a "paint house" location.

Then we got moved into Bungalow 411 where we lived for the next 15 years. Esther began learning to cope with the kerosene stove, and we had gotten a "maid." The week before Christmas our household goods arrived and the "maid" promptly quit. Fortunately the Christmas trees arrived on time and with the novelty of swimming at the Baby Lagoon on Christmas day we did celebrate--and decided to stay. However I said to myself: "But, so help me, for no more than 2 years."

Recollections of the inevitable adjustment problems have dimmed in the intervening years. Eventually we brought Josephine over from Nevis; she was our maid for over 20 years. The heat rash problem persisted until, many bottles of Calamine lotion later. Also a little creative plumbing under the house to get fresh water in one of the showers helped solve that problem. We finally concluded that the brackish water previously flowing from the shower aggravated the rash problem.

Initially our neighbors were the Ralph Denton family (John and Nancy Denton lived there later after Larry and Patsy Engleking and on the other side Broed and Emma Cross followed by Bill and Gladys Miller and the Touchstones--lots of turnover. Behind us was Jim Osborn, down on the corner was Oliver Forbes, up across the street were Jim and Margaret Farris, and on up the street were the Eatons, Schoonmakers, and Rosboroughs. Chief Brook was nearby at "five-corners."

I transferred from Bayway to Lago in 1945 as Process Engineer in the Technical Services Department. In 1951 I transferred to the Process Department as technical assistant in Catalytic & Light Ends Department. Later I became the Process Foreman and Assistant Division

Superintendent in the C. & L. E., then the Acid & Edeleanu Plants, then the Receiving & Shipping Department and then the Utilities Department. The last position I held was that of Division Superintendent (replacing Bill Ewart) in the Utilities Department. Then I spent a year in the Mechanical Department during reorganization. I had by then turned down two transfer "opportunities" and the skids were greased, so I opted for an early retirement, at age 50, in 1967 and came back to the States.

The fun went out of it in the later years as Lago had to cut costs to stay competitive. Those later years were less pleasant, as we pared the payroll from something over 8000 to less than 2000. There were fewer than 100 foreign staff there when we left. Competitive pressures in the oil industry had forced a hard-nosed approach. New management people circulated through the ranks and old faces disappeared. New friends replaced old ones, but the halcyon days were gone forever. As we reduced forces and cut services I think we were all a bit surprised at how much leaner we could operate. It was difficult to see people go, but I think that in the process of reducing the number of men in the organization the minimum of hardship was created for those involved.

Our John had to go to the States for his last two years of high school. We left shortly afterwards, when Bill was ready for junior high school.

I went to work for Bechtel in San Francisco, did a little consulting work after getting my California engineering license, then "hung it up" for good in 1976. My life story--somehow, in retrospect, less impressive than once dreaded of, but with no regrets and with overall good feelings about Lago and Exxon in general.

CAVES

Those caves in the colony were known to our kids as the Burson Caves but I'm not sure why. The younger generation can probably supply you with more tales about those and the phosphate mines. However, I believe Jack Opdyke was the resident spelunker of our time. The only thing I remember about the "bat caves" was the smell. It was there I identified the strange taste found in vegetables from the Chinese gardens at Fontein.

RAINFALL

From a government report (October 1929 - December 1962)
(figures are in inches)

Minimum monthly - NIL on several occasions
Maximum monthly 14.66 - in November of 1955

Overall annual average - 18.82
Minimum annual 7.73 - in 1930
Maximum annual 44.16 - in 1950

WEDDINGS

We remember a Moslem wedding at Lago Heights of one of my employees in the Technical Services Department to which Esther and I were invited. The bride, a Venezuelan girl, had to first renounce her Christian faith and embrace the Moslem faith as part of the ceremony. It was performed by the Moslem leader at his home. He was one of the power house operators, named Saed I think.

CRAWLING THINGS

Lizards, Iguanas, Land Crabs of course were mostly fun things, especially for the kids. Not so the scorpions and centipedes. I didn't believe the centipede stories until I saw a huge one preserved in a bottle. Esther can attest to what they can do. A small one, about 3 inches long, landed on her arm one night at a wiener roast under the sea grape trees and left marks like a surgeons stitches. I encountered a scorpion one day when I pulled on an old pair of pants I had left hanging in the garage. That was not the only time I got stung but the most memorable.

THE PITCH PILE

This was the sandy beach area that was laid out along the north side of the island opposite the cliffs and the Golf Course Club House. Bull dozers scraped up the sand into dikes around the area. Low and high melt pitch was pumped out from the Pitch Stills during the war when the fuel products had to be produced but there was no market for the heavy ends. The high melt, was injected into a 6" pipe line through which a stream of water was pumped. In the water the pitch formed chunks that wound up in the pitch pile. The low melt went out hot to form the pitch lake inside the dikes.

I don't know how deep that lake is, but I remember getting stuck there one night in Bill Beatty's car. The church's Young Couples Club had a treasure hunt and one note was in the old shack down there. We drove onto the lake but tarried too long. The car settled just enough so that it wouldn't budge. As the wheels spun, it settled deeper. Fortunately we found some boards, jacked up each back wheel, put a board under it and got away.

WHITE RATTLESNAKES

We saw one while on a picnic with Dr. Woodard and his family. The next one we saw was in the San Diego Zoo labeled "Rare White Rattlesnake from Aruba, N. A." A guy in the Technical Services

Department, whose name I can't remember, used to trap them to send to zoos.

LAGO COMMUNITY CHURCH

Esther's scrap book turns up a clipping from either an anniversary service or from information sent out when we were looking for a new minister:

"The Lago Community Church, located on Aruba (123 degrees north latitude, bisected by the 70th meridian), with the Reverend Donald R. Evans as minister since 1948, has 312 church members and 300 church school members. The first permanent church organization, formed in 1929 was basically a Sunday school. The school met in George Wilkins home at one time. Later it was supplemented with church services in the old Dining Hall and was led by Jack Emery who was a carpenter foreman.

In 1934 the Reverend Paul W. Rischell, of Norwood, Massachusetts was called as the first minister. The first and present church building was donated by Lago and dedicated in 1939. Many of the furnishings supplied by members at that time are the same as exist today. The Reverend W. D. Bigart (1940 to 1943) guided the church during the worst of the war years. The Reverend Percy V. Dawe (1944 to 1948) promoted the construction of patios for the primary church Sunday school. The Women's Guild request for a church kitchen and an outdoor terrace overlooking the Caribbean toward Venezuela was realized in 1948. With the construction of the large patio east of the church in 1955, the entire Church School was reorganized at their Church." After Don Evans left, he was followed by Joseph Q. Wayne and then Anthony Van Den Doel, but I don't remember the years of their ministries or who replaced Tony after we left. Two notable interim ministers or vacation replacements were Murdo MacDonald and Ed Hunt. Murdo married Betty Russell who was the daughter of Captain Russell of the Lake Tanker Fleet. Murdo had been here with the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders during the war. He came back after the war for a visit and to fill our pulpit for one summer. We visited Murdo and Betty in Scotland in April of 1981. Murdo was the head of the Department of Theology at the University of Glasgow.

TUG AGROUND

I don't know what tanker was involved, but the tug was the Captain Rodger. Our maid insisted that the people from Saba never tolerate losing a ship that way and that, if they got all the Sabanes together, and provided enough rum, they'd get it off the rocks and back at sea.

CHIVAREES

I only recall the one for Al and Comir Kossuth. They spent their wedding night in Jim and Kinta Osborn's house behind us. After they thought festivities were over they discovered that alarm clocks had been hidden all over the house to go off at intervals all night.

GOLF & WATER SPORTS

I wonder if anyone ever took Roy up on his bet that he could beat anybody in the club in a round of golf using only his putter?

Some of the favorite memories shared by our family of Aruba concerns water sports. This includes swimming, snorkeling, water skiing, etc.

LAGO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

I remember very little about it except for an incident when I was presiding at one of its meetings in the Esso Club. A motion was introduced that a strong letter of protest be sent to the island government against their proposal to legalize prostitution. Most people kept their views to themselves, but there were enough bachelors and other well-meaning folk who thought the government action justified from a health protection standpoint. As chairman I didn't cast a vote. Wouldn't you know-- it was a tie and I had to break it.

MAIDS

We went through several until we sent airfare to the sister of Reverend Dawes' maid to come from Nevis to work for us. Josephine was with us for almost 20 years and worked for Gene and Laura Goley after we left. We still keep in touch with her although she is no longer able to work.

One of the early candidates we will well remember: Esther found her one day taking a spoonful of kerosene with Tabasco sauce in it because her stomach was upset.

BASEBALL

Lago Colony had a team in an island league one year. With Joe Proterra pitching and a couple of buys with Class A experience the scores tended to be one-sided. Bill Eagan was playing 1st base, George Janson on 3rd I believe, Wes Walker at short, Walt Spitzer in center field and I was in right field. A guy on the local team got trapped in a rundown between 2nd and 3rd. He tried to get out of it by ramming Wes Walker headfirst in the stomach. In the ensuing melee the fans emptied the stands, picking up baseball bats if they could (we had no fans).

Calmer heads prevailed but we retired from the field--and the league.

In later years we had a colony team sponsored by Woolsey Paint, but by then the caliber of baseball on the island was far different and we were on the losing end.

SOFTBALL

The departmental teams were a source of much entertainment and good exercise for many years. The time came however when some departments had difficulty fielding a team and for a year or two we had pickup teams and welcomed anyone who wanted to play and the coaches tried to give everybody a chance. One night Eddie McCoart told one of his subs to take so-and-so's place in right field. When the sub said "Where's right field?" I thought Eddie was going to swallow his cigar. Maybe that's why the format changed back again, with departments combining as necessary. The High School also fielded a team.

The softball league shares a big part of our memories. This became especially true after our sons got in High School and played along with us. Esther always was (and still is) an avid baseball fan.

BRACKISH WATER

The main well was the Mangel Cora well, a tunnel running between the Baby Lagoon and the Seroe Colorado Light House. I don't remember the other well. Fresh water was injected to control salt content to under 35 grains per gallon, which someone had determined was the limit for plant life. However, it did not prevent heat rash, so many covertly converted their showers to fresh water. On the other hand, one guy insisted a Scotch and water was much better with brackish than fresh water. With the proportions he used I don't think it made much difference.

JIMMY ARMSTRONG

A lovable guy; the only one I ever knew who could swear like a pirate in almost any company and never seem to offend anyone.

It is difficult to talk about all the colorful characters that added spice to life in Aruba. Naming names or even repeating stories without names might cause hurt or embarrassment--except for real short-timers like the guy that buzzed the tankers in the harbor with a flying club plane, damaged his propeller on landing, sawed off both ends of the prop and took off again. I believe he left on the next flight out. Then there were those whose quiet influence made Aruba a pleasant place to live--I think of Glenn Hendrickson, Fred Eaton, and Earl Carroll to name a few.

SHOWS

Esther's scrap book turns up more stuff. "The Cotton Blossom Minstrels" in March of 1955. Put on by the Esso Club Board of Governors; Gene Keesler, Director of Activities; show written and produced by Ev Biddle; with Dr. Russell Carrell as Interlocutor, Vic Schultz as Master of Ceremonies, Jan Koulman's orchestra, and dozens of other talented people.

And then there was the show, March 5th and 6th, 1958. The title was "Hoop Skirts and Bustles." Ev Biddle assembled cast, costumes and comics. The Nineties was with us in song, instrumentation, antics and dance. The Gay Nineties chorus alone contained 41 voices directed by Jan Koulman. We even had the high kicks of leggy Can-Can girls. (They were Ann Orr, Jessie Wimmers, Eileen Hochstuhl, Barbara Malcolm, Beatrice Hayes, and Dean Thompson, Eileen Turner, Angelina Smit, Leo Echteld, Emalie Janson, John Stritch, Dottie Lisot, Jim and Joyce Quitter, Bill Hochstuhl and Jake Freundel, Val Learned, Dot Joseph and Pat Bergfield, with Carolyn Vint at the piano.

Among our fondest memories are Doris Thompson's incomparable annual Community Christmas Choir programs. We have tapes of all of those recorded. Doris deserves special mention for her contribution to the life of the community.

COMMUNITY BAND

This was another major accomplishment of talented people in our community. Jan Koulman was the director and it was surprising to see those of our fellow workers who participated in this community activity.

CAR REPAIR

A pastime for many of us, though not a favorite one, was keeping our car running and often an old dilapidated work car as well, because it was easier than finding a garage you could count on.

BARBECUES

The Golf Club Barbecues were big events. The kids had more fun chasing donkeys on the golf course than eating. Which reminds me you can probably get some interesting stories of escapades from the younger generation that we know little of--such as chasing rabbits with cars on the golf course late at night, diving off Colorado Point, catching sharks at Boca Mahos (it took weeks to get the smell out of my car after Larry brought that sharks head home in the trunk), close calls swimming in the surf on north coast beaches, etc. [2]

ESSO CLUB ACTIVITIES

Club activities were too numerous to mention--bridge, golf, tennis, etc. Our extended "Aruba family" helped us through the Holidays. We helped each other bear up under the absence of relatives.

[2] *Actually we didn't find any in pop's files that were readily available for shoe-horning into this book. Maybe in a sequel. I was hoping to find just that in here. It would make a nice memory book all in one place.*

The Malcolm G. Murray, Jr. Story

My name is Malcolm G. Murray. Before entering the Army in 1955 I answered to "Mac". Everyone was called Mac in the Army so since that time I have answered to "Malcolm." I was born in 1930 in Hinsdale, Illinois. I attended grade school in Ellwood City, Pennsylvania and in Stuart, Florida. I attended High School in Tucson, Arizona and Ellwood City, Pennsylvania. I was the Assistant Editor of the High School Yearbook and graduated in 1948.

I attended Duke University in Durham, North Carolina. I graduated with a B. S. degree in Mechanical Engineering in 1952. While there I was a Feature Editor of Duke Engineering Magazine. I later attended Stanford University, Stanford, California. In 1961 I graduated with a M.S. degree in Mechanical Engineering.

GOING TO ARUBA

I first traveled to Aruba via a KLM Airline DC-4 airplane from Miami, Florida. It was a 6 hour flight and was bumpy over Jamaica. At the airport there I saw a 1930 LaSalle touring car being used as a Taxi. Had no time to take a ride in it. It was hot while we were at Camaguey, Cuba. I arrived in Aruba June 14, 1952 where I was met by Rudy Janecek. All of my travels to and from Aruba were by air. Never traveled on a ship.

ARMY SERVICE

I was 22 years old and a bachelor, just fresh out of college when I arrived. I was assigned to Bachelor's Quarter Number 2 where I lived for two years. From there I moved in with Bob Townsend in Bungalow # 249 (I think). Bob married Frank Berto's sister, Edna, several months later and moved out. A few months after that I moved out to the Army where I spent the next two years.

BACK TO ARUBA

After I got out of the Army I lived in a succession of three room bungalows. I had to keep moving so they could dismantle them. In January of 1967 Consuelo and I were married and we moved into bungalow 267. We lived there until our final departure in 1972.

ASSIGNMENTS

My first assignment in Aruba was to the Equipment Inspection Department. I rotated through various training assignments for a year and a half. I ended up as a project and design engineer. I worked on

various building and refinery construction and plant modification projects. I also did many air conditioning and refrigeration projects and powerhouse work. I became a machinery maintenance engineer in a new section headed by Charles Miannay. In 1971 I returned to project engineering specializing in machinery aspects of projects. I also did a lot of work improving machinery grouting and alignment equipment and procedures.

EXPERIENCES IN THE COLONY

The traditional 4th of July Parades were discontinued in the late 60's. Our regular 4th of July picnics and fireworks continued longer. British subjects attended our picnics. Some told me they were celebrating "getting rid of those troublesome colonies in North America."

We didn't have much variety in our weather. It was mostly hot and dry, with a bit of rain in December and June. 88 degrees Fahrenheit, dry bulb, 81 degrees Fahrenheit wet bulb, 74% relative humidity were our "official" outdoor design conditions for air conditioning calculations.

The allocation of housing in the Colony was based on salary, length of service, family status and size. Bachelors lived in the Bachelor Quarters or shuttled around in vacation houses every few months. Colorado Point apartments were usually the first step for newly married couples. Some stayed there by preference. The Sea View apartments were the next housing offered. Then small bungalows and then larger. Teachers and secretaries lived in the girls dormitory, Nurses lived in the nurses homes near the hospital.

The 30-year history of the Lake Tanker Fleet was brought to a close when the S/S *Trujillo* tied up in Jacksonville, Florida that November, 1954. The Lake Tanker fleet was replaced with four large shuttle tankers. Lake fleet officers and families left. This made housing more readily available. Colorado Point and Seaview apartments were dismantled. Most bachelors moved into bungalows. Housing renovations were supposed to be done every five years but didn't always get done. Many houses were dismantled in the '60's. In the '70's new houses were built and some Aruban employees were allowed to move into Seroe Colorado (Lago Colony).

