

- Tom Hickey sold liquor in Bachelor Quarters #3. Later Otto Sauer (who was in charge of the Cold Storage section of the Commissary Department).
- Mrs. Gregersen (whose Danish husband was in the Engineering Department) sold Danish silver and Royal Copenhagen porcelain.
- Mrs. Frank Roding sold flowers. (Her husband was also in the Engineering Department).
- Al Pomeroy (Also in the Engineering Department) repaired batteries during the wartime shortage.
- Vicellio was the name of the pilot who flew Viana's plane which operated before KLM took over the route. Manual Viana was just becoming a recognized automobile mechanic and later Chrysler dealer in San Nicholas. He organized the first plane service we had for the island. He had a route between Curacao, Maracaibo and Aruba.
- John Pandellis was the fellow in the village who gave painting lessons to Lago Colony residents. He was from Dutch Guiana and his daughter, Lislot, worked in Fanny's clothing store.¹
- There was a boxing match between Hale Honey and Marty Smits about 1934 at the Esso Club. It was billed as a fight between the United States and Holland. Smits won on points.
- In the strike that was experienced by Lago in 1951 many of us from the offices were put in the operating department. I and Steve Sery, also from Engineering, were assigned to the Transfer Pump House reporting to Klaus Dillard. Don Evans, at the time the minister of the Lago Colony Church, came around with food, coffee, etc. Dillard collected much of these items and locked them away where we couldn't eat them up. Otherwise we had a good time.

During the early years the company furnished light bulbs, shower curtains, cutlery, etc. Later on all of this changed. I think it was after the war we were billed for water, electricity, telephones, and rent. Also during the early years we had ice boxes and block ice was delivered every day. We also had kerosene stoves and you called when you needed a supply of kerosene. Telephone booths were provided at various locations because everyone didn't have a phone in their home.

¹ *In 1985 there was a large painting of his on the wall in main hallway in the Colony Maintenance building. It was a beautiful moonlight scene of the Sea Grape Grove near the Colony gate which leads to the refinery.*

- The first golf club was at Savaneta and the fairways were on both sides of the road. After the game golfers had to pass through the village to get to the colony. It was always hard to avoid stopping for a couple of drinks. No one had to pay cash in the village. You signed a slip and paid your bill after payday once a month when you did the town. Fanny's Bar and the Moose Club were two places I remember did this. Taxis were on credit and the drivers collected on payday at the dining hall.
- My nickname, Tex, originated in the lab around 1935. This was because I greeted people with "good night" in the afternoon. Apparently they were making fun of my English. This name has been very convenient in later years.

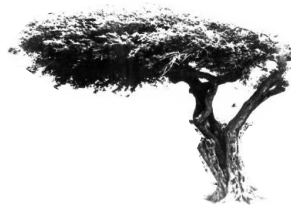
WORK EXPERIENCES

I remember how L. G. Smith, our refinery manager, used to make visits in the refinery. I also remember that he made visits to the Laboratory No. 3. Usually he visited with me because I was engaged unusual projects, such as . . .

- At the Chemical Laboratory I was often involved in rare jobs besides regular assignments. (Often these jobs were off the record). For example one time Art Upsahl and I tried to imitate Bols gin. Art got hold of some Juniper berries and with available alcohol we made several trial runs without much success. We did better making Lemon Gin. We used glycerin, gin, and lemon peels. The only thing was this drink made you sleepy.
- We also furnished the colony with a remedy for athlete's foot. The client provided some cold cream and we mixed it with some benzol and salicylic acid. It seemed to work very well.
- Then we had to check the rainfall in two locations in the colony. This was always good for a food trip.
- Many people brought in "gold" ore. Samples were mostly "Fools Gold," iron sulfide. We just stuck it in a muffle furnace. Real gold (seldom found) did not disappear. Also during the gold rush in Honduras we got a lot of this stuff from Frank Campbell and Hale Honey.
- During the war years I worked on aloë refining more or less for Casy Eman. He later built a factory in Oranjestad for producing aloïne which was used in medicines.
- To repair our sports planes which were a framework covered with linen we needed "dope." John McCord bought us lots of old film

from Eddy DeVeer. (He was the man who had the concession for showing all of the movies on the island.) By dissolving these films in a solvent we made a pretty good substitute.

- We also worked on making an artificial rubber to make large bait fish for Stewart Harrison, the Process Superintendent for the High Pressure Stills.
- A more scientific product development was the Vanadium recovery from flue dust, coke, ashes etc. Venezuelan crude contained many elements and Vanadium was badly needed to make stainless steel.



The Nicholaas Piebe Schindeler Story

My name is Nicholaas Piebe Schindeler. I was born on October 20, 1911, in Leerdam, Netherlands. Leerdam is famous for glass wares made there.

EDUCATION

I attended the Amsterdam Technical College for four years and graduated from college with a Mechanical Engineering Degree. In those days the year before you graduated you spent a year on four different work sites to gain some practical experience. Your supervisors grade you on your efforts and send a report back to the college. First I was in a boiler factory at the receiving end of a pneumatic riveter. Then to the Amsterdam Municipal Streetcar Company (never drove one), a sugar refinery (too much of a good thing), and the Dutch Army (compulsory). I remember in one location I was given a file and two pieces of 1/4" boiler plate. I was to file one edge each of the two pieces for a tight fit. When you held them together and held them up you should not be able to see light between the filed edges. You really had to earn your degree because there were not enough jobs for graduate engineers. Final exams were held once a year. You could take it every year until you made the required grade.

I graduated from college during the depression. Job opportunities were extremely rare. I completed my compulsory military service and the required practical experience and graduated in 1933. I was extremely lucky to receive a job offer from the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey to work as a chemist in the Aruba refinery. My major in college was mechanical engineering, but they took me anyway. When Tex Schelfhorst and I arrived in Aruba we were assigned to the Oil Inspection Laboratory. Our immediate bosses were Bob Ballard and Hank Despain. Syd Tucker was the big boss of that laboratory.

I visited the personnel manager, Harold Atwood once a week trying to get a transfer to work more in my line. After an interview with Elmer Wheeler, Instrument Department General Foreman, I did get a transfer to the Instrument Department in August of 1935. I replaced John Moller who was transferred to Process Design and Testing under Charlie Greene.

While in the Instrument Department I was co-author with Ed Hillstead of a manual which weighed about two pounds. This report was

titled "Fluid Rate of Flow Meters" which was used as a guide to computing orifice plate sizes and the coefficients to use with them. He also did considerable development work on flow measurement in general and the orifice holding ring used in the Aruba refinery.

This holding ring allowed the orifice plate to be fixed in the holding ring. This enabled a mechanic to center the orifice plate more accurately between flanges. The orifice taps were drilled in the holding ring. This could be done in the machine shop. It was not necessary to take the flanges to the shop for drilling and tapping. This in turn allowed orifice plates to be installed between any flanges that were suitably located for accurate measurement.

GOING TO ARUBA

I knew Herman Cousy before he went to Aruba. Martin Smit was someone I knew in Holland who arrived after me. Tex Schelfhorst and I were interviewed by O. H. Shelton in Amsterdam. We traveled together on the *S/S Ingrid Horn* and the trip took 21 days. We arrived in Aruba on October 31, 1933. We were met by Harold Atwood, Lago's personnel manager.

In 1937, being on vacation in Holland I took a job as manager of "Netherlandsche Minneapolis-Honeywell Co.", Brown Instrument Division. Not being able to forget Aruba I resigned my position in 1938 and came back to Aruba a married man.

We had a 23 day trip on the *S/S Queen Mary* to New York and the *S/S Flora* from there before arriving in Aruba on March 25, 1938.

JOB MEMORIES

- Ans and I lived in Bungalows 206, 204, 355, 426, and finally 76 when we lived in the Colony. Ans was 19 when she arrived in Aruba.
- Padu Lampe was about 15 years old in 1933. He was a self taught pianist. He was a popular artist and wrote and recorded many Aruban songs.
- Some of the ministers who served in our Lago Community Church were: Paul Rishell from 1934 to 1940; William Bigart from 1940 to 1943; Percy Dawe from 1944 to 1948; and with Don Evans arriving in 1948.
- Emmy Suylen was the old time Dutch accountant who worked in the Instrument Department. He was one of those who lived in the *sheep sheds*. He was a nephew of Pastor Hendricks of the Catholic Church in Savaneta. He was hired locally but later became an expatriate

employee. He kept the utility records (primarily for Bill Ewart.) Around 1936 he transferred to the time keeping section in the Accounting Department and was assigned to work for Leon Rought.

In the Instrument Department he had a contest one day with Ben Whittpen. Ben operated a mechanical calculator and Emmy did it all in his head. He won the contest. It was amazing how he could go down a long list of four column figures and come up with a total in very short order. He left Aruba in 1938 or 1939 and died in the 1950's.

SOCIETY MEMORIES

- Our maids were mostly from the British Islands. They were paid about \$1 per day during the 30's and 40's. Later they made a little more.
- The Lago Community Council came into being in 1945.
- Ella Poole was our next door neighbor from 1943 to 1946. She played bridge at night and took a nap in the afternoon. She was always complaining about our kids keeping her awake. One story is that one afternoon an electrician was working on an electric line on a post near her house. He was apparently in a happy mood because he was whistling away. Ella asked him to stop whistling because it was disturbing her sleep.
- We had a party one night and it was in the wee hours before we got to bed. Early the next morning Ella called and complained that our kids were making so much noise that she couldn't sleep. I said, "Ella they are keeping us awake too!"
- It is a Dutch custom to visit friends on their birthday. In Aruba, you had to prepare for it. The women often went in the morning but the men went after supper. You could count on having 20 or 30 people at night. They always brought birthday presents. These gatherings could wind up a little noisy at times. These parties were not limited to the Dutch. American friends also participated and not only during the war. Actually we had bigger and noisier parties after the war.
- There was a small group that provided the music for dances that were held at the Club. The members of the band varied as new employees arrived and others left. I particularly remember one group because I have photograph of them.

The members of the 1935-1936 Pan Am Funmakers as far as I remember were:

Marvin Case - 1st Saxophone, Clarinet, Leader

Jim (Squeekie) Norcom - 2nd (Tenor) Saxophone, Trombone

James Dickie of All American Cables - 3rd Saxophone, Trombone
Neil Spigt - 1st Violin
Nick (Piebe) Schindeler - 2nd Violin
Marty (Pansy) Smit - 3rd Violin
Bill Stambaugh and Freddie Maltin (Of Saybolt Lab) Piano
Jack Schnurr - Tuba
Andy Hogue - Drums

I forget the name of the young paleface who played the banjo and
was our Crooner

OUR FAMOUS RECORD

Our group of young Dutch bachelors has many memories of our happy go lucky existence. One of them was that somehow we wound up with a record player but only one record. On one side was "The Beer Barrel Polka" and the other side was another piece that was popular at the time. So we alternated playing first one side and then the other. When the record became noisy because of scratches we would apply liberal portions of Vaseline Hair Oil. No one would give up and buy another record.

WORLD WAR II

All Dutchmen who had served in the armed forces in Holland as conscripts were called to duty on September 1, 1939 when WWII broke out. They were stationed at Savaneta where the government kept a contingent of marines under Captain Van de Spek. All of those called up became "marines" regardless of the branch of service they had served in as conscripts. And they retained their rank that they had when they had completed their service as conscripts in Holland. So I became a Marine Sergeant in spite of the fact that I had served with the Royal Engineers. Lago-ites who became sergeants were: John Moller, Airie Gravendyk, Karel Egers, John Eeltink, Fritz "Herman" Cousy (who always claimed he was a lieutenant, but actually wasn't), Bill Koopman and perhaps others. The only lieutenant we had from Lago was John Hamelers. John ten Houte Delange and Bouten were our only Lago corporals. Also from Lago we had several privates: Paul Gordijn, Bart Kriek, Herman Tielen and others.

I was lucky to be released after almost a year at the request of Lago because they needed people in the Instrument Department. Bill Koopman and John ten Houte De Lange were also released. Most of the others stayed in the service for five years and some advanced to be officers.

In 1941 when I was released from military service I returned to the Instrument Department. In 1944 I was transferred to the Engineering

Department. Next I was transferred to the instrument engineering squad, then later went into the coordinating group.

Piet de Vuijst was a Shell lake tanker captain who was a reservist since he had 6 years of service as a Navy Air Force officer. He became head of the coastal defense in Aruba when the war broke out. After the invasion of Holland, on May 10, 1940, he became a military commander. His promotion came about when Captain Van de Spek, who was in charge of the Dutch Marines, bungled the job of capturing the German ships off West Point in May of 1940.

The Dutch Coast Guard had a few small ships at their disposal. I would classify these ships as pilot launches and one small tug. This latter vessel had a 37 mm gun and did shoot at a surfacing submarine. This wasn't the submarine that made the attack on February 16, 1942. In this case Commander De Vuijst was not on board the vessel at the time. I don't remember him receiving a medal but it is quite possible. The Dutch were and are very generous in bestowing medals, frequently for little or no accomplishment, but just for faithful service.

HOUSING

Houses were originally assigned through what I would call a "patronage" system. It was very important whom you knew. In 1937 Lago developed a formula in which service and salary played a major role.

Houses were at first "renovated" on a four year basis. Later this became a five year basis with bathrooms and kitchens given an extra paint job after 2-1/2 years.

Modifications were allowed (extra rooms, screened in porches, patios, etc.) originally at the occupant's expense. The so-called improvements were estimated, when the occupant left that improved residence and the cost was charged to the new occupant. Later these improvements were capitalized and the rent was increased by 1% of the capitalized amount per month.

The fresh drinking water was originally brought in by tanker from the Hudson River. Later we augmented this with evaporated seawater from #1 and #2 Evaporating Plants in the refinery. When the Dutch government expanded its Desalination Plant at the Spanish Lagoon we discontinued importing drinking water and used government plant water exclusively.

The salinity of the Mangel Cora brackish water well varied widely, depending upon rainfall but we kept the salinity to about 1000 parts per

million by injecting fresh water into the supply line to the colony. Brackish water was used in the showers and lavatories. Salt water was used in the toilets.

Large appliances and cars could be ordered through the commissary but the commissary only acted as receiving agents for the orders. They were handled through the Storehouse and the New York Purchasing Department. This meant that discounts normally given to the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey applied and also the goods were shipped cheaper.

My last three years, 1964 to 1967, in Aruba I was placed on special assignment answering directly to the President and Vice-President of Lago. My assignment was to get rid of employees in a way that was acceptable to our management, our employees, the Union, the government and the population of Aruba. One of the systems I devised and developed was "Job Placement." I had to find jobs for people on our payroll anywhere in the world, help them to get to that place and give them a "golden handshake." In this function, in 1965, I received a letter (forwarded by the New York office) written by Arnold Hanson who was president of Gettysburg College. He (Arnold Hanson) was looking for an engineer but since they could not afford to pay much he thought he might interest someone who was semi-retired. Frankly, I was interested myself, but Bud Murray would not let me go, at least not with a "golden handshake."

I wrote letters to Red Ward, at that time teaching drafting at the University of Copenhagen in Denmark, and Al Clark who was building an airport in Athens, Greece. Both Red and Al had left Lago under the 50-15 program where they had been supervising engineers in the Engineering Department. Both wrote back that they were interested so I told them whom to contact and wrote Arnold Hanson a letter to inform him. Incidentally I don't know whether you remember Dr. Hanson. He was in Aruba on a sabbatical, as a consultant to Lago, to teach our local union how to behave like a union. Anyway when I felt I was ready to leave Lago in 1967, I wrote Arnold Hanson a letter just to find out whether he knew of any vacancies in higher education for whatever I had to offer. Much to my surprise I received his reply in one week telling me that the job at Gettysburg College had never been filled yet and suggested that I come over to discuss it and case the joint. I did, and I liked the place, they made me an offer I could not refuse, and, after some arm twisting, I convinced Bud Murray that Lago could operate without me. Actually, I did not pick Gettysburg; Gettysburg picked me.

After Ans and I made a trip around the world in exactly 80 days I started here on ground hog day, February 2, 1968, and I had a second career here until my mandatory retirement September, 1981.²

²*Piebe and Ans had seven children, all born in the Lago Hospital in Aruba. They were:*

- *Hans - born 1943 - lives in mountains in California*
- *Marie Anne - born 1944 - lives in St. Martin and Ft Lauderdale*
- *Tom - born 1947 - Lives in Brisbane, Australia*
- *Ted - born 1947 - lives in Mobile, Alabama* -----
- *Patricia - born 1952 - lives just outside of Boston, MA*
- *Ronald - born 1958 - lives in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida*
- *Linda - born 1959 - lives in West Palm Beach, Florida*

The Darlene Schlageter Story

My father and Bob's father went down to Aruba in 1929. My father's name was Koepke. I went down to Aruba with my family. My mother and I arrived in Aruba during March of 1930. You had to double up with somebody else for a while until your house was finished. We lived with a family for the better part of two months until our house was ready.

I can't recall the name of the people we stayed with. They didn't stay in Aruba long. She didn't like it there. I think our house was No. 74.

I was gone from Aruba twice. In 1935 I went back to the States and got a job with the company in New York. It was a temporary position. I decided I didn't like New York. I didn't stay and I came back in the latter part of 1935.

We were married in the fall of 1936 in Ida and Coy Cross's home. My parents weren't there. I have a boy and a girl. Gary was born in 1945. These days Gary and his wife both work about five miles due east of here. So I do get to see them very often. Since they live a short distance away and they have baby sitters I don't take care of the kids too often. But they often come over and stay with me for a while.

RETIREMENT

Bob and I bought a small mobile home in Arizona. I go there during the winter time and I am here in Denver in the summer time. Arizona has such a wonderful climate.¹

¹*Apologies to Darlene and Bob, but the foregoing is all the story that survived for telling here. There likely was more to it, but it is buried amidst the Byzantine-like, myriad of memorabilia, notes, tapes, books and petrified candy left behind by the passing of J. L. Lopez, and we could never hope to find it before another twenty years goes by and we don't finish this book.*

The Thelma & Bertram Schoonmaker Story

Bertram ("Schoony" or "Bert") Schoonmaker was born on January 19, 1905 in New York City. He was educated at Suffield School, Connecticut, Peddie in New Jersey and Culver Military Academy in Indiana.

He went to Paris in 1923 on a vacation with his mother and decided to stay. After a period working with American Express, he joined the French office of the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey and remained with them.

My name is Thelma Schoonmaker. I was born in New York in 1912, and moved to Paris with my family in 1926. I attended St. Agatha School in New York City, the American High School in Paris, the University of Berlin, and the Sorbonne.

Schoony and I met in Paris. We were married in the American Cathedral there in 1935. In 1937 we were transferred to the Cie. Algerienne des Petroles Standard in Algiers. Our first son, Philip, was born in Paris in 1937. Our first daughter, Thelma, was born in Algiers in 1940. Shortly thereafter the children and I were evacuated to the United States when France fell. Schoony remained in Algiers until a year later when he was brought to the United States by the Company. The Company then sent Schoony to Aruba in March of 1941. The children and I went to Aruba on the Grace Liner, *Santa Paula*, in June, when housing became available. In those days the Grace Line deposited its Aruba passengers in Curacao. The children and I traveled on the "Snipe" KLM plane which I swear "flapped" its wings. I will never forget the sinking feeling I had when the plane landed at the little old airfield, and I saw the cactus wasteland. The old building was still standing when we left Aruba.

It was used as canteen and headquarters for the Air Force during the war, and there were some wild parties there.

We lived in Bungalow #417; near "five corners." The Eaton's lived on our left after the Forrest's. Behind us lived the John Mechling's, Van Oyen's, Daley's, Salzmans, and Nixon's among others. Two teachers who came down on the *Santa Paula* with me later married Lago men.

Schoony was always in the Personnel Department even after we

came back to the states in 1955. He worked in Rockefeller Center until he retired in 1960. He was active in bowling, Boy Scouting, amateur dramatics, the Anglican church in San Nicholas, and typed the Pan-Aruban for a long time. He loved scouting and worked very closely as Assistant Cub Master with Jack Opdyke from 1945 until we left in 1955. We went camping at Dos Playas and Krystal Mountain a lot.

After the initial German submarine attack on Aruba on February 16, 1942, Theresa Mertens and I took over the Nursery School with the help of Mrs. Grape, and it was kept going, first on the playground, then at my house with Ruth Watkins as my partner. In between, the school was held at Elizabeth Johnson's house when Nellie Johnson and I taught together. It was great fun, and most of the colony kids were our pupils. The Watkins and Mertens have remained fast friends of ours. Jim Watkins and my Noel were born just a month apart at Lago Hospital, and I visited the Mertens in Belgium when I went there last May. When we left Aruba, Jean Leary became Ruth Watkins' partner.

The Pan-Am Club first opened on New Year's Day in 1930. The name was changed in 1932 to the Esso Club when Standard Oil Company bought the refinery. This is the club that was burned down on June 7, 1942.¹

Schoony was a devoted scout volunteer, and spent many days working with the Cub Scouts. I remember one camp at Dos Playas, when it poured and several scouts, whose families were away, spent the rest of the night at our house when the camp was broken up because of flooding. Unfortunately, the campfire, over which the boys had been hovering, had been made with creosoted logs. When the kids flopped at our house about 2:00 a.m., they didn't bother to wash up or undress, and the next morning beds and walls were black with creosote smoke.

As an aside our daughter, Thelma, and Janet Opdyke were Den Mothers of two of the dens of the Cub Pack. They were probably the youngest and least qualified. They were 13 years old and did a good job! Two Den Mothers were needed for 16 little boys who wanted to be a part of the Cub Pack. No Adult mothers were available!

Queen Juliana made two visits, one in 1946 and one in October, 1955. We were at the reception for the first one, and during a lull in the

¹*The old Bowling Alleys (8 of them) were added to the west side of the old club in about 1939. Of course they were burned when the Esso Club burned down. The new Bowling Alleys were built in 1942 as a separate structure near where the new High School Building was later built.*

official presentations, Thelma declared in a loud voice that "She isn't the real Queen, she isn't wearing a crown." Francoise Mertens was one of the little girls presenting flowers.

When Prince Bernhard came in January 23, 1950, the Nursery School was asked to present a gift for Princess Maijke, who was of nursery school age at the time, and we ornamented a tea cloth with ironed on crayon pictures, Bonnie Von Montfrans made the presentation.

I also vividly remember how impressed I was when Eleanor Roosevelt came.

As many brides and grooms often could not get their families to Aruba for the ceremony, Colony women often filled in. I served as witness and Maid of honor when Dave Mortlock was married, Thelma was flower girl - and I was Hans Wolf's "Mother."

Jack Opdyke is the authority on the Caves: I visited them with him. The entrance is near Bungalow # 1557.

Colony women who did not leave the island after the submarine attack had a wonderful time during the war years. There was hardly an evening when there was not a dance at some camp or other, and convoys of cars and/or jeeps took us out to help keep morale strong. The daddies took over baby-sitting. Of course, all homes were open to servicemen at all times, and we all had our special friends. I remember worrying that there would be no presents for the children one Christmas, as the tankers were only bringing the most necessary supplies, and, on the great day, my kids were swamped with gifts that the soldiers had brought in. Many of the children were "mascots", and Philip and Thelma were always being whisked off to spend the day somewhere with the troops. They had a great time, Phil even had a Lieutenant's uniform complete with insignia.

The Queen's birthday was always an occasion for a parade. As a Girl Scout Leader, I took part as did Ruth Kilpatrick, Petey Wiley, Eileen Roff and Thelma Smith.

Speaking of Scouting; the Girl Scouts ran two very successful summer camps, one at Palm Beach, and one at Balashi. There was also and international camping experience with the Padvinsters both in Aruba and in Curacao. I was very happy to be instrumental in getting the Girl Scouts Thanks Badge in 1950 for Ruth Kilpatrick, who really devoted herself to Scouting, and was a marvelous organizer.

The Alexander Huntly & Esther Rosaline Shaw Story

Alex was born in 1895, raised and educated in Alness, Scotland. He was a young man when he immigrated to the United States with his mother, and brother, Hugh. Alex later became an American citizen, and they settled in Seattle, Washington. His mother spent a year with Alex and Esther in Aruba.

He worked in the Salt Creek oil fields of the Standard Oil Company of Indiana. The Salt Creek fields are now owned and operated by the American Oil Company. He has two patented inventions, and he was working on a couple more ideas.

ESTHER

My maiden name was Roe. In 1992, my brother received notice of a limited edition of a biography of the Roe family, going back to our English forbearers, and I have asked him to order a copy for me. I do not know when the family came to this country. At the time of the civil war, a family of eight brothers lived on a plantation in Virginia. Four of the brothers joined the Confederates; four joined the Northern forces. My paternal grandfather, John Wesley Roe, joined the North. When the war was over he married his childhood sweetheart, Rosaline. They had four children, my father being the eldest.

I was born on in the little mining town of Creede, Colorado. Not long before, in August of 1876, Colorado had been admitted to the Union as a state. My father, a state senator, was reported to have introduced and passed more bills than anyone. Although he was creative and talented as a politician, my father's interests were not shared by mother. When he was asked to run as a representative of the state of Colorado, my mother put her foot down. She said it was either politics or the family. He couldn't give up his two small children, so he shelved his ambitions.

He left politics, and he pursued gold mining and other ways of making a living. After the Indians had been moved to their reservation, new land in Colorado was opened for settlement. My father took a claim. Claims were handled quite simply then. If, for seven years a man worked seven acres of his choosing, it was his. Nothing was easy. Settlers had a hard lot. Cattlemen and sheep men were at odds, but they had a common enemy in the settlers.

My father decided everyone needed bacon, and we raised Duroc Jersey hogs. The nearest neighbor was three miles away and there were no schools or telephones. My father got the community together to build a one-room school and hired the wife of one of the settlers as a teacher. After a sudden blizzard that almost froze my five year old brother and me to death, my mother determined she would rather have ignorant children than dead ones. Ordering school books from her sister from Grand Junction, she taught us herself.

Eventually I graduated from the University of Colorado in Boulder. I first met Alex at a dance in Casper, Wyoming.

ARUBA MEMORIES

Alex arrived in Aruba during the week of June 16, 1929. He was Assistant Superintendent of the Power House, Electric and Instrument Departments during the days before the Electric and Instrument Departments became a part of the Maintenance Department. Bill Ewart, the Superintendent, had Alex's deepest admiration and respect.

When Alex went on his first vacation in 1932, he and I were married in Casper, Wyoming. In Aruba we lived in Bungalow Number 320 until 1953. The George Mathews' lived on one side of it, and the Gordon Owens' lived on the other. The George Royer's lived across the street.

Alex, Igor Broz and Bob Dorwart built a telescope, grinding the lens, and constructing it from scratch. It was installed in their front yard of Bob's house. The Venezuelan coast could be seen clearly through it. I do not remember what became of it.

The only wedding that I attended in Aruba was that of my cousin, Lydia Varney. My paternal grandfather, John Wesley Roe, was Lydia's great grandfather. Lydia was a Lago School teacher for two years. She and Jim Lilly planned to be married when she had completed her school year contract, but Jim was transferred to Venezuela. They wanted to be married before he left so that Lydia could join him as his wife at this new assignment. While Alex and Esther were taking them to Oranjestad for their civil ceremony, their car broke down. Jim and Esther pushed, but to no avail. Alex finally managed to obtain another car. Jim and Lydia arrived just as the Dutch officials were leaving. The ceremony was performed in Dutch, the language of the marriage license.

WAR MEMORIES

During the War, when any light that could be seen 10 feet way was considered a menace, Alex contrived a way to black out the bungalows.

In those days we did not have air-conditioning. Our windows had a system of wooden louvers that were operated somewhat like the mini-blinds so popular in the southern part of the U.S. The window frames had a vertical center post. The wooden louvers were mounted in the two halves and could be operated separately. Under normal conditions the louvers were pushed up to close the window. Each home was provided with 3/8" thick wedge shaped pieces of wood to keep the louvers in the closed position.

Alex cut the two vertical side strips that supported the middle of the horizontal "leaves" of the louvers. The upper half was always closed at night. He designed a curved hood of plywood that fitted over the lower half of the louvers. Air could always circulate through the open lower louvers. In the daytime, we opened the upper half of the louvers.

At the beginning of the war the Lago management said that all women and children who wanted to leave could leave. If they did, they could not return until the end of the war. I chose to stay. I felt I could be of more use in Aruba than I could in the States. I do not remember just what I did, but I was always busy.

On the north side of the Colony, the tank farm where all the aviation gasoline was stored consisted of squat, elliptical shaped tanks. Some people called them the "Tomato Patch." I called them the "Pumpkin Patch." These were silver at the beginning of the war. The tanks were painted black during the war because they were too visible to surfaced submarine attacks on moonlit nights. If one shell hit one tank, a good part of the colony would be flooded with burning gasoline. The residents of the colony were all aware of this, and everyone had a plan for the anticipated attacks.

One day, the dreaded announcement we hoped would never come was made: "Prepare for an attack." Alex was at work in "the plant," as he called it. I tried to think of anything I could do in preparation. I took a shower, put on fresh clothes; new shoes in case I had to cross the sharp coral, put my passport in my pocket (so I could be identified if I were hit by a stray bullet) and waited. The attack never came. I have often wondered why I thought it was so important to be clean if I did not think I would survive.

During the war our food supply was precarious. If a ship carrying our food and water from New York were sunk we would be in dire straits. I did not want to put in a big store of food so I collected several cans of "Klim." I then got together several containers of fresh water which I changed every few days. I always kept a pitcher of prepared

Klim in the refrigerator. Alex was very fond of it. I thought that in the event we were without food or water the Klim would give us nourishment and liquid to sustain us for several days.

LIFE IN THE COLONY

Alex was one of the founders of the Aruba Flying Club and bought the first private plane used there.

When he first landed in Aruba, his behavior became erratic and he became exceedingly nervous. Dr. Carroll diagnosed it as thyroid trouble. Esther's uncle, a surgeon in Denver, had gone to school with Dean Lewis who was the head of Johns Hopkins hospital in Baltimore. A letter was written to Dean. After receiving Dean's answer, Alex and Esther went to Baltimore, and Alex underwent an operation for toxic thyroid condition. Lewis said it was the worst case he had ever seen, and it would take a year for Alex's system to adjust. Not long after Esther and Alex returned to Aruba, Alex began having severe stomach pains that had him walking the floor for hours. He returned to John's Hopkins where he had an operation for stomach ulcers. He enjoyed good health from that time.

Our maid Philopia was impressed by Alex's name, Alexander Huntly Shaw and named her first baby after him. She said she wanted him to have a distinguished name.

Alex died Sunday afternoon, October 15, 1953, in an automobile accident in Aruba. He was 58 years old. Apparently he had been doing some work on his plane at the De Vuijst Field of the Aruba Flying Club and was driving home on the road from this airport. He was apparently driving fast and turned over as he was making a turn. He died instantly. He is buried in the cemetery in Oranjestad.

Bill Ewart was very helpful in arranging my affairs in Aruba before I left in 1953.

LIFE AFTER ARUBA

After leaving Aruba Esther decided she wanted to travel. She attended Duke University for a semester to learn more about places she wanted to see on what a two year trip around the world in 1956.

The Harold Lincoln Sholes Story

My name is Harold Lincoln Sholes. I was born on May 13, 1915. I graduated from Manning High School, Ipswich, Massachusetts in 1933. The next year I signed on the *S/S Nantucket* training vessel harbored in Boston, Massachusetts for a two year course to learn seamanship. That winter of 1934 I met my wife Anna Dyer. She was attending a college in Boston, Massachusetts.

