

### Final Chapter

As I lay on that school floor I had flashes of what I had just been through. I shuttered at the many times I had come close to death and knew that I was more than lucky. I could not have made it without God's help; he had his arms around me as he did all of us. But why me - why was I saved, when there were so many good men who were not. I've struggled with this for over fifty years.

By now the other Americans were arriving at the schoolhouse, some of whom were badly wounded. There was very little conversation; we were exhausted and really stiff from the long swim. But we didn't care; the fact that we had our freedom was exhilarating. My mind was racing with excitement. Would we really be able to escape?

The Filipinos brought us rice, raw eggs, bananas and boiled comotes. Since my broken jaw prevented me from chewing, Ralph Person a close friend cracked four raw eggs in my mouth - one at a time, chasing them with water. Then he pushed small amounts of rice in my mouth and followed this with water. Next he broke the comotes in small pieces that I could swallow whole. My stomach was full but I hurt badly and was having trouble trying to breathe.

When the moon came up the Filipinos started us on a trek inland, either walking or riding carabao. In my case, four Filipinos carried me on a bed. As the sun rose we could see the native farmers going to work in the fields, a beautiful peaceful scene. Sometime in the morning we arrived at a bamboo shack and by this time most of the men were exhausted and needed a rest. Filipinos began bringing us food and a nurse arrived with clean rags and a bottle of methyolate. With the help of several men she began to clean and bandage wounds as best she could. She also told us all the natives hated the Japanese as much as we did and they would help us. She told us the Filipino Guerrillas were in complete control of the area. For the rest of the day we watched survivors come down the path to our collecting point. A few men had a dazed look in their eyes obviously still in an emotional shock. By the end of the day we were able to account for eighty-three survivors. Unfortunately we lost one man, Pritchard the first day we were ashore; he died from pneumonia. It is ironic that this man had spent two and a half years as a POW, survived nineteen days on hell ships, survived the torpedoing of the Shinyo Maru, swam two and a half miles to shore and freedom only to have his body reach the final breaking point. Injuries to other survivors included two compound fractures of the lower leg; eight other fractures including a broken jaw, arms and ribs; eight bullet wounds; shrapnel wounds; twenty-eight broken eardrums and numerous cuts and bruises.

With only 83 survivors out of a total of 750 men meant we lost 667 friends. Every one of the survivors had had close calls but none closer than that of Sgt. Denver Rose. After swimming away from the sinking Shinyo Maru for two hours he was only 100 yards from shore when a Japanese patrol boat scooped him up. He was taken to the beached oil tanker where the Japs

had gathered 29 other POW's. The Japs tied the Americans together and tied the hands of each behind their back. They were herded to the rear of the ship where the Japs cut loose the first American, took him to the fantail, shot him in the head and kicked him overboard. Two others followed in like manner. Rose, next in line, had been rubbing the rope that bound his hands against the rusty frayed steel cable. Just as the Japs released him from the other prisoners, Rose was able to break the rope, freeing his hands, and he ran forward on the main deck. The Japs were so stunned that he was able to duck briefly out of sight in front of the forward deckhouse. He couldn't jump overboard because he could easily be shot in the water. In the fastest decision of his life, Rose slipped over the side of the ship at the bow. His foot caught the edge of the large opening through which the anchor chain held the ship at anchor. There was sufficient space for Rose to be hidden from anyone looking over the side. The Japs scurried around for a long time, but finally gave up. Rose climbed down the anchor chain after dark and swam ashore. The next day the tide brought in the murdered bodies of the other twenty-nine Americans, each shot in the head.

Several days after our escape Lt. Col. McGee appeared. He had been designated by the Commander of the guerrilla forces in Western Mindanao to take charge of the survivors and to develop a security camp where we would be supplied with food, clothing, arms, ammunition and medical supplies. Survivors Lt. Richard Cook and Sgt. Joe Coe helped repair the guerrilla radio and we were soon in communication with General MacArthur's headquarters in Hollandia, New Guinea. Things were looking up. Soon after McGee arrived, a boat came into Sindangan with khaki clothing, shoes, rifles and ammunition. We were definitely back in the war on the American side.