There was an old steam locomotive for the phosphate mines on the tracks up near the old phosphate pits in the early days. It was put in the phosphate pits near the hospital. The railroad used by the refinery used Brookville locomotives. It was used to haul catalyst to the Catalytic Cracking Plant. This catalyst was shipped in large heavy cardboard barrels. They were about the size of a 55 gallon oil drum. The use of

this railroad was discontinued about 1956.

BOY SCOUTS

I was never a Boy Scout myself. In 1953 I was working briefly with the field engineers in Aruba doing surveying work under Frank Parisi and C. D. Sexton. C. D. was Scoutmaster, and asked me to assist. I did so for the remainder of the year. Then I continued with Joe Anello the following year, and finally with Jim Lopez.

Other assistants during the period were Jim Maxey and Bob Townsend. Occasionally Frank Berto was an assistant.

Some of our scouts that come to mind were Norman Owen, Billy White, Donald Rosborough, Michael Proterra, Billy and Arthur MacNutt, Carl Beyer, John Thompson, David and Michael Lopez, Tim Hagerty, Phil Hemstreet, Michael Rogers, Bob Legenhausen, Jon Keller, Gary Osborn. Jon Keller caused a lot of disturbance until we found the solution. We made him the troop bugler, and had him blow the bugle to announce every event in our meeting program. He took this responsibility seriously and became a model scout. We camped out at both sea grape groves, Beaujon's Palm Grove at the other end of the island, Andicouri, Boca Prins white sand dunes, Dos Playa, and probably some other places I have forgotten. We dived for lobsters at the Malmok cliffs and cooked their tails over our fires. We hauled supplies in a company truck, hauled boys in a truck or bus, and let them walk the last five miles. We used to have trouble with boys making noise all night and keeping others awake. I solved this problem by requiring parents to sign a lengthy permission slip, in which I threatened to bring home any noisemaking boys, at any hour of the night or morning, and return them to their parents. The parents spoke to the boys. The boys were quiet after taps henceforth. I have waked up in three blankets, and been shivering with cold from penetrating sea breeze. Inside a pup tent one blanket was sufficient. I woke up once with a light shining in my eyes. Surprisingly, it came from a ship miles out at sea.

I left Aruba in March 1955, to enter the U. S. Army. I returned 2-1/2 years later, and again became an assistant scoutmaster, this time under Jack Opdyke, for about a year. During this period, Edward Gruenberg became an Eagle Scout. I then dropped out of Scouting activities, since I had joined the Flying Club, and wanted the time to engage in flying activities.

Now in 1981, I am again helping with a local troop, since our 11 year old boy, Ted, is a member.

ARUBA FISHERMEN AND SIGNAL REFLECTORS

The old time Aruba fisherman used sailing boats, and it was a treat to see them handle the sails to make these boats go where they want them to go. In the late '50's and early '60's, however fishermen stopped using sails, and began using outboard motors. Some took two motors, but many took only one. If the motor failed, the water was usually too deep to anchor. They would then drift to Panama in 17 days. By this time, all on board were usually dead. A lot of fishermen were lost this way, despite extensive searches carried on by the Dutch Navy planes, Aruba Flying Club planes, and sometimes the U. S. Coast Guard from Puerto Rico. Most boats were painted white, and were hard to see in an ocean full of whitecaps. Mauricio Croes' father was lost this way in the late '50's. I searched for him without success in a Flying Club plane.

About this time, I had become active in the Flying Club to the point of getting my pilot and instructor licenses, and was making lots of off-island flights to Curacao, Bonaire, Venezuela, the Caribbean islands, and even to Florida. All this stimulated me to study ocean survival techniques and equipment. One of the most effective devices I found, was the military signal mirror - generally a 3" x 5" glass with an aiming device permitting its effective use over approximately 20 miles range.

Jim Lopez bought four of these one time at an Army-Navy surplus military equipment store. These were purchased along with canteens, belts, folding shovels, etc. for the use of the Boy Scouts. I bought a number of these from military surplus sources, and sold them at cost to Aruba fishermen. Several subsequently had trouble, signaled for help, and were towed in. This seemed to be a good solution to the problem, but it turned out not to be, for two reasons: The surplus sources became exhausted, and new signal mirrors were too costly. The glass mirrors were fragile, corroded easily, and would sink if dropped overboard.

I started experimenting with designs, working in Howard Garig's garage, later at Aruba Engineering & Drafting in Lago Heights, eventually in an airplane hanger I bought at De Vuijst Field. I came up with a plastic "aim-able" reflector which was highly breakage and corrosion resistant, and which would float. I obtained U. S. and foreign patents on the design, and set up a "factory" in a rented building in San Nicholas, to make them in quantity. The Harbormaster, Mr. Jan Berkhout, became interested in the project and arranged for free TV time to publicize them. He, I, and Mauricio Croes put on a TV program in Dutch, English, and Papiamento, in which we explained and demonstrated the mirrors, temporarily blanking out TV transmission when I reflected too much light into the TV camera. The next day we

sold hundreds of them to fishermen. We sold them below cost, which we were able to do by a fortuitous circumstance as follows: Lago, and the Charles Martin and Saybolt Oil Inspection Companies, and U. S. Navy Oil Inspectors decided they needed a non-aim-able version of this reflector for tank gaging. I sold hundreds at a profit to the foregoing purchasers plus the Esso Fleet in New York and Creole Petroleum in Venezuela. This profit subsidized the low cost of the signal reflector sales to the fishermen.

At the same time I was writing a weekly aviation column for the Pan Aruban, Local, and Sun newspapers, and further publicized the reflector program via these media. Customers even showed up from Curacao, and itinerant yachtsmen occasionally looked me up to get them.

I used to climb to the top of Hooiberg or Yamanota and signal to Colorado and California Points to friends established there, to test various reflector designs. Sometimes I would take a plane up, tilt it on its side and signal out the window to a friend on the ground miles away. I needed about 3 or 4 hands all at once, and the plane usually made some odd looking maneuvers.

I also designed and built at this San Nicholas site several unique machinery alignment tools to solve problems encountered on my job at Lago. For the design work, I set up a surplus drafting table in a vacant room at the hospital, and went up there to work on weekends. These alignment tools proved quite successful, and I got U. S. patents on several of them. I began manufacturing them commercially in 1973, with the help of Howard Garig, in a shop in the old terminal building at Brownsville International Airport, Brownsville, Texas. In 1974, I came to work at the Exxon Chemical Company in Baytown and moved the alignment tool shop to Baytown, where I still have it. The Murray and Garig Tool Works, which has been our name since 1973, has shipped tools to 24 countries thus far. As a part-time business, it isn't very profitable, but I hope to get more active with it when I retire, and in the meantime I enjoy it a lot. [1]

Another product, which I never did much with for fear of product liability lawsuits, was a "Painless Paddle." This was made of polyethylene foam. It makes a loud bang, but doesn't hurt the victim. In Aruba, I would give it to people who wanted it then later ask them, in a loud voice, in a public place, whether they had beaten their wives lately, and if so, had the activity been successful? This limited subsequent requests for free paddles.

[1] *You can go to www.malcolmmurray.com for more about these products.*

THE ARUBA FLYING CLUB

I joined the Flying Club in 1957, shortly after returning from my Army service. I had gone on some flights with Frank Berto in the early '50's, but delayed joining since I anticipated interruption of training by army service, and wished to avoid this.

My instructor was Dougald McCormick, an ex-U. S. Navy Grumman Avenger pilot. Among my fellow students were my former boy scouts Bruce Clark and Frank Barnes. Frank later became a U. S. Navy pilot. I got my license, and proceeded with more advance training, eventually getting a Dutch instructor license and an American private pilot license with instrument rating. In 1963 I bought a Stinson 108-3, with an oversize Lycoming 190 HP military surplus engine and variable pitch propeller. I bought this plane in Arizona and flew it to Aruba.

I kept U. S. registry on it, and flew it around the island chain once a year to Puerto Rico for the F.A.A. inspection. When I got married in 1967, Consuelo and I left Aruba in this plane and flew to Puerto Rico via Curacao; Barcelona, Venezuela; Trinidad; St. Lucia; St. Kitts; and Puerto Rico. In Puerto Rico I sold the plane and we continued on to the U. S. by airline. On the way back I found it necessary to spend several more days in Puerto Rico, teaching the new owners to fly the Stinson. Consuelo's vacation was running out, so she returned to Aruba without me, and took some kidding from her friends about my not surviving the honeymoon. I followed several days later. At that time we could ride the TransCaribbean Airline between Aruba and Puerto Rico for $25 one way and $35 for a round trip.

After that, I flew for a couple more years in Club planes, then stopped, mainly due to pressure of other interests and impatience at the increasing restrictions and red tape required for flying.

Prominent members and officers during my 15 years in the Club included Ted Cole, Al Casali, Fred Redden, Dougald McCormick, Ferrow and Betty Himes, Clarence and Edna Waddell, Paul van de Voort, Bill Porritt, Howard Garig, Jeff Johnson, Bob De Goede, Bill Ewart, Barney Ellis, Max Croes, Jessie Wimmers, Margaret Touchstone, Juan Diaz (IBM), Rob Kuipers, Mary Brindle (now Mary Grove), Dave Barnes, Dr. O. A. Bijl, Eddie Luckhoo, Eddie Bernabela, Harold Oduber, Charles Miannay, Pat Heigho (U.S. Vice Consul), Clarence Rutt (Dowell-Schlumberger), Jim Harlow (ex-U.S. Navy pilot).

Albert Nichols was our resident mechanic until he died in the late '60's. Then Jan Staat had the job for a couple of years, and after that the

work was done by ALM Airline mechanics. As I understand it, the Club became inactive in the '70's, partly due to high gasoline prices and partly due to other factors such as unsubstantiated accusations of narcotic smuggling which the government used as an excuse to close DeVuijst Field.

During its most active period, the Club had 45-51 members at any given time, and four planes (not counting several privately owned planes based at the field). We had an active Flight and Ground School program trained many pilots, some of whom went on to become professionals: Jan Staat, Rob Kuipers, Jessie Wimmers, Henk Holewein, Eddie Bernabela, Roy Bergen. Flights were made as far south as French Guiana, and north as far as Canada. The safety record was generally quite good, although a few accidents occurred. The worst being the crash and fire after takeoff of the 4 place Mooney, in which two passengers were killed and the pilot, W. E. Ruiz, badly burned. The most frequently made flights were to Curacao and Bonaire, as might be expected. Many ventured into various parts of Venezuela. My favorite was to enter at Barcelona and fly south via Anaco, San Tome, and Ciudad Bolivar, past the Orinoco River and the iron mines, into the jungle strip at Canaima. This was beautiful country with spectacular mountains and waterfalls, including Angel Falls, the highest in the world. It reminded me of Yosemite without the crowds of people.

Trinidad, the island chain, and Puerto Rico were popular for those taking “local vacations.” And, of course, a few venturesome pilots went on to the U.S. and Canada. These included Fred Redden, Howard Garig, Ferrow Himes, John Wiederhold, Clarence Reutt, Ron Strong, and myself -- plus others I have forgotten.

I have fond memories of the Flying Club. My first date with Consuelo was a flying tour of the island. I served on several managing board positions over the years, and did a lot of working and arguing. Flying Club membership led to some lasting friendships (Howard Garig, in particular) and some interesting experiences.

BLURBS

- I became a registered Professional Engineer in the District of Columbia in 1957. I became a registered P. E. in Texas in 1973.
- I was a member of the Engineers Club, the Camera Club and the Flying Club.
- Jimmy Armstrong had an unusual voice. Face to face it sounded normal, but on the phone it would carry across the big drafting room

from one end to the other. He had a poison apple tree in his back yard. When the Colony Service wanted to cut it down he wouldn't let them. So they put a fence around it. The day after he retired they cut it down.

- In 1958 Ferrow Himes ran out of gas at night while ferrying a Piper Tri-Pacer to Aruba from the U. S. A. He landed in the San Juan, Puerto Rico city dump. The plane only suffered minor damage
- Some of the professors who came down to Aruba during the summer vacations at their college were: Florence Schale - - Rapid Reading, Eugene L. Grant - - Engineering Economics, Bruno Furst - - Memory Improvement.
- When I think about some of the movers and shakers in the Colony I think of Ted Cole. He was a quiet man, an architect for the Colony Service. He was President of the Flying Club and a flying instructor. He accomplished a lot without pushing too hard. We still correspond with his widow who lives in Flagstaff, Arizona. Howard Garig was another of our movers and shakers.
- In the late '60's or early '70's a hurricane blew rain from the south side through open windows. It shorted out some of our powerhouse switchgear.

The William Hughs & Marjorie Hirons Norris Story

I was born on a farm near a small town of Waltonville, Illinois, March 22, 1909. The town celebrated its centennial on June 10, 11, 12, 1992. Marjorie Hirons, a farmer's daughter, was born near Dixon, South Dakota on March 27, 1910. My father had studied law for a short while, worked as a station telegraph operator with a small railroad, and he began farming in 1899.

SCHOOLING

At age four I started school in a one room school house in the little town of Science. I attended Community High School in Waltonville. Waltonville was four miles by road and just over a mile by railroad from my house. My main mode of travel to school was on horseback, and that was because farm chores and school kept me so busy I didn't have the time to walk. Required work on the farm kept me from taking part in sports and extra curricular activities. The saddle my father gave me when I started high school was more of a necessity than a gift. He died in August 1925.

MARJORIE

Marjorie was born on a Trip County, South Dakota farm. A farm near Dixon, South Dakota was her home by the time she started school. In 1927 Marjorie graduated high school in Gregory, a town 13 miles from Dixon. After graduating from nurses training at Christian Hospital in St. Louis, Missouri, she worked in home care and took special cases in St. Louis. The terrible South Dakota drought of 1930 was instrumental in bringing her family back to live in Waltonville, Illinois. Both our families lived in Waltonville before her parents went to "help settle South Dakota."

I met Marjorie while on a vacation from Aruba. We corresponded and she described her duties in Mt. Vernon, Illinois as special nurse, her work in emergency relief, and her experiences in county visiting.

FIRST JOB EXPERIENCE

The Roxana Petroleum Corporation at Woodriver, Illinois gave me my first big job in September 1928. Tests showed I was best suited for a position with their Technical Service Division. The wage was 50 cents per hour, five cents less than a laborer earned.

For the extra five cents an hour, I worked as a laborer for six months. I was with the clean out gang, the pipe craft men, the machinists, and the brick masons.

MY NEXT JOB ASSIGNMENTS

During 1929 I was assigned to the Receiving and Shipping Department. My first job in this department was tank car valve inspection and repair. My next position was yard clerk. Yard clerks prepared manifests, drew samples for laboratory checks, and kept records of laboratory inspections, car sealing tank car valves and dome latches. They cleaned and loaded rack tracks, operated track switches, and called for switch engines. Laboratory samples I delivered by bicycle.

We loaded the tank cars on the 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. to 12:00 midnight shifts. The 4:00 p.m. to midnight shift clerk saw to it that a string of empty cars was waiting on the racks for the 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. shift.

TANK GAGING

My boss, Dave Segal, gave me blueprints to study for a tank farm and gauger position that was opening. After a three day trial period the job was mine. I was responsible for 30 tanks, 12 steam driven transfer pumps, and I had oil and sewer water separators to operate. The separators kept refinery sewer oil from entering the Mississippi River. Oil transfers averaged 20 per shift. I worked this job from June 1929 to March 1930. On March 22, I was 21 years old.

INTERVIEW FOR JOB IN ARUBA

There was an advertisement in the Woodriver News asking for experienced refinery workers to work overseas for the Pan American Petroleum Corporation. Mr. O.H. Shelton offered me a job in Aruba.

The minus 22 degree temperature we experienced during three weeks in January 1930 made his job offer look good, and I accepted. Mr. Henry Wolfe and I worked 12 hour shifts during that period.

The Shell Oil Company got 30 days notice while I went home to put in the family farm's spring crops. New York, my final stop before going to Aruba, was where I had yet another medical exam, received my passport, and signed an 18 month contract.

MY TRIP TO & ARRIVAL IN ARUBA

I arrived in New York simultaneously with the Atlantic Fleet. Bluejackets on shore leave were everywhere in New York City. Battleships loomed in the Hudson River. A group of us destined for Aruba waited 10 days for an ocean tanker.

W.L. “Bill” Legate, E.O. Fickle, John Sonnenberg, two others, and I sailed from Perth Amboy, New Jersey on the S/S *Paul H. Harwood*.