Upon graduation from the training course in 1936 I went on to seek employment and my first job was with the United States Lines in New York. I shipped out with them as an Able Seaman. The ship was a combination passenger and freight vessel. I was dissatisfied with the life and overall environment and I said well I am going to try something different. So after two months of that I went back home and looked around for something else that might interest me. While I was a cadet on the training vessel one of the officers had been a Captain with the then Colonial Beacon Oil Company which also operated out of Boston. Having a lot of influence over the cadets, he kind of pushed the oil tanker business at us and we heard a lot about it. At that time he had retired from the Colonial Beacon Oil Company and had taken a job as an instructor the training vessel *Nantucket*, which I had recently joined. I remembered the efforts on his part in talking with the cadets to convince them to go into the oil business. Of course he was kind of biased in that line and I realized that it was more or less inevitable. So I said well I'll try the oil tankers myself.

I went down to the shipping office that Colonial Beacon had which was actually in Everett at the refinery there. Standard Oil Company of New Jersey had, shortly before that, bought out the Colonial Beacon Oil Company. So I actually signed on with Standard Shipping Company. They were using the old *Beaconoil*, *Beaconhill*, and several other vessels whose names included *Beacon*. However the vessel I happened to board was the *E. G. Shuebert* which was in port at that time. So I joined the *Shuebert* as a seaman. At that time I was eligible, having a license from the Coast Guard, to sail as a 3rd Officer. However there was no berth open at that time. Just because you have license doesn't mean that you can always obtain that position. I sailed on the *S/S E. G. Sheubert* for a trip or two, and I applied for an officer's berth with the Company. And while I had hoped to receive such a berth as soon as possible at the time, it was not immediately available.

My first Third Mate's assignment was given to me after the completion of the International Life Boat Races in the summer of 1937 in New York harbor. I had just completed a vacation which all of the life boat crew had received in appreciation of our efforts. At the completion of my vacation I received a Third Mate's assignment on the *S/S Cerro Ebano*. This was one of the tankers that had recently been purchased, along with several sister ships, from the Pan American Oil Company. She had just joined the Esso fleet. At that time it was called the Standard Shipping Company and was a part of the Esso fleet.

As a matter of fact I have a couple of pictures taken of the ship at sea on the way to Scotland. I believe we had loaded in Aruba before going to Scotland.

At that time there was no "International Union" of officers. The Company maintained its own seniority policy and as you might expect the individuals were very conscious of promotions. If I met "Charlie Brown," and here he was Second Mate and I was still Third Mate, even though I had more service than he did. I went into the office and complained.

When two Esso ships met at sea it was unusual if they knew who the Captain of the other ship was. Radio officers were not allowed to have private conversations with other ships. It is illegal to have such conversations. As a matter of fact the only radio traffic allowed had to be of a business nature. The idea was to keep the airways free for emergency communications.

A very good friend of mine, Captain Black, who used to live about a mile from here, worked from the Keystone Shipping Company. He is retired now. This was the old Molasses Line. I don't know where we ever got that name. They used to run creosote out of Trinidad. This was from the big tar fields that Trinidad still has. I remember later on when I was Captain he and I met at sea. He was going one way and I was going the other. We passed close enough that I could see the name of his ship. I tried to call over from the bridge, but the voice wouldn't carry. So I tried to call him on the radio telephone. He wouldn't carry on a conversation because it wasn't of an emergency measure, and it wasn't of a business nature. Just socializing is not permitted for a very good reason. You could ask him what weather he experienced overnight or you could say we are doing all right over here, but that is all. One day I met him down at the grocery store several months later, and I said, "I tried to call you because I was just coming from home." And he said, "I wouldn't dare to. The radio officer is required to initiate the call and

when you finish you have to hand the microphone back to him. They are very strict about socializing by radio between ships. And I can understand why. If you had everybody shooting the bull all the time by radio you would be cluttering up the airways. Somebody might need help and that is something you always have to be alert for. Somebody out there 10 miles from you or 100 miles from you might need help. You never know. It might be fire, collision, man-over-board.”

I can't say now what was the name of the second ship that I served on. I was on the *Esso Bayway*, the *A.C.Bedford*.

I remember when John D. Rockefeller died I think it was the summer of 1936. I remember we got a message at sea and the message read: "If safety permits John D. Rockefeller, founder of Standard Oil of New Jersey, will be buried at 11:00 o'clock on such and such a day. We suggest you recognize this by stopping the engines, ceasing all work for one minute beginning at 11:00 o'clock." (When such messages are received it is left up to the Captain to decide if it is safe. Safety is always very important.) You know Rockefeller was always noted for the fact that he was always giving away money. And we all thought, "Oh! Boy! I wonder if he left us any money!" But you know we never got a dime! Naturally you couldn't stop your engine if you were in a harbor, or about to dock. You have to use a little common sense. In our case we were able to do this. So we stopped all engines, ceased all work and I can't remember whether we tooted the whistle or not to let all other vessels know of our observing this courtesy. Of course the ship kept on moving. You can't stop the forward movement of the ship just because you turn off the engines. I thought that was interesting. Imagine at that time Esso had 80 ships and all of them stopping their engines at the same time all over the world. I knew of 80 or 85 ships that were in the fleet at that time.¹ Now there were a lot of ships that were under the Panamanian flag and other flags. And then there were comings and goings. After World War I there were a lot of German ships, like the Reidaman Line. A lot of them came over to the American fleets as reparation for World War I. They were still running a lot of those ships. A lot of them were diesel ships. These ships were being manned by German crews and had German officers. At the beginning of the war the company took off the German crews and replaced them with American crews. They had to. The sad part was that all of those men were good Esso employees, and would have done well, but naturally they couldn't let them operate these ships because, after all, they were German and they were loyal to

¹ According to records there were 135 ships in the Esso Fleet.

their country. You gotta be.

That's how I got into the Navy. Mr. R. L. Hague was a big man for uniforms. That was another thing he was remembered for. R. L. Hague was the manager of the Marine Department at the time. He thought we looked kind of sloppy running around in sport shirts and old clothes. He felt we looked like we were all out on a party or something. He wanted all of his officers to look like officers. I still have my hat in there. So anyway he came forward and he got permission from the company to buy every officer one complete set of uniforms. Kaki, coat, jacket, kaki hat and a heavy winter coat. We had to buy any replacements. Of course from then on we looked fine. But you should have seen some of those old fat officers. They did their work, but they had no pride in how they looked. They went around in shorts all summer long. They were a riot when they first put on these uniforms. At the same time in a polite way he had encouraged all of the officers to join the Naval Reserves. Now if the Captain was in the Naval Reserves he could fly the Naval pennant on the yardarm when we entered port. When we entered a port we had that Naval Reserve pennant, the Esso house flag, and anything else that you needed to put up there. We were proud of that. So I went along with the idea and joined the Naval Reserve along with everybody else. I was a Third Mate and an Ensign. And they gave us those real natty uniforms that looked real nice. These were the uniforms supplied by the Company. We didn't have the Navy buttons, but otherwise they looked the same. The cloth, the cut, the suit was identical.

So in 1939 when WWII came along I was Second Mate at that time. Several of our ships were taken over by the Navy because that was what they were built for. The *Esso Gettysburg*, the *Esso Chattanooga*, the *Esso Annapolis*, and there was one more. They were taken over by the Navy and made into aircraft carriers. Any Naval Reserve officers on board the ship usually went along with the ship. They would be reassigned to the Navy. I think it was in March of 1942 I was ordered on active duty. Even though you are given a clothing allowance when you go on active duty I was fortunate that I already had my uniform from the Company. All I had to do was change the buttons. I was taken off my ship and, as an ensign, I was sent down to Washington to work with the Marine Cadet Corps. At that time it was organized to assemble a bunch of cadets who would be trained to later serve as Merchant Marine officers. These fellows would be trained to serve on the new ships being built. At the height of the war we were building three ships a day! These were Victory ships, Liberty ships, cargo carriers. The Liberty ship was a big old work horse that did everything, with very little speed, very

little power, but did the job. The main thing was they could be mass produced. These were the ones that Kaiser and others built. There were a lot of other types of ships being built. They also had the "T-2's". These were ocean going oil tankers. There were a lot of those ships. What we have now is the Merchant Marine Academy which is at Kings Point, New York. This is a genuine 4 year academy. It was all started in Washington, D. C. just prior to WWII. Walter P. Chrysler gave the United States government his entire estate on Long Island. The whole shebang. His lovely big home became the administration building and there was plenty of room for putting up other buildings for the school. It was a wonderful start for the academy. When I first went to Washington, D. C. that was where the core of the whole system was set up. You had to be a Midshipman to get into the academy. At that time it was a three-year course; later a four-year course. They had to have some sea training on a ship as cadets. They had to have scholastic training ashore. The graduates could become a First Mate in the Merchant Marine or they could become an Ensign in the Navy and go into active duty. They had their choice. If the Navy couldn't take them when they graduated they were always in the Reserve and the Navy could call them later. The government and the companies' Merchant Marines worked together very closely on this endeavor. On each ship built four deck officers and four engine officers were required. There was the radio officer too. There were 24 new trained officers needed every single day of the year!

A lot of Esso officers went into the Navy and were in command of naval vessels. I went into the administrative part of this endeavor. Part of the time I was out in California. I was teaching Navigation, Seamanship and things of that nature. The company was very generous in compensation and things of that nature whenever any of the personnel, not just the officers, came back from the service. As a matter of fact I earned my ten year service button while I was in the Navy. When I came back to the company, and on my first trip back to New York they gave me a check for \$15 or \$20 and a ten year service button with a diamond in it. The pay-master brought it out to the ship and said, "Harold, you have earned that money because on the last ship you were on for the company before going into the Navy you were in the war zone and this extra pay is just now catching up with you. I think this was when I came back to work in June of 1947 when I rejoined the Company. The ship I was on was the *Esso Sao Paulo*. This was a propane carrier. It didn't bother me what cargo we carried, because one is as bad as the other. Look at what happened to the *Esso Patterson*. It blew up here in Baytown. It was loaded with a cargo of kerosene. The whole center of the ship blew up sky high. It opened up the ship like a can of sardines. I

was as sea at the time but it was on the radio. It didn't take long for that news to get around. She was loading kerosene, but they found out what happened. What they think happened was that it had had a previous cargo of gasoline. And they were loading the cargo on top of a little gasoline. In those large cargo tanks it is always impossible to clean a tank completely dry. You would have to be down in there and wipe it up by hand. So they ignored that little bit of gasoline. The ship had been inspected and it was satisfactory to everybody concerned. The thinking was that one barrel of gasoline wouldn't hurt twelve thousand barrels of kerosene. That was the attitude, and I have to agree with that thinking. They think that the kerosene coming into the ship under such tremendous pressure stirred up static electricity. They found out later that that agitation created a static electricity charge inside the product. And the gasoline vapors were ignited by a spark caused by static electricity. In all of the years we have been loading kerosene like that no one ever gave it a thought. From that point you must remove all traces of gasoline unless you are going to load another gasoline on top of it. The gasoline is removed with a hot water wash.

One time I think I was on the *Fort Settlement*. It was an old T-2; built during the war. It was an Esso ship. She survived the war. Anyway we were going down through the Red Sea. You know people think about Arabia, and the Red Sea, and Iran and all of the Persian Gulf area and they think of it being hot, 140 degrees in the shade. I have seen it snow. We came across the Mediterranean and approached Suez and here comes a storm. We had to heave to. I mean it was a blizzard. Maybe we were 100 miles from Suez. So the weather finally calmed down but they had a violent storm. Apparently this storm went on down the Red Sea and across the Sinai Peninsula. Finally we went through the Suez Canal, picked up the pilot, and went on through the canal which is 87 miles long or something like that and into the Red Sea and on our way. Early the next morning I am up on the bridge and the boson was there looking on. And he said Mate, hey look there is something out there. It was just the break of day and sure enough it looked there was a man in the water. I rang stop on the engines. I was Chief Mate, so I had to call the Captain. And sure enough we got alongside of two men holding on to a box. We circled around to get the way off the ship so we could stop it. Then we put a boat over the side I took the life boat and we rowed up to these men. One of them proved to be an Italian citizen and the other was an Arab crewman. He was the Chief Engineer of a merchant ship and that storm had gone right on down the Red Sea and sank their ship. He kept pleading with us to look around. So we did for a couple of hours circling around, but we never found another person.

We found out that his ship had sunk the night before in that storm. There were boxes and barrels floating around. And he and this crew member had grabbed this box and held on. This was maybe only half of a days run south of Suez. We got them on board and they had a life ring with them. The ship was registered in Misawa, Eritrea. That is the northern half of Ethiopia. They are still at war with Ethiopia today. Like all life rings it had the name of the ship painted on the life ring on the top half and the Misawa, Eritria on the bottom half. I can't remember the name of the ship right now. We kept the life ring. And eventually when the ship got here to Baytown I took the life ring ashore and gave it to a bar owner right here in Baytown. This fellow used to have ship supplies and he hung it up on his wall. It was there for years until he closed down the bar.

I was only on two ships in the Navy: The *USS Navasota* and the *USS President Adams*. This latter ship was a command ship. The admiral in charge of the some of the activities in the Pacific had to have his headquarters on that ship. She was also a marine transport and also hospital service and supplies. It was like a freighter. It was no bigger than some of the ships you see everyday going up and down the channel. I guess you could call it a troop transport.

The Loesje Marie Elizabeth (Koopman) Sint Story

I was born in 1938 in the Lago hospital. My father's name is William Arnold Frederick Koopman and my mother's name is Elsie Henriquez Koopman .

I remember going to kindergarten in a building next to where the Junior Esso Club used to be which was in the lot next to the wartime Esso Club.

My mother's father was Leonardo Johan Meadus. He died when he was about 82 years old and her grandmother died within two weeks. Her family members are descendents of one of the two Croes families that came over from Holland. Johan Croes family was Jewish.

We lived in bungalow 526 in the Lago Colony. I don't remember any other bungalow. I have a picture somewhere which shows our yard with just the coral, some pipelines, the house and the beginning of a garden. When I graduated from high school in 1956 we had two patios, a nice garden, and a fish pond.

You should have seen my father's garage when he retired to Holland in 1959. He used to do all of his own plumbing and the neighbors used to call him instead of a plumber. He also had his dark room built up in the attic and did the developing of his film there.

COLLEGE

I had two years of college in Gainesville, Florida and the same year my parents retired, I married. Then I lived in bungalow 134 with my husband. And then we moved to bungalow 164, just above the upper tennis courts. Next we moved over to 203 which is right across from guest house 90. The new high school was opened in 1951. It had louvers and no air conditioning.

ARUBA GRADUATION CLASS

There were 30 in our graduation class of 1956. I remember most of them.

BALLROOM DANCING

Mr. Downey taught all of us kids ballroom dancing in the old auditorium on the second floor. This was the 6th grade and 7th grade. Jim Downey didn't allow any of the school kids to smoke. And any

smoking that was done had to be done on the sly. Parents didn't allow their children to smoke either. I didn't smoke until I went to college and I still do now and then.

There were no drugs on the island as yet.

COACH DOWNEY

Jim Downey was a great coach. He was a great disciplinarian. He didn't smoke and he still doesn't smoke. He was married briefly to an Eman girl. And now he's married to every girl who was born here in Aruba.

I was on the Lago Community Church Board of Governors for two years before I went to Holland. I consider myself the person who lived the longest in the Lago Colony: First as a child and then as a mother.

The Lloyd Gaston Smith Story

Lloyd Gaston "L. G" Smith was born in Normal, Illinois in 1891. He went to school in Chicago and University of Illinois, receiving a Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering Degree in 1913. Three years later he married Lucy Fairhall of Danville, Illinois in 1916.

His career began with Standard Oil of Indiana at Whiting Indiana as a draftsman and three years later was engineer in charge of the Cracking Plant. In 1922 he became Refinery Superintendent in Casper, Wyoming. In 1927 he and Tom Cooke journeyed to Aruba and located the refinery.

He moved in 1928 to the Chicago office of Standard Oil of Indiana and then in 1929 moved to New York as Refinery Head for foreign refineries and domestic plants, e.g. Destrehan, Tampico, Hamburg, Savannah and Aruba. In 1932 Standard Oil of New Jersey bought the foreign properties of Standard Oil of Indiana. L. G. Smith went to Standard Oil of New Jersey as Deputy Refinery Head. 1933 found him moving, along with his wife and 6 children, to Aruba as Manager of Lago Oil and Transport Company, Ltd.

Still climbing, in 1935 he was elected President of Lago Oil and Transport Company, Ltd. and in 1946 at age of 55 he left Aruba to join Standard Oil of New Jersey in the Refinery Coordination Department. Some years later he was made Sr. Vice-President of Creole Petroleum Corporation in New York.

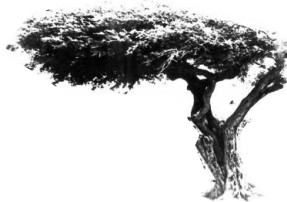
L.G. retired in 1956 after 43 years service in the Oil business. He died September 9, 1958 at Media, Pennsylvania where he had built his retirement home.

Lloyd made it a point to know all of the foreign staff employees' names and details of their families. At least once a week he would walk through the refinery and visit with the operators on the units. This was in the morning when there was a staff meeting in the High Pressure Stills office. He found out where morning coffee meetings were held in the Watching Department Office and on the tugboats in the harbor and would drop in on them unexpectedly. Of course everyone kept their break a short one.

He wore a hearing aid which was a boon for him. At one time he had three of his children practicing on their musical instruments. He removed his hearing aid and was not bothered as he read his newspaper.

CHILDREN:

- Winifred "Winnie" Eloise, Lago High ('35). She married Everett James Esselstyne in 1937. Saw company service 'til 1950 in Aruba and various other locations. She died in Washington, D.C. in 1970.
- Ronald "Ronnie" Fairhall, Lago High ('36); Colgate University, married Ann Armstrong in 1943, 3 daughters, retired from Exxon 1979. He and Ann divide the year between Miami and Cape Cod.
- Edmund "Ned" Joseph, Lago High ('39), Colgate, Air Force in 1942. Married Earlene Speights, 6 children, retired 1965, he died November 1988 of massive heart attack in San Antonio, Texas.
- Gerald "Gerry" Lloyd, Lago High ('43), Colgate, U.S. Navy. M. D. from Washington University Medical School ('51), specialized in ear, nose, and throat surgery U. of Chicago. Married Ellen Compton, began practice in Cheyenne, 8 children.
- Lucy Elizabeth, finished high school Manhasset, NY, Roanoke College Virginia Education and Psychology ('52). Husband Jack Burton Stewart, four children lives in Lynchburg, Va.
- Marjorie Ellen, graduated Manhasset High, Colby College with a degree in Biology. She husband and 2 children live in Cheyenne.
- Sarah "Sally" Sandra, born in Lago Hospital, Aruba, Port Washington, NY High School, Oberlin College ('60) Social Sciences and Music. Married Eugene Hutchinson ('60), they live with their four boys in Chicago.



The Addie & Reg Storie Story

HOW I WENT TO SEA IN 1926

I finished school when I was 14, as was usual in those days. I helped out in our business, a delicatessen/restaurant, with no idea of what I wanted to be. My grandmother, a professional artist who lived with us, had strong ideas about putting my artistic talents to work. I had already won two awards for my watercolor paintings. She discussed with the owner of a local tombstone business, who had a showroom displaying marble angels, cherubs, and the like, the possibility of my being apprenticed to him. I am sure she thought all of the contents of the showroom were created by this monument mason and his staff. The outcome was that I should have a trial period before any apprenticeship papers were signed. Soon after this the owner, Mr. Hancock, had a severe accident. I continued to work with the foreman for about 9 months, helping with all kinds of stone work, but no angels, these I soon found out were all imported from Italy. It was at this time that an uncle returned after being away for two years on one of the Andrew Weir ships, the *Glenbank*. He was the Chief Engineer. He suggested that I go to sea as an apprentice Deck Officer, since there seemed to be no artistic future with Mr. Hancock, it was decided that I should go to sea. My uncle introduced my mother and me to the manager of Andrew Weir and indenture papers were signed, binding me to the company for 4 years. They would pay me 40 pounds over the period, provide me with shelter, food, bedding, and give me the opportunity to learn all about sea-faring. The rest was up to my mother and me. I had to have uniforms, everyday type, and dress, both winter and summer whites, work clothes, and all the important books to study from. It proved to be a very expensive venture.

The day finally came when I received my orders to join my first ship, the *Roseric*. She was loading coal in Cardiff, a Welsh seaport. A long train journey put me there about 4:00 a.m., so I had to hang around 'til 9:00 a.m. when I reported to the office, met the Captain who told me how to find the ship in this very busy port. Finally I got on board, reported to the First Mate, and was introduced to my fellow apprentice with whom I would share a cabin. He had been aboard a couple of days so he was able to show me the "ropes" so to speak. This was February, 1926, just a month before my 16th birthday.

Our cabin was really the spare, or passenger cabin, upper and lower bunks, settee, desk, small wardrobe and wash basin. At that time,

company policy did not allow apprentices to have their meals in the dining saloon, so we went to the pantry, picked up our plates of food, and took them back to our room to eat. That policy was changed two years later when apprentices were served at the second sitting with the junior officers.

ANDREW WEIR

Andrew Weir was a very large shipping company, with round the world trade. They had their own ex-captains stationed in every major port, heading up a staff to look after the interests of the company, the needs of the ships, and to arrange for cargos. The *Roseric* was known as a "tramp" steamer, that is, pick up a cargo here, take it there, then get orders to go some place else for a cargo. It made for a very interesting life. During the 7 years before I was sent to Aruba I was in just about all of the major ports in the world, and a lot of other places hard to find on an ordinary map. Nauru and Ocean Island where we loaded phosphate rock, brought out to the ship in surf boats, one large basket per boat -- 6 weeks to load; this we took to New Zealand and Australia. Rabaul and New Britain where we loaded copra (dried coconut), there to 4 islands in the Pacific, which reminds me -- the uncle who suggested that I go to sea was born on another Pacific Island, Pitcairn.

ARUBA

I came to Aruba by a quirk of fate. Having passed my examination for First Mate some months earlier and notified my employer, Andrew Weir & Co. (Bank Line) that I was ready to return to work. I became increasingly impatient at not hearing from them so I decided to go to the head office in London and report in person. This entailed a 5 mile walk to the train station, a one hour train ride, followed by a bus ride, a journey of about 3 hours in all.

I started off about 9:00 a.m. and 15 minutes later it started to rain. I was about to turn around and go back home when a car pulled up and offered me a lift. That was the only time that had happened to me in all the months I had walked that road, fate as it turned out. I arrived in the office about 1:00 p.m. and was told to wait, as they were busy getting a number of Lake Fleet officers processed to depart for Aruba the next day. After an hour's wait I was told one of the officers had withdrawn from the group and there was an opportunity for me to take his place. I took it and the rush began. Taxi to a photographer for passport pictures (one hour service), taxi back to the office for paperwork, then back to pick up my pictures, a wild dash to the Passport Office which had been requested to stay open, (by this time it was past normal office hours). Taxi back to Andrew Weir office for final instructions, tickets, and most

important, a cash advance. Back home at about 8:00 p.m. via bus, train, and taxi. Then there was the chore of rounding up my possessions (after being home for 8 months) and packing.

At 7:00 a.m. the next day a taxi was waiting to take me to London and the boat train, and eventually the ship was to take the group of fellow officers to Aruba and the Lake Fleet. The Lake Fleet incidentally was at that time owned by Andrew Weir Bank Line. My first spell in the Lake Fleet lasted 3 years and all due to some kind stranger giving me a ride on a rainy day.

EARLY DAYS IN THE LAKE FLEET

My early days in the Lake Fleet were spent in a relaxed atmosphere; there was no night navigation so the ships sailed in convoys, leaving Aruba late afternoon to arrive at the Outer Bar of Lake Maracaibo at daybreak. The Outer Bar was a narrow channel through a huge sand bar guarding the entrance to the lake, a natural opening at this point in time, later to be dredged and controlled. The return trip was governed by the tide, ships could only navigate the Outer Bar at high water, and this determined how long the convoy remained in Aruba.

Conditions in Lake Maracaibo were rough and wild, drinking and gambling were the norm, the oil workers were paid in gold coin and it flowed freely. The loading terminals were crude, with the villages of La Salina and Laganillas being built on stilts right over the water, gambling dens and so called dance halls abounded, the Bucket of Blood being one well known.

The dictator Gomez was in power with corrupt officials everywhere, smuggling by a good number of Lake Fleet officers was a very profitable sideline. Some of the officers carried a veritable store, pajamas being a great favorite. The Venezuelans wore them as street clothes. Cigarettes and hard liquors were the Captain's domain: They could buy these items out of bond (no duty) in Aruba, re-selling a \$2.00 bottle of scotch for \$40.00. This practice was greatly curtailed after the revolution in 1935 and the downfall of Gomez. During the revolution oil continued to flow and ships were sailing in and out of the lake, but with many delays. Gunfire and the sight of fires burning in Maracaibo were common. Rumors and tales of rape, looting, killings, and the public burning of dead bodies abounded. Expatriates were leaving by any means they could find. I was First Mate on the *Punta Gorda* with Captain W. Thomas (who later became Marine Manager.) We were loading at La Salina when the Captain was requested to carry 40 expatriates to Maracaibo, men and women. The men got off there; the women (30)

stayed and in fact remained on board several days, finally coming to Aruba with us. The Captain and officers gave up their rooms and "camped out" on the upper bridge deck. Food and drink were being sent out to us until we received clearance from customs to sail.

Another voyage I remember vividly was the time the *Punta Gorda* took a cargo to Barbados where Andrew Weir Co. had a small refinery. One of their ex-Captains, Keith, was manager. Discharging was very slow through a small underwater pipeline. The bulk of oil had been pumped ashore; the tanks were being drained when someone on shore closed down the pipe line. The rubber hose between the pipe line and ship started to leak. This happened about 1:00 a.m. just as Captain Thomas and I came back from an evening "on the town" arranged and paid for by Captain Keith, (Chauffeured car with two very attractive young ladies.) We feel this was a ploy to keep us out of the way while he deliberately closed down the pipe line because he was short of oil before our arrival and hoped to cover himself by an oil spill, no doubt claiming thousands of gallons pumped over board, when in fact the loss was minor. The local authorities however, treated it as a major event. Captain Thomas was arrested, the ship was impounded, and police in old fashioned British Navy Uniforms (Jack Tars) rowed around and around the ship in small boats, Gilbert and Sullivan style. This continued for several days until all the legal formalities had been taken care of, and we were allowed to sail.

Soon after I returned to England and operated my own restaurant and travel agency for almost a year. I then joined a new ship the *Misoa*, a much larger Lake Tanker and was soon back on the lake run. Many changes had taken place, lights had been installed both on the Outer Bar and the Inner Bar, there was no longer the need to wait for daylight, and ships no long sailed in convoy.

The ships in the fleet were of several groups. The first was the Invar class, being quite small, carrying about 2500 tons. Each after that were larger, the *Andino* (Built in Germany), the *Misoa* and the *Bachaquero* carried about 10,000 tons. Change of ownership was about 1939 but the fleet continued under the British flag until the end of the war, when they were changed to Panamanian registry. The captains and officers remained British as did the pay. The parent company, Esso, did try to establish a decent pension plan for us but ran afoul of the British government, who insisted that all funds be invested outside of Esso. We ended up by receiving an annuity. Mine, after 21 years service amounts to £18 (\$30.00) a month. I do however receive a British Merchant Navy Pension.

GERMAN SUBMARINE ATTACK

I was First Mate on the *Ule*, on dry dock. The first I knew about it was when the Chief Engineer awakened me some time after midnight. There had been a dance at the Marine Club the night before. We went up to the bridge, in fact we stood on top of the wheelhouse to get a better view, never gave it a thought how vulnerable we were. Tracer shells were flying over head; the sea outside the harbor was ablaze with burning oil. We could hear the crackling of the flames, an awesome sound and a sight I'll never forget. The source of the burning oil was the Lake Tanker *Pedernales*, anchored outside and to the windward of the harbor entrance. A torpedo struck amidships breaking the ship's back and causing the anchor to drag free. The *Pedernales* drifted towards Oranjestad where she grounded and was later towed back to dry dock where the mid section was cut out and the two ends joined. She sailed to the U. S. A. in this odd condition and was fitted with a new mid-section. I dread to think what the result would have been had the burning oil come through the harbor, instead of remaining outside.

Up until this time no war-time precautions were taken. The refinery and the colony were a blaze of light and the ships were running with lights. This of course changed at once. It also changed the operation of the port. Mr. Patterson, the Manager, (and I can only believe he was Marine Manager not General manager) gave orders that no ship was to sail out of St. Nicholas without a naval escort and life rafts. The tankers piled into harbor until it was wall-to-wall ships.

Being an inventive sort, I drew a plan of a small life raft to be "man-handled." It consisted of (4) 50 gallon drums, 2 on each side, welded together, separated by 1 inch angle iron which would support an expanded metal "deck." I handed the drawing to Mr. Sheriffs (Port Engineer) first thing in the morning. By afternoon a raft was constructed to my plan. A group including Captain Thomas (Port Captain), an American Naval officer, Mr. Patterson, and others watched the test: Dropping the raft 30 ft. from a crane into the water. It withstood the test but it was decided to construct much larger ones, and to mount them on skids. Production of these started immediately. Every welder on the island was put to work, and within days ships started to sail again. I felt good about my idea being adopted and would have felt even better had I received some sort of official thanks. I learned years later Mr. Sherriffs took credit. About that time I was transferred to Caripito, Venezuela, as Asst. Hydrographic Surveyor. This job entailed making regular surveys of the Maturin Bar at the mouth of San Juan River, servicing the buoys and river lights. We lived on a 2 story house-boat anchored a few miles

up river from the bar, and about 50 feet from dense jungle. At this point in the river an anti-submarine net was installed, of which we were in charge. A small tug was used to tow the line of buoys supporting the heavy net to piling on the other side of the river. I held this job about a year. Spent my vacation in New York with side trips to the Ward's home in Pennsylvania, where my future wife, Put, lived with her parents.

Back in the Lake Fleet I was soon promoted to Captain, and soon made Relieving Captain. This meant making one trip on each ship allowing the regular captain a three day rest. Later I was assigned as Supernumerary Captain on the ocean going tankers going into Lake Maracaibo to load, if only a part cargo. My job was to advise the Captain of the local hazards and conditions, and how to dock his ship at the terminal in La Salinas. Another honor I was given was to greet Princess Juliana of the Netherlands at the Airport on behalf of the Lago Marine Department. I was introduced to the Princess as Prince Storie. Of course I was wearing my captain's uniform, 4 gold bands and gold oak leaves on my cap. The same uniform I had worn at my wedding a few months earlier.

BRIEFLY -

It was I who brought the wild Ocelot from the Lake for Lil Huffler - Hendricks.

The *Invercaibo* and *Inverrose* went to Freetown, West Africa as oilers for the Navy during the war with Captains High and Saunders in command.

The *Misoa* and *Bachequero* went to the British Navy, converted to tank landing craft, and served in the North Africa. In England on vacation when the *Misoa* was returned to the company, I got the job of taking her to New York for re-conversion. On the way over the Chief Engineer informed me that we did not have enough fuel to reach New York, so I put in to St. John, Newfoundland, only to find that Lend Lease, under which the re-conversion was to be paid for, had stopped. We were held there for 4 months.

We left Aruba in 1954.

The Captain Lionel Stuart Story

Captain Lionel Stuart was born on December 31, 1903 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He landed in Aberdeen, Scotland in 1912 when his father returned to settle down in his homeland.