The next day the Filipinos suggested that all able bodied men be dispersed with farmers in the area and the wounded be moved to a guerrilla hospital on a mountain near the town of Sindangan. A few of the survivors who were capable of traveling would leave very shortly, headed for a Moro village quite some distance away to set up the security camp. Eight of us who were more seriously wounded were headed toward the guerrilla hospital. Two of the men, both with compound fractures below the knee, had special transportation consisting of two wooden sleds, two carabao and their drivers. The drivers tied them tightly to their sleds and their Jolting trip began. Their pain was excruciating. At a brief stop a Filipino gave each a cigar telling them it would help. They both lit up.

I was still being carried on the bed and not very comfortable. The other five men were riding carabao and that was as uncomfortable as anything. We started off again but didn't go far-; four bolo men (volunteer guerrilla supporters) who had litters caught up with us and the two with the fractured legs were transferred to the litters, giving them a nice comfortable ride. Two of the men hiding carabao transferred to the sleds. The other three sent the driver's home with their carabao saying they would rather walk. The two who were puffing on the cigars were soon

asleep - the cigars must have been drugged.

A damp wind chilled us as we got higher up the mountain and it was decided to make camp at a designated place up ahead. Upon arrival we found lean-tos made of huge banana leaves tied to bamboo poles. Filipinos brought us rice, bananas and boiled eggs and they hovered around us helping in any way they could. A beautiful Filipino girl (Rebecca) fed me making sure my intake was in small portions followed by sips of water. With intermittent rain and the light breeze it became quite cool and she covered me with more banana leaves and then she lay down close to me keeping me warm with her body heat through the night. My thoughts were anything but honorable, however my physical condition precluded those thoughts.

Late the next day we reached the top of a small mountain and were deposited in a makeshift hospital. We could look out over several miles of jungle to the ocean, a beautiful sight. There was a small stream near by where we could bathe, so to speak. We had a doctor and dentist and several nurses who looked in on us almost daily and the local Filipinos prepared and served our meals as we relaxed and recuperated.

Gangrene had started in all our wounds, we tried cutting it out but that was terribly painful. All we could do to clean the wounds a little, was swab them with water and cover them with a piece of a leaf from a banana tree to keep the flies off. One day the doctor paid us a visit and he had some sulfa drugs. He sprinkled that on all our wounds telling us that would take care of the gangrene and it did.

For roughly a week to ten days things were quiet. Then McGee visited our hospital to see about our physical condition and he said there was a possibility some survivors would be evacuated by submarine. That was exciting new, because those of us in the hospital would be the first to go. We were told to get to the barrio of Siari on the edge of the bay at Sindangan as quickly as possible. Now the big question was about the size of the submarine and how many of us could it take. In the meantime another problem popped up. A few days prior to the news about the submarine, several Japanese planes came out of the clouds and one landed in the Sindangan bay; apparently it had engine trouble and had landed to make repairs. The Filipino guerrillas got excited and as the plane taxied to shore they opened fire. The plane's guns began strafing the beach. Then one of the other planes landed and the two pilots of the downed plane swam out to be Picked up. Then the second plane became airborne and began dropping bombs trying to destroy the abandoned plane that had floated to shore and was captured. What would happen if the Japanese were to attack Sindangan that was a good possibility? They had lost a good complete seaplane except for some engine trouble that could be fixed. Would the submarine be able to come in or have to abort? A scary thought.

We were off to the barrio of Siam. The able-bodied were to walk but those of us who had been in the hospital were riding carabao or being pulled by carabao sleds. Riding the carabao was too uncomfortable; they were big buffalo like animals and hard to straddle. They also had a funny gait that jolted the rider with each step that they took. We stayed as close to tree cover as we could, for we never knew when Jap planes would appear. I had very little pain when walking but for others each step was sheer agony. It was a difficult trip but somehow we crossed mountains and streams with grim determination to reach our destination.