The trip seemed smooth to me, but seasickness and homesickness were prevalent. Some were cheered by the foolish promise we would pass a mail buoy where letters could be posted. Mailing letters at a mail buoy sounded foolish to me, but writing letters seemed to calm those who missed their homes.

To a landlubber like me, all that water, passing ships, flying fish, and dolphins were exciting to watch. I think a few of the others were afraid of the sea and the unknown. We arrived in Aruba May 15, 1930, seven days after departing from New Jersey.

Someone from the personnel office, Joe Getts I believe, met us at the ship and took us to the personnel office where we received our job assignments. We were taken to our living quarters. The *sheep sheds* and Bachelor Quarters One, Two, Three, and Four were filled; we were consigned to the comparative luxury of bungalows. Sixteen other men and I were placed in Bungalow 28. Our beds were narrow, hard-as-stone army cots, and the only place we had to store our belongings was under them.

It seemed some men came to Aruba, took one look the conditions, and went back on the same ship. Some became so despondent they spent most of their off work time in the bar consulting with John Barleycorn.

A month later Bachelor Quarters Five was completed; and Don Haase, John Sonnenberg and I shared a room on the second floor. I don't know anyone who stayed in the *sheep sheds*, but it was rumored that some did not want to leave them. I never was quartered in the *sheep sheds*, but Ed McCoart and others used to have big poker games there.

MY FIRST DAY IN ARUBA

I remember my first meal in the dining hall was very good, but then I thought the meals we had on the ship were okay too. A group went to a Bachelor Quarters One crap game after supper, and I got lucky. My pockets were full of those big guilder bills by 10:00 p.m. Our bungalow had a big party going full blast by the time I got there, and there was beer everywhere. The local beer was not the same as the home brew as I was accustomed to. People were sitting on my cot all evening and I couldn't sack out. About 1:00 a.m. things quieted, but someone had gotten sick and passed out on my cot, and I slept on the porch.

The next day I was assigned to work as a Fireman on Pressure Still Four. Gas Plant work for L.G. Lopez was how I finished most of my

first contract. I learned a great deal about distillation and operations in general. Along with his beautiful handwriting, his knowledge of distillation was outstanding. The construction and operation of the Podbielniac Apparatus in his small laboratory was a wonder of knowledge and patience.

One fellow told me that I would never get anywhere on the stills if I did not come to the cantinas and buy drinks for a certain person who had "influence." I didn't agree with that advice.

A SWING MAN

In Aruba, becoming a "swing man" was an ideal training period for me. I replaced men on vacation in the Gas Plant and the Cracking Plant. This exposed me to the processing of crude oil, Cracking Plants, and the manufacture of lighter hydrocarbons in the Gas Plant. My supervisors and many Lago families made my job and our lives in Aruba enjoyable, and that experience gave us the greatest and most lasting memories. We had the good fortune to experience many great and lasting friendships. The Reunions, The Aruba Chronicle, and the many Christmas Cards and letters keep these memories alive.

THE LANDING OF THE PAN AM SEAPLANE IN 1932

There was a seaplane that landed in the lagoon. The plane delivered rewound motors to replace the ones in Power House One that were ruined when the Pump Pit was flooded due to an operations error.

LAKE TANKER FIRE - 1932

One night when I was working the 4:p.m. to 12: Midnight shift there was a fire at the Lake Tanker docks. Since I was a member of the fire fighting team for that shift I hiked down there. Luckily it was just before sundown. I was on the nozzle with five others helping me with the hose. There was full line pressure on the hose when there was an explosion on the ship. My team immediately took off for safer environment. I couldn't handle the hose by myself so all I could do was "spread eagle" on top of it at ground level. If I had left the nozzle the hose would have taken on a life of its own and someone might have gotten hurt. Finally someone turned off the water pressure on the hose. In the meantime I thought I was a "goner" for sure. I reported back to the Pressure Still Unit where I was working and changed clothes. Luckily I had a change of clothes in my locker there.

THE GUN CLUB

The Gun Clubs (Skeet) were near De Vuijst Field. Shotguns were used by guards of the tank farm after World War II had started in

Europe. A number of the temporary guards later became regular employees in the refinery.

There was a rifle club in the early days when attack by a Venezuelan bandit Urbina was feared. This was in 1930. I was a member and our range was where Lone Palm Baseball field later stood. We used German Mauser rifles and fired moldy reject ammunition from the Dutch military. We had orders to hold the target for five seconds after a misfire to prevent bruised shoulders from those hangfires. At one time the bandit group did land at Curacao. They took guns and ammunition from the armory, commandeered a Red-D freighter/ passenger ship to get back to Venezuela with their loot.

THE CAVES

Most young men in the early days explored the caves below Hospital Hill and near Baby Lagoon. Creaking windmills in that area driven by the constant trade wind pumped brackish water from wells that extended down in certain areas of these caves. The windmills pumped the water for the colony in the early days.

OUR BEACHES

Almost everyone enjoyed the island's beaches. Rodger's Beach was a popular one for the children and adults alike. The "Baby Lagoon," with its shallow water and soft sand, was a favorite with the young mothers and their babies. During the early days shift workers favored the B.A. Beach after workouts in the Bachelor Quarters' boxing ring, handball, or tennis court.

DEVELOPING A UNIT SHUTDOWN PROCEDURE

Mr. G.H. Wilkin, my shift foreman, came to me with a request from Mr. J. S. Harrison, the Cracking Plant Superintendent. I was asked to make a time frame schedule for a normal Cracking Unit turnaround. The time between off and on stream was to be limited to 20 hours.

At first I wondered why I was asked to do that job. It came to me that before I left for Hydro Plant training I had taught the routine to Mr. F.W. Switzer and other young engineers on my 4:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m. shifts.

Mr. Switzer was particularly interested in the fact that the tower temperatures are critical to avoid tray upsets and other equipment damage.

When he wasn't around, Mr. Harrison was referred to as "The Major" because that was his WWII army rank. More than a few people thought he put his military organizational experience to good use in the

refinery. He took charge of the scene at all refinery fires and commanded respect when he did so.

At the time of the next normal turnaround Mr. Harrison took my outline and supervised the shutdown. The work was completed in 15 hours. I was asked about the extra five hours I had projected, and I said, "Some people drive, others lead, some are pulled along with the flow, and some do most of their own work alone."

MARJORIE ARRIVES

Twenty-six-year-old Marjorie arrived in Aruba on February 15, 1936, and we were married on March 28, 1936. I was promised a house before leaving on vacation that year. By some mysterious turn of events there was none available for us, and she stayed in the home of Irby and Evelyn Couch. This was the year when Lago Aruba became the home for many who were transferred from the Huasteca Petroleum Company in Mexico due to nationalization there. Good friends can be wonderful in your time of need. I was in Bachelor Quarters Five, and I worked the 12:00 Midnight to 8:00 a. m. shift as a Stillman on Number Five and Six Units. Stillman was the title of the Operator of a high pressure crude unit at that time.

CHIVAREES

Many tricks were pulled on newlyweds--alarm clocks under beds, bedrooms filled with shredded paper, and you name it. Chivarees were popular in the early days when wives first began to arrive in Aruba. It was almost a nightly affair for a while.

I remember ours lasted almost until daylight. We were living in Jess Norris' house while he was on vacation. We were off for 32 hours and so were the participants.

THE MEN'S FASHION SHOW APRIL 1936

The Men's Fashion Show models I remember most were Joe and Tom Malcolm, and Ev Biddle. Bob Vint also took part. It took place in April of 1947. (This was about six weeks after the Women's Club Fashion Show. It was meant to be a men's answer to the women's show). The clothing worn by the men was described in terms that women use in describing their clothing. It was cleverly done and Wayne Richey and Jack Friel, as Co-Master's of Ceremony, alternately described what we were seeing as the men appeared on stage. This event took place at our temporary Club, near the Commissary, before the New Esso Club was built below Lone Palm Stadium.

TRAINING ON THE HYDROGENATION PROCESS

The year of 1938 saw our lives take a major turn. Our vacation started with instructions that we would receive notification when to travel to the Baton Rouge refinery in Louisiana for a training assignment. World War II was looming on the horizon and military strategists urged the US government to gear up for the higher octane aircraft fuels that would be needed for the expected combat in the European theater. Spitfires and the Battle of Britain confirmed their projections.

Marjorie and I spent most my off duty at the Baton Rouge refinery putting together a booklet that outlined the critical points of the Hydrogenation process. I learned by observing the operators' procedures, listening to the supervisors, and meeting with the department head. Marjorie typed the booklet when our baby, Kay, was asleep. The original was turned over to Mr. J.C. Souder, the new department head for the Alkylation, Hydrogenation, and Polymerization Plants when they were completed. Prudently, I kept a carbon copy of it.

Our first trip by passenger ship was our return to Aruba on the Grace Lines' S/S *Santa Rosa*. While the new plants were being built I continued with my Stillman's job.

THE TRAINING DEPARTMENT PROCEDURES

The Training Department began to change the breaking-in method of preparing recruits or instructing old employees in more efficient techniques. Mr. G.N. Owen, Ray Brown, Ed O'Brien and others were very active in safety issues. I personally enjoyed teaching elements of the safety program like safe handling of volatile materials, home safety, etc. Today Marjorie and I try to attend the "55 Alive Safe Driving" courses each year.

During Hydrogenation Plant (“Hydro Plant”) training, the men in my group held little jam sessions about our points of interest and safe operations. We were aware of the Hydro Plant explosion in New Jersey's Bayonne refinery the year before. Our trainers had assured us that there was little danger as long as sufficient cooling gas to control oven temperatures was present. Cooling gas was made available by a booster system from the main hydrogen feed system. Jim French and I explained this to our students, and the point was covered in the booklet I had prepared for Mr. Souder. A Delta pressure of 250 pounds per square inch was the standard. Regular monitoring of the Delta pressure recorder was crucial. On my shift checking the pressure being recorded was the first order of business.

Coming into the shift foreman's office one day in 1946 I noticed Mr.

Souder and the others gathered around drinking coffee and appearing very upset. I made a silly observation that they must have seen a ghost, and I laughed. I was told in no uncertain words that it wasn't funny, and I was to find the cause of the rapid rise in pressure and temperature that caused an emergency shut down. I thought I knew what caused the problem, and I said so. My popularity rating dropped that day.

The Pipe Craft Foreman, Duane Walker, approached me on the unit. He asked how many men would be required to open the cooling gas system to find the blockage. Very little of the piping had been opened. Entering the control house I noticed the Delta pressure recorder read 250 lbs per square inch and drew a straight line. This indicated a cooling gas failure. I called the golf course to inform Mr. Souder that the problem had been found and with his permission I would return the unit to service. Product was going to storage by 10:00 p.m. and the unit came back on stream as I had predicted.

The above incident sharpened all of our thoughts. To avoid a similar incident in the future, specific orders were entered into the Emergency Procedure Book.

THE CATALYTIC CRACKING PLANT - 1945

The Catalytic Cracking Plant (“Cat Plant” or “Cat Cracker”) was very intriguing to me. Difficulties with it seemed to respond to my instructions every time. I was often called on to pinpoint the cause of problems, sometimes in the wee hours.

The Inspection Department found that the wall of the reactor was thinner than the minimum thickness required for safe operations, and the vessel needed replacement. The reactor was located immediately below the structure's regenerator. I suggested that the new reactor be built outboard of the main structure. The old reactor was to be left in place, giving the unit a hot catalyst storage vessel. The new reactor was constructed while the unit was in operation, and this procedure saved downtime. Another positive feature to my plan was the elimination on the cost of dismantling the old vessel. Keeping the old one for hot catalyst storage saved five to ten hours on shutdowns and startups by holding the temperature at 1100 degrees Fahrenheit during the shutdown period.

Speedy turnarounds were a specialty and many craft and operating department supervisors made this a regular practice. Some names come to my mind: Earl R. Carroll, Chester Rogers, "Plow" Huffman, G. Smit, and J. Briezin. Aruban supervisors and workmen, and a host of others made this possible. Besides getting the job done, safety was always

foremost on our list of priorities.

SOOT BLOWERS

It was a pleasure to have members of the engineering staff visit my office. Some were sent by the Operations Superintendent, G.L. MacNutt. Items of concern were the soot blowers and studded tubes of the convection sections for Units One through Eight's PetroChem Furnaces. During my last vacation, in 1963, I visited a refinery in Detroit and one in Philadelphia. In Aruba we built our furnaces and convection sections at ground level and used induction fans to pass the flue gas through the sections and back to the stack.

WARTIME

The poorly clothed and underfed French troops in Aruba early in 1940 are remembered by those of us there. When these troops were ordered to leave by the Dutch Government they were replaced by the Cameron Highlanders. The Highlanders were a decimated Scottish Regiment fresh from their evacuation from Dunkirk, France in May 1940. February 13, 1942, saw the arrival of an American Coastal Artillery Battalion. The Highlanders were ordered elsewhere on the 15th,

The German submarine, U-156, attacked at 1:30 a.m. on February 16, 1942. I worked the 4:00 p.m. to 12:00 midnight shift, came home, showered, and Marjorie and I were celebrating our sixth wedding anniversary with a late night meal when the first Lake Tanker was torpedoed. I ran out of our house, bungalow #883 and climbed to the roof to see if the explosion was in the refinery. I could see ships burning and the machine gun tracers coming our way, ricocheting from coral and tanks alike. Bullets seemed everywhere. The newly arrived American troops camped just below Hospital Hill began shooting at an unseen enemy, but they were ineffective. I saw a flash, and heard a loud blast. It later proved to be the submarine on the seaward side of the reef, beyond what we now call Skippy Island. [1]

All outside lights in the refinery went out after the first torpedo, and they stayed off for the duration of our 18 month blackout period. Our children never awakened nor did those of our neighbors, Jim and Mildred Brennan. The four of us sat and talked, shivered and fortified ourselves with wine or whatever spirits we could find until daylight came.

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[1] *This must have been when the Deck Gun of the submarine exploded when they forgot to remove the gun plug.*

MEMORIES

- Rodger's Beach got its name from Captain Robert Rodger who was the first Manager of the company Terminal operations. The tug boat that wound up on the reef near B. A. Beach was also named after Captain Rodger. The tanker, *Fisher's Hill*, went on the rocks just north of B.A. Beach April 13, 1947, and the *Captain Rodger*, the tug mastered by Captain J.B. Fernando, went to the rescue. It took a hawser from the ship and attempted to pull it free. As maximum power was exerted, the faulty hawser parted. Its loose end fouled the Captain Roger's screw and the tug went on the rocks. The tug's anchor now stands near the colony gate near B.A. Beach.

- I played some golf and wasn't too bad. At one time my handicap was down to five. Wayne Anderson and I paired up in a tournament one weekend and we both shot par. I had no bogeys or birdies at the 72nd hole.

- Rus Ewing's orchid house was quite a showplace. The little Quonset hut style marvel was built from scraps, and located between Bachelor Quarters Three and Four. He had some good helpers who scoured the island for most of his plants. Others who followed his lead were Mattie Hewlett, Vida Scott, and Jesse Reynolds. At one time orchids were fairly plentiful in the wild.

- Swimming was a year-round activity in Aruba, and until 1936, it consumed much of my time. Jim French and I used to swim for hours on end, and he was always talking about a marathon swim to Oranjestad. It did put a person in good shape; something I later had reason to be thankful for. One afternoon Marjorie and I went to B.A. Beach to sun bathe and swim. She could swim but her favorite past time was floating on an inner tube. Somehow she drifted beyond the beach's safety cable.

  I was sunning on the sand when she called for help. Immediately I dove into the undertow beyond the safety cable and swam to her. We drifted westward as I struggled to propel the inner tube toward the beach. Swimming ability learned in my boyhood days, my conditioning, and my knowledge of how to work with the undertow was a big factor in her rescue.

  The first time I had rescued a swimmer was in high school. A group of us were swimming in a small lake. It was early spring, the water was cold, and a friend developed a severe cramp. With the aid of my Boy Scout training I pulled him to shore.

- The first school building I remember was on the East end of "Bird Cage Row." This was near Dr. Reeve's dental office. Later another was built near the new hospital, east of the concrete block bowling alley. Our four children all finished grade and high school in Aruba's school system.

- Fourth of July Parades and other holiday observances were held at the Company picnic ground for a few years. There were lotteries, and I remember having two of the three numbers required in one automobile drawing.

  During one celebration at the picnic grounds we were buzzed by a plane from De Vuijst Field. This was the Aruba Flying Club Field, north and east of the Colony. The same plane, flown by Mr. Boyd Bastian, buzzed a few other gatherings that day. Boyd had made a bad landing earlier in the day and busted one end off his propeller. Undaunted by this turn of events, he sawed off the other end to match the damaged one. He was spirited out of Aruba on the first loaded tanker after he landed to refuel.