Lionel's father became the Secretary of the Banchory Golf Club some 16 miles west of Aberdeen. When Lionel's father asked Lionel what he wanted to do in life. Lionel said he wanted to become a golf professional. This ambition was based, at the age of 9, on more than hope since he had played three or four times with the legendary Harry Vardon. Vardon had told his father that he thought the youngster had a future in the game. Lionel's father would have none of it, feeling that he would just become a club servant with no access to the clubhouse etc.

THE MERCHANT NAVY

It was thus that, when he left Aberdeen Grammar School, Lionel joined the Merchant Navy, although his father had given him membership of Banchory Golf Club in 1912. Lionel sailed the world over from 1919 until 1929. He started out with the British Mexican Petroleum Company.

He sailed from Belfast, Northern Ireland for the Andrew A. Wier Company as the captain of the Lake Tanker *S/S Ule*. He arrived in Aruba on June 16, 1929. At the time the Lake Tanker fleet consisted of 8 tankers. The job of this fleet was to sail to Lake Maracaibo crossing the sand bar and picking up a load of crude oil from the company loading terminals there. Then sailing back to Aruba, again crossing the "bar" at high tide. In those days the fleet belonged to the Pan American Petroleum Company. His employer later became the Esso Transportation Company Ltd.

On his first run to the lake he sailed as an observer with a seasoned captain who was to orient him to the task. The seasoned captain became ill and was left in the hospital in Maracaibo. Captain Stuart had to bring the loaded ship back to the San Nicholas harbor in Aruba, dock it in one of the more difficult of Lake Tanker berths.

He served as master on a number of the Lake Tankers, ending with the *S/S Cumarebo* and came ashore in 1943 for liaison, and convoy control work for the fleet. He transferred to the Lago Oil & Transport Co. Ltd. payroll in April of 1947. He was lucky to get through the war years uninjured.

When he came ashore he was made chief dispatcher in the Marine Department. He later worked as Signal Tower Operator. In May of 1954 he was promoted to shift supervisor - Harbor Operations. In this role he was described by Marine Manager J. H. Brown III as "the backbone of the Marine organization."

His passion for the game of golf was unabated over the years. During his service with the Lake Tanker fleet his ship was fitted with a golf practice net and the ratings were given golf lessons at the drop of a hat. He played the game all over the world during his years at sea. His crew always knew they would find him, on the nearest golf course. He was called the long-hitting Captain in Aruba because of his long-hitting golf shots.

LIFE IN ARUBA

Captain Stuart's wife, Dorothy, arrived as a young bride on August 29, 1929. In Aruba the Stuart family lived in bungalows 60, 53 and 923 in the Lago Colony. Daughter Dorothy's account runs as follows:

We all had such a carefree, wonderful childhood days on our little island in the sun and although we spent WWII in Aruba, we all had everything we needed. I can remember in the early days when we lived in bungalow 53 along the waterfront the colony bus was driven by "Mario." All of us kids would spend our free time driving around the colony, back and forth to the commissary with him at the wheel. He was without a doubt a kid's best friend. Even our parrot "Bootsie" would signal Mario's bus approaching. At the top of his lungs he would shout "Mario, Mario" to warn us and Eva, our faithful Grenada born maid. She would hurry out to put our commissary order in the box on the side of the bus.

Eva Paul came to work for us from the Lago Hospital in 1934. She was with the family until the day she left Aruba herself in 1957.

Speaking of animals, we had monkeys on yards of clothes lines so they couldn't run away, parrots, dogs, cats, budgies, canaries, and a squirrel.

Our most beautiful cat was "Spotty", the Ocelot my father brought home from the Venezuelan mainland. It was just a baby kitten and had been deserted by its mother. My mother fed it with a doll's bottle and then fed it Pablum.

One of the funniest stories my father told us about the early days was when there were few cars; most were Company cars. One of the engineers of the Lake Fleet had a donkey but he had trouble identifying

it. So one day he had its tail cut short thinking that this would help him find his donkey. However when he returned in two days he found that all of the donkey's tails had been cut short!

In Aruba you could get your automobile driver's license when you were 16 years old. Thus by inference you became of age when you were 16.

It was a blessing when air conditioners arrived on the island. It made it so much easier for the fathers working shift to sleep in the daytime and the kids didn't have to tiptoe around.

My father tells me that when the Marine Club was first built there was no nursery or crib for the babies whose parents wanted to dance. So I was laid on the billiard table to sleep while they danced and they knew I couldn't fall off.

After school we used to race home, put on our bathing suits and head off bare footed across the coral to the T docks and big docks. I don't remember being taught to swim or dive, but we all could.

I was six weeks old the first time I went to sea with my father. I sailed to Lake Maracaibo many, many times with Daddy and there was nothing I enjoyed more in my youth than going for a trip up the lake. I even spent many school vacations with friends in La Salinas. I returned home one time with green hair caused by the chemicals and disinfectant in the swimming pool there!

We all accompanied my father when he took the *S/S Cumarebo* to Martinique in 1938 to bunker the *S/S Normandy*. To us this was the most beautiful passenger liner in the world and I'm proud to say we spent a whole day on board of this Queen of the Seas.

On another trip we went through the Panama Canal - in 1937. What a pity when one is really too young to appreciate fully all of these journeys. But in a nutshell we were all so happy there.

We remember the New Year's Eve dances in the Marine Club and as the clock struck midnight all of the ships blew their whistles in the harbor and it was a sensation never to be forgotten. Since then we have never experienced a New Year like it, and never will.

Aruba will always be in our hearts and our memories will never fade away - they are indeed a gift of God.

RETIREMENT

After 30-1/2 year of service with Lago the Stuart family retired

from Aruba on August 29, 1959. Captain Stuart says, "The saddest day of my life was the day I left Aruba."

After retirement Captain Stuart returned to Banchory, Scotland with his wife. They built a house there and at the age of 56 he was appointed professional at the club in 1959. His retainer was agreed as precisely nothing. He wanted to be Club Professional for the love of the game. He quickly settled into his familiar teaching role helping all of the local youngsters. He was also able to use the club making skill which he had taught himself.

In 1969 he had, unfortunately, a heart attack and his specialist advised him to give up the job. He could not stay away, however, and he has helped his successor in the shop, continuing to start all of the competitions etc. just as he had done as professional.

He could not play golf anymore in his 86th year but he continued on starting and tournament duty.

His wife, Dorothy, passed away in 1986 but he is proud to tell you of his ten grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren.

He was seriously ill during September, October, and November of 1991 but he made a miraculous recovery. Although he doesn't get out on his own anymore he is still very much alert. He has spent 77 years as a member of Banchory Golf Club.

CHILDREN

His daughter, Dorothy Katherine, says she was the first British baby born on the island of Aruba on October 31, 1930. She has three brothers and all four children were born in the Lago Hospital and completed 12 years of schooling in the Lago Community Schools. Dorothy graduated from Lago High School in 1948.

Kenneth is married, an officer in the Canadian Signal Corp., since October, 1991, stationed in Victoria, Canada. He has two sons and two daughters. He graduated from Lago High, Class of '58.

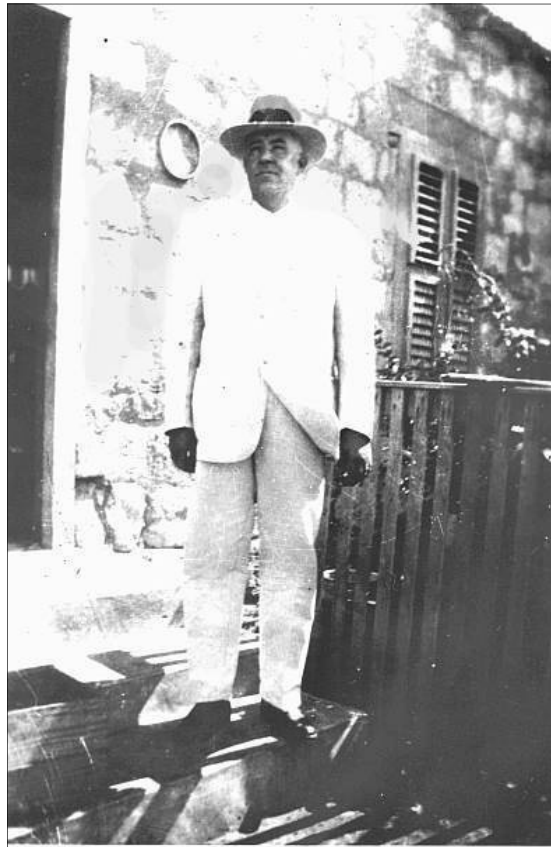
Charlie is married; has two sons; and lives in Ontario, Canada. He graduated class of '53, Lago High, and is retired from the R.C.A.F.

John is married; has three sons; lives in Ontario, Canada. He graduated class of '50, Lago High; and is also retired R.C.A.F.

Dorothy was christened in the home of Captain R. Rodger who was in charge of the English personnel on the Lake Tankers. At the time there was no church in the Lago Colony.

After graduating from the Lago Colony High School in 1948 she became the high school secretary of Ira P. Hoffman and Ray Zaner. In 1951 she transferred to the Executive Office and became the Marketing Department Secretary to Bill Kaestner and Bud Bissell.

On March 21, 1953 she married Dr. Lex de Boijj (dentist in San Nicholas and Oranjestad). Their first son, Stuart Alexander, was born in the Lago Hospital on June 29, 1954. In May of 1956 Dorothy and her family left Aruba to settle down in Holland.



Captain Robert Rodger
First manager of Lago Refinery

Photo date and origin unknown

The Dean Vincent & Doris Thompson Story

I was born in Lisbon, New York. My father was a wheat farmer in Saskatchewan after WWI. I went to Hope College and Cornell University and later received my doctorate of education degree at New York University in 1971.

On a Sunday morning in June of 1951 I drove into a small town and picked up a copy of the New York Times. There was a two inch ad looking for a school principal, with at least four years of experience, between thirty and 40 years of age, and a master's degree in education. I told my wife, Doris, that I might answer the ad. We got a free trip to New York City, for the family for the interview, which was 400 miles away since we were in upstate New York. I was the supervising principal in a small town in northern New York State, and we had roughly 500 students. We were centralized, had 12 rural schools, and were in the process of combining them and moving them into a modern building.

When I started school in Saskatchewan, I rode a horse to school. If I fell off, the horse returned home and I finished the remainder of the two mile trip to school on foot.

We didn't know Aruba existed until we found it in the Atlas, and saw it was just north of the equator. I was 34 years old, and we had two children when we arrived in Aruba.

I started in 1951 and retired in 1977 at the mandatory retirement age of 60. As the principal, I oversaw kindergarten through the twelfth grade. Aruba's largest graduating class was in 1959. There were 38 in the class, but four didn't make it. The four entered summer school and earned the credits they needed to graduate. There were 36 faculty members and grade one had three sections in the beginning. We later broke down to two sections of grade one, and in the end we had only one section.

We finally left the four wood and stucco buildings on the lower campus, and we had our first commencement in our new upper campus auditorium in 1956. That was the year we moved down to the air conditioned Industrial Relations building. The medical department moved in with us in 1972. By that time there were 150 youngsters in

kindergarten through grade nine. To keep the enrollment between 100 and 150 youngsters, we were delighted to offer qualified children of the island residents a place in our school system. Many of these students were children of employees of Lago contractors. When the company had two desulphurization plants built, there was quite a variety of imported contractors: Parsons was one, and Bechtel was another. These were a source of students and we were delighted to have them join us. Our system was down to classes of six or seven students.

Now that we are retired I can talk about Lee Raymond, the president of Exxon, who was the former president of Lago Oil and Transport Company between the years of 1975 and 1976. I reported directly to Raymond. There were only four in our kindergarten, when Raymond brought his triplets to the island. At the last annual Houston Exxon meeting, I ran into Lee and he told me his boys are now graduating from college.

DORIS

In 1952 I started the Community Christmas Choir by calling on anyone in the colony who I thought would want to participate. The choir continued until we left in 1977, with the exception of 1957 when I was sick. In later years I had to scour the whole island community for enough voices. It was called the Aruba Island Christmas Choir, and some years we had to hold four concerts to accommodate everyone. Two concerts were held in the colony, the company's public relations department put up a band shell in the sports park in Saint Nicholas, and we held one there. Oranjestad was the site of the fourth concert, and it was usually held in either one of the churches or the cultural center. Jennie Greene, the wife of the engineering department's Charlie Greene, played the organ for the first concert. Bodil Frolund did the 1952 concert. Ruth Collins was another player in that concert as was Carter Miller. After their departure, we called on the church organist. We had a Dutch school teacher who played the church organ in the 70's, and the last year was done by a colony woman who was an accomplished pianist and organist. I have recordings of many programs. Tom Hagerty was a great bass, and Leonard McReynolds played the kettle-drums. Don Evans originally had the Christmas Choir.

In 1962 I went back to teaching school full time, and did so until we left. I taught history, social sciences, social studies, English, was class adviser, and published the year book.

Ev Biddle brought together people like Jan Koulman, and the accountant, Hugo Upsalt. Yes, we put on maybe four or five big musical

comedies. The first was a minstrel in March of 1955, and then we did a Gay 90's revue. Ev Biddle, the hospital's anesthesiologist, was the organizer of all of these events. He was a frustrated producer and writer. Ev collected sheet music and old time records. He claimed to have had as many as 60,000 records in his house at one time. I have about 400 tapes of his library. Ev, an ex-marine who lived in Florida after he retired, died about 2-1/2 years ago.

I remember Edna (Dorwart) Seitz having her music appreciation programs in her yard, particularly at Christmas time when she featured Handel's Messiah.

Peter Storey, who married Joanne Rae, became an inspiring influence in the community in later years. I don't think the church would have faired as well as it did if it hadn't have been for Pete. He was really a moving force in the community church, and he was a talented singer. Peter was involved in the dramatics club, as was Don Evans' wife.

Our Toastmasters Club in Oranjestad sponsored an event similar to a mock national convention, the United Nations. People came from all over the island to play the part of the representatives from different nations. Dorothy Joseph, the librarian, helped me a great deal with this.

Jim Downey, who came to Aruba in 1947, was on contract with the Lago School system until we left.

We had women's fashion shows in the early 1950's. These were organized by the Women's Club. The dresses shown were from Mrs. Whitfield's and Mrs. Leon's shops.

In the early years the Lago Colony School system operated according to the State the superintendent was from. Originally there was just one teacher. Over the years there were three superintendents who were the chief school administrators from 1933 to 1951. Dean Vincent Thompson was in that position from 1951 through 1977. Ira Hoffman was one. William Mileham was one. The third one was Mark (I can't remember his last name). In 1939 the school was accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The school reached its peak enrollment of 590 students in 1954. The school was geared toward preparing the students for college. A comprehensive secondary education experience was not offered; rather preparation for college was stressed. The majority of students desired and were capable of college and university training. The men brought to the Aruba Refinery were selected and placed in supervisory positions. The majority were engineers, accountants, medical doctors. Each received training

particularly during their early service there. During their later years they were the instructors for the local personnel who were being trained to replace them. Beginning in 1951, with the arrival of Dean Thompson, the school operated under the New York State grading system. It is interesting that 80% of the graduates of Lago Community High School during the ten year period of 1954 to 1964 attended college in the United States and Canada.

In 1964 Lago initiated an early retirement program in their efforts to reduce the number of Foreign Staff employees and cut operating costs. The emphasis was on upgrading more local personnel to take over more of the supervisory positions throughout the refinery. Thus from 1964 onward there was a decreasing number of students attending the Lago Schools. This meant there was a decrease in the faculty staff. From 1954 to 1958 there were 34 faculty staff members and 540 students; 1958 - 1962 there were 25 staff and 418 students; and 1962 to February 1964 there were 19 staff and 305 students.

There was a high turn over of teachers. One out of every three had to be replaced. Average tenure was two years. Faculty attrition was attributed to marriage, desire for a new experience, and dissatisfaction with the fact that the teacher was a company employee and did not function the same way as would be the case in a public school. The policy in the days prior to 1951 was that when a teacher married she had to resign from the school. Due to circumstances this policy was discarded after 1951. It was not that easy to find replacement teachers. Our first year in Aruba, 1951-1952, nine teachers were married before January 1952. The teachers were company employees and considered as having tenure as long as they wanted.

One of the most traumatic times when we were in Aruba was when the big lay off came in 1964. This was when anyone who had 15 years of service and was 50 years old received "an offer you couldn't refuse." Those who didn't take advantage of this offer had no guarantee of how much longer they would be employed and they would not receive any of the layoff bonuses being offered. The cutoff date was January 31, 1964, and that took the heart right out of the school. Over 80 men were let go. I remember Sunday, January 31, 1964, and we went out to the old airport in Oranjestad. It teemed with people who were leaving, and we were particularly struck by the number of people who had no idea what was in store for them. We had a new Minister, Reverend Main, who replaced Don Evans. Evans went down to Buenos Aires for a couple of years. All of these people leaving just took the heart out of his church. Our new minister was only there two years. Then we had a succession of pastors

who would be there a couple of years and then move on. In 1965 we had to take out the 11th grade. That was the year that Gordon Hendrickson (Dr. Hendrickson's son) would have been there.

The company really tried to tailor the layoffs such as to keep the high school going. Dr. Glenn Hendrickson tried very hard in Management Staff Meetings to keep the 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th grades open. And then our youngest daughter who was born in Aruba had to go away to school at the end of the 9th grade. And others had the same problem. The kids were only 15 years old.

DEAN

When we came to Aruba in 1951 we lived in Bungalow 142, across from the elementary school. It was a four-room bungalow, but it was very, very hot. I thought I would have to leave Aruba because of the heat. There was no air-conditioning and the houses were too close together. There was no breeze. I thought when school was out on Friday afternoon how wonderful it was going to be on the week end. It was going to be quiet. It was so noisy all day long. Every Sunday morning all 600 kids came down for Sunday school. They tormented us for most of the morning. We moved to Bungalow 604 where we lived for two years. Bungalow 463 was a two-bedroom, and we moved there because we were expecting our baby. We had a boy, a girl, and one on the way when they decided we qualified for a five-bedroom. Bungalow 463 was our home for two years. Bungalow 413, the one the Willie Miller's had lived, was our next place. We left there and moved up to Jimmie Rosborough's bungalow, Number 553. It was next to the end of the 500 row, near the point. We lived there from 1958 until 1965. The Company tore that house down. I loved it there. We were all alone, away from everybody, and we had a wonderful view from the point. The sea was on three sides. Then we moved to 1576 in 1965 where we lived until 1970. Bungalow 49, the one under the cliff by the old elementary school was our next one. Dean's father and mother were coming to stay with us that winter. Dean had just received his doctorate and we planned staying only one year longer. Dean's father died in the spring. The company made it worth our while to stay on. Both Dean and I taught, and we stayed in Bungalow #9 for seven more years. When we left, it was still in use. We enjoyed that house the best although 553 had a better view. Five fifty-three is now used as a vacation house. When we lived in 553, we really didn't need air- -conditioning; there was nothing to stop the breeze on the point. The only complaint we had was the effects of the salt air on our belongings and the house. In our house in Houston you can see some of the original Lago furniture. In 1962, Lago went out of

the business of furnishing the houses. Whatever we had in our houses was yours, they said, and you were responsible for its upkeep. Up there at the time we had a six-room house. And we had more furniture than you can believe. It all came with us to the States when we left. Some of the furniture fell by the wayside. It wore out.

We had a fellow who was in Aruba on a training assignment and his son was a high school junior. He and Barney Ellis were burning some old tires up on top of Colorado Point, and the fire made a big cloud of smoke, and a big stench. They were disciplined by the Mayor of the village, Norm Shirley, or Walt Spitzer, the Police Chief, I think. Years later, the boy finished college, and he entered the Air Corps. He was considered for a position in the Strategic Air Command, and a government official came down to interview his high school principal. He wanted a complete run-down on the boy, not only academically, but his behavior as a citizen in the community. The incident of the tire-burning was the worst example of bad behavior I could tell him about.

There is a little story I can tell. The bright sunlight bothered my eyes and I wore sunglasses. And when I went into the delivery room at the hospital when I was about to deliver Kitty, I wore my sunglasses because the overhead lights were so bright. And finally Ev Biddle, the Anesthesiologist, said "Doris I don't think you really need these glasses anymore." He gave me a little anesthetic and took my glasses off. We all had a big laugh about that because I minded the light so much. All the rooms in the hospital were white and the bright light reflecting from the sea made me squint. Years later Ev was still laughing about that. He didn't think I needed those glasses then.

We moved the school down to the air-conditioned Industrial Relations office. And in 1973 or 74 we were having a program in the conference room up on the second floor of the school. In the winter of '74-'75, the Company had brought in some Dutch Engineers to demolish the Hospital Building. They were arranging the explosives so that they made the building fall inward on itself. Their work was quite loud and noisy, but I kept the door open so I could see when they set off the charges. You couldn't hear the explosion, but we saw it. I think the government wanted Lago to give them that building to use as a retirement home. Lago wanted to keep housing inside the Colony to avoid installing special lines for the utilities.

There was a complete switch of school policies when I arrived in 1951. Until then there had been different policies used depending on the different principals or administrators who were in charge. Immediately I

reorganized it using New York State's system as a model. For teachers, students, and parents alike, it became a stable curriculum. The Company was primarily located in New York, and the arrangement suited them. We used a variety of text books, selecting them based on our curriculum. A committee of teachers decided which ones were to be used.

We had teachers from many states. Myrtle Parham was from Texas, Maude Thomas was from Texas, and Millie Wightwood was from Connecticut and New York. I'd like to think we got the best. There were a variety of attitudes and opinions. If someone came up with a "Coin-Your-Idea-type" suggestion that sounded good, we'd try it. We couldn't mess with the curriculum in one sense of the word. The standards were set in terms of the New York statewide examinations. When the State of New York put out a new examination of three hours' duration, for example, that was the standard by which our high school youngsters were measured. We offered the same courses New York State offered. I felt that individual teachers wouldn't make up an examination that would be as rigorous as it should be. Every year we gave the SAT examinations to our youngsters and we compared their scores to those of their peers in the New York State School System. Year after year, our scores were above average. More than 80% of our students went on to some of the best college and universities.

We had a School Advisory Committee that functioned as do the PTA's in the states. When I arrived Dr. R. C. Carrell was chairman of the committee. Glenn Hendrickson was another chairman. Many citizens in the Colony served on this five-member committee. Marge Fisk, Ruth Collins, Lloyd Monroe, John van Ogtrop, Jim Maxey, Gene Goley, Patty Curtiss were chairmen of the Committee.

Doris is a Canadian, and I'm from upstate New York. Somehow, we wound up in Houston. Our three children living here was one reason, I guess. I have continued to teach since I retired, and I haven't missed a year. Presently, I'm teaching at the University of Houston's downtown campus.

The Garth Eugene Viele Story

CHILDHOOD

My name is Garth Eugene Viele and I was born June 1, 1915, in Medford, Oklahoma. My family later moved to Okmulgee, Oklahoma where I went through grade school and high school.

My father worked as an operator for the Cities Service in their Okmulgee refinery. He was a wax house operator for 20 years. Okmulgee was a booming oil town then. I remember when I was a little kid I went to work with him and watched what he did. One man ran that whole operation. Pop unloaded the machine and barreled the wax into wooden barrels. He pressed the paraffin, chilling to help get rid of the oil. It was melted, and then run through on a chilling drum, and it came off as a large sheet of wax. This sheet was run into the barrels, and headed up. The plant closed in 1939, and my family went to a farm they'd bought Missouri.

In Okmulgee High School I was somewhat better than average student. In Okmulgee, during the 20's and 30's, we had a very solid educational system. Our superintendent of schools was an educator from Cornell University. In junior high school we had what was called finding and broadening courses. In that program we were exposed to about everything you could think of. We had tin, automobile, printing, drafting, woodwork, and electrical shops. The students just dabbled, and didn't get too deeply involved. It was a time to find ourselves. If we became interested, we went to advanced classes.

I liked woodworking, and I took it through my senior year in high school. My mother had a high school education, and my father had an eighth grade education. According to them, your education wasn't finished until you had college. I couldn't see any application of woodworking in higher education except to teach it, and I didn't think I was cut out to be a school teacher.

A lawyer friend of mine who was instrumental in getting me a job asked me if I planned to go to college. I allowed that I was, but I didn't know where or how. Oklahoma A & M was where most of the fellows went from our area. He told me he had influence at Oklahoma University in Norman, Oklahoma, so I said that would be okay with me. He lined up a job, and I was off to the races. I hopped on the bus as soon as I knew where it was. On the bus I got to talking with a fellow. By the

time I got off, we had agreed to try it as roommates. We rented a room for \$6 a month. He had made grandiose plans while he had taken time out from school to work for several years, and he was ready begin again.

I worked my way through school by holding two jobs. One was as a \$15 a month laborer under the NRA (National Recovery Administration). I also worked in the chemistry department, and it paid my rent. I worked in the cafeteria for three hours every evening to earn my meals. In those days there was a \$9 library fee and an \$11 lab fee. Text books were probably my biggest expense. Most of them sold for \$8 or \$10; a handbook was maybe \$20 and there weren't many of those. My activities during the period between 1935 and 1939 consisted of working and going to classes. I saw one football game in the four years I was there.

In junior college I got interested in Chemistry. As I got into second year of junior college, I determined that engineers were better paid, and I switched to Chemical Engineering.

I got mostly decent grades at the university, but I did best in the engineering courses. They seemed to make more sense to me. I wanted to go overseas because I had heard they paid more. I graduated from Oklahoma University in Norman, Oklahoma in 1939 with a B.S. in Chemical Engineering.

COMING TO ARUBA

O.H. "Jumbo" Shelton of the Standard Oil of New Jersey Overseas Personnel Office had visited our University the year before and hired Neal Lamb for Aruba. That year Shelton wrote a letter to the dean of the engineering school telling him he wasn't able to call on them personally, but that he would like to have someone from Oklahoma University that year interested in going overseas. I sent my name in and I was the only one interested in going overseas so I was sent instructions to have a physical exam and send them the doctor's report. Next I received an acceptance letter which said I was hired and mentioned a departure point and date. Later I received instructions to proceed to Bayway, New Jersey and the company refinery there.

As it happened my folks were in the process of moving to their farm in Missouri.

I traveled to Bayway, New Jersey and discovered there were six of us hired to work in Aruba. Dave Mortlock, graduate of Georgia Tech University, and I went into the Process Department. Mike Tooey, a Pennsylvanian (also a graduate of Georgia Tech University), ended up in

Lago's Metal Inspection Department with my roommate, Bill Long. Lou Ballard, who was a graduate of Kansas University, went to Oil Inspection Laboratory as a shift leader. C. "Buck" Johnson, graduate of Syracuse University) was placed in the Lago Laboratory. I don't know how they made the selections; I guess it was according to our degrees. They did tell us where the openings were and did give us a choice.

In the past they had hired engineers for Aruba who had no practical training. This group of young engineers was placed in the Student Engineering Training Program conducted at the Bayway Refinery in New Jersey.

Our training consisted of six assignments of one month's duration. My first one was in their Motor Fuel Test Lab; the next was in Process Control. I spent a month in the Mechanical Department where they were building a refrigeration plant. The last assignment I had was at their old out of service Hydrogenation Plant. They were setting up a pilot unit to process benzene for munitions manufacturers.

During the six months of training in Bayway, we visited New York on weekends. Off duty at one o'clock on Saturday afternoons, some of the fellows with a car drove over to the Big Apple, and I went along. We saw Mickey Rooney, Judy Garland, and all the big bands on stage.

Christmas was coming up and when I found we would be going to Aruba in January, I asked for time off, and we got a week at home for the holiday.

I had never heard of Aruba, but a week before I left Bayway there was an article in the Saturday Evening Post, The Lucky Girls of Aruba. That was the first and only mention I had heard of Aruba.

January 7, 1940, we sailed for Aruba from Bayonne, New Jersey. On the tanker with us was Oleta, who was going down to marry Howard Wade. Also with us were Ellie Wilkins and his wife, Belle. The ship's master of the S/S *Esso Aruba*, formerly the S/S *Pan Bolivar* was Captain Larsen. On the way down we were lounging on the poop deck, and watching the flying fish one day when the captain and three officers proceeded to conduct a sea burial. The deceased was in a cremation urn, and as the captain concluded the simple service, he scattered the ashes over the stern. He told us it was someone who had died at a seaman's home and wished to be buried at sea.

I remember Buck Johnson saying on the trip down that he was worried about getting stuck in a ten thousand dollar-a-year salary rut. I told him I was mainly concerned about my chances of getting INTO that

rut.

I was 24 when I arrived, and Neal Lamb was the only person I knew before I went.

We received \$130 a month while we were at Bayway; in Aruba, our wages went to \$165 a month. Junior engineers were a dime a dozen in those days. I remember Bill Ewart's wife, had arrived in September before they were married. One day while I was talking with her, I got the notion that she was making \$30 more a month than I was, and she wasn't an experienced school teacher either.

Roy Stickle, a chemical engineering graduate, was in the group that had received their orientation the year before us. He had just finished a year in the Metals Inspection Department when I got there. Roy told me it was too strenuous for him, and he arranged for a transfer to the Personnel Department. Pappy Meisenheimer, Don Stevens, Larry Engelking, and Neal Lamb were other members of Stickle's group.

WORLD WAR II

Holland was invaded before I got there; the threat of war loomed on the horizon. The company hired ten young fellows as guards in the tank farm. I remember the power house guard, Jim Davis who was to become a leading local softball pitcher, and I remember Jimmy Ayers, the fellow who married Rosario, the Costa Rican girl.

We also had some French marines. They dressed in white, and when they came to the mess hall, they stacked their rifles before sitting down to eat. They came in groups of six, and I recall there were about 500 of them. The marines left a few days before the February 16, 1942 attack on Aruba.

That group was relieved by the Cameron Highlanders. None of the Aruba refinery guards were armed.

On June 8, 1942, we woke up and our room was full of smoke. The Esso Club was on fire. We got on the roof of our bachelor quarters and sprayed water on it to keep it from catching on fire from all the embers from the fire at the club. Men from the bachelor's quarters rescued the liquor from the club's storeroom. Most of it wound up in their quarters. The next day Watching Department Chief, Gilbert Brook, had to raid the quarters to recover most of the pilfered liquor.

Bill Sauer, an engineer who was the rabid Nazi, and his brother Otto were sent to the concentration camp in Bonaire on May 10, 1940, the time of Holland's invasion. The big guy at the Thermansaul, a store in

the village, was also interned at Bonaire. I.C. "Andy" Andersen, a young engineer, had just bought a camera there and hadn't paid for it. Anderson convinced the new clerks he had paid, and he got a free camera out of the deal.

I remember when Holland was liberated, Dutchmen in the colony celebrated with uncharacteristic abandonment.

Murdow MacDonald, a professor of religion, married Betty Russell, Tommy Russell's daughter, after the war was over. MacDonald was an old man who had been all over before coming to Aruba. I believe they retired to Glasgow.

After the American Coast Artillery unit departed for occupation duty in Europe, there was a detachment from Puerto Rico. One of these fellows, a sentry at the acid plant, accidentally shot himself while doing the manual of arms.

One day I.S. Moore, an army lieutenant from my home town, walked into the door of the church. Moore was a nephew of senator Moore of Oklahoma. When the unit was reassigned, his uncle pulled a few strings, got him out of the army and got him a stateside job.

Another fellow I knew was a navy lieutenant, Barret Gibson, who was in college with me. In Aruba he was one of those assigned to test the fuel oils for the navy.

I was talking to the Bigarts not long ago, and they told me they entertained soldiers during the war and their commissary bills were always so high they couldn't pay them. It seems that George Wilkins always had to bail them out.