When we reached Siari it was dark. We waited an hour and a half on the beach looking for the sub and then went into the large copra plantation. Jacquin Macias, who was prepared to do all he could for us, owned this. We were fed a wonderful meal, as much as we wanted, of rice and meat. The next day the remainder of our group arrived from the base camp. Those of us who were in the hospital were given low numbers and the rest of the group drew numbers out of a hat. This was the order in which we would board the submarine. We were told to stay inside Jacquin's house so we couldn't be seen from the bay or the air. That night we went to the beach again and gathered around a large fire of dried coconut fronds; that was the plan to let the submarine know where to surface.

An hour before dusk, McGee accompanied guerrilla Capt. Thomas to a large canoe at the water's edge, where two Filipinos waited. They pushed off the canoe, then climbed in and paddled Thomas, holding a large American Flag tied to the end of a pole, out beyond Lanbayan point. Two hours later he returned without finding the submarine. Thomas had no better luck the following evening, September 28th.

The next evening the fire was again built and we waited and finally the submarine arrived. The clear silhouette of the forward 6-inch gun and the outline of a huge submarine slowly emerged from beyond the point. It moved deliberately into the cove close enough to shore to be in full view of us. It was the Norwhal, one of two 371-foot subs, the largest US class.

Some men were anxious to stay on with the guerrillas and be on the beaches when the Americans arrived. But we were skin and bones, fighting malaria and dysentery and living in a body that had reached its outer limits of endurance. At this point we numbered eighty plus Col. McGee and Capt. Lim a MD from guerrilla headquarters who was to accompany us on the sub. Our two radio experts would remain at guerrilla headquarters to do radio maintenance. We soon learned that all 82 of us could be accommodated, no one was disappointed. The date was September 29, 1944, twenty-two days after we swam away from the Shinyo Maru.

Outrigger canoes and two rubber rafts ferried us out to the submarine in strict numerical order. I was certain to go I had a low number. The biggest sailor I ever saw helped me into the rubber raft and rowed out to the sub where another huge sailor said, "take my hand" and he lifted me aboard as if I were a small child. Then I was directed down into the coning tower and into the submarine. Crowded into the forward torpedo room were roughly half of the survivors, including all the wounded and ill. A table holding medication was at the front and we were spread out on the floor. One of the crewmen was eating a sandwich with a glass of milk. When asked what kind of a sandwich that was he replied: "Turkey, we've been out so long we don't have anything in the freezer but crap like chicken and turkey. No beef at all". We all kept quiet but our thoughts were all on the same wavelength: "Poor guy". Soon we were served sandwiches and Campbell's tomato soup. Talk about good!!!!

Breakfast the following morning was unbelievable. The submarine had its own bakery. We had bread fresh from the oven and plenty of butter to put on it. It was just like cake; I tore pieces off, placed it on my tongue, compressed it and swallowed it whole. For just that meal the eighty- two of us consumed forty-eight loaves of bread and sixteen pounds of butter. I don't recall any illness resulting from the meal, however, the pharmacist mate warned us we had better hold back and not overeat. The plentiful food on the sub made the sailors look great, big and robust. When comparing our appearance with theirs we realized how bad ours was, we had forgotten what health looked like.

The second day out a plane was spotted on radar and the general alarm was sounded -ugah, ugah, ugah and the crew scrambled to their emergency stations. The Norwhal dived but instead of making a 6 to 8 degree dive, it was making a 20-degree dive. Crewmembers standing near us turned pale and some began shaking like a leaf. Then we heard Capt. Titus over the P.A. system "all hands aft"; as best we could we scrambled towards the rear of the submarine. We could hear the engines going into reverse and learned later that seamen had manually operated the 'diving fins'. The solenoid mechanism controlling the diving fins had stuck. We popped to the surface and since the airplane was still above us we again dived only this time normally. The airplane didn't drop any bombs so we moved on, eventually surfacing and traveling on the surface.