- CHILDREN:

  ·Our first daughter, Kay, born January 6, 1937, married in Aruba by Don Evans. She and husband, Larry Carlin, school teachers in San Diego, California, and we now have five grandchildren.
  ·Janet, born May 8, 1940, married Smith.
  ·David S., born June 15, 1943.
  ·Barry C., born January 31, 1946.

  All of our children were born in the Lago Hospital. They received their schooling through high School in the Lago Community Schools.

- In 1930, and perhaps long before, huge land crabs scuttled about the colony at night. These big fellows frightened night hikers and others.

- FISHING: I did very little fishing, but I remember crossing the reef with Mr. Kropke, Darlene Schlageter's father, in my small boat. We used a gap most boaters were familiar with that was traversed on outgoing waves and incoming waves. It was tricky, but challenging.

  We were fishing one day near the Lake Tankers anchored off the reef, waiting for dock space. The ships' cooks threw their table and kitchen scraps to the fish. Mr. Kropke, the one of us who was a fisherman, hooked a good size Yellow Tail and was reeling it in when a shark struck. Seeing this monster take a third of the Yellow Tail was enough to make us retreat across the reef, never to return.

There was shark fishing at Boca Mahos where the butcher shops dumped their refuse. High school boys enjoyed this, and some of their shark bones are displayed around our house to this day.

- PHOSPHATE MINES: The phosphate mines were shutdown before my arrival, but an empty engine shed below the location of the new hospital stood, smelling of steam lubricant, was removed in 1931.

- POPULAR MUSIC: Lago bands at the new Esso Club were enjoyed by all. Jan Koulman was the leader of Lago Community Band, and Don Evans, Buck Johnson and many others were among the many players.

  During the war we enjoyed the Scottish Highlanders' "taps."

  Later we enjoyed Padu Lampe, Aruba's own musical celebrity, on the radio and on the local television station.

- OUR CHURCH: George Wilkens of the High Pressure Stills was one of the strongest advocates for the construction of the Lago Community Church. I believe Jack Emery, a Carpenter, did most of his preaching in the first Lago dining hall. Ministers for the church were changed from time to time. Don Evans stayed the longest. Juris Calitis was there just before we left in 1965. Those two ministers seemed to be very influential with the Colony and local people.

- COMPANY HOUSING: The Company housing allocation system was influenced by everything and anything--your job status basis, your job rating, your relative ability, favoritism, if you gave a party with big steaks, or you name it. Of course, department head changes, vacation relief, and such things had their effect. A house was promised upon my leaving for vacation in 1936 when Marjorie and I were married. Upon my return I found I had slipped from number one on the housing list to number 20. This was an experience known to many house seekers.

- THE COMMISSARY: The first commissary was near the San Nicholas main gate. The new one was near the new high school building. Most anything could be bought there, although Viana objected to its selling cars.

  The great cranberry foul-up, the result of an erroneous triple or quadruple order by the store house, happened during 1937 I think. The dining hall served them every way imaginable and in desperation put them in ice cream. That old kid's verse about ice cream became, "You screamed, I screamed, and we all screamed about the ice

cream." The pigs and chickens had a new entree for a while.

- THE BUS SERVICE: The bus system operating from colony to commissary was a must when I arrived in Aruba. Very few cars were available then. Mario Croes was wonderful and many wives asked him to bring their orders. Marjorie asked for his services when we were staying with Mrs. Costello. This was before our car arrived. Later a delivery system was put into effect by the Commissary. We did not use that delivery system since we had a car, but I do not think it lasted too long. Not many had phones in their homes then.

  The commissary ran out of Copenhagen Snuff one time, and the men on the stills made a fuss to J.S. Harrison. At the time he was Superintendent of the High Pressure Stills Area. He was responsible for airlifting a shipment of it to the island. J.S. was a great friend of the shift workers. He sat around and watched the stills from his vantage point above Rodger's Beach.

- FIRE ON UNIT #5: A bad fire started at 11:30 p.m. one night while I was the Stillman for Units Five and Six. Hot oil began shooting from the roof section of Unit Five Cross Furnace into the Reducer Furnace and I told my assistant to contact the shift foreman, George Wilkins, and I said I would see what was happening. Fire was all about, but I guessed right and we shut down the Cross system and blocked off the furnace. The blowdown was opened and followed with a steam purge, and the 100 foot flames went out immediately. The Cross Furnace operated at 1000 pounds per square inch. Ikky Mertens and I never did call the fire department, but Harrison showed up at 11:45 p.m. and asked how we had put out the fire so quickly. I told him Mertens and I were studying emergency procedures and this happened to be one of them. He asked to see the plan and I showed him the only draft of it in my notebook.

  No books covered the subject then, but he said he would see one was started immediately. It was filled with contributions from Mertens and me, and when I retired it was about two inches thick. The General Order Book for Refinery Process may still be in use as far as I know.

- THE LAUNDRY: A few good men, including Preston Hunt, had a hand in the management of the laundry. It was popular with the wives as the men's clothing stained with tar would come back clean and pressed.

- THE SQUARE DANCE CLUB: There were many clubs in the

Colony--Bridge, cooking, sewing, language, art, and many more. We belonged to the Square Dance Club. Its callers were, Cary Daly, Georgio Gordon, Harry Gordon, Al Hellwig, Charles Smith, and on occasion, several professional callers. Herb Gregerson was the one who started us on the "New" western-style dancing.

- OUR POKER CLUB: I was a member of a Poker Club that played for small stakes, even matches. I remember the names of the members by the initials. P.P.B.M.S.N.V.F. The initials stood for Joe Proterra, Tony Proterra, Russell Brace, Joe Malcolm, Bob Schlageter, Bill Norris, Bob Vint, and Jack Friel. To me those initials stood for Poker Played by Me Seems Not Very Fruitful! Our chaplain was Edgar Jackson.
- OUR DANCES: Early dances at the old clubhouse were formal. Dinner jackets and long dresses. During World War 2 the Scottish Highlanders were colorful in their regalia.
- OUR HOSPITAL: The first hospital was built in the colony area between the dining hall and the main Colony gate. This was east of the fence that separated the refinery from the Colony. The site of Bungalow One was across the main road in the area later occupied by the Main Office Building.

  Later the new hospital was being constructed on the raised ground area to the North and East of the dining hall when it was decided that spheroid aviation gasoline tanks should be built there. At the time there was a small gauge railroad for handling heavy equipment for a refinery expansion program. New track was laid for moving the incomplete hospital structure to its ultimate location below Colorado Lighthouse hill. Nurses' quarters was constructed to the East of the hospital.
- OUR BARBERS: Barbers were often refinery workers who did barbering in their spare time. Later an Aruban barber ran a shop in the new Esso Club.
- YARDS IN THE COLONY: Peter Storey's yard was among the best. Vida Scott grew the most vegetables in her yard, and J.S. Harrison's putting green was most unusual. I had one at Bungalow 826 that I had made from beach sand sprinkled with used motor oil. The oil came from Croes' filling station in the village. I remember the company used to give free gasoline to those who used their cars on the job.
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- OUR WATER SYSTEM: It was a great relief to us when the brackish water supplied to all bungalows was discontinued. Taking a shower in fresh water was a welcomed change. Toilet water was originally salt water, later brackish water, and finally fresh water.
- THE DC-3 LANDING AT DE VUIJST FIELD - MAY '46: The DC-3 landing at De Vuijst Field was caused by pilot error. The pilot sighted the field at dusk, and flew around it several times. People saw and heard it, and some 50 cars drove to the field. They lined up on each side with their headlights pointing to the end where he should touch down and he thrilled all the bystanders by making a perfect landing. His cargo was too heavy for the pilot to take off the next day, so his plane was unloaded and its cargo was trucked, by the company, to the commercial airfield near Oranjestad. The next day he made a perfect take off from the small field, and flew to the commercial airfield near Oranjestad. The Company helped him load his cargo and continued his journey.

RADICAL EQUIPMENT CHANGES WERE MADE

This information is to show the activity we experienced during operation changes during 1964 – 1985. I was Refinery Division Superintendent in 1964 when they decided to consolidate the Refining Division Control Houses. This was the year before I retired in the 50/15 program. The consolidated control house was to be in the area south of the Hydro Plant and where No. 11 Viscosity Unit was formerly located.

Another interesting experience was the construction and startup of the N.F.A.R. This unit had eight towers. The feed stock for this unit was normal naphtha. It produced C3 and C4, C5, C6, C7, C8. These streams were used in gasoline blends and Propane for household fuel.

Mr. Don Darner and Ron Smith did an outstanding job putting the units in operation. Mr. Fred Eaton was also commended for his efforts in putting the On Stream Analyzer into operation.

During the first run, we had an operating upset. The heating tubes were discovered to be badly coked It was necessary to replace the furnace tubes affected. There was an insufficient supply of new tubes in the warehouse to do the job, and Ron Smith and I proposed to "bypass" enough of the twelve sections to make it work. Ten four inch schedule 500 valves were needed, and their cost would be between $50,000 and $100,000. Mr. W.A. Murray, the refinery manager at that time, approved the project when it was explained to him that the valves could be salvaged at the next normal turnaround. The unit came on line with two tube sections bypassed. Ron Smith and I saw that these sections were

steam and air decoked and returned to normal service without a ripple in the unit's operations.

OUR RETIREMENT PARTY - 1965

Retirement parties were abundantly popular during the 15-50 retirements Program. We missed our own as we were on a freighter bound for the Panama Canal. I asked the radio operator to call the Marine Department as we were leaving the harbor. They called the Legion Hall for me and give those assembled at the party our thanks. Almost immediately the whistles blew and flares lighted up in a never forgotten salute to us.

The freighter we were on took us through the Panama Canal and we wound up in San Diego, California. We stayed there for a year and a half and then moved to Hot Springs, Arkansas. There we built our home on the shores of Lake Hamilton some 2 miles off State Route #7 south. It was barely finished when we were off to Aruba.

AFTER RETIREMENT ASSIGNMENTS

In 1969 I returned to Aruba for Chicago Bridge to assist in the Cat Plant turnaround.

In 1970 Mr. T.R. Burton asked us to come to the Creole Petroleum Company's Amuay, Venezuela refinery for its HDS start up.[1]

In 1971 we were back in Aruba again for the start-up of the #1 HDS Unit in the Lago Refinery.

In 1972 we were back in Amuay Bay Refinery in Venezuela for the HDS start-up and their #5 Crude Still Start-up.

In 1973 to 1974 we were back in Aruba again for the HDS #2 Unit startup and as relief for supervisor vacations.

FRIENDS

During one's lifetime there are many people who have an influence on your career, your devotion to family, your friends and community.

After the death of my father it was my wish to help my mother, brothers, and sisters with the farm. At Woodriver, Illinois, Dave Seagel taught me about job responsibility.

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[1]*The drinking water for the refinery came from a lake in the mountains. The Amuay refinery Instrument Department was responsible for maintaining the chlorination equipment. In the early days they traveled by horseback to make routine checks of this installation.*

The Lise Nunes Story

LUDWIG CORNELIUS NUNES

Ludwig Cornelius Nunes was born on November 17, 1883 in Surinam. Surinam, formerly Dutch Guiana, located on South America's northern n coast, shares its southern border with French Guiana, and its northern border with British Guiana. British Guiana adjoins Venezuela to the north, and Aruba is a mere 20 miles from that country's shores.

Though he was of Portuguese descent, Ludwig was a Dutch national. He went to a medical school in Surinam and graduated as a physician licensed to serve in Surinam and the Dutch West Indies. He completed his internship in Holland, and was qualified to practice in Holland as well as the colonies. Dr Nunes received his diploma, which had the word "Arts" after his title. As a full fledged, certified doctor, Nunes applied for service in the Curacao government, was accepted and assigned to St. Martin. He married, and had two daughters at the time of his first wife's death.

LISE NUNES

I, Lise Nunes, was born on May 21, 1904 in the French West Indies on the island of St. Martin. My first name is Lise. Not Liza and not Liz, but Lise. In French the "e" is silent.

St. Martin is a small island, the northern half of which is French. Its southern half is Dutch. My husband was serving as the government doctor on the Dutch side, assigned there by the Netherlands West Indies Government in Curacao. At that time the French part of the island had no doctor, and the Dutch doctor took care of patients both sides of the island. I had returned from Guadeloupe where I had been attending boarding school for eight years when we met.

St. Martin is a curious island; both sides speak English as well as their own language. I suppose they had to learn a common language so they could communicate. Kids at school speak their own language, but when schools are out at four o'clock they all speak English.

My grandfather came to St. Martin from France. I believe in the old days my people were fishermen. In my immediate family there was an older brother, and two sisters. A younger brother died with my father in a hurricane. My father, Emanuel Fleming, was French. His wife, Mathilde, died in 1914 in child birth, leaving him with a new baby girl,

Dina. There were also two older daughters, Lise born May 21, 1904 and Douce born in 1906. Douce now teaches mathematics in a French Lyceum in New York. There was also an older son, Constant, born in 1899 and the youngest son, Claude, born in 1902. The boys were already in a boarding school for boys on the island of Guadeloupe.

My father, a business man, was the mayor of St. Martin. He had two growing girls, a 10 year old, and an 11 year old. He didn't know how to handle us older girls. He got relatives to help with the new born baby girl, but he decided the best thing for us older girls was a boarding school. In Guadeloupe there was a large girl's boarding school - a finishing school run by Catholic nuns.

They imparted their charges with an exceptional if somewhat limited education. In order to matriculate, you didn't need to know how to type or write a letter. You were required to know the proper way to place a vase on the table, walk, make polite conversation, and send thank-you notes and other rules of etiquette.

Guadeloupe is the main island of a French overseas department that includes five smaller islands and the northern half of St. Martin. Together, with the island of Martinique a second French overseas department, they are called the French West Indies.

The other half of the island of St. Martin is a dependency of the Netherlands and forms a portion of the Netherlands Antilles.

I was a Fleming in St. Martin. When you go to St. Martin and you say Fleming, you don't need to say anything else - it was a big family. They were like the Arends in Aruba. I thought everyone in St. Martin was named Fleming. As did most others, our household spoke French.

When my oldest brother finished high school in Guadeloupe, he went to Cherbourg, France, to study medicine. World War One came along and he was drafted. His dreams of becoming a doctor went out the window after the war; he decided to be a businessman.

When I was 18 years old I returned from the finishing school, and that was when I met my husband. Not long after my nineteenth birthday, we were married. Ludwig and I went to live on the Dutch side of St. Martin. Our first son, Lewis, was born on there June 1, 1924.

We traveled by sailboat from St. Martin to Aruba. In those days there were no steamers or airplanes. We moved all of our possessions to Aruba with us - we didn't expect to come back. I remember spending eight days sailing from St. Martin to Aruba. My people gave me a cow

so we would have milk for baby Lewis on the trip.

Our son, Lewis, lives in Costa Rica now, and he is with the Green Party.

When I lived in the Oranjestad, I bought water that came in a demijohn. A demijohn is a five gallon can similar to what was used to store kerosene at the time. A water vendor came daily to town leading a donkey with a tin of brackish well water strapped to each side. Brackish water was used to scrub the floors. In the rainy season, the gutters on the roof of the house collected rainwater and it was funneled to the underground cistern. This was used for drinking and cooking. Since the rainfall on Aruba was scarce, you had to be conservative with your potable water. All the years I lived in Aruba, we boiled our water. Every night before we went to bed, a big pot of water was put on the stove to boil. When we lived in Oranjestad we didn't have ice, but when we lived in the colony we had plenty; the company had the ice plant. You put your boiled water in your ice box, and the ice man put two blocks of ice in the top of it every day. Underneath the refrigerator, a tin collected the runoff from the melted ice, and it had to be emptied daily.

We had four children, and Charles, the last, was born 11 years after the others. Yvonne was born the 19th of November, 1927 while we were living in Oranjestad, and Liette was born in 1929 while we were living in the Lago colony.

At the time Lago was getting started, young Doctor Arends was the Dutch physician assigned to the island.

His family was well known on the island and they had a lot of business and family on the island. This boy went to Holland for his degree, and returned to his home town to serve as a doctor. I think he must have already been there a year or two before my husband came. The Arends had a lot to say in Aruba. When the government asked my husband if he wanted to go to Aruba, they mentioned that there was another doctor there, but they didn't say the other doctor had intentions of becoming the Lago doctor. Dr. Arends was a government doctor with a private practice; he came a few months after Captain Rodger's decision to locate the refinery on Aruba. Lago had no hospital. People in need of medical attention went to San Pedro, the Catholic hospital in Oranjestad.

We first arrived in Aruba as a result of the company's request to the government for a doctor. The consensus of Lago's employees seemed to be that it was acceptable for the doctor to be colored for caring for the contractor men, but when their American families began to arrive, they

wanted a white doctor to attend their wives and children. Standard Oil employees, the Americans were very racially conscious people.