LOCAL VACATIONS

For my first two week local leave, I stayed on the island. When the war began, I took only 30 days of my first regular vacation on July Fourth of 1942. L.G. Smith was given my seat on the plane and I had to take the next one, but he apologized for it. They chartered Lockheed's in those days. There was a big life raft down the center of them, and they had blacked out windows. You had to stoop over, and then step off the life raft to reach your seat. They served cold box lunches consisting of a hard boiled egg, a big leg of chicken and an orange. When people started opening their boxes, cracking the eggs, eating the chicken and peeling those oranges, I became nauseated. I did better if I didn't eat anything on those flights.

My next vacation, in April 1945, was another occasion when I didn't

take all of my vacation. We routed vacations through Central America, making reservations almost a year in advance. On this trip there was Eddie Brenner, a bachelor, who worked in the light ends department; "Army" Armstrong ("Limey" we called him then); Julia and Johnny Sherman; Walt Huffman's wife, Dorothy. The first leg of it was by the old Fokker tri-motor to Maracaibo. A schedule change and we sat for three days under a mango tree, waiting for our plane. George Dickover was in Maracaibo then having been transferred from Aruba.

LIFE IN THE COLONY

In the bachelor quarters my first room was 501, and next door was Sammy Wilson. Later on that year I moved to bachelor quarters number four, room 41. Bill Long lived in 442 until he got married.

Bill Long and I were roommates in number five bachelor quarters. Roommates Buck Johnson and Lou Ballard were both married at the time. Buck's wife was Nellie and Lou's was Amber. I believe Amber is still around, though Lou died some years ago. Buck went back to the States and wound up in refining coordination before he retired. He and Nellie live in Florida not far from the site of the annual Aruba reunion.

While we lived in the bachelor quarters someone was always grand-standing. Johnny Drew did some fast practicing with his bugle when he got off the graveyard shift at 8:00 a.m. Drew played in the American Legion Drum and Bugle Corps. Butch Borsch would come off his Sunday morning shift and spin that car of his around in the U of the bachelor quarters until he had awakened everyone. Then he went to bed.

As a bachelor I remember living in Bob Johnson's bungalow on birdcage row next to Joe Auer's. Birdcage row was the name of a row of 3-bedroom bungalows for newly weds or those with no children. Another time I stayed in Larry Engelking's bungalow on the other side of Joe Auer's, and on still another occasion I stayed in Merle Fisk's bungalow, which was next to Bill Curtiss's three-room.

The car in the garage near the bachelor quarters that was hit by the ricocheting flare shell case belonged to a guy who was on the Esso Bolivar, dodging torpedoes up around Cuba. I believe the Bolivar was finally hit. Pickles, of the accounting department, was also on that ship. Pickles was his nickname, and his real name sounded like pickles. Possibly it was Bickles. The shell casing fragments went through the ceiling of Tex Schelfhorst's room, through a brand new battery Tex had sitting at the foot of his bed, hit the coral under the bachelor quarters, and ricocheted to hit the bumper of a car parked in the garage besides the quarters.

We heard it and got up because we heard the shell explode. Other fragments went through the ceiling of the clubhouse and down through a corner of the library and they found them under the club on the coral.

Pat had been teaching school several years before we married. Pat was staying with her aunt and uncle. Pat and Lydia McBurney both became members of Kappa Delta Phi and kept track of each other. Pat first came to Aruba to visit Lydia. She and I first met at a party at Dave Mortlock's. Among others, the McBurney's, Pat, and I were invited. We got to talking and she was going to see some Kansas natives in Curacao the next day. I told her my uncle and my grandparents lived in Kansas. We had much in common. My vacation coincided with her return trip to the States, and we traveled together to Miami, Florida. She went on to Pittsburgh and I went to Oklahoma. On my return from vacation, I passed through Pittsburgh, visited her. We corresponded and she came to Aruba after school was out; we married on July 31, 1948. Lydia McBurney was Pat's matron of honor, and Cart Miller was my best man. Johnny Jones played the organ, and Dehlia Owens sang as ceremonies were performed in the Lago Community Church by a Methodist missionary minister. Reverend Don Evans was due to arrive the next day, and Reverend Percy Dawe had already left. The ushers were Larry Engelking, Pappy Meisenheimer and Lloyd Monroe. On our honeymoon, as I was leaning over the register to check in, rice fell from my pocket. Up to that point we were incognito and no one knew we were newlyweds.

Our first housing after our marriage was a four-room bungalow formerly occupied by Cy Yates. Across the street were Tom and Anne Wolfe. We left in January of 1956 for Colombia.

In an interesting aside, we made a trip to England in the fall of 1983 and lunched at Newark on Trent with Reverend Kirtley and his wife, the very same Methodist missionary minister who had married us 35 years before. We had been corresponding with him, but we had not seen him in all of that time.

When they started building the cement block houses I put in my request for one. Our house was number 1533, before I went on vacation. Clyde Moyer was the one who signed up for me, and he signed himself up for the one next door while he was at it. The McBride's were next door to 1533, and next to them was Eddie McCoart. T.M. Binnion was up the road. "Binky" Fuller had one up there too. Others in that addition were Tom Malcolm, L.D. McBurney, Lewis MacNutt, and then almost across the street was Art MacNutt. Cart Miller was across the street from

him. Anger Folmer, the doctor, was in there somewhere. E.L. Dodge was across the street from us; then the Ted Stanley's; then Ralf Humphreys; then Ed and Grace Babcaney.

I really arrived in Aruba at a propitious time. Men who arrived the year before lived in the infamous *sheep sheds*. Bill and Patty Curtiss and the Hemstreet's started out living in Lago Heights. I remember that some people were upset when I was assigned my first bungalow before Pat and I married. Lettie Janecek said, "Here we are in Lago Heights and you are a bachelor you've got a four room house in Lago Colony!" I said, "But I have been living here for eight years to get that house."

Lago Heights was originally housing built to the north of the Lago Colony for "local hire" people who held responsible positions in Lago and were from islands around the area. There were also personnel from Surinam and most office clerks were from British Guiana. Foreign Staff personnel lived in the Lago Colony. Due to a housing shortage some Foreign Staff personnel were temporarily housed in Lago Heights at this time.

Before I arrived, John Packy from Esso Engineering was there. His job was to iron out the problems with the pitch stills. They were injecting the high melt pitch into a water filled line and pumping it out to the pitch pile near B.A. Beach. In addition to the high melt line, there was a low melt line. To prevent plugging they had to inject gas oil into the stream. There were schemes to market this product, but none ever worked.

I wasn't much of a swimmer - I conducted all of my water sports activities in the Baby Lagoon. The only time I was ever out in a boat was with Larry Engelking. Larry and I were batching in his house while Patsy had gone to the States for some reason.

As far as Lago's teachers, I remember Myrtle Parham, who played the organ at the church when I first went there. I also remember Elizabeth Dickey, a big girl, who was a secretary in the main office building. Those were the days when the company bus used to pick up the office girls at number nine bachelor quarters. The bachelors caught the bus in front of the old post office building about a quarter of a mile east of the Dining Hall.

Right after the war, when automobile production wasn't keeping up with the demand, people acquired automobiles by buying from estates. Someone brought down an air-cooled Franklin with a large glass windshield and windows. Charlie Drew brought a Cadillac V-16.

I thought those retirement picnics in the period between 1953 and 1955 were great, and I never missed one. They were a world famous bargain. All you could eat or drink for five or ten bucks, and the best entertainment in the world. I remember the George Wilkins retirement party, but nothing specific about what was said. Actually there were so many of them I should be able to rattle off the people. I remember Kenney Repath's party because I got invited to his dinner. At that time I was acting Eastern Division Head - this was just before I left in the fall of 1956. Anyway they had this dinner in the guest house. Of course Joe Auer had done himself proud and I had never seen anything like it. At each place setting there were two or three wine glasses to be filled at the proper time with the proper wine. The engraved invitation said it was formal, and I showed up in a summer formal I wore for the first time. At the door Kenny made some comment I didn't catch, and I noticed everyone was in regular business suits. I left after telling Pat I'd be right back, and I went back home to change into a business suit. This was his company retirement party, an eye opener for me, the country boy. Of course I saw many of them in Iran after that.

We had square dances at the picnic ground, and Pat and I were involved in the square dancing group. Charlie Smith was one of the callers, as was Ferrow Himes, and Wayne Anderson. Each of them called a particular dance. Charlie's was San Antonio Rose. I never learned ballroom dancing, and didn't consider myself a real dancer. "Ossie" Osborne, of the power house, and his wife were there as were the Bill Norris's and the Lewis MacNutt's. It seemed as if we had these dances every week, and they brought in famous callers who stayed for a week. Feugot Smith was the one who brought these people. The women dressed appropriately and men wore cowboy boots. Paul Harth was on the verge of teaching ballroom dancing, and Pat and I were signed up when a cable came with the notice that Garth had arrived in Fort Worth. Pat and I missed those classes when we went to pick up Garth and complete the adoption process. We transferred to Barrancabermeja in January of 1956. Maureen was born April 10, 1958, and we went to Fort Worth to pick her up.

Retirement picnics were later held at the colony's American Legion hall. People like Johnny Sherman, Skippy Culver and Frank Chicarelli barbecued.

Julia Sherman had relatives who lived right across the street from my aunt in Wichita.

We weren't involved in too many social events, but I went out of my

way to find retirement parties.

I remember when Daniel Hussey came down from Bayway as a part of the management development program. He went to retirement picnics also and he was crazy about them. Gene Work had one and Dewey Johnson had another.

I remember the basket ball games when I first arrived. George Stoddard was one of the players. "Double Barrel" Strong, brother of "Single Barrel" Strong, was another player. Those fellows played some hot basketball. I didn't see how they could be so energetic in that heat; you could get heat exhaustion just watching them. Bill Long got out there and they ran him down in no time. Reverend Bigart was also a great basketball player.

The ministers we had after Bigart were Reverend Percy Dawe and Don Evans. I was president of the church association one time, and I attended church regularly. Not long before Pat got a job, I was on the committee with Lotje McReynolds. Lewis MacNutt was on the committee later. Carter Miller played the organ. John Emery, from Bon Terre, Missouri, was a very active and devout man. I remember he used to say that, being a carpenter and a lay preacher as he was, he was following in the footsteps of Jesus.

Lou Dittle came to Aruba from Barrancabermeja, Colombia. He was in Colombia during one of their revolutions. He had scads of stories about that time.

The Lago community council organization was started during the war. It was through this organization and their program of collecting donations for all the various charity groups that we first heard about the Edna Gladner home, an adoption organization. The Shirley's and Hazel Cross got their little girls through that organization. If you remember, during the charity fund drive the Lago community council conducted each year, you could specify where your charity contribution would go, whatever you wanted to give. Some people specified contributions for the Edna Gladner home. Ed Babcaney was treasurer of the community council then and he was the one who told us about it. Pat and I contacted Edna and I guess she liked us, because we were put on the list.

There used to be a musical group named The Gladner Playboys, a part of an advertising effort used by some flour mill up in Sherman, Texas. They made a movie called Blossoms in the Dust, and it was the story of how she got into the adoption trade. She was originally taking care of the mill employees' children, but she got into handling the

adoptions of illegitimate children. She got the Texas legislature to pass legislation declaring there is no such thing as illegitimate children, only illegitimate parents. They don't issue a birth certificate for illegitimate children until they are adopted, and then it is issued in the adoptive parents' name.

LIFE IN THE REFINERY

There was a group in the Technical Services Department referred to as the Process Contact Group. These fellows were assigned to work with the various process departments towards solving any technical problems. Neal Lamb, the fellow I went to school with was in this group. His folks knew my folks back in Kansas. During the war he was called into the service, and his wife and son stayed with his folks.

I was assigned to the Process Contact group and worked with L. G. Lopez towards solving any process problems they might have in the Gas Plant.

Bill Curtiss and Hans Lang were also in the Process Group. They worked with the Power House people. Today Lange has a house just about a block away from ours, in East Hampton, New York. He is the president of some company in Pennsylvania.

Ray Zaner was a school teacher, until he found he could make more money in the Lago Laboratory than he could teaching. He and his family lived in the Colorado Point apartments and we went to visit them on Christmas morning while his wife was in the hospital. The kids colored their pancakes red and green with food coloring.

I remember Harry Mills when he worked at "GAR-1" and "GAR-2" which were compressor units built in 1945 as part of an upgrading program we had for our War Effort. Harry and Ray Imler were typical hard-bitten old timers. They are going to fall apart when they retired, I thought. Harry and his wife got married in their 50's. Harry was afraid of retirement, but once they retired and settled in Arizona, they were the happiest people in the world. He was heard to say he wished he had retired ten years before. Tiry Harrod, from Casper Wyoming reached 50 years of service while he was in Aruba.

Klaus Dillard, an operator assigned to the tank farm, was always wearing coveralls. Dillard was a perennial colony committeeman. He was always involved in an argument with the management over some company policy that he imagined was an insult to foreign staff employees. He felt the company was ripping them off.

Klauss found a Model T Ford in a stateside junkyard. It was a

skeleton of a car, having only four wheels, a motor, and a hood. He had it shipped to Aruba along with other automobiles being shipped in for foreign staff employees. When it arrived in Aruba, Dutch customs fined him 25 guilders for bringing junk to the island. After he had gotten it fixed up with a simple wooden body and painted it, he drove his jalopy to work every day until he retired. When he retired, the company refused to ship it home for him. In defiance of their edict, he dismantled it, secreted it among his boxes of personal effects, and it was shipped back to his home town that way.

I remember John Grey, the manager of the commissary. When he died in Aruba, his wife stayed for about a year, and then had a job in the New York office. I saw her at the last reunion.

The last time I saw Louie Crippen was in Bombay.

While Pat and I were engaged, I remember talking to Karl Walker one day. Karl asked Pat where she was born. Pat replied that she was born in Manito, Spain. I'll be damned if Karl didn't sweep the sidewalk of his uncle's house in Manito right across the street from where Pat lived.

Before the war I was interested in joining the Aruba Flying Club. I was at a flying club meeting in the old clubhouse, and I heard two guys talking. It seemed they wanted to buy a plane and start a social club. I never pursued it any further. I could have learned to fly, but I was young and didn't think I could afford it.

When they had that big fire on the number 10 viscosity unit, Dewey Johnson was the one who went up on the top platform and carried down Nick Weiss, the little Hungarian fellow who was so badly burned. I used to play tennis with Nick, and I was over at the catalytic cracking unit at the time. He had been an operator on number 10 for a long time, and another Hungarian buddy of his, Hyman, who worked in the acid plant. We lived in the bachelor quarters and we played tennis together. I thought that Dewey acted heroically when he brought Nick down.

The fire was caused by a leak in the back trap of the intercondensers on the unit's top platform. In those days, oil or gas leaks were blanketed by a steam lance to prevent fires. A lance was a five foot piece of 1" pipe with handles welded on each side in the middle. The lance was coupled to a length of 1" heavy duty rubber hose to a valve in a live steam connection. They were standard equipment at locations where hazards were known to exist.

Standard procedure was to use the lance as a tool to knock off the

insulation so you could find the location of the leak. If it were a small leak the lance was propped up so that a small flow of steam could be left running on the point of the leak.

It was later deduced that Nick Weiss and the other men burned in this fire had used the lance to beat off the insulation, but the line was so badly eroded inside that the lance knocked a big hole in the line and the escaping hot hydrocarbons produced a huge fire. Two men were badly burned, and Nick later died.

I learned something from that. Sometime later we had a leak at the catalytic cracking plant at some pumps. I had the men get a pair of pliers and very carefully cut the mesh chicken wire used to hold the insulation.

I saw Queen Wilhelmina when she visited Aruba. I was part of the official welcoming party in the lobby of the main office building, and we took her to L.G. Smith's office.

O.H. Shelton was the personnel manager who hired me and he also hired Charlie Greene ten years before me. I think he was from Oklahoma because one time he told me that as a young man he used to be a cotton buyer in Oklahoma.

Russ Ewing used to raise orchids behind bachelor quarters number eight.

Bill Curtiss is in Palm Beach, New Jersey.

Scotty Aldie and his wife used to take their two bulldogs for a walk up the cliff road every night.

I remember "Brownie" Kimmler and his Chihuahuas.

Wayne Richey, a process foreman, quit when they promoted Kimmler to operator. Kimmler said he wasn't ready to be an operator, but they promoted him anyway. They brought Wayne back as shift foreman, and he was eventually promoted right back to where he was before because he was a good man.

Julius Landau was the process maintenance foreman, and Gene Work was process foreman in charge of the catalytic cracking unit when I took over from him.

I don't think we had a Christmas tree until we had Garth. I remember Danny Moore and Cart Miller were in Dave Barnes' house one time while the Barnes were on vacation. Danny and Cart got a cactus and decorated it in place of a regular pine Christmas tree.

Fred Eaton was the guy who kept my radio working.

One time Refinery Manager Horigan found out that some guy stole a piece of pipe to extend a water line out to his patio. He made him dig it up and take it back.

L.G. Smith was our Sunday school teacher, and that's where I had the opportunity to become acquainted with him. He was like a patron saint of our community church.

We had the largest lawn in the colony. We had fill brought in and put out towards the cliffs. It extended about 25 feet out from the house and then dropped off to the coral. I planted a hibiscus hedge along the outer edge and an olive hedge on the road side of the house. Our lawn was St. Augustine, and was planted in soil that had been placed on the top of caliche.

At one time they were recovering 1,000 barrels of oil a day at one time from under the island. For a year before he retired, Harry Mills was in charge of the Sears and Roebuck recovery pumps. Several fellows were assigned that duty successively. I remember a fellow by the name of James Danker did it for a while. He married that beautiful Danish girl and they had a little boy.

I'm sure everyone has heard the story about the guy who was vacationing stateside in his car with Aruba license plates, but for the benefit of you who haven't, I'll repeat it. An Arubanite pulls into a filling station. As the attendant was filling his tank, he asked, "Did they ever pave that road to Oranjestad?" It turns out that the fellow had worked in the refinery in Aruba in the early days.



The Beulah Snidlow & Ralph Watson Story

RALPH WATSON

Ralph Watson was born on July 4, 1903, in Tyneside, England. He arrived in Aruba in November of 1924. Ralph was sent by the Andrew Weir Company who had the concession for surveying the San Nicholas harbor. Ralph worked on Lake Tankers for a brief time, and then was assigned to survey the San Nicholas harbor and the surrounding area to determine if it was suitable for oil transfer between Lake Tankers to ocean going vessels. Afterwards he was sent to survey around Lake Maracaibo. While Ralph was in San Nicolas he lived in the old Eman family house. This two story building, with living quarters above the store, was built in the days when sailing ships called on Aruba to take cargoes from the phosphate mines. It is said that as many as 100 sailing ships could be seen in the harbor during the height of the mines' productivity.

The old railroad was still there when Ralph was surveying, and he used the cars to carry his equipment, pushing them by hand. He often told the story about the wild goat problem they had then. These animals were such a nuisance that he had his men to work building a large enclosure, after which they captured them. The Aruban spectators of this debacle were highly amused by their efforts, laughing and shaking their heads in delight at the entertainment it provided. Goats were safely penned every night, but by morning every one had jumped the walls.

SALMON DREDGING COMPANY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Ralph said that, in 1925, the Andrew Weir Company sold out their concession rights to the Standard Oil of Indiana. The Salmon Dredging Company of South Carolina sent a dredge for the harbor. Also they sent their company engineer, a Mr. Levitt. He and Ralph lived in the White House. Ralph said the old bucket dredge cast great loads of shellfish on the reef and the dredge cook kept pots of fresh shellfish on the stove. They took most of their meals there, reveling in the savory seafood. He and Mr. Levitt ran the first pipeline built in Aruba, a two-inch line from Mangel Cora well to the future refinery's location. A small windmill was sent from the U.S. to pump the water from the well. They built a reservoir, and Ralph said he believed that Bill Ewart installed the little pump house. Levitt carved the date 1924 on one of the stones used in the

reservoir and that stone was later put in front of the main office building. According to Ralph, it was about this time or perhaps a little later that the preparation for building the refinery took place.

THE LIGHT HOUSE KEEPER

An Aruban rode his donkey to the eastern lighthouse at Colorado Point, morning and evening, extinguishing and lighting the kerosene marker lights.

THE FIRST SUPERINTENDENT

The first superintendent was Captain Rodger and Jimmy Farquharson was his assistant. They originally had their offices in Oranjestad. Captain Rodger was in charge of shipping and oil terminal operations

DR. HOLLAND REFINERY SUPERINTENDENT

As the building of the refinery progressed, Dr. Holland was appointed Refinery Superintendent. The refinery was built by the Standard Oil Company of Indiana engineers, but the construction company of Chicago Bridge and Ironworks built the first tanks.

I have forgotten when the goats were finally eliminated from the colony but when I went there in January 1930 they were still plentiful, and a nuisance.

BEULAH SNIDLOW

I was born on May 5, 1905, in Portland, Oregon. I graduated from the University Of Washington with a major in bacteriology and was taking graduate work in biochemistry at the University Of Chicago when I ran out of money and was forced to take the job in Aruba. I was 24 at the time.

I was hired to set up a hospital laboratory and do the x-ray work. The nurses' bungalow was full and so for three months I lived in a room in the hospital. It was across from one of the *sheep sheds* that housed the construction workers. The *sheep sheds* were wooden buildings that had windows that were no more than holes in the wall, and they had a wooden door that could be closed but usually never was. My first night in Aruba there was a party in the one across the coral from my room. Until early morning I was serenaded by the sound of beer bottles thrown from windows crashing on the coral. Shouting and singing went on until daybreak, and then the goats began their noisy early morning rounds of the garbage cans. As I lay awake that night, I wondered what had ever brought me to such a place.

THE FIRST HOSPITAL

The hospital was a wooden building with a long "white" ward at one end and a "colored" ward at the other. In between were some private rooms, the surgery, x-ray and laboratory. The front entrance wing had Dr. Mailer's office, some examination rooms and the pharmacy and clinic. The doors to the hospital were the double barroom type.

JIM BLUEJACKET

When any of Welder General Foreman, Jim Bluejacket's, welders had a minor accident, he brought them up to the clinic himself. As he came through the doors he gave a shout that resounded throughout the building. All who could possibly break away from what they were doing rushed to the clinic to listen and laugh at Jim's tales while his welder received attention. One time Jim got the flu and Dr. Mailer put him in one of the private rooms. Whenever any of us had a few minutes we gathered in Jim's room to listen to his stories. Jim called spying on your neighbors "doing louver duty." (A reference to the louvers on bungalow shutters.) Finally Dr. Mailer decreed that this practice was to be stopped. When Jim heard about Dr. Mailer's orders, he said he wouldn't stay if the girls couldn't come to see him. He got up, put on his clothes and went home.

THE FIRST HOSPITAL STAFF

The doctors were, Dr. Mailer and Dr. Sher. The nurses were, Margaret Reeve (Jackson), Peg Hayter, Flossie Alheim, Birdie Bond (Thompson), Doris Steele (English) and Lucille Styles. (The names in parenthesis are their married names.) I, Beulah Watson, was the lab and X-ray technician.

The pharmacist was Harold Breraton and he was the real factotum of the place. I don't think the hospital could have run without him. He knew where everything was and how everything operated. I think he was from British Guyana. He was a splendid example of a gentleman. Other of the men and women who worked at the hospital were also superior people.

We all liked Dr. Sher, a hard working, kindly man with a good sense of humor. One day I was called to the clinic to take blood from a patient, an officer from a tanker, who had imbibed too freely and got beat up. His head was split wide open, but he was enjoying all the attention and was too anaesthetized from the alcohol to feel any pain as

Dr. Sher sewed him up. His shirt was in ribbons and soaked with blood, and he protested that he couldn't go back to his ship looking like that. So Dr. Sher got him one of his shirts, a Japanese silk shirt, and the

sailor went happily back to his ship.

OUR FIRST TRIP TO ORANJESTAD

I don't remember when the road from San Nicholas to Oranjestad was paved, but it was just a dusty dirt trail when I went there in January 1930. There were no clothing stores for women or stores where one could buy cloth and thread. I needed a spool of thread, and was told by an acquaintance to peer into the houses along the main street of Oranjestad until I saw one with a bolt of cloth on a shelf. If they had a bolt of cloth, they might have thread. On the rare occasion when there was slack time at the hospital, Dr. Sher talked Dr. Mailer into letting him have the hospital car for the afternoon. He loaded us into the open touring car. We bumped over rocks, past aloe field and divi divi trees, hoping we would see a wild goat or something interesting. I loved the pungent smell of aloe although many people objected to it. A favorite trick to play on newcomers was to get them to taste aloe. Another was to wait until a newcomer had enjoyed a big stack of pancakes before showing him the kitchen. They would watch in revulsion as the grinning cook pushed aside the layer of cockroaches floating on the batter before dipping a ladle full.

BOB DORWART

About a week after I came, Bob Dorwart came as a secretary. He was fresh out of high school trying to earn enough to go to continue his education. When he had collected enough money he went back to university for his engineering degree.

VIRGIL REEVE

A few weeks later, Virgil Reeve came and set up his dental office. Virgil was the best player on the men's basketball team. There were many players of his caliber, and the games never lacked for audiences.

OUR LADIES BASKETBALL TEAM

Betty Henley started a women's team in the days before shorts. No one had thought to bring their old high school middie and bloomer outfits, so we played in our heavy woolen swim suits. It didn't last long. Playing basketball in woolen swim suits in the tropics isn't the most agreeable sport in the world.

MY WORK DAYS

Besides the six full working days, I usually had to work most of Sunday X-raying the drunks that had gotten beat up Saturday night. One Sunday there had been an unusually involved brawl and the ward was full. I was quite weary and my patience was about gone when a man with a very marked southern accent was wheeled in. I guess I made

some snide remark about the brawlers, and he became indignant. He was quick to inform me he was not one of those. According to him, he had been strolling on a side-walk in the village of San Nicholas minding his own business, when a couple of dark skinned policemen refused to get off the side-walk when he passed. He pushed them off. They weren't impressed by his attempts to enlighten them on subject of the proper etiquette required of dark skinned men while in the presence of a southern gentleman. The policemen gave him enthusiastically applied personalized instructions to demonstrate the correct behavior expected of citizens while in their presence. These attitude adjustments left him with various abrasions and contusions. That southern gentleman later went on to become quite prosperous.

Another of that night's casualties brought in by the police, a man who later became one of the upper company executives. This belligerent soul was thrown from the second story window of Fanny's minus all his garments. I must explain that Fanny's bordello was just outside the company fence, near the main gate to the refinery.

SUPERINTENDENT BARTELLS

Mr. Bartells was later criticized for being tyrannical, puritanical and hypocritical when he gave the order that any brawls at the Pan Am clubhouse would result in the people involved being expelled immediately. Personally, I was pleased by his edict. From then on, I had part of my Sundays free, was able to wash my hair, and I got more rest.

FOURTH OF JULY 1930

Then there was the Fourth of July 1930. The fireworks had been bought and were to be shot off a barge which was anchored just out from the diving tower in front of snob hill. Viewers' cars were lined up just above the barge to watch the display.

Ev Wade's car was next to ours, and he and his little boy, William, were in it. The first rocket went up, but the amateur in charge of shooting it off failed to cover the rest of the rockets. They ignited when the sparks from the first salvo touched off the stockpile of fireworks. The rockets screamed past us at a furious pace, exploding and ricocheting, creating monumental confusion and terror among the onlookers.

Spectators drove away as if they were being dive-bombed by German Stukas. Ralph and I began to follow when Ralph noticed the Wade's car was on fire. He jumped out to help. The upholstery and the little boy's clothes were on fire. Together, he and Ev extinguished the flames, and we rushed them to the hospital.

Ev wasn't badly injured, but William, seriously burned on the back of the neck, was in the hospital for quite some time.

In the meantime a rocket had gone through our radiator and another had taken off a tail light. One skimmed Ralph's head, and he was bleeding, but when we got to my house, and I washed his scalp, we decided it wasn't serious enough to go to the hospital. Ralph, still a British subject, said wryly, "Those Yanks are still trying to get even with us redcoats!"

MOVING INTO A BUNGALOW

After living for three months in the hospital, I moved into a four-room bungalow with Y. Florey and Lotje Gravenstein (McReynolds). Florey was the only teacher that year, but that fall, when a new school had been built, we moved to a five-room bungalow. Louise Powers and Inez Cooke were added to the school staff. Lotje was Tom Brown's (Accounting Department Head) secretary. Later we were moved to a six-room bungalow Peggy Raymond, Myrtle Parham, Jenny (Greene) and Margeurite Fassler were added to the teaching staff.

NEW YEAR'S DAY 1931

New Year's Day of 1931 was another nightmare. In addition to the beat-up brawlers, a couple who had given their son a BB gun for Christmas got into a fight when they got home from the dance. They fought over the gun, filling each other full of bb pellets in the process. I X-rayed one while the doctors worked on the other, take more x-rays on the other when they dug out what my X-rays showed. I was so exasperated; I couldn't help wishing that the tiny bb's had been .38 bullets.

NOVEMBER OF 1932

In November of 1932 a hurricane blew up, took out the Pontoon bridge in Curacao, and headed in our direction. Weather forecasters warned it would strike that night. The westerly driving rain had soaked our beds and covered every low spot with water. We had hung sheets over our louvers, but they were soon soaked and flapping wetly.

Peggy Raymond and I were roommates, and for some unknown reason, fear and dramatic reactions from some of the others amused rather than disturbed us. Ralph came by and took me to the hospital to eat. He told me on the way down that he couldn't take me back because the men in charge were ordered to spend the night in the refinery. The canvas top of his car blew off and the water was up to the hospital porch, but he managed to drive close enough that I could climb on porch without wading. That seemed a little silly to me when I thought of it

later. I couldn't have gotten any wetter; I was soaked to the skin by the time I got home.

Virgil Reeve took me back to our house. The lights had not yet failed when the girls, some of them in tears, began to write last wills and testaments or farewell letters to their families. Peggy and I found our "Funeral March of a Marionette" record and played it, thinking that doleful dirge would cheer them up. It failed to improve their dispositions, and they yelled for us to shut it off. Not long after, the lights went out and we retired to our rooms.

With the aid of a flashlight we pushed our beds as far as we could away from the window and the flapping sheet. We got out what dry clothes we had, put on our winter coats and lay in our wet beds to sleep. Sleeping proved impossible. Peggy and I lay laughing and talking far into the night. Eventually I dropped off to sleep, but was awakened by Peggy's moving her bed so she could open her bureau drawer. I asked what on earth she was doing. Her drawer was full of beautiful clothes; her trousseau. She was to be married as soon as school was out that spring. In answer to my question, Peg said, "Beulah, I can't have my body washed up in these dilapidated clothes. I'm going to put on my good ones."

Years later in California, I teased her about that. Peggy was to be given a special award as outstanding teacher of the year in her Escondido, California district, but she died before she knew of her recognition.

MARRIAGE

Ralph and I were married in June 1934, moved into bungalow 321 and I took up the job of learning to be a housewife and gardener in Aruba. I learned to cook on the kerosene stove and clean the burners, to carry fresh water in pails, use the ice-box (with block ice), break the eggs into separate containers so that the inevitable rotten ones didn't contaminate the main dish. I tried not to mind the over-ripe chickens (before the refrigerated tankers brought us the frozen ones). I learned to fight cockroaches in the kitchen, and land crabs and lizard in the garden.

I think the name of the author of *The Lucky Girls of Aruba* was Ben Robertson. (*Saturday Evening Post*, July 8, 1939) He died in a plane crash in Spain, soon after the article was published. I believe he was on his way to Europe as a war correspondent.

SLIM REED

Slim Reed, a steward on one of the tankers, had left the fleet to

manage the mess hall.