We arrived at Mots Woendi on October 5, 1944, having been on the submarine approximately seven days. As we climbed out of the coning tower Marines all carrying sub-machine guns and on full alert, met us. The sub had wired their base that they were bringing in Japanese POW's. We were stripped of our clothes, those that had any, (most of us had given our clothing to the Filipinos before leaving Sari, run through a sterilizing tent, issued new clothing and fed royally. PT boats took those who were able to travel, to Away Island, a very large combat airbase,

where we stayed the night. Upon our arrival at the Island two American women representing the Red Cross, the first we had seen in about two and a half years, greeted us. They were very friendly and in conversing with one of them I discovered we were both from Montana. I suggested she write her father mentioning the coincidence of our meeting. Tell him I am on my way home, gave her my name and father's name address and phone number. She did and her father called my father and for the first time in two and a half years my parents learned I was still alive and now safe in allied hands.

From Aawi we flew in four planes down the coast of New Guinea to Hollandia, General MacArthur's headquarters, meeting General Carlos Romulo, who was very interested in our experiences. It was there we flew over the largest flotilla of ships ever assembled, in preparation for the landing on the island of Leyte, Philippine Islands. We landed at Nanzab, staying there overnight. In the morning we took off for Darwin, then Townsville and finally Brisbane, arriving at the 42nd General Hospital in late evening. There were no attendants around so we were led by several wards in the hospital and finally ended up in one big one. The officers were separated from the rest of us.

The following morning we were checked over by several doctors who then designated those that needed immediate help and those who would get a regular physical. I was sent to a dental surgeon who examined my jaw, took X-rays and told me he would have to rebreak it since it was not fusing right. I also had osteomyelitis and they might have to put a metal plate in to support the bone. They also found I had hookworms. The deworming process involved taking a huge pill and then fasting until one defecated. That pill made me sick but it worked. They weighed each of us - I weighed 89 pounds. That made me wonder what I weighed before the ship was torpedoed since I had put on weight the twenty-two days in the jungle and the seven days on the submarine.

I was given shots of penicillin every four hours to reduce the jaw infection. About 4:00 a.m. the second morning after our arrival I was fitfully dozing when I felt the blanket being pushed to one side and my pajama bottoms slowly being lowered. I raised up quickly, grabbed the wrists and pulled the person toward me. There was a scream, the lights came on and everyone was awake. I had a nurse half in bed with me and my fellow survivors were cheering me on. I let her go and the Officer of the Day came running in and asked, "What the hell is going on"? I explained what had happened and by the same token, under similar circumstances, asked what he would have done. He smiled and said "same damn thing, too bad she just came in to give you a shot of penicillin".

Later that day the dental surgeon re-broke my jaw, ran wires between my teeth formed small I

hooks to which he attached tiny rubber bands, pulling the two jaws tightly together. From then on my meals consisted of five, ten ounce glasses of milk shakes fortified with an egg plus vitamins and minerals, breakfast, mid morning, lunch, mid afternoon, and then again for dinner. I also HAD to drink a bottle of beer twice a day, once in the morning and again in the afternoon. I hated that!!! The irony of this was that adjacent to our sleeping quarters, was a ward stocked full with food of all kinds for our use as we saw fit. We also had access to the regular hospital mess hall.

Coming out of the dental surgeon's office I met Bob Kirker who was a B- 17 crew chief in our squadron. He was in a body cast and riding in a wheel. chair. The doctors had found he had a broken back. This man swam two and a half miles to shore, tried riding on a carabao but the pain was sheer agony, walked through the jungle to the guerrilla hospital, walked over mountains and swam through rivers to get to Sian and spent seven days sleeping at night on a narrow slat board floor on the sub. Very rarely had he complained and then only saying he hurt.