Captain Rodger applied to the governor in Curacao for another doctor but he did not tell the doctor they had already hired. When my husband arrived with the proper credentials as a replacement, the Arends family was angry. Their son was the first doctor on the island. It was their country. He should have been offered the post of company doctor.

Aruba is strongly Catholic; the hospital in Oranjestad was run by a Catholic priests. If the priest said, "This has to be done," his orders are carried out. Even the doctors were under the direction of the priest in those days. The priest wished for the Catholic people to have a Catholic doctor. Although I am Catholic, my husband was Protestant. When faced with this, Captain Rodger said, "Oh! La! It can't happen this way. I'm going to build my own hospital." In the beginning employees went to the Catholic hospital. It didn't have the proper equipment to perform operations, so if you lived in Aruba and you had appendicitis, or a hernia, you died. Those who had money or relatives who could help took one of the daily boats to Curacao for treatment. If the patient was not in serious condition, there was no trouble. With accidents happening at the Chicago Bridge construction site, and with the people working at the harbor there were accidents.

The company decided to build a hospital, and nurses were sent out. There were four nurses, the head nurse being the operating room nurse. As soon as proper medical care was available, the wives came down.

The living conditions in Aruba were pretty bad in those days. The drinking water was transported to Aruba in the same tanks that were used to carry oil, and the water had oil floating on it. My poor husband often had diarrhea. As time went by, special tanks were assigned to carry drinking water, and this helped. Another thing that helped was the shipment of vegetables from the U.S. by tankers. I remember when they first brought me to see the colony and they told me that is where the company is going to be and this is where I would have to live. Imagine what they were talking about. It was cactus and coral. No houses, no streets, just cactus and coral. Marvelously, the houses began to sprout amid the cactus and coral; the company brought everything it took to make a small town. Workmen began to construct houses. One day you would see the site, and in a week or two, you could see a whole new street full of houses.

The wife of the boss of the Chicago Bridge Company planted flowers in front of her bungalow, and all of the men came to see them. It

looked so odd after all that cactus and rock. I think that woman was the first woman from the company to be in the colony.

The women would not come out until they had a bungalow. At first there was only a mess hall and bunk houses. By the end of the first year they had running water, but they didn't have toilets.

There was nothing the men could spend their paycheck on in the colony except the movie house. The men had to go to Oranjestad to see a movie. Outside the colony were a few beer bars, beer was the only form of alcohol the company allowed. They were bad news from the beginning; I'm telling you, they were trouble from the start.

Tankers came in at night, pumped the crude into the tanks, and the next night they left for Maracaibo. Sailors had their night in town, and after a long time without liquor, they went to the bars and loaded up on beer. Since it was dark, they were drunk, and most of them didn't know the paths back to their ships, they wound up falling down in the cactus. These poor people came to my husband covered all over with cactus prickles. He had to remove thousands of them from some sailors.

My husband was in the company's employ, but he also represented the Dutch government, and was required to attend to Arubans. The company had a fence around the concession, and no one was allowed to enter without permission. The first house inside the main gate was the doctor's. Our house was the first house built because it was requested by the government.

The walls of poorest native houses were made of small woven limbs of trees and coconut palm branches covered with mud. I have seen houses where they used the fresh manure of cows and horses to plaster the sides of their houses. It sealed the houses, and when it dried, you could never tell. Their dirt floors became hard after they were walked on.

Captain Rodger's wife and two daughters must have arrived in 1926 or 1927.

Many people were hard at work. The dredge worked on the harbor, men worked on the refinery, and carpenters worked on the houses. The Chicago Bridge people were busy building tanks. Office workers handled the paperwork.

Besides the *sheep sheds*, there was the mess hall and the Chinese laundry.

The small tankers arrived from Venezuela every morning. In the

beginning my husband was required by government regulation to meet the boats outside the reef. No one else was qualified to examine the men. Every morning about seven o'clock, he went to each tanker by launch to see if any of the crew were carrying anything. Any one having signs of a contagious disease wasn't allowed to come ashore. After the harbor was dredged, he met them at the docks and went aboard.

Arends, the other government doctor, never came on the company concession. But everything from the company was under my husband's control. If he needed anything, he put in a request and they got it. Americans gave the employees anything they needed.

My husband had a good life in Aruba. He got along well with Captain Rodger and the company bosses; they treated him well.

When asked about my years in Aruba, I will tell you that during my first two years, my best friend was my can opener. All we ate was canned food. I don't understand how we survived. We never used to take vitamins because we ate potatoes and rice, and he always made sure the children drank KLIM powdered milk. Some of the boats from the States did bring marvelously fresh carrots and cabbage from Texas, and frozen chickens. Because my husband was the doctor we got our supplies without any trouble.

By 1929 we had lived in Aruba for nearly six years. And it was difficult to decide to leave Aruba. My husband was making good money; we had a good life. Our children had grown up and we wanted them to have a better education than was offered in Aruba at the time. My husband dreamed of opening a practice in Holland and continuing his work there. We were in Holland during the war years and in 1942 we lost everything we owned.

Our fourth child, Charles, was born in Rotterdam on April 25, 1940. He was named after my brother, Claude. Unfortunately, the Dutch cannot pronounce Claude, and he was called everything except Claude. After six days of this, my husband said he had an uncle that was named Charles who had been very kind to him, and that we ought to change Claude's name to Charles. Max, a good friend of ours said he was going to call him Max. Poor Charles finally wound up being called Charles, Claude, Max, or Alexander.[1]

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[1]*David Louis Lopez was born December 12, 1940. In 1955 the author, was transferred from Lago refinery in Aruba to the International Petroleum Company's refinery in Barrancabermeja, Colombia. The company school there taught students through the 8th grade. David was*

Nineteen days after he was born, the entire center of Rotterdam was destroyed in a half hour by the incendiary bombs. The Germans dropped them when the country refused to surrender. I can remember that the date the bombs fell was May 14, 1940. I wrapped Charles in a blanket and we ran away from the center of the city where the bombs fell. We had a country house in Schisterberg, near the queen's residence, and we went to live there.

It was a shock to my husband. All that he worked for all those years was gone. Ludwig developed a heart condition, and his patients

were scattered. After about six months of doing nothing, he began again. He went to a little house back in the neighborhood where he had been to build his practice again. He lasted a year before his heart condition claimed him.

When I returned to Aruba in 1946, I didn't know it anymore. There were many Dutchmen who had families in Curacao that they hadn't seen during the war. The Dutch government filled one of their military boats with these people and I was on it.

(contd). *sent to stay with his grandmother, Maggie Tibbets, in Miami, Florida, to attend ninth grade at Miami High School through the 1955-1956 school year. He became acquainted with Charles Nunes and his mother who lived in the house just behind the house of David's grandmother. He and Charles became good friends and went to the same school together. One of the things that David remembered over the years was his friend's lengthy name; Charles Claude Max Alexander Nunes. It seems his parents were eager to honor his antecedents, naming him after Dutch and French uncles. Charlie's mother was the widow of L. C. Nunes, the first regular doctor of Lago Oil and Transport Co. Ltd.*

On May 1, 1985, David was working on a project that required that he obtain some quotes on computer equipment. The purchasing agent of his company gave him a telephone number of a computer equipment supplier. The man who answered his call said, "Charles Nunes speaking". David asked, "Do you mean Charles Claude Max Alexander Nunes?" There was a dead silence for several moments while the man on the other end recovered from hearing his full name and realized who he was talking to.

Victor Lopez made friends at this same house when he came in 1961 to attend school at Miami High. It is interesting to note that both this school and Oklahoma Military Academy (author and all three boys attended there) are now museums!

From Curacao I went to Aruba to see our dear friends and to check on property we owned there. They opened their house to us and we stayed for a few days before we moved on. My brother, the mayor of St. Martin, had a small hotel that he turned over to us when we arrived. Due to privation, shortages and rationing, my son, Charles, had never seen an egg. When his uncle discovered this, he made sure there were always eggs and fresh milk available. My brother has since passed away.

After three months, Ludwig's children, who were ages 17 and 18, became restless since there was nothing for them to do. I went to Curacao with them, and they got jobs. Their Dutch education made it easy for them to find work. They called the Dutch airline and got jobs. Soon, they became engaged, got married, and I was alone with Charles.

I decided to sell my house in Curacao, and return to Holland where I had five homes and a steady income. I had a sister living in Miami I wanted to visit. I really intended to tell her goodbye before I returned to Holland, but I liked Miami's climate. I agreed to stay there for a while, and if it doesn't work out I'd go back to Holland. The two children working for KLM airlines could travel to Miami easily since they had opened a route between Miami and Curacao. If I had gone to Holland, there would have been only Charles and myself.

I haven't been to Aruba lately, but I have been to Curacao because my daughter has a business I help her with sometimes. So I don't know too much about Aruba. I had two houses in Aruba, but I sold them after my husband died.

I remember Dr. Johannes Hartog. He was in Miami when I was there. He lived on a boat up the coast from Miami, somewhere near Fort Lauderdale. His family in Holland was looking for him, and couldn't find him. My son-in-law, who is a manager for KLM and lives with me in Miami, found Dr. Hartog through the Dutch consul. When they told him about his family looking for him, he went to see them.

I speak Dutch, French, English but no Spanish. When you call a bank, business is conducted in Spanish. I have found that one must be bilingual to live happily in the Spanish-speaking center of Miami.

My husband did a lot of business with Aruban people and we had to learn to speak Papiamento. I had to learn it to communicate with the Aruban maids I had. While in the Guadeloupe school, I learned to speak the Creole dialect. In the past, I have gone to the court in Miami to translate for the Haitian people there, and I enjoyed that. Now I am too old.

The Jack Opdyke Story

Jack was born in Weehawken, NJ on September 22, 1909 except he says maybe he wasn't because he had no birth certificate. His family came to the United States from the Netherlands circa 1655. He graduated with a B.S in Civil Engineering in 1930 and in 1932 he picked up a C.E. Both of these degrees were awarded at Newark College of Engineering, Newark, NJ (now New Jersey Institute of Technology).

Before going to Aruba he worked with a consulting engineer and surveyor. He taught engineering drawing. Between jobs he worked with the CWA.

He went to Aruba in July of 1937 on a Norwegian tanker that picked up a cargo of oil at Cartagena, Colombia.

Marian went to Aruba in December 1938 on a tanker that picked up a cargo of oil at Caripito, Venezuela.

Marian was arriving in Aruba to be married. She hadn't seen John in 1-1/2 years, but left a teaching job and headed into she wasn't sure what. John says she probably thinks such things after 44 years. The ship docked at 2:00 a.m., and she had a bet of 5 cents with another passenger that John would meet her and she won. However John had to leave her on board because there was no immigration representative there at that time. They were married later the same day.

In 1938 Jack became the Cubmaster of Cub Scout Pack #1. This Pack was formed in 1933 by Gilbert Brook. Paul M. Walker was the second Cubmaster. Jack replaced Paul and continued as the Cubmaster for the following 17 years. The Cub Pack and the Scout Troop were sponsored by the American Legion Post #1 of Aruba.

The Alvah Rarick Story

I was born December 27, 1914, in Four Bridges, New Jersey; I was named after my father. At the age of five, I went to a little country school of six or eight pupils. The building still exists today, but it is now occupied as a home. Between the time I was born and went to school, my mother left our home. My father went to live with his parents, who were farmers. We lived there for three years until my father remarried. My mother was named Viola Smith, and she was from the same area in New Jersey. They met around 1910. My dad was a mechanical apprentice. He worked as a mechanic as long as I can remember.

I went to Roxbury High School in Kenburry, New Jersey. We never had any of the problems people encounter these days. I went to Rutgers University for four years. I had developed some interest for chemistry during high school, and I thought chemical engineering was the thing for me. I had a short period of trying to get myself settled in the industrial world. I worked for General Chemical Company, Hercules Powder Company, and Bakelite in a two year period. Exxon said come on and work for us. My parents had a friend who was well known throughout the company and he became interested in me and he spoke to Harold Atwood about me. Harold called me to go to Aruba. In 1937 I went down on the Grace Line S/S *Santa Elena* . . . first class. June 9, I started out in New York. The ship made a stop in Curacao, and one in Porto Cabello, Venezuela before arriving in Aruba on June 14. I was single then. This was in the days when the Grace Line docked at the number four finger pier, and personnel had an office at the head of the dock. They just came right down and scooped me up and took me back to their office and found out who and what I was. They assigned me to work for McDermott as a student operator (the only one at that time) in No. 9 Viscosity Unit. I was on shift work, and boy, I didn't care very much for that. I had the short part of a month before they moved me to the Central Pump House. And then they needed somebody in the Hydrogenation Plant.

THE HYDRO PLANT

I was given training in the low pressure side of the Hydro Plant. Hydro had a low pressure side and a high pressure side. This was all nice clean work and was in an area where there was a breeze. These were much better working conditions. I worked with Charles Adams Blakly, the operator on the initial start up of the unit, Dewey Hallay, Jim

French, Bill MacKnight, an assistant operator, and Sprider Heinze.

The High Pressure control room was the center of things as far as unit operations went. The controls to the unit were in there. It had a cement wall that would have protect the men in the control room against almost any explosion. This part of the unit operated at 3,200 pounds pressure. The size of the vessels was limited by their weight, and they had very thick walls. Once assembled, they were difficult to move.

I can still remember Jack Souder who had been put in charge of the Poly-Hydro Plants area. I was out working with some equipment when Neil Griffin came through, and I was on the second floor of this thing and I was trying to do something up there. I had vented a steam trap, which might have presented something of a safety hazard and they said something to me and I said, well, I guess I could vent it down to the next floor. It was very easy to get out of line with this assembly; it was very dangerous.

We received our feed stock (olefins) from the Poly Plant and pumped it up to 40 pounds, and there were a very large reciprocating pump that went slowly back and forth, and it had two pieces to it. One would come up as the other was going down. The operators had to keep an eye on those constantly as they weren't automatic. The two parts of this pump had to be moving in sequence. If they got out of sequence the pressure messed up. I wasn't on shift when we had some trouble. The pump was hooked up (oil and gas being pumped at the same time). They were pressurizing high percent hydrogen gas that was made at the Hydro Plant with five compressors to 3,200 lbs. The Hydrogen gas met with the oil and a bunch of catalyst. If you kept an eye on these 24 hours a day, you were all right. The big pump was steam driven. One of the boosters was steam, and the other was gas-driven. Once it got out of whack it was hard to get back in synchronization. After it left the compressor, the oil and gas stream were joined together, the mixture went into an oven with a catalyst, and that converted it to high quality av-gas (short for aviation-gas) component. It was not actually a blending operation as you talk about blending in the refinery, it was actually a reaction. Then you went through the business of depressurizing the product in a great big drum, down to 30 or 40 pounds. Part of the plant operated at this pressure. There were a few scheduled shut downs for maintenance and adjustments, but in the time I was there we only had two or three shut downs. This equipment was of the highest quality available and you could do anything with this equipment if you took care of it. They ran those units two and a half years after the WW2 ended because they didn't know if they would have to go back over there and do

some more fighting.

As I've said the Hydro Plant had to be watched carefully. One of the important valves had an extension that put the valve wheel inside the protected control room. There was an operator positioned in a chair near this valve wheel. He was supposed to keep his eye on the delta pressure recording instrument. If the pressure deviated from the 250# he was supposed to maintain, he adjusted the valve wheel as necessary. One fellow who had been on the job for a short time came to work one night, sat there for a while and all of a sudden he took his flashlight and bashed the front of the instrument. He wrecked it. The pressure of the responsibility was too much for him. He was quickly given a one way trip back home.

The unit could make about 6,000 barrels a day of a very high level of blending material. That doesn't sound like too much, but you've got such a large amount of 100 octane aviation gasoline you can make with that amount. When it got to the tanks it was under only five pounds of vapor pressure, not dangerous at all unless you had a careless person fooling around.

VACATION - MARRIAGE

I worked for 2 years in Aruba, went back home on furlough. Lois and I were married in 1941. Lois and I had sailed to Curacao on the Grace Line S/S *Santa Paula* at the end of October in 1941. In Curacao the Company told me to come back to the refinery straight away, and we took our first plane ride back to Aruba.

Bungalow 119 was waiting for us when we got back. I don't know to this day who did this fine thing for me. The Dorwarts, "Doc" Reed, Reede Holly, and all those folks were our neighbors.

When Lois and I first married, I didn't have a very good car, and I had an old jalopy I bought from Dave Meyers. That thing was a lemon. I vowed right then I would never have another Ford, and I never did. The next one I bought was Hankamer's Chevrolet. Clarence Hankamer worked up in the Poly-Hydro area. He drowned one day when he was fishing.