MANUEL VIANA

Manuel Viana had been a cabin boy on a tanker. He came ashore with a small tire capping outfit. He wound up living in a simple little Aruban house. He later got the concession for Chrysler cars, and was very successful as a car dealer. He bought planes and established the early air service between Aruba and Curacao. (Viana Airlines was bought out by KLM some time later.)

A. MINTON

A. Minton was a WWI dispatch motorcyclist with the British army in France. After the war he went to Argentina and became a gaucho. From there, he went to Peru, where he became a friend of the president. When they had a coup, and that president had to escape to Chile, Minton relayed messages and carried packages to him. When another coup returned his friend to power again, Minton was made chief of staff. He rode a white horse and was the grand marshal of parades. Another coup sent Minton and the president on the lam. Minton wound up in Venezuela where he got a job as office manager in Dr. Sandvoss' hospital. Sometime before WWII, Dr. Sandvoss became a surgeon in the Lago hospital. Minton, ever in search of new ways to improve his lot, got the idea of buying a popcorn wagon and bringing it to Maracaibo. It proved to be quite popular, and made him so affluent he was able to purchase several others. Lamentably, one of the sons of Juan Gomez, the dictator, decided Minton was doing too well for a foreigner, and confiscated the wagons. Minton finally wound up as office manager at our Lago Colony hospital.

TONY AND JACK SCHNUR

It seems that Jack Schnur was the one who really made a name for himself. In Aruba, he was in charge of the Lago foundry where castings were produced for machinery and equipment used in the refinery. This included the bronze memento awarded by Lago in 1945 to those who had been with the company in Aruba on the first day crude oil was processed, January 29, 1929. On March 15, 1945, the one billionth barrel was processed in the refinery.

During WWII, China began organizing their famous cottage industries for production of steel, and the manufacture of arms. They asked for help from the American Industries Development bureau, an organization for assisting countries in the development of needed industries. Someone was needed who could set up the industries, and teach the Chinese the necessary skills required. When questioned by

American government officials about Jack's abilities, Lloyd Smith replied that no one he had ever known could be so right for the job. Jack was dispatched to China. On the final leg of his trip, he traveled over the Himalayas in a sedan chair.

1962

When Ralph and I visited Tony, his wife, and Jack in southern India in 1962, he showed us pictures of himself, and Chiang and Madame Kai Shek. He had letters of commendation from high officials. Included was one from Adlai Stevenson.

At the time of our 1962 visit Jack was teaching molding and pattern making. He had a laboratory and classroom. While we were there, a telegram came requesting his presence in Delhi for a conference. China had invaded Assam and relations between those two countries were a bit tense.

When Tony and Jack moved into the south Indian village, Tony asked what she could do that would be the most beneficial for its inhabitants. She was told that a meal for one child from each family each day would be the thing. Each evening, a flock of youngsters came to her, and they were fed. It was just after Christmas when we were visiting and she had a Christmas tree and presents for all the children.

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY ARUBAN PARADE 1939

My first queen's birthday Aruban parade was in 1939, and it consisted of one old truck filled with Arubans playing Wirri Wirris with cattle horns etched so that when a small rod was scraped over the etched ridges a rhythmical sound was produced. The truck was followed by one lone, staggering drunk who kept shouting, "Viva La Reina Wilhelmina," much to the amusement of the onlookers.

ESCAPED PRISONERS FROM DEVIL'S ISLAND

We can't remember which year it was, but escaped prisoners from Devil's Island reached Aruba. The 11 Frenchmen and one Belgian were in a rather dilapidated sailboat. Followed by the French cruiser *Jean d'Arc*, they stopped at Trinidad for supplies. The fugitives managed to slip out of Trinidad without being captured by the cruiser and successfully made landfall in Aruba. The cruiser caught up with them and anchored outside Aruba's three-mile limit to await their departure. The men were put in the San Nicholas jail until their boat could be repaired and loaded with supplies. A collection was taken up in the colony and supplies were provided along with an outboard motor.

Ralph was a good friend of the harbor pilot, Captain Smit, and was

told to bring a movie camera when the boat was ready to sail. Ralph was with him when he towed the boat out before daybreak to avoid spotters on the cruiser. The boat was towed out past the reef as planned, and the pilot boat turned back for the harbor as soon as Captain Smit saw its sails were properly set. Suddenly the captain let out a yell. The sailboat had overturned and its men were seen struggling in the water. The pilot turned back and soon he had all the hapless ex-prisoners back on the pilot boat.

They were returned to the jail while another collection was made to buy them a new boat, and more provisions.

HENRI CHARRIERE

Henri Charriere, another Devil's Island escapee, fled the penal colony with two other Frenchmen in 1933. They picked up three others in Trinidad, reached Curacao, and then went on to Colombia. After other adventures Charriere became a citizen of Venezuela in 1945. The title of the book he wrote about his adventures was "Papillon". This reference to the butterfly tattooed on his upper chest was the name he went by in the French underworld. It was first published in France in 1969. Charriere died in 1973 at age 67.

LOCAL LEAVE PROGRAM

There was great joy when local leaves were instituted. Men were given two weeks of local leave after one year's service. This leave could be taken anywhere. Those with two years of service were allowed a thirty day vacation plus travel time to their point of origin. That gave us the opportunity to see other Caribbean islands and Venezuela, and we took full advantage of it.

Helen White, Trudi and Colin Ward and the two of us took a trip to some of the islands in 1939. We were on the little Dutch freighter, *Baralt*, and were in St. Martins when the radio message came that Germany had invaded Poland. We crossed to the island of Antigua in a sailboat, and while we waited for the 1923 Buick truck that was to pick us up, we talked to Mr. Thompson, the well-read port captain and immigration officer. We discussed the European situation, and Mr. Thompson declared emphatically that England should impose a Carthaginian Peace on Germany.

SUBMARINE ATTACK ON ARUBA

After the German submarine attack on the Lake Tanker fleet in Aruba on February 16, 1942, most of my friends left, particularly those with children. I found it a lonely time, but we had an excellent library at the club run by Harriet Baldwin. The blackouts were uncomfortable in

the days before air conditioning. Tightly shut louvers and doors with heavy draperies were stifling. Lowell Thomas spoke to us from the radio, and the Time magazines brought in by tanker kept us informed. All were happy when the U.S. Air Force came and we could have lights again.

At the time of the submarine attack we were the only refinery making the high octane gasoline required by the Spitfires, and it was important for the Germans to put us out of commission. Seeing those Lake Tankers and the burning oil was a horrible and unforgettable thing, and I'll leave it to others to recount the war years.

The Lee Dew family left after the submarine attack. Lee was our Company baker and kept us supplied with all sorts of excellent bread and pastries. With him gone we were dependent on the outside bakery for our bread. A wild yeast infected that bakery, and the virtually inedible bread produced was an ominous dark purple. Most of us began to bake our own, and the island's limited supply of flour became so full of weevils that it took many siftings to render it usable. The adult weevils weren't hard to separate from the flour, but the larvae were impossible to get out. One lady in the commissary told me that she had sifted her flour 12 times that morning to no avail. She gave up and baked her bread, weevils and all. We all eventually did the same.

GERMAN SUBMARINE ACTIVITY

The war's demand for increased production, and workers leaving to avoid the possibility of being killed or injured in an enemy attack caused a shortage of personnel in the refinery. Other islands were asked to send laborers.

A sailboat from St. Lucia crowded with workmen bound for Aruba was machine-gunned by a surfaced German submarine. Some of the helpless victims were killed outright, and many were wounded during the attack. So involved were the Germans in destroying the ship that they failed to detect approaching U.S. Air Force antisubmarine patrol planes until they were overhead. One dropped a bomb, scored a direct hit, and the submarine blew up.

THE ARMY AIR FORCE

While the Army Air Force was in Aruba, tanker sinkings decreased noticeably, but the submarines always seemed to know when refrigerated tankers were in the area - a testimony to the effectiveness of German agents in the Caribbean. Many of them were sunk. Supplies became scarce, and notices of carcasses from Argentina, or elsewhere were as welcome as news of allied victories in Africa.

MARION WILEY

Red haired Marion Wiley was head nurse at Lago's hospital. She was very grateful to the ex-nurses in the colony who cheerfully offered their services when the hospital was swamped with the casualties from torpedoed ships. Security was at an all-time high. Everyone who passed through the refinery gates was required to stop and show their badges. The one exception was Miss Wiley. She got big smiles and was waved through. Mr. Horigan, the refinery manager, was amused by that. He said they always stopped him; he didn't rate as much with the guards.

It was fun going shopping with her in the village if you weren't in a hurry; she was always being stopped to be told about ex-patients and their families.

Min and Joe Josephson lived across from the old hospital. Min was known as a wonderful cook, and she and Joe used to have bachelors over for special meals. Whenever colony people spoke of popularity, Min's name was the first to be mentioned.

The girls from Fanny's and other whorehouses had parades on Sundays. They dressed in long Japanese silk dresses and walked up and down the main road in San Nicholas until members of what might be called The Pre-moral Majority protested to the management of Lago. The houses were soon closed, and that made less work for me; the incidence of VD declined. One year an amoebic dysentery epidemic struck and the hospital was filled to the halls. I worked day and night to clear enough food handlers for the mess hall, bakery, and commissary. I contracted the disease myself, and had to be hospitalized.

In 1947 Celma Rosborough and I spent a week in the small charming little village of La Mesa, Venezuela, and I wanted Ralph to see it. Ralph and I spent our 1951 local leave in Venezuela. When we were walking about the village we saw a very beautiful garden and paused to look at it through the fence. I told Ralph that it looked more like an American garden than a Venezuelan one. We hadn't seen the elderly man who was working there, and were startled when he emerged to tell us it wasn't as good as his San Franciscan one. He invited us into his dirt floored, yet immaculate cottage, and two friendly well groomed dogs greeted us. A picture of President Truman had the prominent place on his wall. After the usual preliminary conversation, I asked him to excuse my inquisitiveness, but I was curious about why he was living there in La Mesa. He laughed and said that he was a young Finnish sailor who had jumped ship in the United States. He got a job with the construction firm of Chicago Bridge and was sent to Aruba. When that job was completed,

the men were reassigned to another in Venezuela where he eventually retired. His wife had died, but he had children in San Francisco. It wasn't as bleak of a story as I first thought. He told us the U.S. Ambassador to Venezuela was a friend of his and he could return to California any time he wished.

When we retired in 1954 we lived in Oregon and we were taking a dance class in Portland. In conversation with a student, we told him we had worked in Aruba. He asked if we had known Dr. Holland. He said after Dr. Holland left Aruba he worked as a draftsman and was a colleague of his. Dr. Holland talked a lot about Aruba and was very bitter about being let go. He said that he had 'stepped on a snake' and been 'kicked out.'

In 1963, Peggy Raymond, Ralph and I were attending the music festival in Aspen, Colorado. One evening we went to see the showing of a special movie in an auditorium. A short feature before the main attraction showed pictures of an island, not Aruba, but with wind blown trees similar to the 'Divi Divi'. A lady behind us said, 'It looks like Aruba.' I turned and glanced at her, but failed to recognize the woman, so I said, 'Did you say Aruba?' She said, 'Yes, my daughter lived there for a year, God help her'. Ralph turned around and said, 'I lived there for thirty years, God help me.' We all had a good laugh.

This reminds me of a story Louise Harrison, Stewart Harrison's wife, told. During the war she was on vacation in Louisiana. At a party a lady told about the hardships her soldier son suffered on a horrible island called Aruba. Louise said she was amused, but didn't tell the lady she had lived there.

Now we are 'hopi schuma, poco chocolate' (much scum, little chocolate) and a weekly trip to the grocery store is the extent of our travels. We have our books, magazines and television, and we are content in this retirement community with all the other decrepit old codgers.

Maybe someday we will go to a big Aruba reunion, where we will be able to say we have sweated in the tropical heat, drank gasoline flavored water, and smelling the sulfur dioxide vapors rolling in from the refinery. We kind of miss the cockroaches, lizards, aloes and cacti.

RALPH'S REFINERY MEMORIES

Mr. Kane was in charge of the docks, but Ralph knew many of the wharfingers personally. From the early days they called him Mister Wachee. One day a pipe burst on the docks and the wharfingers fled the

scene. Nothing Mr. Kane could do or say would bring them back. Ralph, whose affinity for the workers was widely known, was called. He appealed to them to return to help with the repairs. One of the wharfingers said in Papiamento, 'Mr. Wachee, when pipe breaks, God can help. Me, no.'

Tom Cooke and Don Smith, VIPs from New York were in Aruba on an inspection visit. The day they were to visit Ralph's department he got dressed up - white shirt and tie, good white linen pants. Just before they were due to arrive, word came that a gasket had blown in the Loading Pump House. Ralph rushed over and in his attempts to handle the blow-out his pants were soaked with oil. He took them off and was soaking them in a bucket of kerosene when the visitors walked in. He greeted them in shirt, tie and underpants!

A large steam operated whistle in the Power House sounded at the 7:a.m. start of the work day in the refinery. The same whistle sounded at the 4:p.m. end of the work day.

There was also a smaller, higher pitched, whistle mounted on one of the tall structures in the refinery. This whistle was blown when one of the key personnel was wanted. It served the same purpose that a 'Beeper' does today. A long blast followed by two short blasts might be a pipe fitter was wanted. The person called would dial into the Central Pump house to be informed who was trying to get in touch with him. Everyone who heard it learned who was being called.

If a man gave notice that he was quitting, management's policy was that he be interviewed and persuaded to stay. A man from Montserrat came in to tender his resignation one day. When Ralph asked him why, he said, 'Mr. Watson, here it is: whistle, whistle, whistle. Whistle to come to work, whistle to quit work, whistle, whistle, whistle.' He added with a gleam in his eye, 'Besides, in Montserrat, behind every bush there is a girl.'

Not long before we retired one of the Arubans in his department came to tell him an interesting story. The man's wife was a teacher in a government school. The day before, as a part of her class work, she had the children tell her how they had spent the weekend. A little girl said that she had gone with her parents to the Misa Bu, the old church. The teacher had never heard of a church called Misa Bu although she had been born and lived all her life in Aruba, as had her parents, and grandparents. She questioned the little girl further, and the child offered to take her there. The next Sunday, the teacher and her husband went with the child and were excited by their findings. He told Ralph where

to find the church, and we went there the following Sunday. It was on the rockiest stretch of the north shore - on a high cliff above the sea. There was a narrow winding path part way, but we had to climb over rocks most of the way. The broken walls of a small building awaited us. The height of them ranged from three to six feet, and inside were the remains of a stone altar. On it was a fresh bouquet of flowers. Outside was a graveyard filled with stone mounds. In the later part of the sixteenth century or the beginning of the seventeenth century there was a community living near Savaneta. It was harassed by pirates lying in wait for Spanish convoys from South America. The women in the community were raped and the men enslaved. There was no priest in Aruba and the priest from Curacao rarely came to christen, marry, or bury the people. The community found a new, more secret location near the north shore and built their little chapel on the rocky cliff. Three hundred years of hurricanes and weathering had all but destroyed it, but the descendants of the original community continued to worship in the ruins. The people of Oranjestad and other churches in the north decided to rebuild it. When Ralph told the story to Mr. Horigan (Manager of the Lago Refinery), he sent a company bulldozer to clear a road and carry the material for rebuilding the little chapel. A church had given a Virgin Mary statue, and it was dedicated and renamed. I still like to think of it as the Misa Bu. After the ceremony the elderly Arubans who had known Ralph in the old days clustered around us. One older man with merry eyes said to him, 'Mr. Wachee, bo to bu, bo to gordo.' (Mr. Watson, you are old, you are fat.) Another laughingly pointed to his thumb and Ralph was reminded of the very early days when the man had cut a big slice from his thumb. There was no doctor closer than Oranjestad, and Ralph had picked up the piece of thumb, stuck it on, and wrapped it. The next time Dr. Nunes came, he had him look at it. It was healing nicely, but Dr. Nunes observed that Ralph had put the piece on upside down. His thumb had caused no pain, and the old Aruban had used it all those years.

Ralph knew and liked Louie Lopez. They were roommates in the hospital once, and lived in the same bachelor bungalow, Number 47.

RETIREMENT

Ralph and Beulah retired in September of 1954. They retired after 30 years of service with Lago Oil and Transport Company, Limited. They built a home in West Linn which is near Oregon City, Oregon.

Oregon City was Beulah Watson's home town. At a ceremony in the Journal Building the Netherlands Acting Vice Council, Mr. R. M. Crommelin presented Ralph The Order of the Orange Nassau. This medal was presented in the name of Queen Juliana of the Netherlands.

The body of the medal is a blue Maltese cross set in gold and silver laurel and carrying the legend of the order "May God Be with Us". To the Netherlands it is the equivalent of the Order of the Knight of the Garter in England.

Ralph had previously received his American Citizenship granted for "...serving American interests abroad (during World War II)"¹

¹*Beulah died of a massive heart attack on October 5, 1984. Ralph, who had been ill for some time, succumbed to complications on October the sixth.*

The William Otto Weber Story

GOING TO ARUBA

I found out about the position with Lago from Brown Instrument Company. Brown had been taken over by Honeywell and I was part of the R & D involved in the development of the class 15 potentiometer. At the same time I was asked to handle a special group of instrumentation for a show job that had to go to Tulsa, Oklahoma. It was during this activity that I became acquainted with two fellows who were receiving special training to go to work in Aruba at Lago Oil and Transport Company. One of them was Bill White. I was impressed when I heard they were going to the Dutch West Indies. I could just see that they were going down there to sit under palm trees, have beautiful girls bring drinks to them, and have a wonderful time while they thought about work. As it turned out, I did more looking into the situation, and found you had to write to the overseas personnel in New York. The Personnel Manager was O. H. Shelton. My father told me my letter was too long. I had written two and a half pages. I told him the man didn't know me, and I thought I should give him a little background. I thought I was quite knowledgeable in instrumentation at the time, having taken the training course at Brown. That was the time when the first pneumatic transmitters and receivers had come out. I had to pass the physical. The strange part about that was the doctor was the same man I met when I came back to Honeywell many years later to get another physical to rejoin the company. I passed and soon I was on my way to Aruba.

In those days, the only way to get there was by boat, and I came on the *S/S Esso Aruba*. It was square-nosed, and had the triple expansion steam engine. We were 7 1/2 days from Bayonne to Aruba. My first glance at Aruba made me think it was a pioneer operation. As we rounded the point, I noticed the activity at the refinery. I was slightly disappointed that I was not in on the start of the operation.

When I arrived I was put up in Bachelor's Quarters No. 1. When I entered my assigned room I decided I needed a shower and wash my hair. All a sudden my hair turned to steel. I thought I was a goner for sure. I was put wise to the fact that the shower water was brackish and you had to carry fresh water from the outside spigot. There was a spigot on the upper and on the lower floor. You filled a bucket with the fresh water and dumped it over your head and everything was all right.

I roomed with a married man who was missing his family

considerably. He used to go out every night with his friends and get grossly drunk. He came home and I had to put up with that.

One night, one of his friends came around to put ice in our beds. It was in the wee hours of the morning and I didn't care too much for this. The guy didn't realize I was awake because he was slightly inebriated, so I snuck up on him and jumped on his back. He got scared and went charging out of the room, and since we were on the second floor, I darned near went over the banister. I told him never to come into our room again. He said I had scared the living daylights out of him and he'd nearly had a heart attack.

The way I solved the problem with the roommate was going out with him at night and seeing he didn't get so inebriated and got home safely. He missed his family so much he didn't stay long.

I didn't go to work right away, because the personnel manager's secretary, a woman by the name of Elizabeth Dickey, said he wouldn't be coming in for a week. The procedure was you had to get the okay from the personnel manager to go to work. The Instrument Department General Foreman, Paul Jensen, was unhappy about it, and tried to indicate it was my fault. I said it wasn't. The Assistant General Foreman, Mr. E. J. Hillstead, who we used to refer to as Mr. Bedstead, came around and asked me if I knew anything about the pneumatic instrumentation in the shop. Being honest with him, I said I knew a little. I realize it wasn't too hard to analyze the situation and calibrate the instrument. He thought since I had come from Brown Instruments, I should know everything about everything, and that sunk my points with him. He said something about ordering a dial for some precision indicator and hadn't received the right equipment. Being very honest, I asked if he used the right part number. He acted as if the part number wasn't too important. I looked at the part and the part book, and found he had ordered the wrong dial. There again, I got off to a poor start with Mr. Hillstead.

My first job was to help calculate orifice plates. Stan Chapman, Reede Holley, Jim Lopez, and I were involved with that. We used a three foot slide rule.

I arrived in Aruba in 1938. I stayed until 1952. The two Featherston boys were Robert and Richard, I think. Charline was the oldest.

Featherston was my ex-father-in-law. I divorced Charline in Aruba, and she left with the little boy we had. I agreed in the court that she

could take the child and raise him. She has made no attempt to contact me so as far as I am concerned, the issue is closed.

I met my present wife, Regina, while I was on vacation in Philadelphia. I found myself with time on my hands since all my friends were working. I was passing an airport, and decided to take up flying and managed to get a license, and at the same time, met my present wife. We agreed that if things worked out in Aruba, we would then get married. I wanted to make sure I could get a house in Aruba after we got back from that vacation. It was funny, when I sent her the letter saying things were okay, she was walking her father down the aisle for the second time. Her mother had died and he had decided to remarry her mother's best girlfriend. Everybody wondered why she was smiling and so happy. They didn't know she was leaving shortly to get married in Aruba. We're still doing very well. Unfortunately, Jean is having a bout with cancer, but we believe we have the thing licked. The doctor says everything looks pretty clear now, and her chemotherapy treatments are stretched out to every five weeks instead of four weeks. We hope in the near future, she will be able to get completely off the treatments. The treatments are very rough, but Jean has taken them in stride. She has lost all her hair, and I have kidded her that I am going to buy her a blond, a red wig so we can go out and live it up. You can see things can be bad, but yet they can be funny too.

Davidson brings up an interesting subject. He was dating almost every datable girl on the island along with me when we were single. He approached them with the idea of marriage, and every one of them turned him down. It was then that I asked my present wife to come down and married. About that time Jensen came to me and asked me to make a hurried up trip to go to Venezuela. I said, gee whiz, I just got married and I don't want to go away for a month or two. Why not send somebody else, and give them a chance? They sent Davidson, and that's where he met his wife, who was a nurse in the operating room. He popped the question, and they got married. I have always wondered if I had taken his place, would he have gotten married.

Davidson was a great outdoorsman. During the war, I used to wait for him to come in and relieve me on the shift. Time and again, I'd get a call from some P.T. boat that Davidson was riding around on. They would always say it was unfortunate, but that they couldn't get Davidson in time to make his shift because they had spotted a submarine and they were after it. Davidson would come in an hour or so later. I would have taken his shift and be waiting for him to come in and relieve me.

As I have said, he was a great outdoorsman. Dottie was a person who was afraid of drafts, took medicine for something or other, and was somewhat of a hypochondriac. He wound up selling his sailboat. His famous Packard was left to rot and rust. I heard the stories of how Davidson got married and how he took her down to the Bachelor Quarters to see his room. His sitting room was set up all nice. That was where he did most of his entertaining. You could come in, sit down and have a cold drink. She wanted to see the bedroom. They went in and she saw boxes of empty Coke bottles, 40 pairs of socks that needed mending, 12 pairs of shoes that were in bad shape, he had the sail from his sailboat lying in there among all the junk. There was one little path that lead over to the bed. Dottie got a fright, because she was a very precise person as far as taking care of the home was concerned. I heard the maids complain that she made them take all the books off the bookshelves and dust them every week. My maid was approached by Dottie to work for her, and she said no even though Dottie offered more money. They found a home on the point, the old Law place. Dottie wanted white rugs and furniture. There was so much white around, that poor old Davidson practically had to strip at the front door. She wouldn't let him in with all his dirty clothes on. When we went to her house for dinner one time, she had two roasts. One was well done, and the other was medium rare. You could get almost any kind of a drink in their house although neither of them drank much.

Ed Clevely was another roommate of mine. He was interested in photography and radio equipment. I had got together with him when he was a bachelor. For two years, he and I had a building over near the old *sheep sheds*, where we had a photographic business.

We were able to print 400 pictures a night. Those were contact prints. We did enlarging. Almost everyone in Aruba had a good camera. There was a store in San Nicholas that had good cameras, contacts and Leicas. We spend quite some time working on Lago employees' work. We even had a chance to bid on a special manual that Lago wanted to put together. It was to show the various departments where a person would work, the types of transportation, the living quarters, and the arrangements for food. Cleve and I bid on it, but we didn't get it. We did get a contract to make pictures of asphalt road surfaces to use as advertising material to sell their asphalt plant product.

We had a good time. One time I had the idea we should increase our production. I went down to the tin shop and had them make me three tanks long enough to handle complete rolls of 35 mm film. One was developer, one was fixer, and the other was the hardener. I was told that

any steel coming in contact with the steel or the film would be corroded and warned them to take special precautions. I painted the tanks with special paint, but the long tanks were almost impossible to coat the metal entirely. I put the solutions in them, put in fourteen rolls of film. We always did a good job, but they turned out half developed, undeveloped, and they were a mess. Cleve always worked in the shop with me, and he did all the figuring on all the chemical solutions. He marveled at all the answers I had for the people whose photos didn't turn out. I asked them if they took the lens covers off, if they had the right exposure. That time, I gave them another roll of film and offered to develop it free of charge. They had some new film at that time, and I got permission from people who had taken pictures of the Queen's celebration to use their film, and I made the pictures available to those whose pictures had been messed up. Everybody was happy. I finally sold the business to a fellow in the construction business. That was when we were changing the high pressure units and increasing their throughput. This one young fellow saw how we were doing the work, and he said he had always wanted to get into the business and wanted to learn about it. We sold him the equipment and got out of the business. It was about that time the war started. The Aruba Trading Company came to us and asked us if we would do the exclusive development of their pictures for 24 hours. If we did that, they would buy us a building, and provide us with new equipment from Germany. This included the new earthenware tanks, and automatic equipment. Because of the war, the shortage of equipment from Germany made the whole deal go up in smoke.

Cleve and I bought a boat built by one of the shipyard workers, a nice 28 foot motor launch with a 15 foot beam. It was a nice fishing craft. The day I went to pick it up, the fellows from the Yacht Club told me to take Chico along. He was one of the guys who hung around the club. He was so ragged and dirty, I told them I wouldn't let him on my boat for fear he would contaminate it. They said I should take him along because he knew all the shoals, reefs and so forth. I took him with me. On the way back, I got sea sick and Chico had to run the boat. Before long, there was a lot of smoke in the cabin, and Chico came to me. He said he thought the boat was on fire. I told him to let it burn. He said, no, he had to put it out. I was half dead and had turned three different colors from the sea sickness. He took up part of the deck, and found that the shipyard joker had put the water injection at the stern instead of the front of the boat. This meant that the hot exhaust pipe was lying on the ribs of the boat. The ribs had charred and almost caught fire. We doused the hot pipe with buckets of sea water to keep any thing from burning. The boat had to be put on the marine railway and the exhaust had to be

changed around. I finally put in brass pipe, and remodeled the injection and everything worked out fine. That boat was a poor investment. It had wide planks and it leaked like a sieve. We tried everything, even putting tar on the inside of the hull. One day I had it up on the dry dock and some guy came down to look at it. He asked if I wanted to sell it, and I told him I would. We talked about price, and he gave me a check. The last I saw of that boat, it had broke loose from its mooring, gone onto the rocks and bounced around on them, and it got a couple of holes poked in it. It was up on Rodger's Beach, sand had come in the stern where it was busted out, and the whole cabin was full of sand. We went down with axes and helped them chop it up. That was the last of that boat.

Fishing was good in Aruba. We used feathered lures and did much trolling. It took me a while to get my sea legs. I was showing it to one of my friends one day while we were still in the lagoon. I was just standing on the boat, and it wasn't even moving. I got sea sick.

The kind of fish we caught was tuna, barracuda, marlin, sail fish, dolphin, and jack fish. Most of the stuff was caught trolling. The seven foot sailfish I caught was while I was trolling. We went to Oranjestad and went out with the fishing fleet. They were operating in 100 feet of water and we had to use heavy sash weights to hold the rig on the bottom.

I've been back to Aruba several times since. One time we had a 45 pound tuna, and it took me two hours to get him in. That was a lot of fish.

Up until the time I left, Cleve and I got involved in radio repair work. I had a four bedroom house on the main road (they've since torn it down). I put in a nice garage and a nice workbench. Cleve mentioned he was interested in radios and he told me he had bought a number of Heathkits - test kits for testing radios. I got interested and built a couple of them. I felt that I should know more about electronics because we had bought Honeywell electronic potentiometers. You know the problems we had teaching the natives the fundamentals of instrumentation. They were talking about grid bias and c bias all over the plant. I thought there wasn't anything to this radio business. After I got into it, I found that they didn't know what they were talking about. They were just making noise.

Cleve and I formulated a radio repair business. We had a hundred tubes, thousands of resistors; we did much work for a place in town that had since fallen on hard times. We had so many radios I had to put shelves on both sides of my garage. We had a system whereby we could

fix four or five radios a night. We'd start out by checking all the tubes. Of course if the rectifier tube was shot, we'd look at the filters. If they were okay, we did a general signal check. If it didn't, we started checking voltages on the bases of the tubes. We managed to eliminate all the problems. In those days, the paper condensers leaked like sieves. Our most valuable instrument was the condenser checker. The moisture from the sea ruined many sets in short order. We got quite a reputation. Anytime I went to one of social affairs, I would find myself involved in coming back to the house and getting one of my amplifiers to replace one they had that didn't work. The Marine Department invited me to a big dance. The Scottish men and English men there had to offer me a scotch and soda, and then we'd had to have another. Before you knew it, I couldn't even find the machine they wanted fixed. After that, I insisted in looking at the machine before we did any drinking.

I guess I competed with the instrument shop on some of the sound projectors that were around the camp. We tried to help.

Larry Engelking left Aruba because one of his children was having trouble with allergies. They took the child up to an institute and found he was allergic to dairy products. He had to give him special care and diet, so Larry agreed to quit his job and stay there. He was working for a small refinery as both chief engineer and purchasing agent. Larry had quite a collection of old cars. I was in there one time when we worked for Honeywell (he was one of our salesmen) and we had talked about buying a control panel for a unit, and the salesman mentioned Larry's name. He said he remembered Larry saying something about remembering Bill Weber from Aruba. I walked into the office and here is old Larry bent over something working on it. I said, "Okay Larry, let's get off your ___ and get back to work." He got up and recognized me. I told him I wanted to talk to him about the panel, and he said I had to come home with him to see his family. He started to take me out the door, and I said just wait a minute, I wanted to see about the order. He told the man to take care of my order. We went back to his home and saw his family. Patsy was his wife's name.

Talking about Leo having a couple of strokes, it's funny because I have had one myself. I had it during the time I was at Honeywell. I had had high blood pressure and I wasn't taking good care of myself, burning the candle at both ends. I was on the road so much, I only saw my wife on weekends. One time I was on my way to Canada to make a presentation and I started feeling kind of funny. I didn't know what it was, so I went to lunch. I lay down, and when I got up, I took a step and fell on the floor. My left side just went out. I was out of business for six

months, but I made a fast comeback. I still walk with a funny limp. It never did come back completely.

Next I went to New York at the invitation of Fred Rich who came down to Aruba when I was still there. He was interested in our training program. He was one of the training engineers for Aramco in New York. Fred took me right to the chief engineer and they offered me a job with a salary I couldn't turn down. I called the wife and told her I would look for a place for us in New Jersey. I went home with one of the engineers and got a house the next day and I went to work for Aramco. That was a good deal. I had 14 years of service with Lago, and Lago was owned by the same company that had 30% interest in Aramco. My 14 years of service transferred to Aramco. I got both Lago and Aramco benefits.