We were all restless at night and at any given time two, three or more of us could be found walking the floors. Our nerves seemed to be fractured and our skin was itching constantly, becoming more annoying as we moved around. As more doctors checked us out, asking questions about conditions that we had lived under as POW's; they arrived at the solution to our problems. The reason we couldn't sleep was the beds were too soft. For two and a half years we had slept on boards and more or less had forgotten what a real bed was like. For a few nights we were given a mild sedative and before long we were sleeping like babies. They also found a solution for the itchy skin. We had scabies, a contagious skin disease caused by mites. The treatment for this was to apply an ointment that was not to be washed off for at least three days. So we forgot about the wonderful showers for the time being, they were off limits. Where we contracted scabies was never determined but the submarine was considered the likely source. As nice as those sailors were to us we would never have complained.

We had been in 42d General about two weeks when our officers were granted permission to have a party in one section of the hospital not in use. They pooled some of their money (we had all received a partial payment) purchased liquor, had food prepared, borrowed a record player and records, invited off duty nurses and personally invited all of the enlisted survivors. The purpose was that this would probably be the last time we'd all be together. Orders had come through; we were to board the troop ship USS Monterey on October 22d bound for San Francisco and once in the States we would all go our separate ways. The dental surgeon warned me not to drink too much since I had been on a liquid diet it would probably hit me faster than usual and if I should get sick I'd choke to death. To be on the safe side, he assigned a nurse to stay close so she could cut the rubber bands if necessary. She was a cute, bubbly pixie, a 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. and we had a great time dancing and talking together. I went to the latrine and while in there I looked over my shoulder and there was my nurse. In a rather demanding voice I

asked what she was doing in there? She said, "Where you go, I go". Later I told her I was going to bed and she offered to walk me back to the ward. When we arrived she gave the cutter to the on duty nurse then turned to me and with a big smile and a twinkle in her eyes said, "pleasant dreams".

The USS Monterey before the war was a luxury liner but it was much different after being converted to a troop ship. Capacity was probably quadrupled. We were tightly packed but happy to be going home. The only problem, the stateroom I was in with five other men, was two levels below the water line. This worried my roommates and me as well, as we thought about what happened to those in the lower hold of our Hell Ship. They had very little chance of getting out when the ship sunk and most of our trip home we were definitely on alert for Japanese submarines. Except when it rained, I took my pillow and blanket and slept on the upper deck with other survivors who felt the same way.

Never will I forget the feeling, the thrill of sailing under the Golden Gate Bridge. So many were on the harbor side that the ship was listing. We were back home! My eyes were clouded with tears, I wasn't too sure at times if I would ever get back safely. I was embarrassed with the tears running down my cheeks but as I looked around me almost everyone was wiping their eyes. I closed my eyes and thanked God for watching over me and bringing me safely home.

We were taken to Letterman General Hospital where a dental surgeon checked my jaw, but no further treatment was given me. I called home, talked to my parents and my sister, told them I was a little thin and had a broken jaw, otherwise OK. After four days at Letterman we were given orders to fly to Washington, DC reporting to Walter Reed Hospital. Our plane ride was anything but dull. The plane had bunks instead of seats having been used for bed-bound patients. We did have an emergency landing in Louisville, Kentucky, fire trucks and ambulances awaited us. We stayed on the plane while it was repaired or whatever they did and soon were airborne again, arriving at the air base in DC in early evening.

We all had a very thorough examination at Walter Reed Hospital. They removed the rubber bands holding my jaw in place instructing me to open and close my mouth took more X-rays and came to the conclusion it was not healing like it should. The consciences was they should re-break it again and set it and I would be at Walter Reed for at least a month. I didn't want to stay in Walter Reed for a month and said so and if it had to be re-broken again I'd like to go to a military hospital closer to my home to have it done. They agreed I couldn't do it any more damage and I could be sent to Baxter General Hospital in Spokane, Washington. They sent Ralph Person and me to the Hilton Hotel and assigned a staff car and driver to take us there. Also the staff car would take us back and forth to the Pentagon until the interrogation was

completed.