WW2 CAME TO US ON FEBRUARY 16, 1942

I was in the unit on the late shift when the Germans came along. I saw the tracers zipping. I was taking a reading on the pyrometer on the second floor side of the converter furnace, and as I looked out toward the water, I saw six or eight tracer bullets zip by. This was after the torpedoes. I out later that they surfaced, blew up their deck gun in an

accident, and were trying to do damage with their machine guns. No one was scared. Where I was by the compressor, you couldn't hear anything, and it was just like the whole thing happened at once. Only four places were found where the dud 37 millimeter rounds hit.

Many years later Bill MacKnight was in the Abbey Hotel in New York. He found himself talking to the former German Executive Officer of that German submarine who was injured during that action. As it turned out he was the only survivor of this submarine. This U boat was sunk by an aircraft off the coast of Venezuela while recharging its batteries. He was in the hospital in Martinique recovering from his foot wound when it went down.

Marchant Davidson came over to the unit and helped shut it down, but I had my own little bailiwick and I didn't see him.

Paul "Porky" Hermanson was the operator and I was his assistant on the low pressure side. Brinser was the operator on the high pressure side. All men did their jobs just as cool as cucumbers. They had a manual about that said three days would be required to shut the thing down. We started about 2:30 a.m. and we were almost completely shut down by the time we left there at 8:00 a.m. They were still pumping with the compressors to keep up the pressure when we were going off shift. Hydrogen gas goes right up in the air so venting it wasn't a problem. The Hydro Plant was shutdown for a week or two if my memory serves.

Bill MacKnight and his wife, Betty, were on the first plane that left Aruba after the submarine attack on February 16, 1942. They landed in Brownsville Texas along with a bunch of others from Aruba. We went half way to Oranjestad one time and that was the longest trip we made on the island during the War.

About five nights later, an American cruiser fired flare shells because they thought they saw a submarine between them and the eastern tip of the island. The shell casings from these two shells damaged the bachelor's quarters and our Club House Library. The American Coast Guard maintained a small area near number two power house and had some equipment there, and part of that was depth charges. Some batteries were in for recharging late one June afternoon in 1942, and the charger went amiss. Things got pretty hot and one depth charge went off. Nobody was hurt, but it tore up two houses on the lower level of housing near the water. Tore off some of their shingles. I was working days and Lois and I had gone to the village after 4:p.m. We were returning from the village and were just stepping on the front porch of the house when we heard the "whumph."

The American Army finally got their 155 cannon installed on Light House Hill above the colony on the eastern tip of the island. They had firing exercises during the day time. The explosions of these guns knocked pictures from walls and rattled window shutters in our nearby bungalows.

The French troops, who were there in 1940, wore white uniforms with red pompoms on their berets. They were not very well supplied from France and lived from hand to mouth.

After the shutdown of the Hydro Plant I was transferred to the Poly Plant for the start up over there, and I was working with Ed O'Brien.

THE POLY PLANT

The material being handled by the Poly Plant was 70% sulfuric acid and 30% liquid butane. Actually the full name of this unit was the Hot Acid Polymerization Plant. The operators complained because when a certain small pump had a packing gland leak they wound up with shredded lower pants legs because of the acid spray. The acid ate holes in the pants legs and didn't do their shoes much good either. You can be sure the operators learned to tighten up that leaking packing gland as soon as it was spotted. The operators habitually wore protective goggles when making their rounds in this plant.

This process polymerized, that is, glued together, two hydrocarbons. This was a very corrosive system. It operated at 160 lbs pressure and was a continuous process. At the end of flow through this unit there were distillation columns to allow us to remove the material that didn't react. On some of the metal inspections, I had seen great big claw marks right down through one of the distillation towers. I warned people how this was tricky business. This was a brand new process and we were working under wartime conditions. Things were pretty hectic and we worked under blackout conditions. Apparently they had trouble coming up with a solution. In particular they were interested in this great big vessel that was one and a half stories high. All of this stuff was turning around in it.

The Hydro Plant personnel were transferred elsewhere after the Alkylation Plants were built. The Poly Plant became a part of the Gas Plant Department which was under L.G. Lopez.

I left the Poly-Hydro area in 1946. I was still up there when Laurie was born. I went from there to the Technical Services Department.

THE EXPLOSION AND FIRE AT THE POLY PLANT

One day there was an equipment failure on the day shift sometime

after 8:a.m shift change. Apparently there was a 1/4" sample line that had corroded through and broken off. This was something as big as your finger. The 160# of pressure behind this kept blowing out a fog of acid and butane. This made it very difficult for anyone to go in and take corrective action. Of course the operators activated emergency shutdown procedures and left the unit. In a very short time this whole area was filled up with the mixture and the butane vapors were ignited. The failure happened on the north side of the control house and there was a small boiler with a furnace about 100 yards to the south west of the control house. The boiler produced high pressure steam for use on the unit. The boiler furnace was sitting right out on the corner of the unit. More vapors were filling the area at the time. Jimmy Seymour was one of the American operators that day. There was a horizontal condenser to the east and north of the control house. Jimmy ran around on the north side of the condenser, away from the resulting explosion. Another young American operator made the mistake of running around the south side of the same condenser where he was exposed to the resulting explosion. He was badly burned. The new employee [1] waskilled. The only clothing left on the new employee in the control room was his belt. The rest of his clothes were burned off.) That plant was one of the most dangerous in the refinery. It was shut down after the explosion. The war came to an end. This process was very expensive. More manpower was required to operate this plant as compared to an Alkylation plant. They had to maintain a stock of land joints (a type of flange for connecting two pieces of pipe together) for the Poly Plant. A land joint has a little dip in it and they put two of those together, one against the other. They put very fine grinding compound on those, and grind them until those two pieces will fit together perfectly. When the pipe is assembled with these joints it is tested for leaks. In this case they used air pressure at twice the

[1] *There was an employee on the local payroll that was in the control room at the time. He was a newly hired man and he didn't know what was going on. The office of Louie Lopez and Bob Baum was a short distance away and they heard the initial gas escaping and they ran to the scene. They could see the vapor cloud slowly rolling towards the furnace and they knew it would be ignited by the hot furnace even with the burners extinguished. They took up a position out of the danger zone because they immediately realized the danger. They were waving and yelling at the new man who was standing in the control room doorway. They were telling him to run toward them, out of the danger zone. He apparently didn't understand or hear them. He continued to stand in the control room door.*

operating pressure and there must be no leakage. All that material is highly specialized alloys and as expensive as gold.

During the war they set up the Alkylation Plant Number One, a process that did the same thing without all the fancy equipment. Number Two Alky plant was added later. Both of these units were able to do the same thing at low pressure.

TECHNICAL SERVICE DEPARTMENT

When I was with Technical Service Department in 1946, I worked on shift again in the Oil Inspection Laboratory. Here we checked the quality of the cargo loaded on the tankers. This is a job where you can meet up with all kinds of strange things.

The Receiving and Shipping Department may have a ship that is ready to load gasoline. The Oil Inspection Laboratory might find that a sample of the gasoline turns out to be all black. Then the Oil Inspection Laboratory had to shut things down to find out what the problem was. A clean up crew might have to be brought in to take care of it. Sometimes whole ship had to be off loaded.

Right after I got there, I came to work at midnight and checked the final samples in the lab and found the octane level came out low. Here is this ship loaded with 100,000 barrels of gasoline which didn't meet the specifications of the order. The octane number was too low. I couldn't hold him, so I called Frank Griffin, our Refinery Manager. Frank was all over the captain who apparently was lax in supervision of loading the ship. After I gave my little spiel to him explaining the problem, he said, "Hold the ship."

The next morning, we got some more samples, and sure enough the load was contaminated. Some one had opened the wrong valve in the tank farm and the wrong product had gone into the ships tanks. A good part of the cargo was below specifications. The problem was solved by loading a higher octane product and the mix was blended in the ships tanks.

In another case it was found the mix was slightly off color. They finally adopted a scheme where they took the rust and scale from the ship to see whether it was passable or not. If it wasn't, perhaps her skipper would have to clean it up. Most of the problem was in the loading.

We had one tanker, the S/S *Trail Blazer*, from Charles Martin in there one time that came in to load gas-oil and gasoline. The first samples showed that the tanks on the darned ship were literally filled with holes in between the tanks. I don't remember whether they took a

waiver on that or what, but it was finally loaded. The quality was uncompromised as far as Lago was concerned. They may have had to change the specifications, and this meant they had to have concurrence between Lago and Charles Martin. Of course someone lost money on that one.

Sometimes valves don't hold between tanks. We took three samples during the course of the loading. The first was to see if there were any obvious trouble, the next was when the tanks were half full, and the final one was taken for overall quality. You took a quart or a gallon from each tank, in some cases, such as av-gas, you took five gallon samples. If you were watching, you would have a pretty good idea whether the cargo on the ship was all right or not. A lot depended on the guy taking the sample. They were usually young boys. It was a dirty rotten job. We kept an eye on them. Often we would go out with them and watch. Occasionally we sent the shift leader down to check their techniques, whether the proper tanks had been sampled. Sometimes the problem would involve three or four tanks, with everything else being all right. Maybe the fellow who had been sent down to sample didn't get the numbers right. They wrote up a batch of labels at a time. Then as they took the samples they put on the tags.

One time av-gas was the problem. Samples showed there was severe corrosion present. Copper strips were used to make this test. A strip was immersed in the sample for a certain period of time. If copper strip turned color, the quality of the av-gas wasn't acceptable.

One time a pipe fitter used a second hand piece of pipe to replace a piece that had been condemned. Apparently the pipe had been used in some plant that had a lot of sulfides in their process. They finally tracked it down. They knew which lines had been moved. They sampled each section of the pipe between the refinery and the ship until they came to the point where they found the section containing the corrosive material. They then replaced it with a clean section of pipe. The load had to be taken back on shore and put through the process again.

Some of the line-ups down there involved awfully complicated handling.

I was in the Chemical Analytical Laboratory One for five years. I worked with Henry Goodwin in Heavy Fuels. Then I went to Laboratory Number Two. One part of Laboratory Number Two took care of routine testing and another part handled non routine testing. Specialty work samples came from Laboratory Number One to Laboratory Number

Two. I was also in Laboratory Number Three. I was head of Laboratory Number One. My job assignments took me back and forth between these three Laboratories.

Doctor James Read moved from Laboratory Number Two a short time before I got there. Ben Whitney took his place. He did trouble shooting and odd jobs. He is extremely competent and knows his business.

Laboratory Number Three did a lot of Catalytic Cracking Plant work. Part of it was testing the product, but most of it was keeping track of the catalyst quality. The powdered catalyst, aluminum silicate, became contaminated in normal operations and twelve tons a day was lost as fines going out the stack to the atmosphere. Much was done to keep the loss rate down as low as possible. Carbon was burned from the catalyst automatically in a continuous operation.

BUNGALOW 513

Bungalow 513 was our next home, and we stayed there for ever and ever, excepting renovations of course. That was where Laurie was born in 1945, and we adopted Ellen in 1952. She was seven, and we adopted her from around our home town. She is a third daughter of a first cousin of mine. If it was done, Lois handled it. I'm pretty sure we belonged to the Girl Scouts. Lois was an adult leader for as long as the girls were involved.

Often we went to the place right outside the Sea Grape Grove to go swimming. It was always amazing to me that that quieted you down when you got in there.

The local person that I am talking about is named DeCourt and he was a local supervisor, and we went on a picnic with him and his wife. There was another Aruban family, the Fabiano Kelly's, that worked for a while in the Laboratories. He went to work for the government. He was sent to Holland on a number of occasions. He was to learn about sanitation so he could inspect containers and vessels that come into contact with food. I guess he did quite well with this, but I don't know that the government paid all that well. A few years back I had a letter from him telling me had bunged up his back. This last Christmas, I got another that invited me to stay with him for only $30 a night. He has some cottages above Oranjestad. There are houses beyond the hotels along the beach clear up to the California Light House on the northwestern tip of the island. The farthest north road that is any good is the one where he lives. He had a sixteen cylinder Cadillac at one time. It was a very long thing with air conditioning, and the story goes that he

had got the thing trading with the Oklahoma Indians. We stopped off to visit him the last time we were on the island.

Men who worked in Aruba were highly trained and motivated. Any who left Lago applying for a job were hired immediately. Some went into the consulting business.

CLUBS

I didn't belong to any club in Aruba. I went swimming and did some work on a couple of sailboats. One of them, built in Ponce, Puerto Rico, belonged to E. L. Wilkins. Its owners sailed to Aruba with a cargo of oranges. The people operating the boat got into trouble with the Dutch authorities, and they had to scamper for it. This made the boat come up for sale, and the people in Aruba were interested in it. Around the time of the German attack, MacKnight and I bought it from Art Krottnauer or whoever bought it in Curacao from the government agency that had impounded it.

Bill MacKnight worked for Kellogg all over the world. He died in 1986. They came to visit us in Fort Lauderdale in 1985. He was getting lined up for some job over in China and he never made it. Died of a heart attack. Bill had one little girl at that time.

RETIREMENT

When I left Aruba in 1965, I came to Fort Lauderdale, Florida and have been retired for 22 years. I have done all of my house maintenance except roofing.

The Loren Elmer Robbin Story

He was a tall black haired man. He had two grown daughters when I first met him in 1937. His two daughters were married in Aruba. Margaret, his eldest, was married to Gilbert Corrington. Evelyn was married to Ira Couch. Elmer was an operator in the Gas Plant, as it was known in the early days. He was from Casper, Wyoming.

The way he told about his first trip to Aruba always made us laugh. It seems that he and another fellow owned an old Model T Ford touring car, and they had the idea that they would drive it from Casper to a point near New York, sell or otherwise get rid of it there, and then they would take a train to their hotel in New York. When they reached the hotel they would find out how to catch the tanker bound for Aruba.

Well, they had an exciting time making plans for their first trip across the country to the fabulous city of New York. When the time for departure finally came, they were almost unable to sleep. The day of the trip, they got up in the early hours of the morning, fired up the old car and began their great adventure. They followed a route that took them through the northern states. Nearing New York, they began to look for a place to sell the car as they had originally planned, but all the sights and happenings kept them distracted. The next thing they knew they were entering the Holland Tunnel. When they got on the other side of the Holland Tunnel there would be a place to get rid of the car, they decided. From there they would take a train the rest of the way into New York. In the tunnel, policemen stationed along on the elevated walkways kept motioning them to keep moving. Their old car sputtered and strained, but it never could make the speed the traffic cops wanted. Behind them there was a long, bumper-to-bumper line of rush hour traffic behind them, impatiently waiting for them to get out of their way so that they might pass through. In the sunlight at the other end, they found themselves in what seemed to be a chaotic bedlam of confusion. The small town boys realized they had arrived at their destination. They also realized it would be a chore to find the Lincoln Hotel. They asked a policeman for directions. He spoke a different kind of English, but they finally understood his directions. On their arrival at the hotel, they presented an outlandish sight. Luggage was strapped to the fenders like the “Okies” from *The Grapes of Wrath*, road dust was an inch deep on everything, and they hadn't shaved in two days. To top it off, their old

car wheezed asthmatically, bucked like a maverick, refusing to die after the ignition was turned off. The bell boy who came out to unload their luggage was flabbergasted when they gave him $25 and told him the old car was his.

People in the lobby peered curiously from the windows at this motley crew and their trusty steed. Elmer said he didn't blame them because the old car's fenders continued to flap up and down for ten minutes after the engine had been turned off. He said they were attention getters as they walked through the lobby to the desk, trailed by a cloud of dust while they tried to make themselves presentable. Two bell boys following them struggled with their antiquated bulging bags whose straps seemed to be ready to burst at any second. The newcomers' Western attire was distinctly out of place, and their quaint, Midwestern accent made them foreigners to the average sophisticated city dweller.

As they were being guided to the elevators and their rooms, they could still see the first bell boy trying to figure out how to get their trusty steed off the crowded street.

Another story told about Elmer was typical of things that happened to him as recounted by his fellow workers. On Elmer's shift there was a man by the name of Claude Dixon who was always thinking up new ways to play practical jokes on his fellow workers. One day he doctored Elmer's lunch while Elmer was out in the plant. Claude cut up a Serrano pepper in long thin slices. He put a couple of them in the bottom side of one of Elmer's sandwiches, rewrapped it and returned it to his lunch box. Well now, those familiar with exotic condiments know the Serrano pepper is considerably hotter than the fiery jalapeño, which is quite hot enough when you get right down to it.