WORK AFTER ARUBA

I had worked for about a year in the New York office, writing all their purchasing requirements and produced a design manual for them to install equipment in the field. Next we went to Saudi Arabia.

LIFE IN THE COLONY

The choir was quite good. The choirmaster was also the minister, Don Evans, and he really had a good choir. Reynolds and Hagerty were in the choir, Carter Miller played the organ, and I did solo work. *Oh Holy Night* was my big deal on Christmas. I think I sang it the best at one Christmas when I was half drunk. One time I had been at the church to practice the solo and I had left it to go to the club. While I was sitting across the dance floor in the old club, somebody said, throw me your glass. Across the floor, somebody threw one of those old beer mugs and it hit me on the head. I was wearing a white shirt and slacks, and it cut me to the bone. Blood was all down my back and I was a mess. The guy who did the throwing came over and said, "What have I done." I told him the heck with what he'd done; I needed to get to the hospital to get sewed up. Doc Brace had been in the club only 15 minutes before I had been hit and he had gone to the hospital from there. When I got there, he wanted to know what had happened. To keep the guy who threw the glass from getting fired, I said I didn't know who did it. They had to cut part of my hair away and stitch me up. That was when I wore a Panama hat. I looked like a bloomin' monk with the top of my head shaved off. I got the guy who did it to take me downtown and buy me a complete new outfit. In those days you could get one for five bucks. I used to have two of them. The wife and I used to go to the club dances and halfway during the dance, I had to go home and shower up and change outfits because I would sweat the other one to death. Those club dances were something. They started with a cocktail party at your house, and you as

the host would have to make the arrangements to get the table. The whole gang would go to the club with their own bottles. The club provided the ice and fixings. Lou (Walsons) was the inspector for Navy tankers. His wife was a prissy thing who didn't want to act like she liked to drink in front of the minister. Don Evans was there with his wife. Both of them were pretty good dancers. All Don did was smoke cigars. He would take a Coke, but never did any drinking. He was a heck of a good minister; he always gave you a good message. Lou's wife was careful what she said and did. She wouldn't even let me hold her close in dancing. Everything went fine until Lou got drunk. He had been drinking on the ships, and he was drinking heavily at the club. She got upset with him, and decided to dance close and drink. It was crazy. Sometimes the dances ended up in a fight, throwing bottles around. My last trip to the reunion a year ago, the club was still the same.

During the opening of the club they were serving free drinks to employees. They were frying up steaks in the concession area. The Chinaman running the concession came to us and said there was no gas. We went to the refinery and got 12 filled propane tanks and hooked them up for him. An hour later, he came to us and got us to go back into the kitchen. He showed us gas coming out of the electrical receptacles. We opened up the cabinet and found the contractors had piped the gas line into the conduit. If somebody had lit a cigarette, the whole club would have gone up. We had to shut the kitchen down and tell people to quit smoking for a while. We blew air through the conduits to get the gas out.

THE LA SALLE

I was sitting beside a guy who was going into the army the next week, and he had a LaSalle sitting outside at the curb. It was in good shape except for the top. I told him to get a new top, and come over to my house just before he left for the army, and I would give him a check. I had it completely overhauled, all new plugs, reworked the carburetor, new starter. It was during the war, and I was only allowed five gallons per month by the quota system. I had Jewish friends in the oil business and I brought a bunch of silk stockings from Aruba. I traded them for gasoline. The day I took my car over to Bayonne, I had it filled. I had truck stamps which were good for 20 gallons. I saw the guys handling the car and I bribed them with the 20 gallons of gasoline in the LaSalle's tank. I took that Chrysler New Yorker I bought from Viana to the States. They brought it up on the *S/S Esso Aruba*, and they had to load it nose first because it couldn't be loaded horizontally. Later when they leveled it out, they about chopped off the front of my car. The lights, the

fenders, the grill, and the bumper were destroyed. I got a call from Personnel and they said they would take care of it in Bayonne. They said they would have it ready by 5:00 p.m. and I could come over and get it at that time. I saw the service manager sitting with his head in his hands looking very dejected. He told me I wouldn't believe him when he told me what was happening. The guy took it out for a test run and he stopped for a beer. He didn't look where he was going, and he backed into the truck. The whole thing was messed up. The car never worked very well. There was always something wrong with it. I used to drive it to New York, and out of the eight cylinders, four would have to be replaced. I sold the thing in New York and took a train home. Gasoline used to be 30 octane when it should have been 90 octane and you can imagine the damage it did.

We used to have a quartet made of Reynolds, Miller, myself, and one other guy. We used to sing for the company on occasions, and we did some barbershop quartet singing. I do have a picture of the four of us.

I had gone to Carapito, Venezuela on one of my trips and I was supposed to be a vacation relief for the so called engineer over there. This guy had been hired as an electrician. He had hooked up all the motors in the machine ship in series. Things didn't work too well. They decided he wasn't an electrician, so they put him to learning how to operate the crane. His biggest forte in life was operating a crane. They sent him to the States to get training, and while he was showing me around, I couldn't help but noticing all the controls were a mess. This guy tells me all I needed to do was get an easy chair and sit down. There wasn't much to do. He left one day, and for the fun of it, I pulled a chair into the control room. Doc Ramsey was one of the operators in the units in Aruba and he was transferred to Venezuela. He was a free spoken nut. I was rocking away, and he kept watching me. Finally he asked me when I was going to go to work. I told him that the guy I replaced told me that there wasn't anything to do. I put the chair away and went to work anyway. That was a crazy place to work. One day I took out a valve on the overhead part of the still. In the shop, I rebuilt it so I would have a nice tight shut off. I asked the operating people when they were going to bring the unit up. They said, sometime tomorrow. I said, great. I left the valve in the shop and went back to the quarters and cleaned up. I was wearing a nice shark skin suit in the club having a beer, minding my own business, and here comes the shift foreman. He asked me where the valve was. I said I had been told the unit was supposed to be put on line the next day. He told me they decided to do it that night. I found

Ramsey and asked him where the standby pipe fitter was. He asked me if I thought I was in Aruba. They didn't have any. He said I was the pipefitter. It was a two inch flanged valve and I told him I wasn't putting it in. He said he didn't know what was going to be done, but he would help me install it. We did, and the next day I talked to Charlie and told him the next shut down or start up they were going to have standby pipefitters and electricians. That was the last pipefitting I was going to do. It wasn't safe, we didn't have the right tools, and we could have done ourselves some damage as well as the equipment.

William Gillis was one of my roommates. He was quite a character. He was Scottish by birth and he was a sponger. Nobody wanted him as a roommate and he was stuck up in Lago Heights. I asked him to come and room with me. Old Scottie and I were working over at the Hydro Plant and we were using some of those old Brown circular case instruments with the three wire inductance coil. You had to give them a mechanical balance and an electrical balance. Scottie didn't know a damn thing about this and I taught him. He got to where he could calibrate the instruments. Old man Jensen showed up and asked Gillis what he was doing. Gillis started telling Jensen a real snow job, telling him how to adjust the instruments and calibrate them. Jensen came over to me and started telling me what a bright young man and how far he could go. He said Gillis needed a better job. I got Scottie aside later and told him since he didn't give me any credit for teaching him, the next time he didn't know how to do something, he was on his own.

When Gillis was my roommate, one time during Christmas, I'd gone to town and bought a bunch of booze to celebrate with the fellows in the courts. I was coming back from the club one night and I heard some singing and going on. I thought somebody was having a hell of a good party. The closer I got to the Quarters, the more I thought it was coming from my room. I got there and saw Gillis had brought all his friends and they were drinking my liquor. They were telling me what a wonderful guy he was, and how nice it was of him to give them all this liquor to drink and what a nice time they were having. I didn't say too much and Gillis was kind of sheepish about the whole thing. When the party was over and everybody had left, I told him we were going downtown and he was going with me and we were going to buy a whole new stock of stuff on his account. He almost died. He thought that was terrible. I think he was the one who worked for the (pony) transfer to the Power Department, and he was the one who got caught stealing food from the lower frozen food locker at the part of cold storage near the Power Plant. They had warned everybody that they found that stuff was taking out of

the area and they would have guards watching. I think Gillis was the one who came out with two bags of frozen food. They turned the lights on and there he stood with the two bags of food. They packed him and had him out that same night and that was the end of him.

POST SCRIPT

I saw George Echelson in Houston working for the Pullman Company as an instrument engineer. When I left Aruba, I became an instrument engineer in Aramco, and I spent some time in college at Drexel.

Reede Holly never seemed to age, he always looked the same. I just couldn't believe he had died. I heard he wasn't doing too well.

Echelson is the same old B.S. he always was. He puts on a big show. He and his wife are still together, but everything seems to be okay.

R.D. Mayer was the one who came to Aruba with L.D. White. I saw both of them in Brown Instrument Company when I decided to come myself. Charlie Casson and Bob Bonham and I had a plane at the airport. Bob and I used to fly to Venezuela to see Zucchini. Zucchini got set up good. He's got several stores set up by the government that sell meat to the Venezuelans at a fixed price. He owns several big apartment buildings, and is a millionaire. He was chased out of Aruba when the war started because he was Italian and supporting the Germans.

The German tankers that came to Aruba during the war with Italian crews to load oil were denied their cargo. It turned out that they were loaded oil to take back to England because the English had taken the women and children out of Ethiopia after Ethiopia began to get the upper hand on the Italians, and the English agreed to take the women and children back to Italy while the men stayed to fight the Ethiopians. As it turned out, most of the men were killed. Their favorite trick was to make them jump from the cliffs to the valleys below and they'd pour gasoline on the bodies and burn them. A few might have escaped, because when I was Arabia, I got involved in an Ethiopian coffee plantation with 10,000 acres, and I had to design the coffee processing plant. We bought most of the equipment from England. I have a little stock in it. The guys who were running it were traffic managers for Aramco and I didn't trust them too much.

Cunningham couldn't stand being away from his wife during the war, so he went back to the States and worked for Esso. He came back and got a better job. We all resented that to some degree. Bill (Weiner)

and I were friendly. He had an old car that he kept in good shape. He and I went out with the girls together and had a good time.

George Janson I met at the last reunion. His wife had died, but his sons were with him, and they were doing well.

I met Fryback's brother working for Honeywell in Boston. He looks like him. He was kind of hard to deal with when he was my foreman. He had a little game he had with me of trying to find something wrong with the equipment. One time he ran wildly around until he came up to me with a smile. He said my job wasn't perfect and I asked him what was wrong. He pointed to a pressure gauge that was turned the wrong way. I said, to hell with it, I don't care. I'm going to leave it that way. That's how fussy he was.

Hughes lived next door for Fryback (Bungalow 303). I had had the house originally. I had a rowboat down at the dock that I wanted to get serviced one night, and I loaded it into the company truck. Some natives helped me unload it and put it on a rack so I could scrape and paint it in my yard. This was about three in the morning, and I couldn't help but notice Hughes looking through the louvers, watching what was going on. The next morning, Hughes came into the office and said, "Being one of the junior executives in the organization, I couldn't help but notice you using company equipment and taking company time to do personal things." I said, "Yeah, so? I saw you looking through the louvers." He said he was going to have to talk to the old man about that. I allowed as to how it was all right with me, and I told him that if he was having a party on the 4:00 to 12:00 shift and needed a fan or some ice, not to bother calling me up. Those services wouldn't be available for him. He left disgruntled, and Janson came in after a while. He asked me how it was going, and I told him everything was okay except for one problem I wanted to discuss with him so he wouldn't be surprised. I told him I took a few minutes the night before to take my boat to my house and set it up in my yard so I could service it. If Hughes called and said something about it, Janson wouldn't be surprised. I asked him if he minded, and he said he didn't care what I did with my time as long as the refinery ran properly, and nobody complained.

It got to be quite a racket. When I worked the 12:00 to 8:00 shift, I used to make the rounds of the stills and talk to each of the operators and tell them that if anything went wrong, they had the telephone number to call me. I would check out all the men and check out all the jobs to see that they had the right equipment. I would go back to the shop, close it up, throw a bunch of rags on the floor, and lay down to sleep. One time I

slept until morning. Luckily I had the shop locked up, and I hear them banging on the doors to try to get in.

I had smashed up the company truck and I promised the guys a new truck. We finally got the new truck, and of course Jensen was quite concerned. He made everybody check and recheck the truck. When you turned the truck over from one shift to another, you were supposed to inspect the truck first, and sign off on it. When Davidson was on the shift before me, I took his word when he said the truck was okay. I was driving the truck around the refinery, and when it got daylight, I was stopped somewhere and I noticed the upper right hand corner of the cardboard liner of the roof looked as if it had been beaten with a hammer. I looked at the top and saw it had creases in it and looked like it had been touched up with black paint. It looked like a mess. There had been in some kind of accident and thought Davidson had had one and didn't tell me. The old man came in and I had to tell him. He was ready to take me out and shoot me. Here it was a new car and I already had it banged up. I told him I didn't do it. He said I had signed off on it when Davidson turned it over to me, and it must have been okay, or I wouldn't have signed off. I got a hold of Davidson, and asked him if he had had an accident. He said he didn't have any trouble. I told him I was going to get some time off again on that deal. We started checking around and found a native boy in the stockroom decided to take the truck for a ride when Davidson had it. He drove it around the building, and somehow he got too close to the casement windows we had around the shop, and creased the top of the truck. He got a hammer, straightened it out and started painting it. He didn't say anything to Davidson, and Davidson didn't know about it. Once we figured it out, we made him tell Jensen.

The amount of work and experience, both in the Training Division, as well as the actual work in the plant, has stood me very well. You'd be surprised how many people are looking for a chance to get hands on experience in instrumentation. I have been working with hospitals. They have been getting equipment with exotic controls, and they don't have the least idea how to handle it. I've gotten pretty heavy into the distributor control systems with the CRTs and so forth. I just signed a contract with Fisher and Porter to do some teaching for them. Their business has fallen off and I'm waiting to see what they are going to do about it.

In the meantime, I'm learning how to be retired and enjoy myself. I'm getting the wife to where she's feeling good.

I had old Romney working with me in the blackout, and he was going to go over the fence to the Oxy Plant without telling me. He came back and told me, "That man going to shoot me. They're going to kill me." I told him I would take him over to the plant in the pickup.

I remember the *S/S Esso Bolivar*. I saw that it was given back to the Germans because nobody had drawings of how the pipes were run. I saw the Germans come into Sidon to pick up a load of oil. My wife and I had come over on the *Esso Raleigh*, a naval tanker. Shortly after we were married, I wanted to have a fast trip home because the wife was pregnant. It was supposed to run four days, but we ran into a hurricane and it took seven and a half days instead of four to get into Bayonne. We had to eat aft with the crew on that shift. I ate breakfast six times one morning. Every time I threw up, I went back and ate again. The chef finally told me I should give up.

I enjoyed the tankers.



The William Ruben White Story

LIFE BEFORE ARUBA

I never liked the name Ruben and my mother didn't want me to be called Bill so I was called Ruben from the day I was born. I've gotten so now I don't mind it so much any more.

I was born in Snyder, Texas, which is about 70 miles west of Abilene, on December 19, 1906. My father's name was Edward Harris White and my mother's maiden name was Belle Thompson. She was from that area also. At that time you could be from a place and not live in a town. There might not be a town in 50 miles. In fact Snyder was about 50 miles from where I was born. My father was a Baptist preacher and a school teacher. At that time he was on a ranch north of Snyder. About all they had out there were cows and rattlesnakes. We had our experiences with both of them at one time or another.

One of my earliest memories from out there was of a bull in a herd and my mother was deathly afraid of that bull. I don't think there was anything to keep him out of the yard or any other place. I do remember the bull, but I don't remember any adventures with him. During my early years we moved a lot and I lived all over Texas. I think of Wichita Falls, in North Texas as more like my home.

When we left Snyder we went to Abilene because my Dad wanted to go to School. Simmons College was there. It is Hardin-Simmons University now. We moved over there. Well we were several other places in the meantime. I had one brother and one sister then.

My sister's name was Hazel and she was in Aruba. She married Otto Goodwin. Hazel died two years ago. Otto died about four months later. They went pretty close together. Otto was not related to Ward or Henry Goodwin. He was in the Electric Department and then became a Zone Supervisor in the Mechanical Department. He went down there in about 1936 I guess.

My mother died when I was 9 years old. We lived in Kerns, Texas then. Not too long after my mother died my father married again. He married a widow who had six children. There were three girls older than I and one younger and two boys that were younger than I. My Dad tried to go into "dry land farming" close to McGargle, Texas. Dry land farmers mostly raised cotton. The farm had to be so constructed that it would save every drop of water that fell. But they made cotton crops.

They didn't make them too often. We didn't know how to irrigate then but it is now irrigated. At that time it wasn't. It was really cattle country, but there was some farming.

My father got a farm and put in a crop of cotton, but we didn't get enough rain. He soon saw that it was going to burn up. So he loaded us all in a covered wagon and we headed east. There weren't many automobiles then. This was probably in 1915 because I hadn't reached my 10th birthday yet. There weren't any so called "Highways" in that part of the country. Back east you did find them. We had to "feel" our way; using Ranch roads and inquiring how to get from here to there. And we stopped wherever we found water in the late afternoon. Often we didn't, but if we did we would spend the night there.

I recall that we kids slept on the ground on "pallets", blankets and quilts, and my father and my step-mother slept in the wagon. My father would put a lariat rope around the whole "bedding area" at night. It was his theory that kept the snakes out. I don't know how true it was. I had heard it often at that time. I haven't heard it much since then. Well I never woke up with a snake in my bed! So I had to think that must be a pretty good idea!

We traveled across Texas to Oklahoma around Ardmore. That isn't far from the Red River, the Texas/Oklahoma boundary. The Red River was usually dry. There weren't any bridges but there were a number of roads that crossed the river. There we found timber and woods and obviously there was rainfall and lots of farming. As we went on into Oklahoma over about 30 miles of trail, which was 2-1/2 days to us in that wagon with the route we followed then and carrying the load we had incurred. I remember that trip very distinctly. We kids didn't ride much in the wagon; we could walk as fast as that team of mules could pull that wagon. We had a team of mules named Kit and Dot. They were small mules, but good stock. At that time I was in the third grade I believe. We were there a year and a half. Then Dad got another school and we moved away from there. We didn't move far as you look at it now, but it was far then.

I finished High School in the town of Haworth down in the Southeast corner of Oklahoma. I made an effort to go through there about 15 years ago. It was not the Haworth that I once knew. The little railroad had folded up. There had once been a pretty nice little town there with two banks and several what we called grocery stores. Those would be supermarkets today, but they were small stores then. When we went back through there the last time there was no bank; the railroad was

not there anymore. I didn't see a store of any kind. I saw one filling station. The High School where I had finished had been a two story building. It was called a Consolidated School in those days. A bus traveled around and brought kids to school. The top story of the building was gone. The school yard was fenced in and much smaller than when I had graduated. Well we knew we wouldn't know anyone there. We hadn't actually lived there. We lived 6 miles away. They only had a 2 year High School there so I had to come to Haworth to finish.

After I had graduated from High School my dad was hired as the principal of a Consolidated School in a little town called Arden just across the line in Arkansas. So we moved there and put in a crop of cotton. It was on the same railroad that went through Haworth, but it's not there any more.

This was the year after I had finished High School. I didn't stick around to harvest the crop because I managed to get hold of enough dollars to go to the Chillicothe Business College in Chillicothe, Missouri a good long ways from there. It was up in the northeast corner of Missouri almost. I took Bookkeeping and Stenography there and graduated in 1925. This was a "calling" which could get you a job. I only went one year for this. The College was a four year college if you majored in other courses. In those days it was important to get enough education and get you a job. That's what I did. After receiving my High School Diploma I found a job in St. Louis. However about that time a Law firm in Ashnow, which wasn't far from where my people lived, offered me a job there. So I left St. Louis and went down there.

I didn't stay there very long because the job didn't look very promising. So I left there and went to Wichita Falls, Texas where I got a job working for the Ford dealer there. He was a well known man in those days. He had the agency there and an agency in nearby Iowa Park and I think he had another agency in Henrietta, Oklahoma. I worked there about a year and was offered this job with the Prairie Oil and Gas Company out in Borger, Texas. The "Boom" was on it looked a lot more exciting and work where you might get along faster. So I left and went there. The Prairie Oil and Gas Company was later taken over by The Sinclair Oil & Gas Company.

Times were getting tough there in 1929. Borger is about 50 miles from Amarillo, Texas and at the time was a rough oil field boom town. In fact it was almost lawless and the "law" we had there were "wanted" men from other parts of the country, most of them. Eventually the Governor, Dan Moody, of Texas sent the National Guard in there and put

the place under Martial Law and then sent the Rangers in there to take over all of the law enforcement positions and hold an election. Otherwise you couldn't have gotten a fair election.

I worked for the Prairie Oil and Gas Company for three years and then the depression swept down on everything and the oil business was particularly hard hit with that you know. Many people don't know that now, but it was.

APPLYING TO GO TO ARUBA

When 1929 came along I had sorta got the feel of things and it was fairly obvious to me times were going to become tougher. I hadn't lost my job as yet, but it looked like it wouldn't be long. My boss, the warehouse foreman, got a letter from a friend of his who had been offered a job on this place called Aruba. Nobody had ever heard of it. You couldn't find it on a map, at that time. He had decided that he didn't want to leave the country and he sent this letter down to my boss and my boss showed it to me and I got the address. It was 122 East 42nd Street, New York, New York.

And I wrote and told them I'd like to go. I said if you'll offer me anything at all reasonable I'll go. And I told them who I was and the things you write in a letter of Application. In a very short time I got a letter back with a Contract in it. The letter was from O. H. Shelton and they offered a Stenographer's job. I guess they didn't have any Stenographers down there at this time. They offered me \$150 month plus my board, room, laundry, and medical expenses. At the time I was making \$140 month plus my room but that was it. As it turned out that job with the Prairie Oil & Gas Company didn't last much longer after I left.

So I wound up going to Aruba in February 1930. We sailed from Providence, Rhode Island on the tanker the *F. H. Wickett*. It took us eight days to make the trip from New York down to Aruba. There was another passenger on the ship; I had met him in New York. We were both there at the same time getting ready to go. And he was a most interesting individual to me. His name was Charles Wynne. He was a Steam Hammer operator from Tulsa, Oklahoma. He was a big man. He confessed to me that he was going down for three years (two contracts in one) and save enough money to buy a chicken farm back in Oklahoma. He was seasick for most of the voyage, and I think, he had suffered considerable disillusionment even before we sighted the island.

In New York we stayed in the Lincoln Hotel. They gave us each a cash draft to go up and get our \$50.00 allowance for expense money

while we were waiting on the ship. When we got to the cashier, and I cashed my voucher and got my money, Charlie shoved his voucher under my elbow and said, "Sign mine too!" I said: "Charlie I can't sign it, you've got to sign it!" And he said: "I can't write!" He couldn't read or write but he did show me then that he could sign his name. It was sort of like drawing a picture, but it got him his money.

I had some interesting experiences with him. Charlie had never been out of Oklahoma and I had barely been out of Texas and into Oklahoma. So we were really seeing the tall buildings. I am sure we both got sunburned tonsils. We started down to the doctor's office for our physical examination. I think the doctor's name was Sharpe. I can't tell you now where his office was, but they told us how to get there. And we went in the subway all the way. By this time we had been on the subways a little bit. But some where's on the way Charlie and I were separated. When I got down there the doctor says, "Where is Mr. Wynne?" And I said, "Well I don't know. I started with him, but I lost him somewhere." And he got on the telephone back to Shelton's office and they didn't know what had happened to him. I got my examination and he still hadn't showed up. When the doctor finished with me he examined my teeth. I had never been in a dentist's chair in my life. After he examined my teeth he said, "Well all I can say about that is that these two are missing." And I said: "I never had any teeth pulled!" And he said, "Well you probably never had them!" I know now they were wisdom teeth, but I didn't know it then.

In any case Charlie still hadn't showed up and on my way back retracing the route that I had come down on. At one of the stops there, it may have been 114th street, looking out of a window on the train I saw him on the platform over on the other side. He wore corduroy trousers and a coon-skin-like cap. He was a big man too, so he was easy to pick out. I managed to get off of that train and somehow get to the other side and get him. So I got him down to Sharpe's office.

The next thing that happened took place at the pier at Cutter Point, Providence Rhode Island. We were wandering around the docks while the ship finished discharging her cargo. We entered one of the shacks on the pier. In talking with the fellows there we mentioned that we were going to Aruba and one of them said, "Oh! A fellow around here just went down there about six months ago. His name is Griffin. Look him up when you get down there." It was Frank Griffin and I met Frank pretty soon after I got down there. But he didn't work in the same department and Frank was already on his way up. In Providence he was an Oil Inspector, but I don't know the job he went into when he got to

Aruba.

ARRIVAL IN ARUBA

My first official encounter on the Island, immediately after debarking from the tanker was with Ward Goodwin in the Personnel Department. I don't think Joe Getts was there yet. Ward then was a giant of a man, "tall as a mountain and with an arm like a Sycamore tree." I have seen him several times over the years and somehow he now seems quite ordinary in stature. In those early days he was sometimes called "Bear Tracks". He was a participant in all types of athletic competition and very active in colony organizations. He had quite a sense of humor. I remember he tacked on Eddie McCoart the appellation of "Blind Tom McCoart". Eddie umpired most of the baseball games and often officiated in the basketball competition. Harold Atwood was then personnel manager. Harold fell upon evil times and left Aruba after writing and publishing a story (can't remember in what) about the people of the island. The local populace took almost violent offense at what they considered aspersions on their state of culture.

Anyway, after disembarking from the tanker, Wickett and I went right to the Personnel Office first thing. We made out our allotments for the folks back home. I was sending some money to my Dad because times were really tough for them at this time. Charlie Wynne says: "I'm going to stay three years and I am going to save enough money to buy a chicken farm. And I don't want my old woman to have to go to the washboard (take in clothes for washing for other people) to make a living." So they took down all of the information that they always obtained from new employees like: Next of kin, address where we came from, how much and to whom should they send the allotments and things of this sort and then they sent us to the *sheep sheds*. These were frame buildings built well off of the grounds on those piers with oil pots built into them to keep out the insects such as ants and cockroaches.

LIVING QUARTERS & ROOMMATES

The room to which we were assigned was scarcely large enough for one person. There were three steel cots and Charlie and I and a Venezuelan fellow by the name of Jose who spoke no English were assigned to this room. Jose was a shift worker and Charlie, who was quickly stricken with violent home-sickness, spent more time drunk than otherwise; I didn't get much sleep in the *sheep sheds*.

Jose built ships inside of bottles. He used all kinds of bottles, usually whiskey bottles. These ships were all folded up when he slipped them in there. There was a string on each ship as he put them in the

bottle. And as soon as he got the ship where he wanted in the bottle he pulled gently on the string and the ship came up and looked like it was built inside the bottle. As I remember the string had a bow knot on it and when he pulled the right end of the string the knot came untied and slipped right out of the bottle. He built any number of them. He worked shift and he'd be out working when we got up in the morning and he would come in while we were gone and might be sleeping when we came in.

And that was wild country when we were first there. I never saw so many lizards in my life. There were all sizes. And I learned early to turn my shoes upside down and knock them against the leg of the bed each morning before putting them on. And two mornings in a row I knocked a scorpion out of my shoe. I never got bit but I was being very careful. Many people did get bit at that time.

Charlie would get letters from his wife and he would get me to read them to him. And then I would write his letters back to his wife. He had a son who must have been in his twenties and they were having a little trouble with him. Boys out in that part of the country in those days were pretty rough individuals. I can't remember the name of the boy, but I think Charlie's wife's name was Sarah.

They were building the early Bachelor Quarters then. At that time the *sheep sheds* were west of and not very far from them. They had already built Numbers 1 and 2 and were building 3 and 4 when I got there. The *sheep sheds* were about in the location where they later built the Alkylation Plant. There were about five or six of the Sheds and in the middle of them was a central shower and toilet area. There were some native's in these quarters I believe. Jose, a local employee? I am not sure. I never could talk to him enough to find out. He was still in there I believe when, after about four months, I got a chance to go to Number 2 Bachelor Quarters. I had to leave Charlie because he had to stay there for a while. But he was an interesting individual in that he never drank a thing in New York. He would go in a place where I would have a beer and he would have maybe a Coca Cola. He confessed to me that he had lied about his age, but he was 50 years old. This was one year beyond what they would hire at that time. He must have had it on his passport although I never did actually see it. He had worked there about three weeks when one morning I heard a yell down in the refinery. A long, Indian-type yell that you could hear all over. And I got out to see what was going on. And here was Charlie coming up through the refinery taking the entire road, weaving from one side to the other and he would let out a long yell and he'd say: "Momma's little red bird got out!"

I don't know where he got that, but that's what he would yell when he came home drunk from the village. He didn't make it to his work the next morning. And they sent up for him. And I thought well he would get fired now. But he didn't. They were after him to keep working. Apparently they needed him. He must have been a good steam hammer operator. He went through this for a long time. At the time they were building the harbor and Charlie must have been involved with driving piles for the piers. I never got down that far. I would walk down through the refinery on the main roadway to the Accounting Department. At that time they were located just about across the road from the Number 1 Power House. Actually we weren't too far from the Gas Plant as we would notice the gaseous odor when the wind changed. No buildings were air conditioned.

Charlie was there maybe six months when he came in and said: "I am going home. I can't stand any more of this." But Bob Miller got hold of him and talked him out of it. And he went back to work and worked for some time. And then he quit again. And then they got him to go back to work again. They must have needed him because they were taking a lot from him. I didn't think they would take that much, but they did. The third time he quit Bob said: "Okay we'll get you a tanker and get you out of here." And then he got to thinking about that and decided he didn't want to go. Well he did stay his 18 months and then he left. I never did know what happened to him after that.

When I moved into Bachelor Quarters Number Four I had two room-mates who were very early men down there. One was Roy Malley. He was from Fort Worth, Texas. And the other was Herbie Forcade who was a welder. He was a very nice individual, a big heavy set man. He was a pretty nice artist in addition to being a welder. And in our Bachelor Quarters, in the room that connected with us on the other side of the bath room, we had Austin Repass who was a pretty good welder, but he was a pretty heavy drinker. I don't think it ever interfered with his work at that time. Austin eventually got married and had a pretty red headed wife and they were friends of Betty and me after we were married. Of course I was still in the Bachelor Quarters at this point. I finished my first contract down there and at that time in the Accounting Department there were only five men who had stayed for a full contract. The others wouldn't stay that long. They had all quit. Americans didn't stay down there at that time.

PERSONNEL RECOLLECTIONS

The first person I remember seeing and meeting upon arrival in Aruba was Leon Rought. Leon was then Chief Timekeeper. He was on

the dock when the *S/S Wicket* arrived and it appeared that the chief engineer had something for him which he had brought from the States - some little goody, I presumed, which was not readily available in Aruba. I was soon to learn that a great many ordinary little goodies were not available in Aruba at that time. I don't know how long Leon had been in Aruba before me but I know that he was regarded as a pioneer even then. I don't know when he left Aruba but he retired from there. Since we both were in the Accounting Department I came to know him quite well. At my then age of 23 he made a great impression on me as a man of the world. An impeccable dresser, he exhibited what appeared to me to be a great deal of polish, considerable culture and, an erudition (although then I didn't know the meaning of the word). One of his customs I will not soon forget. On each July 14th, as long as we were in Aruba, he brought to the office a large container of champagne cocktails. Just before the noon whistle he served us all and proposed a toast to Bastille Day. I don't think I ever did that before or since.