Most of the surviving enlisted men came from the West Coast by train. Immediately following their arrival an awards ceremony was scheduled in the office of Army Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall. He spoke briefly to us and General Henry did the actual awarding. All of us received the Purple Heart and a group picture was taken. The date was November 18, 1944 exactly two weeks after our arrival in San Francisco.

After General Henry gave us the decorations he informed us we were classified as Project J Special List and gave us a trouble call number. We were told not to divulge our names, serial numbers or show our orders to anyone and stressed anyone, and if we were ordered to do so use the trouble call number.

A couple of days later this came in handy. Sgt. Person and I were walking towards our hotel, deep in conversation about the interrogation session we just had. Neither one of us saw a Lt. Colonel coming towards us nor did we salute him. He wheeled around and stopped us and reminded us he was an officer and we had failed to salute him. We both apologized saying it was not intentional; we were engrossed in a discussion and failed to see him. He asked for our names, serial number, organization and where we were stationed. We told him we couldn't divulge that information and walked off towards the hotel. He told us to halt and I told him we were classified Project J Special List and our verbal orders were to not give him or anyone else the information he was requesting. He said he was ordering us to give him our names, serial numbers and our unit. I again said we have orders not to give anyone that information. He threatened to call the MPs and that he would press charges. I said, Col. I have a phone call to make that I think will straighten everything out, would the Col. please come up to our room? On the elevator he told us we were idiots and he would see that we spent some time in the guardhouse. I had the hotel operator place the trouble call number. When the phone was answered I said, S/Sgt. Bolitho, Project J Special List. The voice said one moment Sgt. and the next voice said, "General Henry, how may I help you, Sgt.". I explained what happened and that the Col. was in our room. The General said, "May I speak to the Col.?" I handed the phone to the Col. and all he said was Yes Sir - Yes Sir - No Sir - Yes Sir - I will Sir -thank you Sir. The Col. hung us the phone and said we had high friends in high places, he didn't understand everything but he was ordered to apologize and to leave us alone, with that he left our room. Person and I breathed a sigh of relief.

Our interrogation at the Pentagon was completed in about five days and I received orders to report to Baxter General Hospital in Spokane with ten days delay in Butte. My arrival home was a joyous one and many tears were shed. It was wonderful to see my mother, father, sister as

well as my grandparents and many other relatives. There were times when I doubted I would ever see them again. The next day was Thanksgiving and my mother was at a loss as to what to prepare for dinner. I asked her to please make her traditional turkey dinner with all the trimmings. I explained that my jaw was going to be re-broken when I arrived at Baxter so I would remove the rubber bands and have a feast. We had a wonderful dinner; it was a joyous Thanksgiving.

Near the end of the ten-day delay in route to Baxter, I requested an extension, which was granted and several more were approved enabling me to spend Christmas and New Years at home. I reported in January 3, 1945 to Capt. Elbert Baker, Commanding Officer, Detachment of Patients. He handed me a directive from Washington to the Commanding Officer, Baxter General Hospital, stating that every consideration possible be given to Sgt. Person and S/Sgt. Bolitho and in some cases it could mean waving existing Ward Department directives and Army regulations. Such was the verbal orders of the Secretary of War. According to Capt. Baker I had a license to steal. I had a Class I military priority on commercial airlines; access to a staff car; access to the Officers Club and anything else I desired. He handed me a letter stating I could use and drive government vehicles and carry civilians in said vehicles per verbal orders of the Secretary of War; signed by him with the approval of Col. Mackey, Commanding Officer, Baxter General Hospital.

I met Baker's secretary, Irene Loeken, from Hot Springs, Montana. We began dating January 6" and for several. months ran the wheels off staff cars. We were stopped by MP's, who just shook their heads when they read the letter. Once we took a trip to Coeur d'Alene, Idaho where there was a large naval training base. We were stopped by the Shore Patrol who said, "I don't know who the hell you are Sergeant, but get out of Coeur d'Alene and don't come back.