It was the practice of workers to heat their suppers on a bare spot in the steam line where they removed a slab of insulation. I happened to have had business in the area as Elmer took his sandwiches from the hot steam line. As was his custom, Elmer had heated his sandwiches on this handy hot pad, replaced the insulation, seated himself, and methodically laid out his lunch on a small shop table. He poured a cup of coffee from his thermos bottle and carefully removed the wax paper from the first sandwich. Shortly after Elmer took a big bite of that sumptuous looking warm beef sandwich, tears began to come to his eyes. He gasped and lifted the top slice of bread to inspect his sandwich for the cause of his discomfort. When he turned it over and lifted the bottom slice, he saw the remains of the two pieces of a Serrano pepper. He virtually drained the thermos bottle, trying to put out the fire in his mouth. He said

breathlessly, "Boy, when I get home that Josephine is going to get it this time!" Elmer went home after that shift thinking that his wife had played a trick on him. I've often wondered how Josephine came out when he got home.

At the Aruba reunion in Clear Lake in the fall of 1985, I ran into Jack Couch, Elmer's grandson. I told him I needed additional material on Elmer to round out this story, and he promised he would look for more.

In the spring of 1987 I received a call from Jack, who lives in Victoria, Texas. He told me he had found some poems composed by his grandfather, and that he was sending them. I wasn't aware Elmer wrote poetry, and I feel they should be included in Elmer's story.

THROUGH THE HOLLAND TUNNEL IN A FLIVER (1929)

We approached the tunnel from the Jersey side
where thousands of cars were ready to glide.
We took our turn with cars galore,
as they proceeded to enter the river bore.

As we went in we saw a sign
"Thirty-five miles and stay in line."
The best we could do with gas to the floor
was 22 miles and not a bit more.

The cars in front had gone from sight
and those behind were packed in tight.
The police hollered "come on you rubes,
don't obstruct or block the tube.
With her ears pulled down she rattled and knocked,
her fenders waved and her body rocked.
She smoked and steamed and shimmied bad,
but more speed she never had.

At last we reached the New York end,
and daylight there seemed like a friend.
At last we found a place to park
we felt like Noah when he left the ark.

The experience was great and we got a thrill.
To drive thru again I never will.

JIMMIE BRENNAN

Congratulations Jimmie Brennan,
Best wishes from us all.

The evidence is proof enough
For why you had to fall.

May this charming girl that you've deceived,
Find all that's good in you,
And realize right off the bat
That what you've promised is true.

May you never have a dog house
The same as most of us,
Into which you'd sometimes have to crawl
To avoid an awful fuss.

We warn this kennel's quite a place
To lay and gnaw a bone
And ponder o'er the mistakes you've made
For which you must atone.

There's sure to be a more pleasant way
We hope you can teach us how
To enjoy a happy married life,
Start the example now.

Our very best wishes for your success,
We're certain it's bound to be.
Unlock the successful happy way,
Don't lose or hide the key.

TO SHERRIE LYNN

I used to wonder, sometime back
Just what I'd really do,
If ever I became the 'boss'
Of a treasure just like you.

The plans I'd made and tho't I'd keep,
Don't seem to work at all.
'Cause often now I'd like to sleep
When you decide to bawl.

It seems you're hungry night and day
And demand that you be fed.
I wonder now, who must have put
Such ideas in your little head?

I might complain for hours an' hours
And tell how I'm abused
Wow the plans I'd made before you came

I've discovered now just can't be used.

So keep it up, Miss Sherrie Lynn,
And yell commands with all your might
I'll always meet them with a smile -
My previous plans were just not right.

Signed, Grandpop (Sherrie is Margaret Corrington's daughter; Robbie, Robbins' granddaughter.)

FRIENDLESS

I live in a house by the side of the road,
I'm no longer a friend of man.
My home is surrounded by air machines
Just try and sleep if you can.

It must have been man, I'm sure it was,
With all the abuse he could muster,
That developed this terrible machine,
And called it Pavement Buster.

Of all the contraptions that man could devise,
There's nothing so quiet disturbing.
The dishes rattle, the radio squawks,
It really is unnerving.

The directors of labor I once tho't nice
But now I have learned to hate.
They seem to know to plan their work
When they're sure I'm twelve to eight.

They know I must sleep some time in the day,
So keep their men instructed,
To keep gouging, punching, and driving away
Till everything is busted.

There's conduit to bury, sewers to change,
There'll always be ditches to dig.
They're never truly happy
Unless this jigger’s dancing a jig.

I guess I'll move back away from the road
Move back as far as I can,
Where I'll be assured of a quiet sleep,
And continue to be a friend of man.

THE OLD LUNCHPAIL

I've made many a trip
From camp out to the job.
I've tried to satisfy the hunger,
Of my boss, the man called Bob.

I've been laden with sandwiches
Fruit, cake and ham.
Some times I change the fare,
And it's soup, vegetables and jam.

My bottle is always filled with milk
Or something to quench the thirst.
At times I'm packed so full,
I'm afraid my sides will burst.

But for all this I won't complain
'cause I know I fill the bill.
But the overtime that I put in,
Is sure against my will.

I never get a moment's rest
Because of my trip back home
I don't seem to mind the food
But the return trip makes me groan.

I've carried bolts, screws, bricks and rags
Paint, oil, chains and nails,
And many other numerous things

That weren't meant for dinner pails.

Someday I'm sure to lose my grip
'cause I've stood about all I can.
But I'll carry my secret to the grave
In order to protect my man.
(Signed) O.B. Joyful

(As told by James L. Lopez.)

The Chester & Marilyn Rogers Story

My name is Chester Raymond Rogers. I was born November 29, 1915 in Kewanee, Illinois which is about 150 miles south of Chicago. This small town had three major industries: Walworth valves, Boss work gloves and Kewanee Boilers. [1]

My father's name was Clifford Raymond and my mother's name was Nellie Page. My father worked for Walworth for 10 years and then became a decorator of the interior of buildings. Finally he became a Manager of one of the buildings in Chicago, Illinois.

I graduated from high school in Kewanee. I worked as a machine parts Inspector for 2 1/2 years in Chicago. I was making $19 a week.

My uncle, John Rogers, was a boiler-maker in the Aruba refinery. I saw him when he was in the States on vacation in June 1937. He talked with me about getting a job in Aruba. He mentioned something like $150 a month, plus room, board and laundry. This sounded pretty good.

In October of 1937 I received a letter from the Personnel Office of The Standard Oil Company of New Jersey in New York. They offered me a position in the Mechanical or Operating Departments. I chose the Operating Department. I filled out and returned some papers they had sent me. Next I received a letter from New York in April, 1938 saying I was booked on a Grace Liner leaving New York in April. One day before sailing I received a telegram from the New York office canceling the Grace Line trip. I was instructed to report to the Personnel Office at the Everett Refinery in Boston with my papers (Visa, passport and police good conduct report).. At that time the contracts for new employees were for two years. If the employee quit before his contract was finished he had to pay his own fare home.

At the hotel, where I was staying, in Boston, I met Ed Hastings who was scheduled to go to Aruba at the same time. Ed was the brother of Ray Brown's wife, Mona. Ray Brown was the head of the Safety Department at the time.

Ed and I were spending our own money on our expenses and still

[1] *John Rogers, Chet's uncle, had previous service in Indonesia and South Carolina before coming to Aruba. He lived in Bungalow #314 in the colony. When he retired he had 28 years of service with Esso.*

hadn't been given any funds by the company. At the Personnel office we were informed that we were sailing to Aruba on the Tanker S/S *W. H. Libby* on April 20, 1938. Ed and I informed the Everett Personnel Office that we only had enough funds for two days so we had better be on the ship as scheduled.

On April 19, we were transported with our luggage to the dock and boarded the S/S *W. H. Libby*. Two other men also boarded for the trip to Aruba, but I can't remember their names. The ship didn't leave until April 21. The next day at sea the Steward asked for our papers. We told him that the New York Personnel Office had our papers. The Steward was very worried because the Captain would be very angry. With no papers we would not be allowed to land in Aruba. The Captain would have to return us to Boston.

The ship arrived in Aruba on Saturday April 29, but because of no room at the docks it had to anchor offshore of Venezuela as was the custom at that time. On Sunday April 30 the ship docked in Aruba at 10:a.m.

George Hemstreet, from the Aruba Refinery Personnel Office, came aboard the ship and handed each of us a large envelope and said "here are some things you need." These were the missing papers plus a check for our expenses getting to Boston, hotel, food, etc.

George delivered us and our luggage to the Lago Heights bachelor quarters. These were similar in layout to the s*heep sheds*, which were another type of housing available in those days. There were four buildings, each containing 12 separate rooms with a bed, desk, chest of drawers, and a chair. In the center of the square formed by these buildings there was a utility room with showers, toilets, and washbasins. The main difference between these quarters and the *sheep sheds* was that the Lago Heights quarters had framed screens in the windows that could be removed for cleaning or repairs. These buildings were intended to house employees from Surinam and British Guiana, who were being recruited for office clerks. The larger Bachelor Quarters were being finished in the colony and we were to be relocated to them as they became available.

There was a row of s*heep sheds* to the west of the new Bachelor Quarters that were being built. Howard Jenkins was one of those who did not want to move from the s*heep sheds* to the new Bachelor Quarters.

The eight new quarters each had forty rooms and was built in the shape of an "H" with the "legs" of the H pointing north and south toward

the sea. They were two story structures built on the hill above the dining hall.

At supper time a bus took the new arrivals to the dining hall. There I was introduced to Jim Bluejacket who was the Welding Department General Foreman and a well known personality.

On Monday morning after our arrival, the newcomers reported to the Personnel Office for their job assignments. Ed Hastings and I were taken to the commissary to get work clothes. Ed was assigned to the Hydro/Poly Plant area and I was assigned to #5 and #6 Combination Units. I was sent to see Paul A. O'Brien who was the Assistant Division Superintendent. He said I would start on the 4 p.m. to 12 midnight shift that day. After supper at 3:30 p.m. the newcomers walked from the dining hall, through the colony gate and to their units. George Wilkins was Shift Foreman and Ben Cobb was Assistant Shift Foreman. George took me to #3 and #4 Combination Units. There I was introduced to Tarpy Miller who was the Operator. He gave me strict instructions on what I was expected to do. Stay on the unit, learn the procedures, and keep alert to what was going on. My first job was to follow the experienced old Aruban fireman around and learn his job. I was given all of the tricks of the old fireman. These tricks have stayed with me to this day.

Later in that shift I was reassigned to #5 and #6 Combination Units. At that time one new foreign staff employee was assigned to each unit. As it turned out #3 and #4 already had two new foreign staff employees and #5 and #6 only had one.

"Doc" Ramsey was the operator on #5 and #6 Combination Units and a strict disciplinarian like Tarpy. I was working with Ramsey for four years.

Each unit had two furnaces, a Cross furnace and a Reducer furnace. The control house for both units sat between the units. Two reciprocating reduced crude charge pumps and two cross furnace charge pumps were on each side. The furnaces and the tar pumps were on the south side of the control house. One reactor for each of the two units sat on top of the control house. There was a door on the east and west sides and one on the south side facing the furnaces. The control panel with all of the measuring and controlling instruments was located inside the control house on the north side. The operating personnel were: the one Process Helper who did all of the odd jobs on the unit such as taking samples, cleaning up spills, etc; the Fireman (one for each unit) took care of the two furnaces for each unit such as changing burners as necessary

and keeping the temperatures steady at 830 - 840°F on the Reducer Furnace and 910 - 925°F on the Cross Furnace; one Houseman who read and recorded all of the meter readings on the panel; The Levelman (one for each unit), whose job was mainly outside, made sure all liquid levels were correctly maintained plus taking gravities on all products; one Assistant Operator and one Operator for the two units double checked the work being done by the others. The pressure on the Cross Furnace was maintained at 750 psig.

Shortly after I began working in the Pressure Stills I noticed that the young newcomers began to disappear. They apparently couldn't meet the standards set by the operators.

I moved into Bachelor Quarters #4 after about six months in Lago Heights. This was about the time I became an Assistant Operator. In the bachelor quarters, one bathroom was shared by each two adjoining rooms. Two persons were assigned to each room in BQ #4 and all were shift workers. At various times three men were assigned to each room in the other quarters when housing became a problem.

While I was Assistant Operator and on one 8:a.m - 4:p.m. shift the pressure on Cross Furnace of #5 unit exceeded 750 psig and climbed to 900 psig. It was impossible to move the outlet valve so the Operator shut off the fuel to the burners in the furnace. The Operator opened the blowdown valve to relieve the pressure to the blowdown drum in the Central Pumphouse. Next the feed pump was shutdown and the blowdown valve was closed. When the pressure dropped down below 750 psig the burners were put back into service; the feed pump was put back into service. In the investigation of the incident they determined that instead of opening the blowdown valve it was better to shut down one of the furnace charge feed pumps.

Four years later I became an operator and four years later I became an Assistant Shift Foreman. 18 months later I became a Shift Foreman. I became Maintenance Coordinator in 1950. Two years later I became Process Foreman. The Process Foreman determined what each unit was to produce and issued the orders to change operations according to demand.

I was on vacation in 1942 and was planning to go to college. However I found that I would be drafted if I was no longer working in Aruba. Aruba needed me and the government considered my job essential to the war effort. So I decided to postpone my further schooling and return to Aruba. The person in charge of the Draft Board where I was registered was very disgruntled when communications were received

from Standard Oil of New Jersey officially requesting that I be deferred.

When the German submarine sank the Lake Tankers at 1:30 a.m. on February 16, 1942 I was asleep in my room in B.Q. #4. It was my day off. The explosions awakened me. My windows faced the refinery and I could see bright light coming through the open shutters. But when I looked out the windows I could see no fires in the refinery. Upon further investigation I could see the flames were from just outside the harbor. I immediately went outside and looked seaward and saw all of the flames. The lights in the Guest House just west of the BQ came on and someone yelled "turn out the lights" and the lights immediately went off again. My friend Bill Eagan was hard of hearing and I woke him up to tell him about the fires. As we were on the porch we could see the tracer bullets from the submarine sailing over the refinery. From the seaward end of the porch we had a ringside seat of all of the activity.

Marilyn also remembers when the first Americans came and set up their camp near B. A. Beach. It seemed unusual that they were issued no ammunition for their rifles. She also remembers when the Queens Own Cameron Highlanders came in 1940.

Marilyn remembers when the German submarine torpedoed the Lake Tankers just outside the San Nicolas harbor on February 16, 1942. She remembers you could hear the survivors of the sunken Lake Tankers hollering for help in the water.

It so happened that the Holtane family was scheduled to go on vacation in February, 1942. After the submarine attack the company chartered a plane to evacuate the families wanting to leave because of the attack. The Holtane's were included in that schedule which led to some confusion. The company later initiated a policy that those families who were evacuated would not be allowed to return until after hostilities. As a result of this policy the Holtane family could not return for some time, so they were living in California.

Marilyn graduated from Lago High School in 1942. Marilyn and I were married in September of 1942 in California. Marilyn went to Chicago to live with Chet's sister and Michael was born there February 1943. Joyce was born in Chicago in September of 1945 and graduated from Lago High School in Aruba. Phil was born in Aruba in February of 1953. Kate was born in Aruba in October of 1966 We lived in Bungalow 512 and in 1954 we moved to Bungalow #251.

MARILYN'S STORY

Marilyn Holtane was born in Los Angeles, California on September

9, 1924. Her sister, Vivian Holtane Spencer, was born in Panama in 1921. In 1928-1930 Marilyn and her family lived in Laganillas, Venezuela. This was on the edge of Lake Maricaibo. She remembers seeing the fires when the oil on the surface of Lake Maricaibo burned and destroyed the Venezuelan workers housing on shore and on the lake sometime during that period.

Her father, Theodore "Ted" Holtane was a machinist and was working in Panama in 1921. He worked for Creole Petroleum in 1928 - 1930. In 1934 he transferred to Aruba. At the time there was serious shortage of housing in the colony. Lago had established a policy that new employees had to wait three years before they could bring their family. Mrs. Holtane, Marilyn and her sister, Vivian, arrived in Aruba in 1937. At the time Terry Smith was working in the Personnel Department. He met the Holtane family and helped them get to Bungalow #313. Marilyn and Vivian entered Lago High School in 1937. Vivian graduated in 1940 and Marilyn graduated in 1942.

In 1938 they moved to #812; in 1940 to #314 which their uncle, had occupied previously. Ted Holtane retired in 1950 and the family went to California.

RETIREMENT

Chet retired on 11/1/75 when he was 60 years old. He had planned to retire when he was 55 years old, but the company made him an offer he couldn't refuse so he stayed 5 more years. The Company allowed him to stay beyond his final retirement date to allow the children to visit over the Christmas holidays. Chet said he enjoyed the first month of retirement watching the packing of his household effects prior to leaving Aruba.

During his final years in Aruba Chet said he was vacation replacement for the various Superintendents around the refinery. Because of a lack of a college degree he could not be promoted.. The family finally departed January 4, 1976.