The doctor who was in charge of the hospital when I got to Aruba was Dr. A. R. Mailer. I broke my arm playing baseball and he set my arm for me.

Beulah Snidlow Watson was there when I had the dysentery too. Snidlow was Beulah's maiden name before she some time later married Ralph Watson. She was the one who ran the laboratory in the hospital in the early days. She was the one who found if we had dysentery.

COLONY LIFE

I didn't meet Bill Legate on the job. But the first time I met him was in the hospital. We had an outbreak of amoebic dysentery and I was the first one in. I was in bad shape because we didn't know about this and it was just diarrhea and I tried to treat it myself for quite some time, eventually passing out in the Bachelor Quarters. They got the ambulance down there and took me to the hospital. During that night Bill Legate came in. I think he may have been the second patient. At one time there were about 40 patients with the same problem. They found that one of the Chinese cooks in the mess hall had it and was passing it on to us.

Dr. Mailer came right into the room where I was. There were four of us in this room. He pointed his finger and said: "That one and that one, we don't have yours run yet, but you two have amoebic dysentery!" And he pointed to Bill Legate and me. Then he had to get a book and let us read about it. We had a medicine that they still use today, but they give it in a different way. They gave a big hot salt water enema every day. I lost weight until I got down to less than 100 pounds! I got so I

couldn't walk; couldn't stand up. No one died at that time. Of course if you don't get the right treatment in time it gets into the liver and sometimes you have it all of your life. Back in the States some Texans died of it, but that was very early on and they didn't know what it was. The American doctors in Aruba did not have the experience to handle it at first. It took them a while to get up on it. They had cots in the hall and all over the place. There wasn't really enough room for all of us at the time.

When I came back to the States and got married, I spent all of the money I had saved. I told Betty that I was going to save \$2000. Well I saved \$1800. I came pretty close. I thought I would have some left, but by the time we bought all the things we had to take back with us it was all gone.

When we got back we lived in Bungalow #141. It wasn't far from where the school was later located. At the time they had the school in a frame building down towards the refinery. Maude Thomas was the school mistress at the time.

I think Fred Switzer was already there when I got there. He was going in and out of the Accounting Office a great deal because the Properties Accounting was right near my little department. He was over there to see Tommy Jancosek quite often. I was in the Stenographic Section of the Accounting Department. I think Mary Lopez worked for me once for a while. Mary's mother, Corinne, and I worked together. She went on the Private Payroll with Don Heebner and me. Don was in charge of it. When he would go away I would be the "Boss man" in charge of it. I don't recall if that ever happened while Corinne was in there or not.

One of the early people that I met down there and became very friendly with was Collins Luth. Collins headed up Colony Service for a time. A Ned Bell was the first manager of Colony Service. Collins worked for him. He was Ned's assistant. Later when Bell left, Luth took it over. Luth left us during the war because he was a reserve American Naval Officer. They called him into active service. After the war he became Postmaster at Niles, Michigan. That was his home town. And he went back there and got this job and spent the rest of his working days there.

I worked in the Private Payroll Section for a number of years. Mary Lopez worked in the Typing Department which was up in the new General Office Building. George Larsen and Lunn Easten were there when I went. Lunn left Aruba in 1956. His wife's name was Essie, but I

can't remember what her maiden name was before they were married.

The men that I knew down there in the early days were one of a kind. They didn't measure out by any mold that I had every known. Lunn Easten was British to the core. But having been born on the island of Montserrat he had many of mannerisms and thinking processes of the West Indians. He had the typical British love for the sea and ships. He began his Aruba career in the Accounting Department but ultimately managed a transfer to the Marine Department in the nautical, British atmosphere which he loved. Lunn was completely non-mechanical and his first car triggers the memory of a story worth telling. The car was a little stripped down Ford number with just enough body left to provide a seat over the gas tank and floor boards to rest the driver's feet when they weren't on the pedals. There weren't many cars at that time. The Company furnished vehicles to supervisors who needed transportation. A few of the boys were beginning to get cars. In it's stripped down fashion it didn't weigh much, which leads into the story that occurred one Saturday afternoon. He couldn't drive and I taught him to drive. He didn't know what caused this or what caused that or why you needed a battery. He wanted to know why we couldn't just eliminate that thing when the battery went down.

Lunn lived in Bachelor Quarters No. 2. I lived in that Quarters too at that time. He had a parking space just inside the side of the "H" that pointed toward the sea. He would come in on the back road and turn around that "L" of the Bachelor Quarters and around that end and swing back in and into his parking stall. He was still learning how to move the car around which he did strictly by rote. He had memorized each step necessary to get the vehicle moving, accelerating, slowing down and stopping. He knew all the moves and their sequence without much knowledge of why each was necessary or what function it performed. On this particular day he was out for a drive, was just finishing the complete routine and returning to his parking stall at Bachelor Quarters Number 2. His stall faced the cross wing of the building and to get to it he had to drive along the south side of the building, make two right turns around the end of the south wing and into his stall. George Larsen had the stall right next to him. George had an old car too. He liked to fish and was out a lot when he wasn't at work. On this occasion Lunn made the two right turns and headed in to park when, too late he became aware of a pair of long and muscular legs protruding into his parking stall. The legs were attached to the body of the fellow under the car in the next stall. Lunn did everything by rote. You turn on the key and you stepped on this pedal and that pedal. Seeing those legs sticking out there took

him by surprise. By the time he recognized what was there he was running over Larsen's legs. There was a very loud Norwegian bellow came out from under that car. He couldn't get out fast. And Lunn in the meantime realized he had done something wrong and he did the only thing he could think of and shifted his foot to the middle pedal, as you know on this old Ford this was the "Reverse" pedal. And he came right back over Larsen's legs again. By the time Larsen got out from under his car there were enough of us down there to sort of surround Easten and protect him. Because he wouldn't have lived.

THE "PAN ARUBAN"

I wrote that story up for the *Pan Aruban*. I was on the *Pan Aruban* from shortly after I arrived there. I was on it for many years until my job changed and my schedule didn't fit in any more and I had to give it up. I did everything on the *Pan Aruban*. I typed stencils; ran the mimeograph machine; took over the various assistant editor posts and was "Executive Editor" when Bob Schlageter would leave the island on vacation or business trip. The *Pan Aruban* was started by Jake Forter and Reg Miller. I believe I came on at that time as sports editor. Aruba was quite a place for sports. We had to make our own entertainment and that's what we did. There was always sports news to be written up and I wrote the sporting news for a long time. Don Heebner was on it when I got there and he started me on cutting stencils. Then I got to writing for it. Ralph Boyd was sports editor for some time. Jake Forter was in the executive office at that time. (I guess you would call it executive secretary today.) He and Anthony "Tony" Palmer and Bill Legate were there.

Reg Miller worked over in the M & C Department. He didn't stay there much longer after I got there. He was a nephew of W. R. C. Miller. I think Jake Forter went over to the M & C when Reg Miller left. I think Reg Miller was there like 18 months. I barely knew him. He was a witty person and a good man. I think both of those people did a good job. I worked through all of the jobs and finally did the "World News" which we got by radio. It was not easy because the only radios you had down there then that had "short wave" was a radio called "The Wasp". I don't know who made it, but there were a few of them there. I got access to one where I could hear it in the evening. I took dictation. I used the Gregg system. I used to take notes that way at one time. I guess I have lost most of that skill by now.

We ran the *Pan Aruban* for about three years when we decided to write a history of Aruba. There was no written history of Aruba in any language as far as we could find. Mr. Leon of the store by that name in

the village was Dutch and he started out to write a history of Aruba. He collected quite a lot of material and then for some reason he gave it up. So he sold the material to a fellow who worked in the stenographic department where I was. He was an older man. And he was going to write a history. He got all of this stuff from P. F. Leon and then he decided to leave Aruba. He gave up on it. I think Jake Forter bought it from him for \$10.00.

We went through it and gathered other information and we wrote the first "*History of Aruba.*" I would guess that would have been about 1934. Jake Forter and I and Don Heebner printed this up separate from the Pan Aruban. It must have had 100 pages, maybe. They sold like hot cakes. Everybody wanted a copy and we got a call from someone. I don't know all of the details of that because Jake Forter handled that, but we wound up sending two or three copies to the Library of Congress. They had nothing in their files on Aruba at that time. I think we sold that thing for about three years and then stopped. Everyone that came in wanted a copy so we rewrote it, brought it up to date. I remember I had to write a chapter in there on the oil industry in Venezuela. It wasn't easy to get the information. You didn't have a library you could go to. Very few people knew anything about it. Lloyd Smith was down there by that time and I went to him. He gave me a lot of information about Creole Petroleum Company; in the early days it was "Lago Petroleum Company". Then we sold another 1000 copies of the new issue.

MORE PERSONNEL RECOLLECTIONS

Jim Bluejacket was there before I got there. He was somebody everyone knew. I thought that Bluejacket was quite a character in those days. I didn't get out to the village too much but when I did I would find him out there drinking with a bunch of his old cronies. And the girls all knew him and the "Madams" all knew him. He was quite important in the Colony and I guess he must have been in the Company too. Bluejacket had been a big league baseball player. I think before he came to Aruba he was a pitcher with the St. Louis Cardinals.

I think Bob Schlageter was there when I got there and he was in the stenographic department. Bob's brother came much later and didn't stay long. Bob was just a kid out of high school. He ran the mimeograph and ditto machines. But after a time when he had gotten enough money together I guess. He went back and went to school at the University of Colorado and got his degree in journalism. Then he came back to Aruba to be the first Editor of the *Esso News*. He had a lot to do with putting it together and organizing the staff for it.

Another one who was there about that time who had done a lot of professional baseball playing was Harmon Poole. I don't think he ever got into the major leagues. In those early days we had a baseball field down in what later became the tank farm. This was down to the West side of the refinery below where Acid Plant was built.

Even before I left New York I heard about Harmon Poole. He had already won over \$5,000 playing poker! I don't doubt it a bit because they had the early poker games over at the *sheep sheds*. There was one little central building there that had tables and chairs. On Saturday nights particularly they would have a big poker game. You had to have a couple of hundred dollars to start with. I never played in that game, because it was too rich for me.

I remember that in one hand of "draw" poker Poole looked at his cards and said: "I want one card". Usually when you draw one card you are trying to fill a "straight" or a "flush" or maybe a "full house". Other people had drawn around the table. Bluejacket may have been in that game. The windows were open, and the wind was blowing, you remember how the wind blew there. When the dealer dealt the card the wind caught it and turned it face up. Well in "draw" poker you have to "burn" that card. You can't receive an exposed card on the "draw". You could expose one of your own cards if you wanted to. And the dealer has to give you another card. Harmon reached for that "exposed" card, which was the Queen of Hearts, like he was real "Hungry". And one of the other guys said: "You can't take it Harmon. Dealer, give him another card." Harmon was going to put up a fight because he really wanted that card. He actually turned white. I thought he was going to hit somebody but he eventually said, "Well all right!" He got up and went over to the window as if he hadn't recovered from the shock of being offered a card like that and he couldn't take it. Everybody assumed that it filled up whatever he was after. It turned out to be a big pot. There were several passed hands in there. They couldn't "open" because they didn't have "Jacks" or "Queens" or whatever the opening was. But Harmon eventually came back and sat down. He didn't even pick up the card that was dealt to him. The guy on his left bet quite a bit. When it came around to Harmon he didn't even look at the dealt card and pushed his whole stack of chips out to the pot. He was still mad and everybody thought he had blown his top so everybody called. There were two or three hands there. When everybody had finished betting, Harmon walked over to the window again, then he came back and turned up his hand which contained four Jacks! He made everybody pay for that. Nobody knew he had four Jacks and his whole act was to get people to

bet and come in and they did!

Poole played like that. He was a smart man in his way and I am sure that Harmon made as much money at things like that as he did from the Company. He worked with a fellow by the name of Tony Federle who was an electrician as was Harmon. I don't think either one of them had degree or anything like that but they were good men. They could do things that needed to be done. When the lights went out, they found the problem and fixed it.

Federle was a radio expert. At this time they had more short wave radios. Tony was a left handed baseball pitcher. He was a good pitcher. Federle played first base when he wasn't pitching. Harmon also pitched and played first base. They would spell each other.

The Accounting Department had Ralph Boyd who was also a semi-professional baseball player. He was maybe the best baseball player they ever had down there. He would usually beat them. But all of the games were tough games and they fought, lemme tell ya. Boyd was a dapper, astute individual with a little mustache. He was an excellent accountant. He was a good man. Tom Brown liked him. Ralph got along well and moved along well and became the No. 3 man in the Department. Garber was the No. 2 man after Tom Brown.

At first the No. 2 man was a fellow by the name of Eberly from Chicago. However his health was not good there. He had some kind of skin trouble, and the heat bothered him and he couldn't stand it. So he left. We had another man there by the name of Paul Brinar who was the No. 2 man for a short time. He was there when I got there. He was a very smart individual. He ran the place when Brown went away.

Brinar was killed in an automobile accident. He was coming back from Oranjestad one night. He might have been the first man, from the Company, who was killed in automobile accident in Aruba. A fellow by the name of White (not me!) was in the rumble seat. It was an Auburn Sports Car. Coming back from Oranjestad the driver "rolled" it. I guess he had too much to drink. Brinar was killed and White was banged up some. And a young doctor, by the name of Walker, who hadn't been there very long, was injured. I think he had a broken arm or something like that. White got skinned up I think. I think the authorities pretty well established that Walker was driving and he left Aruba to get out of the possible charges of manslaughter. So Boyd moved up to the No. 2 spot in the Accounting Department.

Just across the yard from us was the executive office and just next

to that was what we called the Engineering Department in those days. It later became the Technical Services Department. They were all down in the refinery. I know I walked several times from there down to the Marine Office which was near by at that time. I was "clearing ships" at that time. I was preparing ships documents pertaining to their cargos before they sailed. E. G. "Army" Armstrong was the one who took my place. I was getting ready to go on vacation and T. C. Brown told me: "We've got another job for you when you get back. I was thinking about this 'young' Armstrong to take over your work. What do you think about him?" I said: "Well he drinks too much Mr. Brown. You know you have to prepare these documents at night or Sunday when there is nobody around. They have to be right or you have trouble and I couldn't imagine anyone who always has a skinful of Scotch doing that." But T. C. said, "Yes, I know he drinks too much, but he is a pretty accurate worker. And I just thought I might try him." And I said, "Well you might try him, but I don't know." "Army" turned out to be very good on that job and no matter how much he had to drink he could prepare those documents. He seldom made a mistake. He was more accurate on it than I was. He was quite a one for playing practical jokes. You had to be rough with him, because that was what he liked. Some of his practical jokes were so rough I wouldn't want to write about them.

We had people in that refinery in those days that could do anything. Most of them were not college trained men. They had learned their trade through experience. Some of them came from company operations like in Tampico, Mexico. Some of them came from our refinery in Whiting, Indiana. Warren and Harry Steihl in the Maintenance and Construction Depart as well as Vernon Turner who headed up the Carpenter Department. When we needed something done and we didn't have the right part for it, they would find something.

The original 21 members of the Flying Club charter members that I can think of were men like: Bill Ewart, Al Donaghy, Roy Wylie, Marvin Case, Frank Roebuck, John McCord, Curtiss Osborn, Skippy Culver, Frank Perkins, Al Ayers, and Ottie Goodwin. Others involved were Charlie Greene, R.W.Linkogle, Whitey Riggs, Tony Schmitt, Don Blair, Ferrow Himes, Bert Teagle, Tom Malcolm, Rupert Burton, Bob Campbell, C.J.Perren, Boyd Bastian, Warren Stiehl, and Vernon Turner. We were flying from the Dakota Flying field in Oranjestad at that time. They gave us a runway to use and we built a hanger for our use.

Bill Ewart and Al Donaghy had done some flying before coming to Aruba so they were able to "solo" after a lesson or two. I think the first of the original club members to "solo" was Frank Roebuck. Roy Wylie

and I "soloed" about the same time. It took me about ten hours of practice before I was able to "solo".

When we started the Flying Club, I was one of the 21 charter members who put up my money to buy a Piper Cub. I think we put up \$100 apiece. \$2100.00 would get a Piper Cub brought in there. We formed a club and then we got the plane and we couldn't get bills for it. When we would write up about it they would come back and say: "Lend-Lease furnished you that plane. It came out of Lend-Lease and they will have to bill you."

But we could never get in touch with anybody in Lend-Lease that would give us a billing. So we had the plane and the money was in the bank. We flew the plane, maybe a year, and Paul Gordijn, who was one of the members at that time, ground-looped the plane and washed it out. At that time we were using the Dakota Airfield where the KLM commercial planes landed. When he realized that a big KLM plane was also landing on the runway he tried to get out of the way and in doing so he ground-looped the plane. The Piper Cub was washed out. He was soloing of course. I don't know if he had his license yet. It usually took us a while to get our license after we soloed. Anyway we gathered up the pieces and put it up overhead in the Hanger, on the rafters up there.

In the meantime the local Government had come to us and said, "We would like to have some of our local police officers learn to fly. If you will take four or five of them into your club we will give you the two new single engine Aeronca Trainers we have received. They probably got those through Lend-Lease too! We weren't actually in the World War II yet, but Holland was. So we got these two Army primary Aeronca Trainers and went right on flying. These planes were one P.T. 19 and one P.T. 26. We still had our \$2100.00 in the bank and still couldn't get a bill for the Piper Cub.

I remember I was Treasurer of the Club at about that time and I made my Annual Report to Tom Brown. I have forgotten what part he played in our organization, but he watched our finances. I went to him to make the report and I said, "Now, Mr. Brown, we don't have any liabilities except that \$2,100.00 for the Piper Cub and that has become more or less a contingent liability now. We can't get anybody to take money for it." He said, "It's a liability. If you got the plane and agreed to pay for it, it is still a liability you keep it on the books." So I said, "Okay Mr. Brown!"

In the meantime we had two planes and were flying. One day we remembered we had insurance on this Piper and we collected insurance.

Included in our Flying Club membership were some old construction-type men such as Vernon Turner, A. H. Shaw, Bill Ewart, and John McCord (who could build anything, it seemed to me). One day John McCord was with some of these fellows looking at the remains of the Piper Cub and he said, "Hey! We can put that thing back together; the parts are all up there." The next thing you know they had that plane put back together and it looked like a new one. It had been recovered and was all slicked-up. So here we had the insurance money and we had the original money we had set aside to purchase the plane and now the plane was back flying and we had two other aircraft and we hadn't spent a dollar on airplanes!

In the meantime the U. S. Army Air Corps had come in and flyers who had been put in the base there in Oranjestad. They were for the most part lieutenants. All were eager to fly, and they would give us our lessons so we were getting our lessons free! We were flying from the field in Oranjestad at that time. They gave us a runway to use and we built a hanger over there at that time.

When the Army Air Force pilots came into our Flying Club the first thing they did was to form "The Short Snorters Club." This was something that all of our military air men around the world, wherever they were, organized. A member or "Short Snorter" would ask you "Are you a Short Snorter?" If you said, "No!" then he would say, "You'd better be one!" We used a one guilder note, but most places they used dollars, but down there we were using Guilders. Of course the new recruit had to furnish his own guilder. He would make it out for you. He would put his name at the top of the bill as the "Organizer" or whatever they called themselves. I think he put the latitude and longitude, the date, and some other vital information, and he signed it and you gave him 2 Guilders. This happened anytime you wanted to join and if you were taking lessons at the Club. All of our Flying Club members became a "Short Snorter". I came across my "Short Snorter" bill some time ago and I gave it to my Grandson. I had a lot of signatures on there. Captain Royal S. Thompson signed mine. He was giving lessons to many of us. He was one of the Army fliers there at that time.

There is an interesting story about something that happened at the Officers Club out at the Army camp. It was a big club and they had a pretty big building. Many of us were invited out there to their parties. We could bring a date and any women because of course there was a shortage during wartime. A four-star General came through. I think it was General Andrews. The same one who was later killed in an airplane crash in Iceland or somewhere up there. They threw a big party for him

and I was one of those invited. We were all sitting at the bar having drinks and somebody said, "General are you a Short Snorter?" And he said, "Oh! Yes!" One of the rules of the game was that when you announced that you were a member you had to produce your "Short Snorter" bill. And if you didn't or couldn't produce your "Short Snorter" bill it cost you a "fine" of a dollar for every "Short Snorter" present. Well, I think that time it cost him something like \$300, but he paid up.

When I was in the Flying Club I never landed in Venezuela, but I used to fly over there and fly around the coast opposite us. That is, until we were told if we ever had to land over there we would probably never be heard of again. So I stopped flying over there, but I flew to Curacao a number of times. I wrote up a story for our Treasure Coast Trails paper one time about a trip I had made to Curacao. One time I flew to Bonaire and met the man who ran the resort there. This was originally the Dutch concentration camp for the German and Axis-sympathizer nationalities during the wartime.

I don't remember when we decided we would build a field over near the Golf Course on our end of the island, but it was after wartime flying restrictions were lifted. We named our Flying Club field after Commander Peter DeVuijst. At the time he represented the Dutch government on any naval matters on the island of Aruba. He was a nice guy. We all liked him. He did a lot for us. It was probably through him that we received the two Aeronca Trainers that the Dutch government had gotten through Lend-Lease from the United States. He didn't fly himself. He set up the rules for us and watched to see that we obeyed them.

Later we began to get members like Whitey Riggs. One time he took a plane out at night. This was before any of us were supposed to be able to fly at night. Anyway he decided he could fly at night. I think he had a skin full of gin at the time. De Vuijst took away his flying privileges for something like six months.

Later on a fellow by the name of Boyd Bastian, a young chemist, took up a plane out on a week end. He was a member of the Club at that time and was qualified to fly. He began buzzing cars along the Oranjestad highway. He ran several of them off of the road. Then he came down to the recreation area at Rodger's Beach and started diving on people who were swimming out there. And he flew the plane so close to the water that a piece was knocked off of one blade of the prop and he flew it back to the Flying Club and landed it, got out and got a saw and cut the other end off of the prop to match that one and took off again. I

believe it was on a Saturday. Of course the Government and DeVuijst and the company took a pretty dim view of these things and he stowed away on a tanker to get out of there. I was in the Marine Department at that time so it must have been right after the war. I wasn't flying much then, but I was still a member of the Club and I did fly occasionally.

I went to the Marine Department in 1945, during the war. I spent the war years there up until about 1952. It so happened that they needed somebody down there to do a job that I could handle. Lunn Easten was down there at that time and Lunn came up and talked me into making the change. I went down there as Lunn's assistant.

Then after the war was over Joe Andrea came down and he took me out of what I was doing and brought me in as an assistant to the Marine Manager. I stayed in that job until they did away with the Lake Tanker Fleet. They decided they didn't need it any more. I think that might have been 1951.

Soon after that I went back to the Accounting Department. In fact they cut down the size of the Marine Department and they didn't need an assistant to the Marine Manager any more. They also closed out their Finance and Insurance Division which was where I originally went when I transferred to the Marine Department. At that time Lunn decided to retire. He could take a layoff allowance and retire at that time. I could have too, but was still pretty young and didn't want to do it.

So I went back into the Accounting Department and went into the Systems and Methods Division and worked for George Barker, who was then head of the division. (I'll call him Barker for obvious reasons) Then George Barker left to go to Venezuela where he was offered a job over there with Price, Waterhouse Company in Caracas. His job was taken over by a young fellow who didn't last too long and then I was made Division Head. Barker had a nice young wife and a small boy and he fell for a very pretty East Indian girl in the village. He subsequently divorced the American girl and married the East Indian girl. Tom Brown didn't like this and the company didn't like that either. If you did something like that you could go up to a certain level, but you could never go beyond that in your career. So Barker who was a very smart man in his business didn't stay. He tried to get a transfer to Creole, but he didn't like what they wanted to pay him. Price, Waterhouse came along and hired him to go over to Caracas. I saw him some years later when I was over there on business.

Then I became Head of that Division. By that time we were putting in computers and I had to go to New York and take training in that.

Then I had to go to Venezuela for checking out programs because I.B.M. had a base over there. We purchased the IBM 650 for Aruba, the first of the electronic tape computers. It was still only half electronic; half of it was mechanical. It was electronic in that it used tapes. I put in that system. About five years later we decided it would pay us to get a new set up. And we got the IBM 1410. And I stayed there to see that put in. And then I went on a special assignment and finished out my time.

MEMORIES

Some of the most interesting people I knew in the early days in Aruba I have already mentioned. I met Ward Goodwin when I got there and played against him in various sports. He was quite an important individual. Ward himself was a very interesting character. He played all of the sports and he was a big competitor. I played tennis on the company's team that traveled around. I played soft ball. I also played golf.

I remember when the Personnel Office was right down at the Main Gate where you went out into the village of San Nicholas. A Scotsman, Mac-something, started to come in the gate down there. We always had free passes to come in the Main Gate there. Everybody went through the refinery to get to this Main Gate to go into the village and we all came back to the colony by the same route. Mac was on foot on his way to the colony through the main gate. This Dutch policeman on the gate stopped him. Some sort of argument ensued and Mac knocked him down. The policemen wore those little pistols in a scabbard that strapped down and he was trying to get that strap off of there to get to his gun.

Ward Goodwin had seen the whole thing from the nearby Personnel Office and he came out there and as he saw it the Scotsman hadn't done anything drastically wrong except get in a fight and he saw a shooting was about to take place. Ward held the policeman's gun in the scabbard to get the Scotsman out of the scrape. Well then the Government was after Ward, but he was a good talker and he talked his way out of it: He had prevented a shooting and nobody was hurt.

Lotje Gravenstein was T. C. Brown's secretary when I got down there. Then when she married L. S. McReynolds she left the job. T. C. had a couple of other women come down from the States, but none of them worked out until Etta Williamson came along.

We had a man in the Accounting Department whose name was L. B. Foster. He headed up the Materials Accounting then and took care of the storehouse, commissary and things like this. He went "mad". He went off of his rocker. The company had to confine him until they could get a

suitable ship to send him to the States, so they picked out a bungalow that wasn't occupied at the time and they put Foster in there. Then they picked out men to be with him all of the time. One of the men they picked was Tommy Jancosek. Tommy had his new watch with him one night. One of the things that this Foster wouldn't do was wear a stitch of clothing. He took off all of his clothes. They had to pacify him and keep him inside. Tommy came on at midnight and he was letting Foster do pretty much of anything to keep him happy, except he had to stay inside. Pretty soon all of the lights went out in all of the bungalows down the street there and Foster said: "It's hot in here can't we sit out on the porch?" It was dark at this time and it looked like everybody had gone to bed so Tommy could see no reason why they couldn't sit out on the front porch. Like people with mental problems often are, Foster was pretty clever. They sat there and talked a little bit and finally Foster said: "What time have you got Tommy?" Tommy pulled out his new pocket watch, everyone wore pocket watches in those days, looked at it and said, "Well as near as I can tell it is 5 minutes to 2 and Foster said, "Let me see it." Tommy held it over to him and suddenly Foster grabbed the watch and threw it out on the coral, as far as he could throw it. Tommy was incensed and said, "What are you doing to my watch?" and he got up and started out to look for his watch. When he did, Foster jumped down off of the porch and took off down the street yelling like a "banshee". The lights began to come on in the houses all up and down the street and it took Tommy a little while to round him up and bring him back to his assigned Bungalow.

Tommy Jancosek was another of the most interesting people that I knew down there. He was a wonderful athlete in all of the sports that he undertook. Some he hadn't played before. I don't know if he had played much basketball. He never was much at golf, but he took up tennis and he got quite good at it. And handball. And at softball he was a star. As a softball pitcher he never lost a game in all of the five or six years that he was down there. I don't know how he did after he left.

The first Esso Club had not been finished when I got there and he was one of those who played softball out in that ball field that was on the west side of the club house. The Accounting Department had a team and Tommy was the pitcher for that. The M & C Department had a team. The Process Department had a team. In fact they had two. The Light Oils had one and the High Pressure Stills had one. I played on some of those teams, as well as Ralph Boyd, Red Maxwell, also Bob Campbell along with others.

I remember one night we were playing softball and Bob Campbell

was playing short center field. I was playing center field. I came running in to catch a fly ball and just as I got where I thought I had the ball I ran over Bob Campbell who was squatted down there to catch the ball. I actually turned a flip, but Bob caught the ball! I think we had a Texas team then. Gilbert Brook, Red Masters, Bob Campbell and I played on the team. I can't remember who the others were. We didn't win any big prizes, but we had a great time. We had no lights on the field at the club house in those days and the games often ended up after dark. The games were usually played on Saturday or Sunday.

When I first went down there they were just building the houses. They had some of them finished but there weren't many women in the colony. And 18 months later after Betty and I were married and we came back we had Bungalow #141. It was fairly new. Somebody had lived there a while, but they had just repainted it. We didn't have fresh water in the houses. There was a faucet out there between your bungalow and the next one. You had to go out there and carry your water in. We had brackish water in the houses. We used it for many things, and that is what we had in the showers. We had the kerosene stoves. Betty didn't know how to light the one we had when we got down there. I thought I could, but I couldn't. I know we went over and got Rachel Heard, Art Heard's wife, and she came over and lit the stove for us the first time.

By then the Pan Am Club had been built. It was Pan American because Esso hadn't taken over yet. I think it was in my first year there that Standard Oil of New Jersey bought all of that property down through there, Venezuela and other places in Latin America.

Doctor H. H. Holland was the manager of the refinery that was being built at that time. Nat Holland, who was an operator in the Light Oils Department, was his nephew. Doctor Holland was later replaced by Tom Cook and he was the one who got the employees together and told them they were to run the club, hire a club manager, and oversee its operation. The employees elected a Club Committee and they ran the club. I was on the Club Committee a little later on for a time. I think maybe the first committee was appointed, but after that the members were elected. The first manager we hired was Phil Hunter. He was a good club manager. We had dances there. And I had forgotten about the paper "Club Comments" that was published then. I was master of ceremonies for a while at the special dances that were held there. We had an orchestra that was formed early and it was a good little band. It was called the Pan Am Funmakers.

Most people left Aruba before the end of their contract and some people only stayed two contracts. In those days a contract was for 18 months.

The first Fourth of July that I was there I never heard so much hell raised in a small place in my life. Your life was in your hands if you got outside. Those guys were all hitting the bottle and it was a holiday of course. The new Pan Am Club was open, but it had been opened just a short time.

The Post Office when I first got there was a part of the Mess Hall. Later they built another building for it across the road, to the south, from the Pan Am Club House. Our first postmaster, who was a local man, committed suicide. He hanged himself. Later we had an Indian from India in charge of the Post Office.

WARTIME

I was in Aruba when the submarine attack came on February 16, 1942. We never thought of submarines being in those waters. They had been attacking the tankers right around Puerto Rico and Haiti and the Atlantic coast of the United States. Nobody worried about submarines being around Aruba. We were wide open. Some thought was being given to organizing for operating under blackout conditions, but there seemed to be no big hurry. There was a spheroid tank farm behind the colony and these tanks were filled with 100 octane gasoline. This was one product the refinery was manufacturing as a part of our war effort.

Betty and I had gone to bed and we felt this explosion about 1:30 in the morning. It was a tremendous explosion. It didn't knock me out of bed, but I almost fell out of bed when it occurred. I went to the front door and looked out. Our house wasn't too far from the hospital. I told Betty that it looked like the commissary was on fire. Something must have exploded down there. I pulled on my pants right over my pajamas and Betty and I got in our car and took off. When we got up to the commissary a gruff voice said, "Turn out your lights you damn fool!" Then I realized that all lights were out in that area. I think they had pulled a switch somewhere and shut off all power up our way. We saw the Lake Tanker *Oranjestad* which was burning and men were swimming across the lagoon. Some of them so badly burned they didn't live over it, but they got in. Some of them swam across the harbor. I am sure they must have been desperate. They must have been pretty good swimmers too. I can't remember too much about what we did that night except that some people went to the "air raid shelters." The Company had actually built some shelters inside the community for us in case we

really had an "air" attack, and some people went to these little shelters. We didn't.