Two days after arrival at Baxter the Dental Surgeon found some evidence of infection in my jaw and again I was on a series of penicillin shots every four hours. This lasted about three weeks and then the jaw was re-broken and some lower front teeth, right at the break, were pulled. They were the source of the infection. With that under control I requested a ten-day leave to fly home. My orders stated I was on an emergency war mission with a Class I priority.

We were asked by various clubs in and around Spokane to talk about our experiences. We also spoke at several war bond drives. The audiences, in some instances, were large with everyone bringing pictures of their loved ones who were involved in the war in the Philippines. In too many cases we knew their loved one and knew they were dead. We couldn't tell them that; we'd say yes we knew him but don't know what happened to him. This began to bother us so we just gave up the public appearances.

Major Sam Grashlo, one of the ten men who escaped from Dapecol with Col. Dyess in April 1943, was Operations Officer at Geiger Field. We had worked together on a detail at Davao and had renewed our friendship before I reported to Baxter. He was required to fly a certain number of hours per month and asked me if I'd like to fly with him. After we landed the first time he suggested putting me in for flight pay. I filled out the necessary forms and inserted Col. Mackey's name as my Commanding Officer. It went through. We did this for several months - no problem. Grashio knew I was dating Irene so on one of the flights he flew over the hospital and changed the pitch on the prop, which sounded like the plane was diving. When I got back to the hospital I was told Col. Mackey wanted to see me. I went to his office, saluted him saying Sgt. Bolitho reporting as ordered, Sir. He said, "Sergeant, I don't mind giving you the run of the hospital, I don't mind your use of the staff cars, I don't mind your going into the Officer's Club, I don't mind you flying with Major Grashio and I don't mind signing your flight pay vouches, but keep that --- ---- plane away from this hospital!!!!!!! Understood?" I said "Yes Sir" saluted him, did an about face and left his office with a smile. I was the only enlisted man in the Army Air Corp drawing flight pay while a patient in a military hospital.

I used the Emergency War Mission Class I priority several times. The surgeon would do what he called maintenance work - removing bone splinter, tightening wires and replacing rubber bands. When this was done I'd fly home for a week or so. Irene and I were getting serious about each other and on one occasion I took her home to meet my parents. We then drove to Hot Springs so I could meet her parents. We became engaged on May 22d and were married in Butte, Montana on June 24, 1945. I was discharged at the Separation Center in Salt Lake City in September 1945 and the following week I went back to school and Irene went to work. After completing the school year, I took a temporary job with General Mills, Inc. which lasted for thirty-four years. We have lived in Butte, Minneapolis, MN, Memphis, TN, Chicago, IL, Dallas and Rockwall, TX and have been at Holly Lake Ranch for the last twenty years. We love it here.

Our twin daughters, Judy and Joan, were born February 4, 1947. Judy and Phil Herron now live in Little Rock, AR and have two boys, Christopher still in school and single. Scott and Lynne live in Gainesville, FL and have Aston Hayes Herron, age three and Jayden, who will be born in January.

Joan and her husband George Osborne live in Philadelphia and have a son and daughter. Brian and Karen live in New Jersey. Brian will complete his Ph.D. in Education in June 2002. Tonya and Jason Delborne live in Pleasant Hill, CA and have a daughter, Olivia, 15 months.

Jennifer was born February 8, 1950; she and Gary Wilhelmi lived in Grapevine, TX have two boys, Corbin a freshman in College and Trenton a junior in High School. We lost Jennifer, June 26, 1996.

Janie was born May 6, 1952, lives in Chicago and is our career girl. She is single, a Vice President of Alltel, managing their Chicago operation.

With our family living in various parts of the country it is next to impossible to see each of them as often as we would like. But, everyone has a computer or cell phone and we can easily communicate with one another.

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Don't miss Hayes' Epilogue that will appear in the next issue of The Gazette. From a man who was there, we get some insights into General Douglas MacArthur. Was he really a hero?