The Jimmie Rosborough Story

After graduating from Eureka College in 1928, Celma and I were married and moved to Chicago to work. Later that year, a friend of a relative of mine told me about a job possibility in Aruba through Standard Oil of Indiana. I interviewed shortly thereafter with a Vice President and was hired as a chemist to inspect the quality and quantity of oil as a result of a certain Cracking Process.

After the usual six to seven day trip to Aruba, I lived in a bungalow with several other bachelor foremen. No one in the refinery really knew what to do with me; they weren't too sure what I was doing or what my job really was all about. One of the men living in this first house was Ralph Watson - who later became a very close family friend along with his wife Beulah.

As a condition of employment, the Standard Oil of Indiana VP promised me a house shortly after my arrival and passage for my wife shortly thereafter. There were about 50 bungalows built at the time, and I was assigned to Bungalow # 128. Sometime during the winter of 1929, Celma took the train to New York, a small launch out to the tanker, and then had to climb a rope ladder to get aboard. The Captain wasn't too thrilled with passengers and so the trip to Aruba wasn't the best.

Celma was very popular. Bungalow 128 was part of "bird cage row" - a group of three room bungalows all occupied by young married couples. Lots of good times remembered and lots of Scotch. Pete & Eleanor Linster and Ellie & Belle Wilkins were part of this gang. A short time later, I remember buying a second hand Model A Roadster with a rumble seat for $150. One of the things I wasn't too popular for was the fact that I had a telephone (one of the very few in the Colony). The reason I had it was because I had to get up at all hours of the night to go out and "gauge a tank."

Basket ball was a big thing down there in the early days. I was on the Lab Team and played forward along with Grady Burnett. I remember a six foot center named Herman Bechtal. George LeMaire was also on the team.

Our first son, Dick, was born on 6-4-31 in the hospital by the refinery - a small one story building. Ralph & Beulah Watson sat in the hospital with Celma & me waiting for the birth. Beulah was a lab

technician at the hospital and was a big help. Dick was one of the first babies born in the Colony.

I remember a fire in the lab later in 1931 caused by a broken seal that allowed gas vapors to escape and then ignite. As I reached under the table to turn off the gas, my cloths caught fire. I ran out and jumped a six foot table before being covered with a blanket. The Chief Chemist, Dr. Reid, took me to the hospital in a pickup truck. Recuperation took almost four months and was very painful as not much was known about burns at that time.

When our second son, Jim was born on December 2, 1935, we moved to Bungalow # 418, a two bedroom house. Our third son, Don, was born on March 22, 1939. After the war, we moved to bungalow 553 where Susan was born on October 15, 1948. Our last four years were spent in Bungalow 1521

This circa 1976 picture attempts to capture the unusual sight of barrels set apparently helter-skelter in the hills in the back roads. Actually, they are carefully placed around small trees to keep the burros from eating their foliage until they are killed.

Photo courtesy V. D. Lopez

The Berend "Tex" Schelfhorst Story

My name is Berend (Tex) Schelfhorst. I was born in 1911 in Almelo, Holland. I attended Technical College, Amsterdam.

I was 22 years old when N. P. Schindeler and I sailed from Holland on the S/S *Ingrid Horn*. Nicholaas Schindeler and I were the last of plus or minus 150 Dutchmen that Standard Oil of New Jersey had hired as Foreign Staff. We were hired by O. H. Shelton in Amsterdam. This was by way of a trial to replace the American Foreign Staff. My rate was 4th Class Operator and I was placed in the Oil Inspection Laboratory. This laboratory was in a shed across the main road through the refinery and opposite the old ice plant.

Standard Oil of New Jersey wanted to operate the refinery with Dutchmen as was done by Shell Oil Company in Curacao. This was because the Dutch were paid lower wages than the Americans. As a Fourth Class Operator I was paid Fls. 1.20 per hour, American contractors Fourth Class Operators made $0.60 per hour. When the United States went off the gold standard the monetary exchange rate went from Fls. 2.50 to Fls. 1.80 to the dollar. This meant that I made more than the American 4th Class Operator. This went on for years as pay for each rate increased. (Fls 1.20 versus Fls 1.08) Finally the Company decided to place all foreign Staff on the dollar payroll. Apparently the Company policy was changed due to different circumstances such as needing jobs for displaced Company employees from other locations. You can understand that we were not popular and considered as price cutters. It took years to overcome this. We considered this as a typical example of mismanagement. We didn't know about this program at the time and neither did the Americans. All but 40 of the Dutchmen involved left the company after a few years.

After a 21 day trip we arrived in Oranjestad on March 31, 1933. Mr. Harold Atwood, Refinery Personnel Manager met us upon our arrival. He drove us to Lago in an open 1926 Ford.

The first American I was introduced to was Chief Gilbert Brook wearing his Sam Brown belt and a cowboy hat.

Nick and I were assigned to Room 16 in Bachelor Quarters No. 6. After that I went on shift work and a seven day week.

My first boss was Syd Tucker who immediately put me to work

sweeping the floor and washing the windows. (Imagine this as your introduction to your new profession.) Later I was assigned to perform the normal work in the Oil Inspection Laboratory.

After a year I was transferred to the Chemical Laboratory under Dr. James Reid. My colleagues there were: Dr. Broz, Tim Binnion, Art Opsahl, and Jim Rosborough.

In 1946 I was transferred to Equipment Inspection Group where I was involved in material testing and corrosion inspection.

I was also married in 1946 and lived in Bungalows 117, 383, and 126. My neighbors were Ferrow Himes, Lou Ballard, Fletcher "Paddlefoot" Dunbar, Bert Teagle, and Andy Tully.

The refinery guards were only stationed at the gates. I don't think there was any patrolling. They carried no club or weapons. There was also a Dutch Marine at the gates.

One of the entrances to the caves under the Lago Colony was fenced in and was opposite Bungalow #383 where I lived at one time.

The Baby Beach was located east of the new Esso Club and Lone Palm Stadium on the south coast of the island. It was very popular with the mothers of small children. The beach at Fontein was noted for the dangerous undertow. That area was a good place to go for a picnic. The Rodger's beach was more for older children and grown-ups and sailing; the sand on the beaches was crushed coral and sea shells. I remember Jim Downey and Miss Olsen (who married Bill Ewart). I remember the 4th of July celebrations in the early days and during the war years; the parades in the colony with the American Legion, the Dutch police, and the Dutch Marines; the baseball games at Lone Palm Stadium; the picnics at the picnic grounds near Baby Beach; the Community Band playing; all nationalities attending

I remember some of the doctors: Crismon, Borbonus, Hendrickson, and Kretschmer. De Ruyter, Waasdorp, Wevers, Bettink, Dreveling, Meiners.

The nurses I remember: Hayeze, Heffernon, Steirly, Mitchell, Wylie, Clark

The first hospital was located in the area between the dining hall and where the Cat Plant was located in 1945. It was rather simple and most of the patients were housed in one main ward. The boss was Dr. Sandvoss, a German. His assistant was Dr. R. C. Carrell. In 1936 or 1937 the new hospital was built north of the dining hall and in the area

where the spheroid gasoline tanks were later built. Before the hospital was completed it was decided that that space would have to be occupied by the spheroid tanks. Narrow (30") gauge railroad tracks were being used to move material to certain areas in the refinery and colony. The partially completed hospital was cut into three parts and was moved to its final location by means of specially laid tracks. Since the surveyor who laid out the path of the track liked to drink during his work the path of the track was not exactly straight.

Tony was the barber in the Esso Club Barber Shop. Most of us went to Vink's Barber Shop in the village. With some drinks it always took the whole evening. Later his nephew opened a shop in the colony, close to the elementary school.

According to my guess the *sheep sheds* would accommodate about 20 people. They were occupied from 1930 to the end of the war. They were later moved to Lago Heights for contract personnel, schools and clubhouses.

Our first club house burned down in June of 1942. Many of the firemen became very interested in the liquor storage room. I spent more of my time in the Marine Club and the Eagle Club. But during the war years I was often in the temporary club that was made up of Army Barracks that were assembled in a square with the center open to the sky. This was where our open air movies took place. Our new club was opened about 1950 between Rodger's Beach and Baby Lagoon. One of our long time, well known, bartenders at the club was "Courtney."

Our water system was a little complicated. We had salt water for the fire hydrants and toilets. We had brackish water for our showers. Fresh water replaced the brackish water in our showers later on. The brackish water came from a horizontal tunnel connected to the Mangel Cora well which was located above the Baby Lagoon. Rainwater filtered down into this tunnel and well when there were rains. This water floated on top of any salt water that might be in the bottom. The salt content varied between 400 and 1,000 parts per million of NaCl.

Fresh water was originally brought in by tankers that had been fitted with special tanks. It was said some of this water came from the New York area, notably the Hudson River. Later the evaporating plants in the refinery furnish some water and eventually we received water from the government-operated desalination plant at Balashi.

We had a bus system that had a bus circulating through the colony. The bus came by every half hour to the commissary. Mario Croes was

the bus driver. I think he was the brother of Frank Croes who later owned and operated the Esso Filling Station later located just outside the colony gate, at the entrance to San Nicolas.

Our Community Band leader was Jan Koulman. Some of the members of the band were Les Seekins, Leonard McReynolds, and Merle Fisk.

The Dance Band was called the “Funmakers.” Leader was Marvin Case; some of the members were Andy Hogue, Neil Spigt, Nick Schindeler

The Engineer's Club house was located just east of the “new” Commissary. The club had a woodworking shop that was well used by the members. They held monthly meetings with refreshments and had speakers for each meeting.

Cary Daly was the pusher of the Skeet Club. His able assistant was Laurence Baily.

I was a member of the Flying Club and flew all of the planes. We did stunts which today are considered reckless. Pushers of the club were Skippy Culver, Bill Ewart, Alex Shaw, and John McCord. There were sufficient foremen members so that maintenance of the De Vuijst Field and the planes was taken care of on the "government job" basis. (A term used to indicate that the work was done unofficially and not recorded on the "time sheets.") The original instructors were from the Army Air Force. Instruction was given at the Oranjestad Airport.

The Yacht Club provided Sunday afternoon sailboat races. Later there were more motor boats and water skiing. The pushers were Lewis MacNutt and Gene Goley.

The first flight of the KLM was made by the "Snipe." The plane landed at the beach in Sabeneta. The same landing field by later used by Viana's airplane. (Actually there were two planes involved. They were German-made, tri-motored Fokker’s.)

The first commercial airport was located where the present airport is located. Then in maybe 1936 this field was renamed the Dakota Field. This airfield is now called the Princess Beatrix Airport.

The original road, San Nicholas to Oranjestad, went through Frenchman's Pass and then along beside the airport area. I believe the route of the present road to Oranjestad was established about 1931-1932.

The original small gauge railroad for the phosphate mines was still

in place when the oil business came to Aruba. This railroad extended from the Lake Tanker docks up past the dining hall and into the colony. In the early construction days it was used to move material to temporary storage sites in the colony area. It was also used to transport foreign staff workers to and from the dining hall at noon time

The retirement parties used to take place at the picnic grounds, at the American Legion building, the golf club and later the Esso Club.

I was on the all-Dutch, "Woodpickers" bowling team. We had lots of fun and drank lots of liquor. We won the championship once.

The day Holland was invaded by Germany during WWII was May 10, 1940. All Germans and their allies were picked up by 5:00 A.M. and transported to Bonaire by Lake Tankers. The French cruiser *Jeanne D'Arc* appeared before Oranjestad and wanted to land Marines. Later they were permitted to land. Further that day lots of talking and listening to the radio. On the day of Holland's liberation I guess there was a lot of drinking! When the French Marines landed they didn't stay too long. I saw them.

The Highlanders stayed in Aruba until February 13, 1942. The American Coast Guard Unit from South Carolina arrived on February 11, 1942. The Scotties and the Yanks shared 8 hour guard duty for the two days before the Highlanders left.

The Americans installed anti-aircraft guns at various locations and one was on top of Number 3 Laboratory. They also installed foundations and bunkers for three 155 mm canon on Cerro Colorado Light House hill. The foundations and bunkers can still be seen on the hill. They also installed some mock guns on the outer reefs. When the American troops left in 1943 they were replaced by Puerto Ricans.

The Tank Farm Guards were recruited from non-operating department personnel. J. S. Harrison was the boss with two sub-commanders; L. S. McReynolds was one and the other was a Power House man. I was one of the guards. Winfield Wilson, Frank Roding and I don't remember who else were also members of this group. This temporary guard group lasted about 4 months. We had Skeet Club rifles and the .22 rifles from the old Gun Club. We had 4 hours on duty and 8 hours off duty.

WORLD WAR II

The German submarine U-156 attack Lago at 1:30a.m. on February 16, 1942. The Lake Tanker, *Oranjestad* was torpedoed and it sank. The Lake Tanker *Pedernales* was torpedoed and it caught fire. It did not sink

but drifted to the west and north of Oranjestad where it came to rest on the beach. A tug later brought it to the Lago's dry dock. There the badly damaged center section of the ship was removed and the bow and stern sections welded together in Lago's dry dock. It was sailed to a ship yard in the U.S where it was reconstructed

The tanker *Arkansas* had just arrived at the Eagle Pier in Oranjestad. It had just come out of dry dock in the United States and was still gas free. It was hit by one torpedo but because it was gas free there was no explosion. The torpedo exploded inside the ship but no one was injured. A second torpedo missed the *Arkansas* and landed on the Eagle beach. The next day a Dutch Marine officer was killed trying to disarm the torpedo.

The anti-aircraft shells fired from the deck of the German submarine did little damage. One shell hit crude tank #112, but only made a dent because the shell was a "dud" and it didn't explode. Another shell hit a house in the village but did not explode and no one was hurt.

Investigation of German Naval records after the war revealed that the 10.5mm deck gun on the U-156 was damaged when they fired their first shot at the Lago refinery. The crew failed to remove the gun muzzle plug before firing the gun. They only had anti-aircraft guns to do the actual shelling of the refinery. The ammunition was "dud"; that is it did not explode on contact with their target. The submarine had to retreat because of Allied action that began taking place.

Some days before the submarine attack Tony Federle caught an S. O. S. from a torpedoed ship in the Caribbean. This was the first indication that German submarines had penetrated into the Caribbean.

At daybreak on February 19, 1942, as later verified, two flares were fired by the American cruiser *Missouri.* At the time the cruiser sighted what they thought was a submarine just off of the eastern end of the island. Evidently no thought was given to where the flare casings would land. One went through the roof of the old club and did some damage to the Library. The second flare casing came through the roof of my room and demolished my desk about 1 foot from my bed. A new car battery was sitting on that desk and of course it was demolished too. From there the casing went through the floor, bounced when it hit the coral below and ended up in the radiator of a car parked in the community garage behind Bachelor Quarters 6. I was sound asleep at the time. It was quite a happening. I never saw the company make repairs so fast. At 4:p.m. my room was repaired and my desk was returned later.

Lots of people arrived and took away the damaged items. About 7:a.m. I heard from the Coast Guard that these were flare casings from the U. S. *Missouri*. At the lab when I told what I had been told nobody believed me and Sy Rynalski (head of the lab) called me a traitor. I was so damned mad that I never spoke to him again.

Later it was officially announced that it was indeed a misfiring from the U. S. *Missouri*. There were some American reporters still there in Bachelor Quarters #6 who had filed stories on the German submarine attack on the 16th. They jumped on me for a story on "how it felt to be alive." These stories showed up in American newspapers but they stated that these shells were from a German attack on the island. (Part of the confusion was caused by the spelling found on the shell casings. The word "Fuze" was interpreted as being the German word for "Fuse." Actually both spellings are used according Webster's dictionary.)

During the war we had to put black out shields to cover the windows. Headlights of the cars were painted blue with a 1 cm wide x 2 cm long slit of clear glass in the center of the lens for showing a very small light to drive down the road. The tail lights were also painted with blue paint and a small slit left for a very small red light to be seen at night.

There were shortages at the commissary during the war years of 1942 and 1943. The German submarines picked on our supply ships. Our spare tires were confiscated by the company and put in storage.

ROYAL VISITS

I saw Queen Juliana's first visit. The Women's Club decorated the Esso Club patio for her visit. My wife was assigned to catch gold fish in the Lecluse fish pond at their bungalow for use in a fish bowl. She also trimmed palm tree leaves used for decorations. I also saw Eleanor Roosevelt on her visit during the wartime.

ARUBA EXPERIENCES

- Russell Ewing had a special place for keeping his orchids. It was behind his bachelor quarters. John Moller and Mrs. Frank Roding also raised orchids.
- After the war we had classes from professors from the United States during the summer months. One of these was professor Atwood who taught public speaking. Another was professor Funda who covered the subject of corrosion. (These were instructors who were teaching the equivalent of college summer courses.)