A battalion of U.S. Army Artillery had arrived just three days before. There was a squadron of the U.S. Army Air Force that had set up a base of operations at the Dakota Airport over near Oranjestad. Some planes flew over within a few moments. They didn't know what the hell to do. The artillery hadn't gotten organized or anything. They were stringing telephone wires all over the place down there. The emplacements for their 155's were not constructed as yet, but they got them up in a hurry after that. We had blackout the rest of that night because the lights were all turned off. The very next day we had an organization of "black out watchers." All the bungalows were "watched" and everything was blacked out. We could have some lights inside, but we had to have black out screens and people painted their shutters black. If any light showed you soon got a call. The refinery was shut down so blackout shields could be constructed for the furnaces.

In June of 1942 the Esso Club burned. I remember that people were walking around in the ashes and coals and coming out with cases of Scotch. Johnny Walker was one good brand and another was Pinch. Through the good graces of the U S Army the Company got four of those Army barracks units and put them together as a replacement for the burned down club, and they located it up across from the new Commissary Building. They arranged the four buildings in the form of a square and left an open space in the center and this was our outdoor movie very much like we had in the early days of the Esso Club. Of course when the movie was shown the light could be seen from above, but there was no light showing towards the sea. In the meantime our Flying Club field, which we had named De Vuijst Field, had been constructed near the Golf Club. One night we were at a movie at the "Temporary" Esso Club and an airplane flew over and then he came back and flew lower, right over the movie area. About the third time around Skippy Culver said I think that guy is looking for a place to land. We got a bunch of people to drive their cars out to De Vuijst Field, park on either side and turn their headlights on to illuminate the field and a DC-3 landed. He was just about out of gasoline and he didn't know where he was going to get any more. The whole island was blacked out except for our movie which he could see. He brought that plane in on that short runway. He had fresh vegetables flying them to some place in Venezuela. He got lost somehow and he had a young woman passenger with a tiny baby. She was going down to join her husband in Venezuela. We fixed him up the next day and got him out of there. The second DC-

3 to come in there followed one of our Flying Club planes in and that was some time later.

Some of the people I knew in Aruba who spent time in Dutch concentration camp for German nationals and other sympathizer nationalities in Bonaire were Gus Stutzman, Al Zucchini, Karl Schlageter, J. F. X. Auer, the two Sauer brothers. One of them ran a business out in the village. Otto worked for the company in the Cold Storage. In the early days he was also a "bootlegger". At that time they weren't allowed to sell any hard liquor on our end of the island.

RETIREMENT

I took the layoff allowance and came back here. I left Aruba in April and my actual retirement date was in June of 1962. This was after a total of 32 years of service with the company. This was before the 50/15 layoff program. They were offering a layoff allowance when I retired and I couldn't have gotten it, except for the new Marine Manager whose name was John Brown III. He was a big, tall man and I think he might have come from Boston. He had seen service on a ship. He had a ship's captain's papers. I think he had graduated and had a degree from Yale. He was a man of some importance. I liked him; he was a pretty nice guy. He came to me with the proposition that if I would come down and survey and block-diagram all of the jobs and this sort of thing that he would talk to Tom Brown and see if I couldn't get the layoff allowance they were offering. They could give it to someone who had a certain number of years of service and whose job was no longer there. At the time I had the number of years, but the job I was on was still a "live" one. I went down and made this survey and we laid-off some people.

Betty and I have two children, a son and a daughter, who were born in Aruba. The oldest is the daughter who is married and now lives in Princeton, New Jersey. She has a son and a daughter. My son, Bill, lives in Dallas, Texas now and has been for 19 years with Texas Instruments. He has one son, Ron, who is a junior in college and has got it all lined up so that he will go right into the Air Corps.

The John & Eileen Whitney Story

My name is John "Jack" F. Whitney, and I was born in County Wicklow, Ireland on January 12, 1892. My wife, Eileen, was born in Dublin, Ireland on June 2, 1898. She passed away June 2, 1981 on her 85th birthday.

I helped my father operate a dairy farm outside Dublin until just before the depression. Then I took a job with the Huasteca Petroleum Company in Mexico. I was located in Cerro Azul, Tampico. When the Mexican government expropriated the oil companies I went to California. I worked in the oil business for about a year.

While in California, Aruba came up. I applied for a job there and was accepted. My first assignment was to the Gas Plant in the Lago Refinery where L. G. Lopez was in charge. First I lived in Bungalow No. 10 approximately where the main office building was later erected. This was just outside the gate between the colony and the refinery. In 1945 I lived in Bungalow 726. My neighbors were Lou Ballard in 722, Stan Hartwick in 724, George Janson in 725, Rade Broz in 727, Cornelius Dunlap in 728, and Hugh Orr in 729.¹

¹*He retired from Lago in 1948 and lived in Riverside, California. He died August 2, 1988 at the age of 97. He has ten grandchildren born in six different countries:*

- *Bennett Stewart Whitney was born in Dublin, Ireland on March 27, 1918. He is a graduate of Trinity College in Dublin with an M.S. in Chemistry.*
- *John Frederick whom all called "Sandy" was a Wing Commander in the Royal Air Force during WWII. He visited Aruba in 1947-1948. He died in 1978.*
- *Samuel James whom everyone called "Buster" had dark hair and now works in the Canadian Civil Service.*
- *Arthur Vene retired from the American Air Force. He works for them in a civilian capacity in Denver.*
- *Donald Sidney was born in the Lago Hospital, October, 1931. He now operates a John Deere agency in Riverside, California.*

The Bennett S. Whitney Story

I arrived in Aruba on April 2, 1945. I traveled on board the S/S *Princessa* in a 128 ship convoy from England to New York and it was a 21 day trip. This trip was arranged by Anglo-American Oil Company. I traveled from New York to Miami by train; from Miami to Curacao via a Lockheed; and via a Tri-motor Fokker (Snipe) from Curacao to Aruba.

My first assignment in Lago was as Shift Leader in Laboratory No.1 (Oil Inspection Laboratory). Then I became Chemist in Laboratory No.2 (Analytical Laboratory). Next I was Group Head B. and then Group Head A in the same Laboratory. Before I retired in 1974 I was director of all laboratories including Laboratory No. 3 (Development).

Hazel and I were married in Dublin on March 18, and arrived in Aruba May, of 1948. Bungalow 506 was our first temporary home in the Colony. Interestingly enough one of the first neighbors of the Whitney family in Aruba lived just two doors down this street. Louis G. Lopez lived in 509 and Jim L. Lopez lived in 510.

In October of 1950 Hazel and I traveled from New York to Aruba on the tanker, s/s Chattanooga. This was after a trip to California to visit my parents. Howard Garig who later went to work for Lago was an engineer on this ship.

Our daughter, Moira was born in the Lago Hospital on July 23, 1952. She attended the Lago schools through the 9th grade. The Lago High School had been discontinued so she went to a preparatory school in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

On the south side of the island the sand was mostly white coral. On the North shore of the island the beaches were covered with pebbles and coral sand. The coral sand was produced over centuries by the parrot fish, which eat live coral - digested the living part and excrete the shells as a fine powder. The local name for the parrot fish is "caca belly", which refers to the sand excreted by the fish.

Rainfall averaged 19.6 inches a year, but varied from 10 to 40 inches. Rainfall seems to run in cycles which closely followed sunspot cycles.

Humidity and temperature records at Beatrix Airport in Oranjestad give us the following averages for 1969. At around 5:00 a.m. the temperature was around 78.8 degrees Fahrenheit and the humidity was

83%. At 1:00 p.m. the temperature was 87.26 degrees Fahrenheit and the humidity was 65.4%. The temperatures were obtained with a dry bulb thermometer.

The coldest was 76.64 degrees Fahrenheit at 5:00 a.m. in September. The hottest was 91.58 degrees Fahrenheit at 2:00 p.m. in June. Higher temperatures have been noted during hurricane season. This is when the trade winds die. When you put on a clean shirt it is soaking wet with perspiration before you get it buttoned.

We fished with look-boxes. Local fishermen fished in 90 fathoms. They used a heavily weighted line having multiple hooks. They retrieved the line over a pulley in the bow of their boat. It took about 15 minutes to retrieve the baited end of the line. Small fish netted at the shoreline was used as bait.

Arthur Whitney caught an 8 foot shark just outside of the Baby Lagoon and kept it tied up at the T-dock near the swimming area at Rodger's Beach. For a week he brought it out of the water for picture taking. He charged 50 cents for this service.

Jan Moller lived in Bungalow 64 before we moved in. He had orchids growing in the patio and on the cliff behind his patio. Then we got interested when we moved in and also had quite a collection. These orchids obligingly bloomed every year when we had our St. Patrick's Day cocktail party we had every year. Nell and Odis Mingus also had an orchid collection at Bungalow 69. The Beermans also had a collection in Bungalow 52. Russ Ewing also was another avid orchid grower.



The Nelwyn Grace Williams Story

I was born in Patterson, Louisiana in 1911. My father was one of 14 children. I have many relatives in Houston. I had an aunt who was like a second mother to me, and I stayed with her when I was living and working in Houston. I am the oldest of four children. I had one brother, David. Meredith (Mert) was my youngest sister. Aubrey and Stuart Daigle were my nephews. Aubrey was born in 1913. My youngest son, Cliff, lives in Marquette. My daughter is named Dolores Nelwyen and she lives in Pasadena, Texas.

I had gone to visit an aunt in Destrehan and met Gilbert, at a Saturday night dance. Gilbert was quite a baseball fan and player. I was twenty and he was thirty. Gilbert and I were married on October 15th of 1930. He went to Aruba before me. Gilbert was on an 18 month contract when he first went down. I think it was December when I went to Aruba from Destrehan, Louisiana. I had just graduated from High School. I had a scholarship to go to college. I was told I could go to college or go to Aruba. I decided to go to Aruba.

Just before my son, Richard, was born I went back to Patterson so he was born there. Dolores was born in Aruba in the Lago Hospital which at that time was west of the Dining Hall.

Gilbert worked shift as an operator on the Rerun Stills in the Light Oils Finishing Department.

We left Aruba after the attack in 1942. We went to Maracaibo, Venezuela, and stayed overnight in the Creole camp. From there we went to Guatemala City, and then to Brownsville, Texas. One man got out and kissed the ground, proclaiming his happiness to see the good old U.S.A. Peggy Pollock might have been with us on that flight from Aruba. We grabbed our passports and clothes for the children. We were back in the caves near the hospital first. Then we went to the Rutherford's. We sat around the table, drank coffee, and stayed up all night.

We lived in a five room bungalow, Number 429, next to the club house. I used to bake cakes and pastries for the bridge parties at the clubhouse. I would make the candies and cookies or whatever the people wanted. The club would only serve ice cream and sherbet.

Everybody knew I made birthday cakes, and I used to make them on

order. One week I made three birthday cakes. Gilbert was famous for his whiskey sours and he used to make them for weddings. I made wedding cakes, home-made candy, and pies for Bill and Fanny. He was from California and she was from France. They loved rhubarb pie.

Paria Allen was a beautician in the colony and Ciolette Carrill was another. Ciolette had a heart condition, and could only eat certain things. I used to cook her one meal a day.

I had a wonderful recipe for two-tier wedding cakes. Eight egg whites were folded into the dough. Then, I took part of the dough, added pink coloring, and twirled it to put the pink design in the cake.

We sailed out of New York on December 5, on the Grace liner, Santa Paula, when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. We were off the Florida coast, near Miami when we got the news. We sailed on to Curacao where we caught a plane to Aruba. There were many people on that ship bound for Aruba. There were 35 people got on that boat knowing that they didn't have a life preserver. They wanted to get back to Venezuela. They wanted to get back to their homes.



The Richard Gilbert Williams Story

(Son of "Sonny Boy" Gilbert and Nelwyn Williams)

MY EARLY YEARS

I was born December 16, 1931, in Patterson, Louisiana and went to Aruba when I was 5 or 6 months old.

My mother and father had been living in Aruba and my mother came back to Patterson when it was time for me to be born.

My father was from Reserve, Louisiana and was working in Destrehan, Louisiana before going to Aruba. Ev Wade mentioned that he remembers my dad because he worked with him in Destrehan before going to Aruba. Destrehan is located on the east side of the Mississippi river less than 20 miles upriver from New Orleans. My mother was from Patterson, Louisiana, down near Morgan City.

GOING TO ARUBA

It was in 1930 when she went to visit an aunt in Destrehan. While she was visiting her aunt she went to a Saturday night dance and that is where she met my dad. She was twenty and he was thirty. She was born in 1911 and he was born in 1901. They were married on October 15, 1930. Gilbert went to Aruba in November and Nelwyn followed him in December. She sailed from Destrehan directly to Aruba.

I remember my father was quite a baseball player. On Sundays when they played in Lone Palm Stadium I had to sit in the bleachers while he played ball. I always wanted to go swimming and he said: "no you just sit there." He also played basketball. He would take me to the club with him when he played and I would have to sit on the side lines. Sometimes he refereed.

In earlier days my Aunt Mert used to work in the Aruba Trading Company in San Nicholas. Her name was Mercedes, but we all called her Mert. Her brother, my Uncle Aubrey worked in the Personnel Department of Lago. Mert lived with us in the Colony. Uncle Aubrey used to live in the Bachelor Quarters and ate in the Dining Hall and sometimes with us.

FAMILY EVENTS IN ARUBA

MY SISTER IS BORN

My sister, Dolores Nelwyn, was born in the Lago Hospital in Aruba in August 1935. In those days the hospital was located on the right hand

side just as you went from the colony into the refinery. There was a parking lot on the west side of the Dining Hall. The hospital was located on the west side of the parking lot. They were both on the same side of the main road to the refinery. Small children weren't allowed to visit in the hospital in those days. I remember my dad holding me up to the window and I talked to my mother. I also remember that she held up my baby sister so I could see her through the window. I was just about four years old at the time. However I don't remember who was taking care of me while my mother was in the hospital.

SCHOOL HIJINKS

I went to the first and second grade in Aruba. The second grade teacher was Mrs. Alsborough. She was meaner than s---. I remember one day Mary Frances Barnes came to school after being absent because she had been sick. Our teacher, Mrs. Alsborough said: "I don't believe you have been sick!" And without further ado she took Mary Frances by her ear and slung her down so she fell against the desk and broke her glasses. Boy! I remember that just like it was yesterday! It was no accident.

I played hooky a couple of days while I was in this second grade and I was scared to go back. I made my mother go with me.

Miss Myrtle Parham was my teacher when I was in the third grade. For the fourth grade I had Miss Olsen who later became Bea Ewart.

We lived in bungalow #429.

The first and second grades were in one building. The third, fourth, fifth and sixth grades were in another building. This building had an upstairs auditorium. Grade's seven through twelve were in another long building. The building with the Auditorium had fire escapes on each end that were huge, round, metal pipes. These were like the chute the chutes and we used to climb in there and play in there and then slide down. We did most of our playing in the fire escapes on week-ends. I remember we would sit on the rock wall around the school and see how many license plates we could copy down from every car that went by. This was on the road that started at the refinery gate which opened into the Lago Colony. The road went up the hill and past all of those three room bungalows and then past the school. (These bungalows were built for newly weds or couples with no children. This row of houses was locally known as "birdcage row.")

LIVING QUARTERS

The first house that I remember living in was not too far from the

Girl's Dormitory. There was the Pan-Am Club and a big parking lot. There was a street below the Girl's Dormitory and we lived the second bungalow (#404) along this street. I realize now that they were building more bungalows in that area - extending the rows on up towards the light house hill.

After my sister was born we moved from that two-bedroom bungalow to a three-bedroom bungalow further up, #429.

I remember the details of the bungalow we lived in when I was 8 or 9 years old. It was up high enough that I could walk underneath the house without having to bend over.

Many people fixed up their yards beautifully. I remember the Massey's had a beautiful patio, fish pond and garden on the lower road. And the Turners up in back of us had a beautiful yard and patio and garden. You know many people took great interest in their homes and built some beautiful patios. At the time we were there not too many people spent much time on their yards.

I remember used to have picnics out near the tar pits on the north side of the colony. I also remember there were mango trees there. I also remember going to the beaches where the hotels are now and where we could get coconuts from the big grove that used to be there.

Aunt Mert is the one who took many pictures and had several albums of good pictures of Aruba. Many were of her and Aubrey and after she was married of the different cars she had. Every time she came to visit us in the colony in those days she came up in a different car.

MONKEYS AND ME

There were some people who lived in the back of us who had a pet monkey. They had it chained to something like a dog house. And kids being kids, we teased that monkey. Next to us there were some Dutch people called the "Schoens" and they had a daughter named "Anna" and a son named "Neil." "Anna" was the oldest and she used to baby-sit my sister, Dolores, and me when my mother and dad would go to the movies or to a dance.

Dad had built a Patio on the left hand side of the bungalow. Neil and I were sitting in the patio one day and Neil said "so and so's monkeys' loose." I don't remember who the people were. A friend of my mother's "Anne Lampo" was visiting my mother at the time. My sister was about two years old. Across the front porch (this was before it was screened in) was a gate to keep my sister from getting off the porch. Neil who was a lot older than I was yelled "the monkey!" We both

started running up the front steps. Neil was old enough to jump over that gate and run into our house. But I was too short and I couldn't get over the gate. I remember the front porches of our bungalows had wooden steps. I remember screaming bloody murder for somebody to come and get me and I can remember my "Aunt" Anna came running to the front door. She wasn't any relation, just a good friend of my mother. She came to see what I was screaming about. I turned around and that monkey came up and through the steps underneath me and bit the little finger on my left hand. Anna grabbed me and the monkey ran off. I remember my dad threw me into the car and we went to the Hospital. And all the doctor did was soak it and bandage it. They didn't put any stitches in it. And you can still see the lump there on the end of my finger. I'll never forget that monkey! As long as I live!

There were some people who lived next door to us; I think their names were Brown. They had a pet spider Monkey. And the woman used to leave it in the trees outside the house in the evenings. He would come across the pipe line and scratch on our back door. I could put my hand out and he would crawl on my shoulder. Then I would take him back to Mrs. Brown. One day that monkey bit me on the ear. I wouldn't have anything to do with monkeys after that. I had been bitten too many times by monkeys.

CHILDHOOD IN ARUBA

My fun was playing in the oil pots that were molded as a part of the concrete piers all the houses rested on. The little moat around each pier was filled with fuel oil to keep out the roaches and ants. I also enjoyed running on the pipelines that ran between our row of bungalows and the ones next to us. These were the 6" diameter pipes that carried salt water for our commodes and also served as our firewater lines. Smaller pipelines carried our: brackish water for our showers and fresh water for drinking. 4" diameter piping was the sewer lines. These were grouped together and supported on concrete piers throughout the colony. My parents told me many times to stay off those pipes. And they didn't know that I was on them unless I slowed down when I was running on those pipe lines. There was always a big bunch of cactus waiting for me when I did slow down. Inevitably I'd slip off those great big old pipelines and fall into that cactus. Then I would go screaming home. When I got home my folks would pick out those cactus needles. Oh! They would hurt terribly more when they were pulling them out than when they went in! And then after they had taken all the cactus out they would spank me because they knew I had been on those pipelines!

I remember one time when Mr. Manuel Viana was dating Mert who

was living at our house at the time. Mr. Viana owned the Chrysler dealership for the island and he lived in San Nicholas. He was in his car that was parked in front of our bungalow. My dad was on the ground at the driver's side of the car talking to Viana who was sitting in the driver's seat. I was on the passenger side standing on the running board holding on to the door sill. I was very small then I remember. And I was leaning back and letting go with my hands and then grabbing the door sill again. Well one time my hands slipped and I sat down in a bed of that needle grass. For a couple of months I was going to the Hospital so they could pick those fine needles out of my bottom. I'll never forget that! That time I didn't get a spanking. My folks grease my behind with mentholatum. Then they took me for a ride that night towards Oranjestad to keep me from crying. This must have been when I was five or six or somewhere in between. This was when we still lived in the two-bedroom bungalow, and before we moved to the three- bedroom bungalow.

I remember one time when the Colby family lived in the bungalow on the street behind our bungalow.¹ This was when we lived in the three-bedroom bungalow. It seems to me there were five boys and one daughter. The daughter's name was "Betsy." She used to sit on their front porch playing her piano accordion almost every afternoon. I only remember the daughter because I used to stand out in the yard and listen to her piano accordion playing. I don't remember the names of the boys or just how many there were.

When they left the Wayne Richey family moved in. Mrs. Richey's name was Helen. Dukie was my age and then they had two older daughters, Tommy and Patsy and the baby "Kelly." I told Kelly one time in later years: "I remember you when you were in diapers and used to sit in mud puddles in your diapers, happily splashing away." And he said, "You don't know how many people have told me that!"

In 1936 we were all in the states for the wedding of my Aunt Mert and Viana. The wedding was held there on one Sunday and the following Sunday we buried my grandfather. It just so happened that the whole family was there for those two important occasions. As a result of my grandfather's death some important decisions were made. It was decided that my grandmother should go to Aruba to live with us. My Uncle Aubrey and Uncle Stewart were to go to Aruba with us. Stewart was sixteen and still in high school. They all stayed a year. I don't

¹*This was W. C. Colby who was sent down from New York on a special assignment in the Personnel Department.*

remember if we all went to Aruba together or not. Aubrey got a job because he was on the island. I don't believe he was on a contract, but on the local payroll. He worked for just a year and then he went back to the states.

My Uncle Aubrey stayed in the Bachelor Quarters and grandmother and Uncle Stewart stayed with us. Stewart went to Lago high school for one year while he was in Aruba.

Nelwyn's Uncle Treville Daigle was down there for a year. He lived in the Bachelor Quarters I think. In reality I don't remember him being there at all. All I remember is hearing people talking about him and saying that he was the Barber at the Club.

I don't think I ever had a pair of long pants until I was in the sixth grade. All I ever wore was short pants. And when we went to the states it was always in the summer time and every one wore short pants.

My dad would stay in Aruba and go on vacation every other year. And he would always go to the World Series and it seemed they were always up north somewhere like Detroit or Cleveland. When the World Series was over he would buy a new car and pick it up at the factory in Detroit. From Detroit he would drive to Louisiana and join us for the rest of our vacation. At the end of our vacation we would all drive to Bayonne, New Jersey. There we would board a tanker with our car and go back to Aruba.

TRAVEL, INCLUDING TANKERS

I don't remember any tankers we traveled on but I remember a Captain "Hefflinger" and he had a dog named "Carioca."

I remember we were going to Aruba one time and we were in New York City staying in the Lincoln Hotel, I think it was. We were scheduled to board a tanker in Bayonne, New Jersey for our trip to Aruba. Fellow passengers were some woman, I think her last name was Pollock, and a daughter named "Sandra." We were going to be the only two families traveling on that tanker. Kids will be kids and I was filling up balloons with water in the bathroom. I don't know where my mother was. I was dropping those balloons out of the hotel window on the heads of people below. Boy! Did I get a whipping for that! Sandra and I were both involved in that.

We were on a tanker one time for thirty days! It was a German tanker leaving New York and going to Aruba. They had engine problems and we were adrift for I don't know how many days. It took us almost a month to get from New York to Aruba. We finally got into

Aruba and dad was wondering what had happened.

I was always into mischief and I don't know how I managed to keep out of trouble. I remember we were on a tanker one time when the boat was rocking quite a bit. The deck would be at something like a 30 degree angle. And as you remember the railings were not enclosed. The tops of the railings on the oil tankers were about 40" high. There was a horizontal bar at the top and another horizontal bar at about 20" above the level of the deck. It would be easy for a small kid to slide between those railings and over the side. The deck, where our cabins were located amidships, was covered with sea water from the spray. I would slide from the high side to the low side and grab a doorknob. This is a good example of how a little boy can get himself into trouble due to his ignorance of what can happen. Suppose I had missed that doorknob. I would have gone straight through those railings and right on overboard. They wouldn't have missed me for some time and that would have been the end of me!

In 1940 or 1941 while we were in the states on a vacation, mother bought a house in Patterson, Louisiana, her home town. there too. She bought this house a thousand dollars so my grandmother would have a place to live. Then she moved my grandmother and Uncle Aubrey and Uncle Stewart into that house.

In 1941 we traveled to Aruba on the *Santa Rosa*. We were only a couple of days out of New York - maybe off the coast of Florida when Pearl Harbor was attacked on December 7, 1941. My sister and I were put to bed early that night and mother and dad stayed up all night in the dining room listening to the radio. The Captain didn't know whether he should continue to Aruba or go into Miami. But finally they decided to continue all the way to Curacao. And then we flew from Curacao to Aruba by KLM. My mother was always scared of flying. She always sat in the last seat in the back.

WORLD WAR II

When the Island was attacked by the German submarine in 1942 all I remember is that my sister and I were sleeping in bunk beds. I was sleeping in the top bunk and my sister was in the bottom. In all two-bedroom bungalows the bathroom was between our bed room and our parent's bed room. When my mother opened the bathroom door the light shined in my eyes in the top bunk and that woke me up. And she came running in and she said, "Kids, we have to evacuate the house right away because the island is under attack by German Submarines!"

She grabbed my sister and I jumped down from the top bunk. Then

I ran into the living dining room area all the way to the kitchen door. All I could see was the flames leaping up towards the refinery. I thought the refinery was on fire. But it must have been one of those Lake Tankers that had been torpedoed and was drifting, on fire, to the west along the harbor entrances.

The next thing I knew my dad grabbed me around my waist and threw me in the back seat of the car and drove over to the Colony Church. That is where all the people, from our area had been told to assemble and a large group was milling around outside the Church.

All the bungalows in the area alongside the tank farm had been alerted. Whoever was doing the alerting threw rocks against the bedroom windows to wake up the people and tell them we were under attack and to report to the Colony Church. Our house was in the third row of houses from the tank farm fence. All the people in the area, which was south of the spheroid tanks containing av-gas, were considered to be in a very hazardous location. It was figured that if one tank was hit they would all go up together and all the houses along there would be flooded with all of that gasoline. All of these bungalows were at a lower level than the tanks.

All the people in these houses were told to report to the Colony Church. We were up there I don't know how long when a ship got torpedoed and all of a sudden the man said, "This is too dangerous!" At that point, as I remember, a group of us first went over to the caves near the sea grape grove. I don't remember how many kids there were, but when the airplanes would come flying overhead all the kids would come running out of the caves. We were all lying down on blankets in the caves. I guess our folks had grabbed up some blankets when leaving the house and brought them along. I don't think our parents slept at all that night. They were sitting up and talking. And I don't know how long we stayed there. But later on we wound up at the house of Jim and Jesse Rutherford who lived in Bungalow #477. This was in that group of houses just below the hospital hill. And we were in their house for the rest of that night.

Jim and dad worked together I guess and Jesse and my mother were very close friends. Jesse visited the family several times afterwards in the states. The Rutherford's invited us to their house that night. And I guess I finally went to sleep. The next morning we went back to our house.

I didn't go to school the day of the submarine attack, although they did hold school that day. And, as I recall, there were steps near the south

end of the school that went down to the level below the cliffs that the school was built on. I remember going to those steps and going down and then across to the waterfront above Rodger's Beach. From there I was trying to see what parts of the ships that had been torpedoed during the night were visible. I think about half of the parents kept their children home that day, because they didn't know what to expect.

The attack took place at 1:31 a.m. on Monday, February 16, 1942. We stayed in our house Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday nights. We didn't sleep in our beds as I remember. My sister and I were sleeping on the sofa in the living room. My mother and dad were sleeping in a chair. This was because we never knew from one moment to another when there would be another attack.

It was very early Thursday morning, February 19, 1942, when the flares from the American cruiser were inadvertently fired over the colony. The empty casing in which these flares were packed landed in the colony.

My Aunt Mert and her husband, Viana, went out on the Balcony of their Apartment that was over the Chrysler Agency in San Nicholas. They heard the noise and wanted to see what was going on. Mert said that it looked like big balls of fire over the colony. We didn't know what was happening but my sister and I were dumped off the sofa from the vibration of the shells. My dad threw us kids into the car and we took off again.

Anyway my dad came home from work that morning and said that they were evacuating all the women and children off the island as fast as they could. I guess it must have been a week or two after the attack before arrangements could be made and they finally flew us over to Maracaibo. We spent one night in Maracaibo and from there we flew to Guatemala City and spent one night there. From there we flew to Brownsville, Texas. From there we took the train to Louisiana to my grandmother's house.

After we left in 1942 he stayed in the states about a year and then we went back in 1943.

One time during the War we took a plane out of New Orleans and flew to Miami in a Clipper Ship. From there we went by Clipper Ship to Jamaica and from there to Curacao, I believe. There was Mert and her daughter and mother, my sister and I. Traveling by ship was not allowed at that time during the war. Just about a week later one of these planes just disintegrated when it took off the field in Jamaica! I remember my

mother telling about it!

I remember getting on a ship in Baytown, Texas and going to Aruba. That was when my "Aunt" Anna went to Aruba. We boarded at night.

LEAVING ARUBA

I was in school there for six months. Then dad got tired of working the graveyard shift in black-out with the Arubans who always were trying to sleep on the job. The company was unable to give him a transfer back to the states at that particular time. And he resigned in June of 1944 and came back to the states. He subsequently went to work for some Seismograph Company working in the Gulf.

I attended the University of Southwestern Louisiana in Lafayette, Louisiana after leaving Aruba. When I went there it was called Southwestern Louisiana Institute. It was the second largest university next to Louisiana State University.

FLYING OVER ARUBA

In April of 1963 I flew over the Island of Aruba as a passenger in an Air Force plane. We left Montgomery, Alabama and flew to San Juan, Puerto Rico. From there we flew to Curacao. In Curacao we landed and had something to eat at the Hotel; did some shopping and then flew to Montego Bay, on the north shore of Jamaica. From there we flew to Port-au-Prince, Haiti and then to Miami and back to Montgomery, Alabama.

In the fall of 1962 I flew from Montgomery, Alabama to Miami, Florida to Kingston, Jamaica where we spent the night. Then we flew to the Panama Canal Zone where we spent another night. We returned by way of Miami to Montgomery again. It was just cross water Navigational Flights to give the Navigators their flying time for the month. It was always cross water Navigational flight. I was just along for the trip. There were "x" numbers of Navigators who would go on the trip. It was a T-29 and they would fill up the plane with just anybody who wanted to go. I knew the co-pilot and he fixed me up so I could be a passenger aboard both times. I had just been called back to active duty from "reserve" status and sent to Montgomery, Alabama. I had been in the Air Force during the Korean conflict and this time I decided that I would just stay in the service. I was working in New Orleans until the time I was called back to active duty. This was when the East Germans had built the Berlin Wall in 1961 and I was called back to active duty. A year and a half after I was recalled I was sent to Germany. This was during the "Berlin Crisis."

During our flight over Aruba the co-pilot called and said, "Hey, you want to see your old stomping grounds?" Then the pilot said, "Why didn't you tell me you had lived on that island we could have landed there." He said, "I am stopping just to find out who would give us the best prices on the military rates that we could use on excursions to the Caribbean!" I think this was when Viana had interests in one of those hotels, his fingers were in everything. I said, "Well, I have friends who live on the island who I am sure could get us some good rates." The pilot said, "The next flight we have going to the Caribbean we will stop in Aruba." And he said he would make sure I got on that flight with him. And then I got assigned to Europe and Germany!



